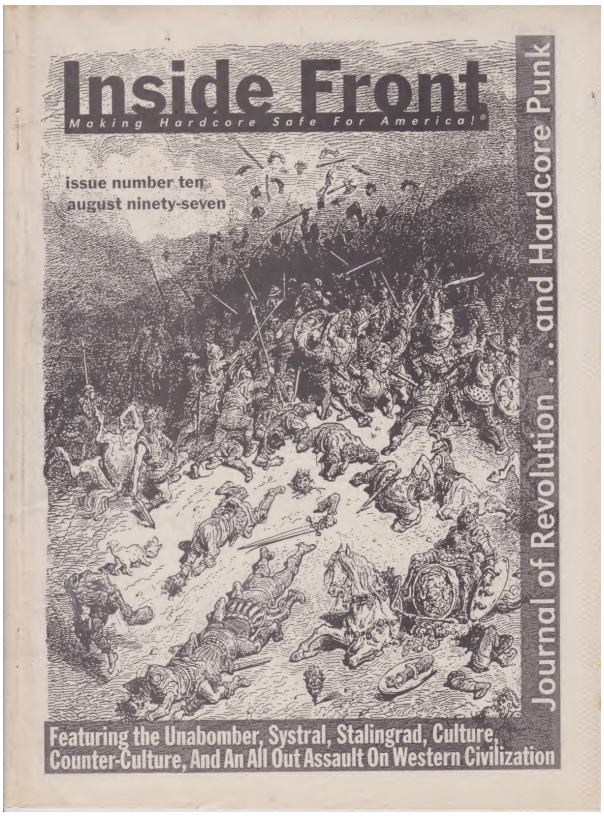
Inside Front: International Journal of Hardcore Punk and Anarchist Action

Almost Complete Archives, 1994–2003



2019-02-06

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Introduction

Two and a half decades ago, some of the first people to collaborate on CrimethInc. projects met via the international networks that had developed in the zine underground associated with the **hardcore punk scene**. We've finally scanned the last five issues of one of these zines, *Inside Front,* to add to our archives. Bear in mind, these are relics from a very different time. We hope, in putting them at your disposal, to offer new generations of anarchists — and punks? — some context for what came before. We've also added the hardcore compilations that came with issues of Inside Front to our **music page** for free downloading.

Once upon a time, in another century —

When only doctors and lawyers had cell phones, and long distance calls were so expensive that punks used hacked phone dialers to trick pay phones into letting them place calls free of charge;

When zinesters secured *freedom of the press* by **scamming photocopies** on a scale today's social media users cannot imagine;

When **traveler kids** sneaked onto freight train cars to ride for free, watching mountains and oceans whizzing by as the earth rumbled past beneath them;

When the singer of every hardcore band spoke earnestly to introduce each song, if only to entreat audience members to cause each other serious injury;

When punk itself was not an ossified tradition, but a living challenge to corporate aesthetics, in a process of constant challenge and change;

When DIY bands traversed a network of squatted social centers from Trondheim to Santiago, and you could play a hundred shows in a row without ever performing in a venue that was legally owned or leased;

When dropouts lived *on bread alone* in order to dedicate themselves entirely to **lives of daring adventure**;

When MAXIMUM ULTRAISTS committed to **risk-tolerant experimentation** organized guerrilla noise shows in convenience stores and mashed pies into the faces of corporate entrepreneurs;

When young people inspired by punk music set out to **reclaim the streets** and destroy the **World Trade Organization**, and everyone understood that anarchists were among the **foremost threats to capitalist globalization**;

In those days, without the internet, how did people discover and pass on anarchist ideas and tactics?

By embedding these values in rebellious subcultural milieus such as the punk scene — by reading dogeared books about the Yippies, the Situationists, and the Spanish Civil War — and by **having adventures.**

These three elements — subculture, reading, and *adventure* — came together in the hardcore journal *Inside Front,* one of the first projects to bring together people who still collaborate on CrimethInc. projects today. We invite you to explore its pages, as if holding a candle up to the dusty walls of the past.

Issue #1 (1994)

Date: January 1994
Subtitle: The Mailorder Address Issue
Source: <archive.org>

A Factsheet for SXE, Hardcore, and Righteous Living

Statement of Purpose

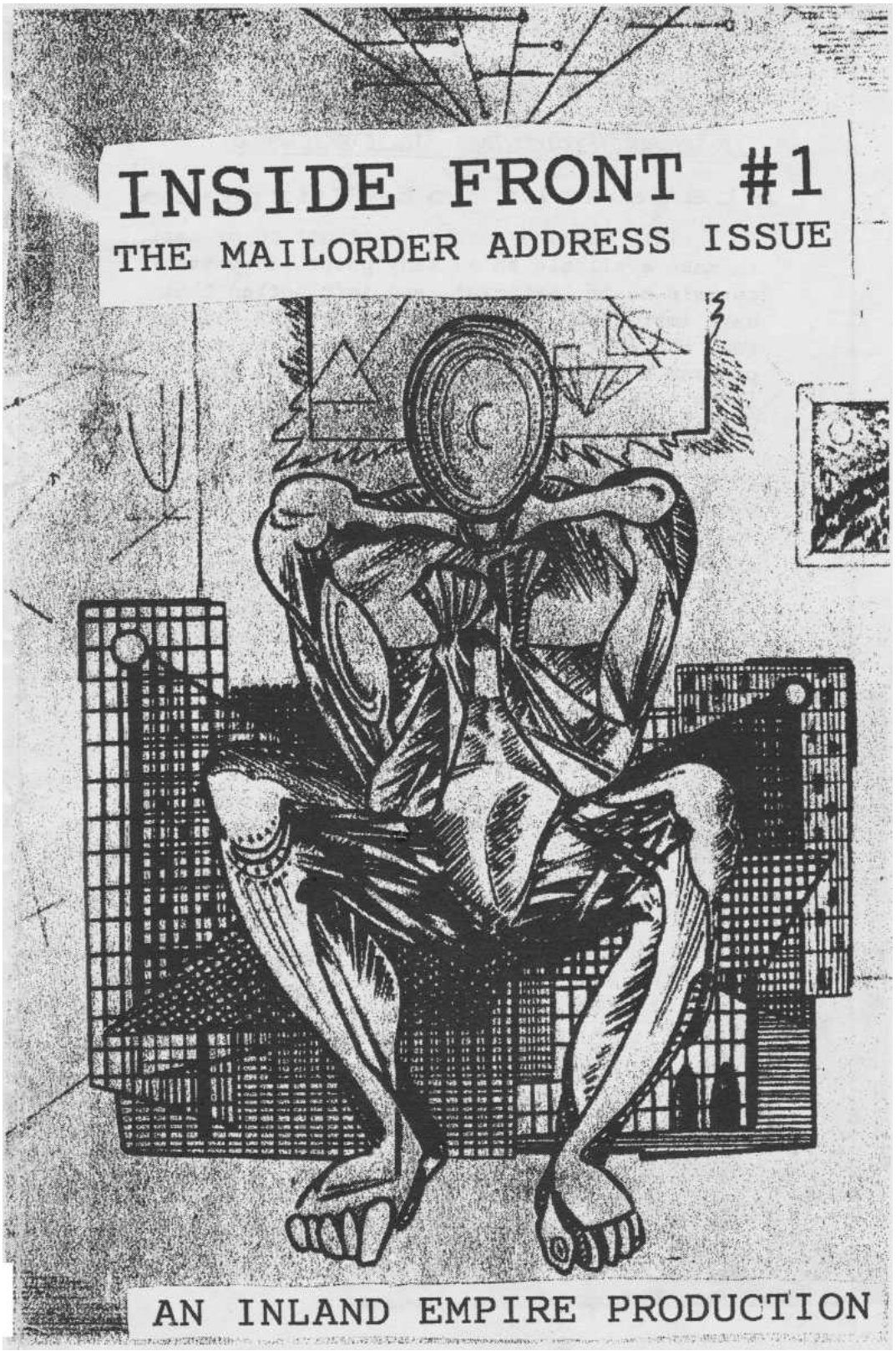
This publication is an effort on my part to make available to as many people as possible certain music, material, and information that have improved my life unmeasurably, in the hope that others might also have access. I plan to publish a wide variety of subjects, so this first issue is not necessarily indicative of anything but the general character of this factsheet. Rather, I want this issue most of all to publicize INSIDE FRONT as an available venue for information from me and from you, the readers. Because of this, I would welcome any contributions anyone sends me; I will try to incorporate any such material into this format. I will be producing and distributing this at cost, because I feel that $$ issues should have nothing to do with art or moral stances...

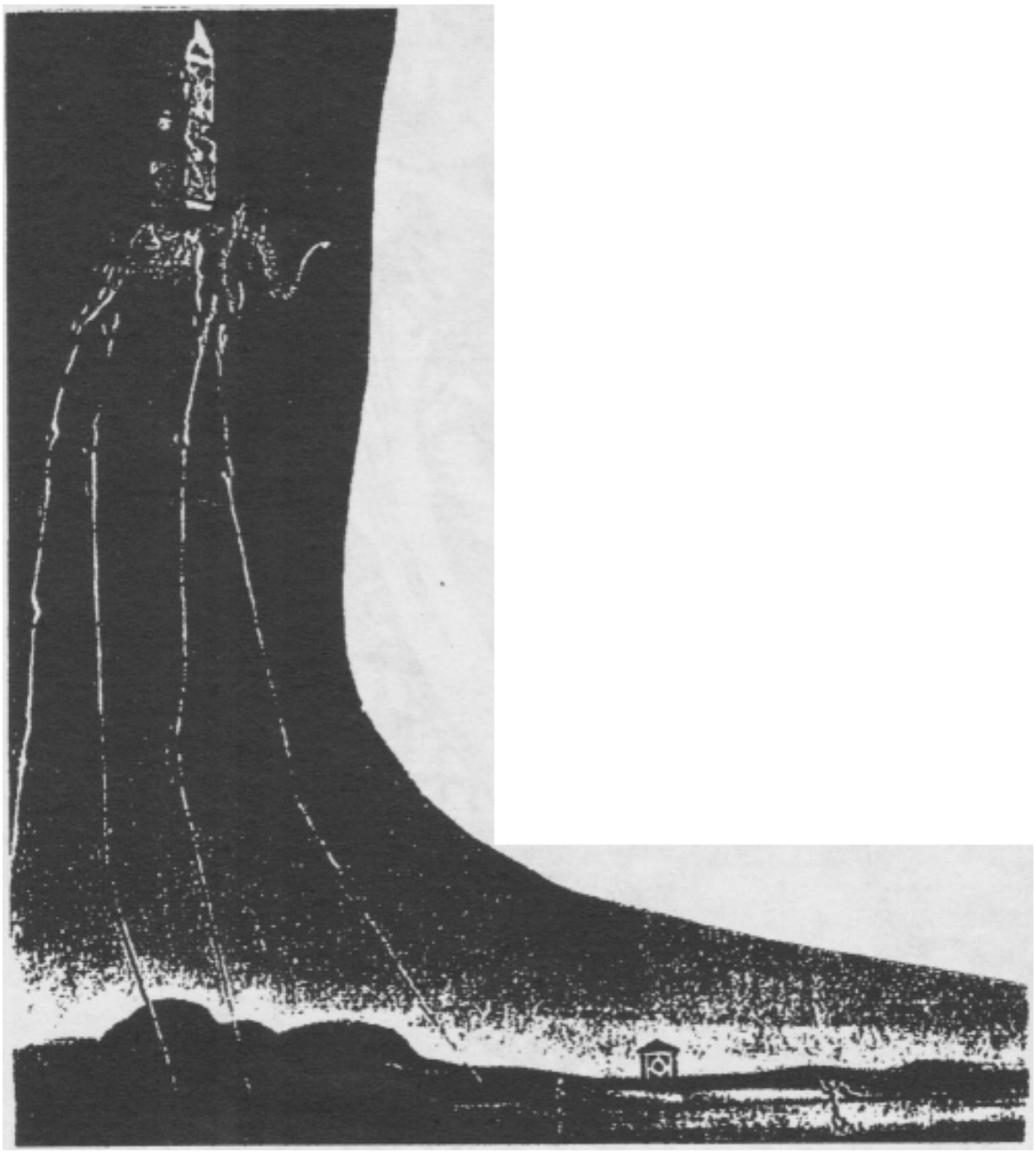
If there is anything in this issue you want to argue about please call or write with a logical coherent argument. If you want any more information about anything I mention, get in touch and I'll give it to you (because of space limits I had to be real brief everywhere, which sucks) If you want to hear any of the music I mention, send me a blank tape and postage money and I'd be happy to record it for you. Remember I want to reach as many people as possible; that also means that I'm depending on everyone who reads this to get the word out. Thanks.

Mailordering

This first issue contains information on all the new music that's coming out (you're on your own for old shit) and all the addresses at which it's available. I've tried to cram it as full of addresses as I could — These are generally addresses where they will write back, and some of them are great guys who will send you all sorts of cool shit. By mailordering you'll save money, get access to all sorts of cool very rare and recent shit, and learn about other cool shit you wouldn't otherwise hear of. By the way, some of these addresses (Victory and ConquerTheWorld records, 4 instance) also do distribution–this means they have lots of records you can send for, not just the bands they have signed. Dude!

As for the title, INSIDE FRONT the set of values with which a person approaches life dictate not only his character, but his fate; this seems obvious, but the most


INSIDE FRONT #1
THE MAILORDER ADDRESS ISSUE
AN INLAND EMPIRE PRODUCTION



common human failing is to look to the outside world as the source of pleasure and suffering, while both are caused by the individual's approach to life alone. Noone can succeed in life until they have established a failsafe philosophy that they can count on to seperate the false leads from the true. Therefore I think people should not spend as much effort on external problems as on failings! within, until they have sliced out all theMl irrational and self-destructive (tumors within their own souls; otherwise they are doomed to failure. I think the Straightedge philosophy is a promise to make oneself pure and free from conflict inside, and the essence of Hardcore life is to follow everything through without wavering–so this is for those of you who feel the same.

The most important fight of all — really, the *only* fight — is always fought on the front Inside.

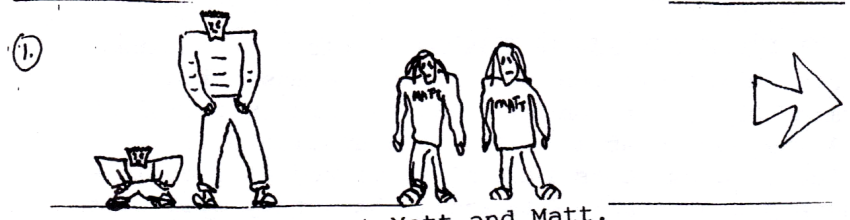
Brooklyn has a new generation of metal-influenced hardcore bands: DARKSIDE is the best; they have a really oldschool sound with an incredible punch and eloquent lyrics (although believe it or not some of them were in Sheer Terror-yuck) They have a single, a new demo, and shirts available from their band address. Confusion is really metallic, but if you like that stuff they're great. They have two demos and a single outwrite to their band address (but hurry-they only have 1000 singles) Life Of Agony is another BKLYN band, but they're on MTV and are just too crybaby metal 4 me. They have a CD out on Roadrunner. Other good Bklyn bands are MERAUDER, SOCIAL DISORDER, JUDGEMENT DAY-look for them and every other new East C. hardcore band on the East Coast Assault hcore compilation-its the best new comp in years 4 vicious EC metal-influenced stuff. 4 some all those bands are on french labels...?

4 the rest of NY city, less cool shit is word is the band REJUVENATE is the shit-all I know is they opened the final Agnostic Front show, so here's their address. AF broke up and singer Roger Mlret is supposedly a motorcycle mechanic in FL, but he sings on his 18yearold brother's new single: the band is MADBALL, and they've improved alotthe new single on WRECKAGE records is great oldschool hcore. WARZONE reunited and is putting out stuff on VICTORY rex-so what. SICKOFITALL has a live recording on LOST AND FOUND records, good with a bootleg feel. Their new album is soon, hopefully it will have the House remix of their song JUSTLOOKAROUND. If anything by INTROSPECT or TREADCHAIN buy it-I know nothing about them except they're great oldsch. NY hcore. DMIZE is a NY band with a demo out-decent but hot really memorable. MIND OVER MATTER is a NY funk/punk band on WRECKAGE-you might like them more than me. Finally, don't evten bother with any of the REVELATION new stuff (bold cd, underdog demos, Mike Judge blues album). Revelation just wants your $

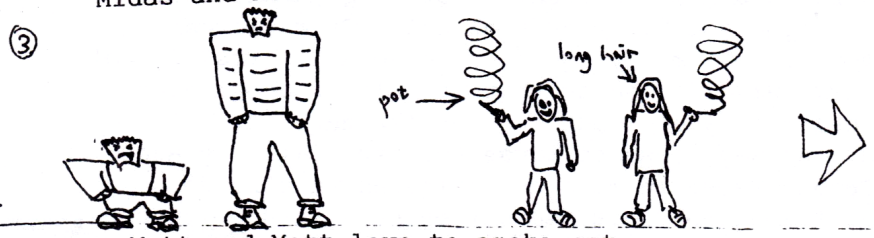
Upstate NY seems to be the next big thing: SNAPCASE has a new album out in JAN 94, I haven't heard it yet-EARTH CRISIS has a complex, melodic very vegan single out-everyone loves it but me. Both bands toured the East in January with Strife — they're all on Victory rex. Zero Tolerance, who had a great song on the Victory ONLYTHE STRONG93 compilation, became THISWORLDREJECTED and have a

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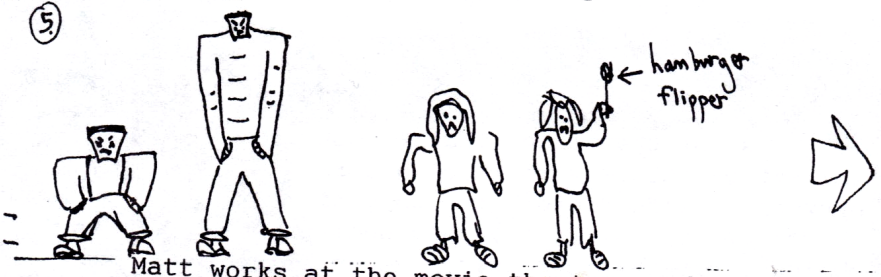
MIDAS AND MOE MEET MATT AND MATT



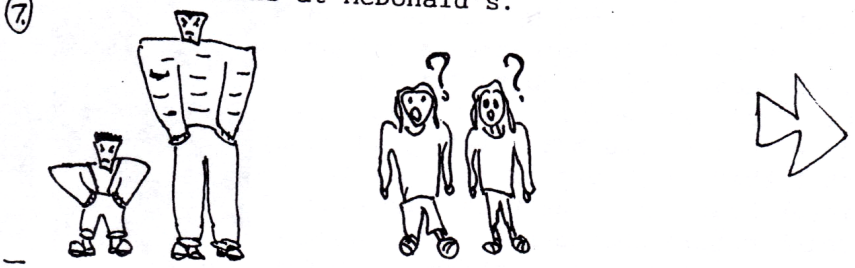
Midas and Moe meet Matt and Matt.



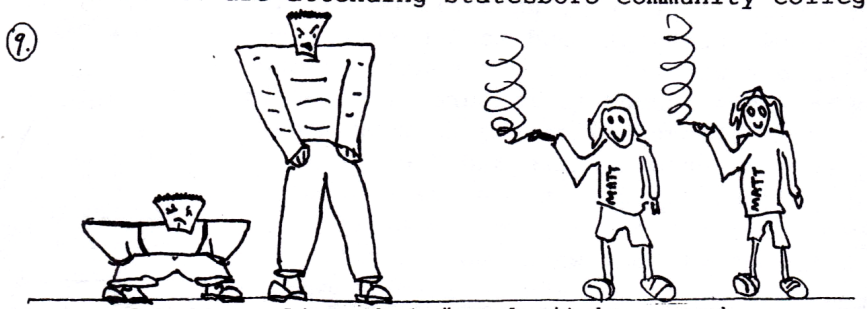
Matt and Matt love to smoke pot.



Matt works at the movie theatre, and
Matt works at McDonald's.

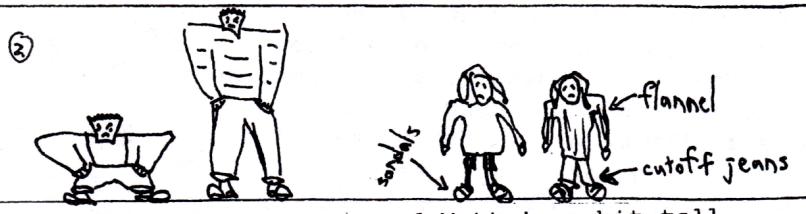


Matt and Matt are attending Statesboro Community College.



Matt and Matt realize that "we don't have much
in common, but hey man, everyone's a brother and
we'll smoke out with anybody--wanna share some pot?"

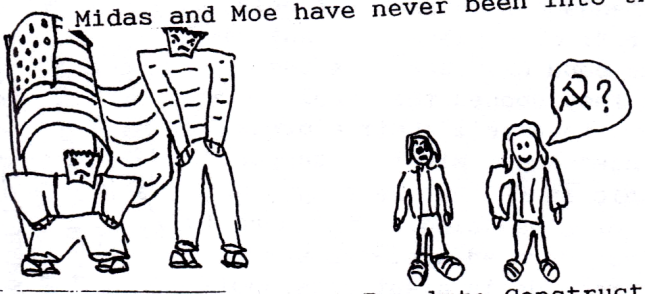
(An Instructional Comic.)



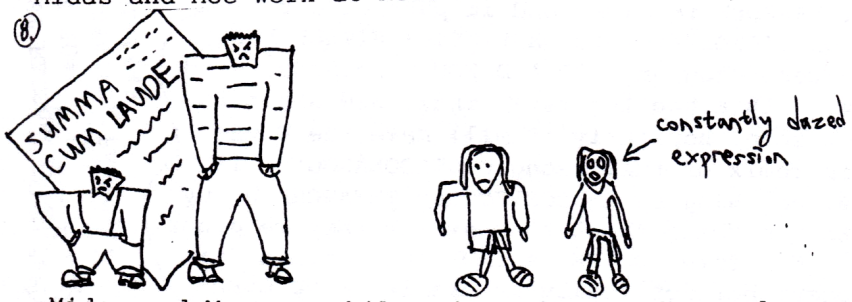
Matt is a little short, and Matt is a bit tall.



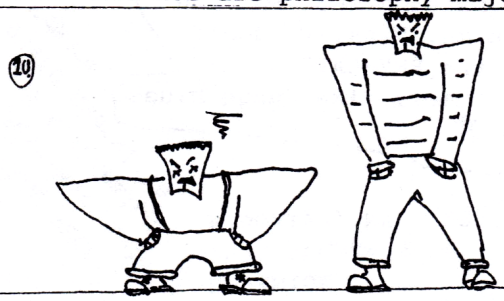
Midas and Moe have never been into that.



Midas and Moe work at Resolute Construction Co.



Midas and Moe are philosophy majors at Harvard.



...MIDAS AND MOE DON'T THINK SO.

great (albeit Krishna) single out on INITIAL rex. They've got the 2xbase, hiphopcore sound down pat.

No really good news from Boston lately — WRECKINCREW have a new single on SONIC AGGRESSION rex, it's 2 metal, it sucks. BZERKER have 2 singles out, if you like whiny metal. BRICLAYER has a good song on that E C ASSAULT compilation, so here's their address for deep, oldsch. hcore. SLAPSHOT stayed at my friend's house last year, and everyone but singer Choke was smoking pot and drinking-so if you see them, beat'em down with hockey stix. AND their new album is soft crybaby shit, 'losers.

The rest of the N-EAST is more interesting. PA has Dare2Defy, who put a decent hatecore 7" out on French label INNER RAGE. Also in Penn is Watermark Records, which has bands like conviction(I've heard good things about their new single) and Worlds Collide(I hear they're like rocknroll now) WaterMfs used to be REDEMPTION rex-if you like emocore try to find the old ENCOUNTER single on that label, it was great. SMORGASBORG rex has moved up from shit like PUZZLEHEAD to better music-here's their address. EDGEWISE(good SXE hcore) and STARKWEATHER (weird metal shit) have new albums out on harvest records. SOMETHINTOPROVE(they had a great hiphop .hatecore song on ONLYTHESTRONG93 on VICTORY) broke up, but a new band is forming from their remains. Don't buy anything by a band called STP on LOST&FOUND records, they're not the same band. NJ is busy with emocore like the much aclaimed new LIFETIME album on NEWAGE rex (deep, melodic stuff) and, on the same label, the new RESSERECTION album (loose.tftess^, scr^^A stuff.) No news yet from Hard Response of DE, but their song on EC ASSAULT was allathat-hard as shit, melodic, intelligent, brilliant. I think they have a demo out somewhere.

Mixed news from the Midwest: FACE VALUE put out a new album on DOGHOUSE(the local melodic/emo HC label) [that has a real weak trebly sound, with lots of bad blues guitar; it sucks, AND singer Tony Erba has rejected X-edge. Fuck'em. CONQUERTHEWORLD is a new I record labal with real recent shit like SHORTSIGHT, OVERSIGHT, FRAMEWORK, CHOKEHOLD–music I don't like (2 punk or melodic 4me) but you might. EVEN SCORE \ the band once fronted by Tony of VICTORY RECS, might be reuniting to recxord an album — it should be brllli if its anything like the LIFECYCLE (aka EVEN SCORE) on ONLYTHESTRONG199O comp.from Victory. RINGWORM is the next big thing from ClevelandOH — Xedge pals of Integ, but their music is a little too punk sounding (choked vocals, too fast and loose) 4 me. DARKEMPIRE is the new label now putting out Clevo shit a new INTEGRITY album is due from them soon. Let me mention that INTEG is my all time favorite band, music so hard and complex I 'it sounds like the voice of God himself. Unfortunately D I hear they broke up. Jeff Grey is selling INTEG videos I .and he has lots of other great stuff for cheap: MEATSTREAK, CONFRONT, FACE VALUE, RINGWORM, OUTPACE, DIEHARD, JUDGE, SLAPSHOT, and lots of other cool stuff... Dude! and other midwest hardcore. He's also doing a zine so get in touch with

him. Just so it's known, DIEHARD on CONVERSION records was a previous form of INTEG. DARK EMPIRE also put back out the old CONFRONT single, its pure Xedge punk. ENDGAME records of Maryland closed sadly, but I have the brilliant MAYDAY/INTEG split 7 if someone wants a copy — MAYDAY was one damn hard, original sounding HC band. Also in MD, thugcore gods NEXTSTEPUP (of EC ASSAULT fame) have a new album on -SHADOW records. ATLANTA has rumors of a new HC scene — . I bet it sucks tho (I havent heard it yet) since Atlanta is better known for 01 like JACKTHELAD (x-moonstomp and ®Combat 84, or something like that) who are monotone and! IBflat from what I've heard from them. In LOUISVILLE, KY i ®the latest Xedge band to notice is FALLING FORWARD — on INITIAL tecs with THISWORLDREJECTED, so I guess they must be good.

Dark Empire Rees
PO BOX 770213
Lakewood OH 44107
216-590-7766 (Integrity/Outface/CONFRONT/
Bowel/Mighty Sphincter)

News from the deeper South: BLOODLET of Florida has a good tape out on Smorgasborg Rex. It sounds like the loose mess of RESSERECTION plus the holy terror of INTEG. In North Carolina, PATRIOT (one of the best bands, if you can stand that stuff) is making waves. OTIS REEM is a good ska band out of GREENSBORO, they just remixed their demo for mailorder: theyre the only ska band in the world I have any respect 4 — they're all straight, and really good guys. Finally, the CATHARSIS demo is out (medium sound quality but brilliant music) and a new one is due this summer. CATHARSIS is a band to watch for: very straight, intelligent music on the cutting edge. Get in touch with us.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA has a thriving scene–the best release there is the FOCUSED CD — great sound quality, hard as shit music and biting but emotional vocals — the very best in ChristianCore, even if you can't relate to them give it a 4\ try. DEADWAIT is another talented hard Xedge band on the way on the way up — look out for them. STRIFE is really good WCoast Xedge, in March their new album is due on VICTORY and they have a great song on ONLYTHESTRONG93. TIDBIT fanzine % dissed VICTORY, so fuck them, they hang out with those soft REVELATION spinoffs anyway. If you want to know why I hate those guys so much, call or write and I'll give you 10 good reasons. Club 8 1/2 here puts on great Xedge shows and ZED M records in Longbeach is a great store, in the weekends you | can meet hardcore god Igby and the old singer for POINT BLANK 9 J there. Those guys say the new PROCESS album on New Age recs is good, so maybe it is. VINYL SOLUTION in Huntington Beach is a kind of punk record store, but it has great prices and selection. Emocore band DRIFT AGAIN broke up. Athletic militant-edge _˜j_ band CHORUSOFDISAPPROVAL is on ice while guitarist and boxing champion Jeff Banks goes to lawschool in Nebraska, but their new 7" on an Italien label is their best yet, and that means Solid Gold, if you ask me. The guy from TAANG records (x-slapshot

label) retired to San Diego, and opened a pflil^g record store there. UNBROKEN of San Diego has a new 'guiltcore[1] album on NEWAGE. MEAN SEASON of Berkeley has kickin rhythm and music but their singer is pretty pathetic. UNDERTOW from WA state has a new 7" out, I've been hearing good things about it. Go to EPICENTER in San Francisco for a good record store, but the music scene there sucks. Maximum-Rock&Roll is from there, and they've announced that they hate all hardcore that isn't soft emo shit. Well, if you can't take the heat because you're too fucking soft, that's one thing, but don't diss something just because you can't compete. I see right through you...

INTEGRITY: KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

> In this wretched life: flesh vs. soul A victim to torment, entrapped by desire Your sovereign Lord beckons you to repent Incision ornaments the flesh, temptation whores out your God–plaster covers my hands as it chronicles unforgiven man...amphorous prison let me be, salivating demons crawling through me I.N.R.I. the stake of the unsavory Martyr Sphincter! Taken down from the cedar, He arises in Hades to cast out the souls untrialed — unmasks forms through torment, Awakens again beside my soul
>
> *Yeah funky, funky bass! Yeah*

Integrity: Rebirth

> Christ-like born insanity Rising in the Rape of Humanity...Taken down ashes, see the rebirth of Christ–it holds no answers for those blinded by so much light. Blackened room, whispers, imprisoned sevenfold: quabalistic hauntings, nightmeres never told. Sodomized by reason, insanity unknown-doubt and damnation calcining through you; darkened prince tyre, he who holds the thrown. God welcomes suffering, Demon Belial sodomized by angels, insanity unknown..." brand in no Christ in my flesh" Rise, my Son

DARKSIDE: FORGIVEN BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

> Cast aside all the time disregarded I find I'm always being let down — I've come to expect it my mood thus affected it's just something to overcome; won't focus on couldhavebeens fucked up shit happens won't

> let my life be drowned in regrets: still broken up inside, best to just let it slide I'll forgive but I will never forget Growing despondancy, gnawing incessantly a disconsolate reminder; this chip on my shoulder growing into a boulder I'm crumbling beneath it all; contempt builds up over time in the shrouded recess of my mind–it wouldn't hurt to ease the pain disappointment is self-tribulation, extreme discontent is a direct result. So I brace myself and prepare for the worst, never to let down my guard.

Yeah straight-up from the heart. Yeah!

CATHARSIS: FALL

When it all falls in on top of you and there's E nowhere left to run–maybe then you'll understand When you stand alone at the end of the line and you have to do your time–maybe then you'll finally be a man...Shit's going down right on top of you You look around for somewhere to run to *Ok*

This time there's none–can you stand on your own two feet? Can you compete: life's hard, harder when it's built on lies; hardest when you don't care if you live or die, so stand or Fall?

Laying in wait for you, living in hate of you–spent my life working to be harder and sharper than you There's no excuses if you haven't come prepared Measured by your weakest link you'll finally get your fair share: Pressure's on, your last moments on this earth — face your greatest fear, to see how much you're really worth...stand or Fall You'd better meet me now on whatever terms I set

You've got a debt to pay that I can't let you forget Because if you don't pay for sin with suffering the price comes from your very soul–it's not what you did to me, it's how you could do it to yourself–!'m just trying to keep you out of hell Cheated lied falsified used me abused yourself and refused to admit that it all adds up to bring you down-maybe I'll just leave you to face up to it Alone–Your last moments in this world you see the life you chose to live, the price you put on your soul: you sold it away so fucking cheap–Trying to^ find some way to give it all meaning some last minute Salvation...but your vision blurs and your grip is slipping: Eternal Damnation — Stand or Fall?

"Brian was my friend and I really liked him. Bull think he's a sociopath "

Coming up: The Interview Issue

INTEGRITY/DARK EMPIRE RECORDS, VICTORY RECORDS, FOCUSED, ex-POINT BLANK, EDGEWISE/HARVEST RECORDS, OTIS REEM, etc...

Postscript

I hope some of you have been able to find something useful in this. I will begin calling up record companies and bands for the next issue(the interview issue) as soon as this is copied and sent out. The second issue should be larger and maybe formatted differently; let me warn you that as the quality increases the price may to, but even if it gets up to 2 stamps that's not so bad, considering lots of zines are 2 fuckin dollars — I'm not trying to earn money off anyone, I have a real job 4 that. Of course, nonprofit work will not be as pretty or, perhaps, as popular(since I don't need to please anybody to stay in business) but my integrity is intact. Hopefully I'll be able to reach people all over the country eventually, since I already have friends on both coasts and correspondence between. Let me repeat myself and say that if you want to see this done better, send in your own shit... Because I'm going to be doing this either way..

ENDORSEMENTS

It's always good to know which companies you can count on, in these days of corporate rip-off and quality downgrading. DICKIES still makes great pants: they're clean-cut and classy but much more durable than jeans.

Unfortunately they're becoming popular in some circles–hopefully this ☒ won't affect their price($18!) or quality, like it did Doc Martens. The best root beer and cream soda is definitely made by BEST HEALTH- their root beer is clear and delic and it sort of makes you wonder what scary brown shit other companies put in theirs unnecessarily. Have your local soda jerk order it from the Brooklyn Bottling Corporation Brooklyn NY 11207. o^go^-f 8 Z7 SHENKS SPORTING GOODS^specializes in letterman's jacket customing, and they do great work with many options to choose from.(9735 Flower St. Bellflower, CA 90706)...that's south of LA, for you E Coast kids. Finally, why would anyone choose to be scarred for life with a fuckin ugly prison-looking tattoo? The very best and cleanest work I've seen is from AVALON TATTOO, 1037 Garnet, San Diego, CA 92109: 619-274-7635 Just so all you punk fucks know, I really like these places, I'm not being paid for this. So get a job.

Nirvana leader Kurt Cobain has said that bands like Pearl Jam are "jumping on the alternative bandwagon."

"Pretty soon you see an ad where they're moshing, 'Out of the mosh pit and into a Buick.'"

Issue #2 (1994)

Subtitle: The Interview Issue
Date: March 1994
Source: <archive.org>

This is the second issue of INSIDE FRONT, a factsheet 4 straightedge, hardcore, and upright living. If you want information about how to get your hands on previous or future issues, turn to the back. In this issue, I aim to make available® information and various perspectives I got from **O** interviewing a variety of people involved with ® this sort of scene. I'm not representing my own views or endorsements in these interviews, necessarily; rather I am providing these people aR forum to be heard. And if you think any of them should ** be 'blacklisted' and not heard from, fuck you ya punk _you_ won't be heard from here. 1 A word on the interviews: I don't have any devices' for recording telephone conversations, so instead **j** I will describe the interview in general, myself,

in the past tense; this is the most honest way to represent what took place, and just to be sure I do not misrepresent anyone I will be sure that z

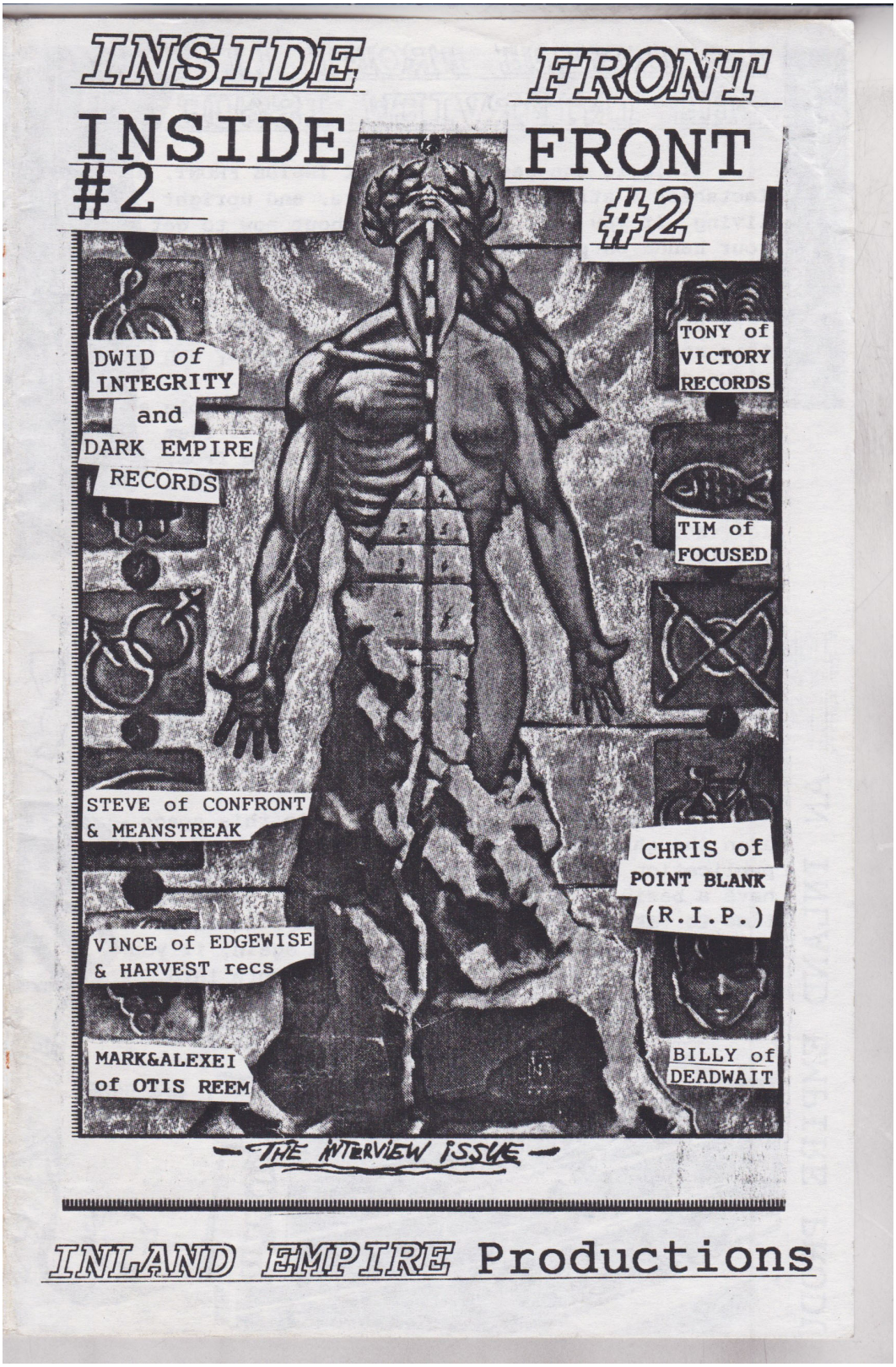
ieveryone I interviewed has a chance to see my ! version of what we discussed. I hope some of you ; can learn something from this issue, if nothing ☒ else maybe some fucking groundless rumors will be dispelled–of course the gossip will always go on ...but whatever.

Let me mention one more thing in this space, , even though this should go without saying: this publication is intended for those who already have a basic idea of what's going on, I don't have time to take kids to school who haven't lived or pondered enough to relate. But, once again, if youi want to debate any of this or get any more info, or a recording of any of this music, get in touchy and I'll be happy to set you up. — ˜^ t . H *Even* *»H A BATO

NEWS AND UPDATES

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Two great comps are out: already out is the DARK EMPIRE STRIKES BACK CLEVELAND COMPILATION, which is, of course, Cleveland punk & HC on DARKEMPIRE recs. I've heard from many sources that it is incredible; it has INTEGRITY, CONFRONT, FACEVALUE, OUTFACE, PALECREATION, BOWEL, 6FEETDEEP, RINGWORM, theGUNS, BRAINWASHEDYOUTH, and a variety of other swell stuff. There's a video version out too. I saw some of Jeff Grey's INTEG videos (see last issue 4 address) they're good, you should check them out. Out at the end of March on the new AMMUNITION (address on page 10)recs is BRINGINGITBACK a comp of all the best new southern California HC: it has music by STRIFE, FOCUSED, MEANSEASON, UNBROKEN, PROCESS, OUTSPOKEN, DRIFTAGAIN, IGNITE, UNASHAMED, REMAIN, RESIST, & LACKOFINTEREST. It'll be the shit, and it's put out by 3 great guy who's not a flake at all, so order


INSIDE
INSIDE #2
FRONT
FRONT #2
DWID of INTEGRITY and DARK EMPIRE RECORDS
TONY of VICTORY RECORDS
TIM of FOCUSED
STEVE of CONFRONT & MEANSTREAK
CHRIS of POINT BLANK (R.I.P.)
VINCE of EDGEWISE & HARVEST recs
MARK&ALEXEI of OTIS REEM
BILLY of DEADWAIT
THE INTERVIEW ISSUE
INLAND EMPIRE Productions

it. #2 release on AMMUNITION will be the REMAIN 7", (emo with a bite) due at the end of May. The guys at ZED recordstore wanted me 2 say that they have a huge selection of SXE/HC/punk shit, and if you call them they'll mailorder anything 2 you anywhere, the next day. (their address: page 10 in here) Call or write them & they'll get you a catalogue, they're a cool place so give it a try. The new CONVERGE single from Boston is not bad, tho the best song was on the EastCoastAssault comp and the rest is not earthshaking. Also, these kids seem kind of young to get to go to a studio. The demo by DEADWAIT is discussed later in here, it's a perfect 10 for simplistic straightfromtheheart SXE HC. I don't like the new EDGEWISE album as much as their older music, the mix and the sound in general isn't as hard, and sometimes it sounds like they're trying to be something that they're not (that is, hard.) There are a couple good songs, tho. There's a new HC band from Boston called TOETAG–they sound just like SLAPSHOT on SUDDENDEATHOVERTIME, but of course SLAPSHOT was a lot better(back then.) This guy called Frank is trying 2 do a SXE zine called "FEDUP" in Miami, write him (address inside) and see if he's having any luck. In SanFrancisco CHAPTER recs and FADEIN mailorder (SXE stuff, etc.) share an address(inside) — CHAPTER just put out the RESTRAIN and SECOND COMING 7"s, and due are 7"s by)⊠⊠*£»« and EVERLAST. I have no idea what J that stuff sounds like at all–I guess its newSXE HC^

see an ad where they're moshing, 'Out of the mosh pit and into a Buick.'

[Image not archived]

MOE THINKS AND
MT IDAS THINKS
MIDAS DRINKS

Midas says tonight he's going to drink until he pukes.
that is a dumb idea.
And Midas pukes and Moe doesn't.
Midas has an idea.
Now Midas and Moe are straight together.

[Image not archived]

Dwid sings for longtime Cleveland, OH HCore^ band INTEGRITY, and operates DARK EMPIRE records which puts out lots of Clevo HC. I talked to him » on Feb. 10, 94. Integ has 2 new songs (1 a cover w of NEGATIVE APPROACH) on the new DARKEMPIRESTRIKES BACK CD on his label, and in about 2 months he says® they'll record a new album, to come out probably * on a different label. They just came back from their, 2nd tour of Europe — he says they don't have a van J (or the $) to tour the USA, tho they do play showsjg out of Cleveland. He told me long ago when they were put out their first 7" on Victory recs they were gonna tour with INSIGHT of Utah; but there was a disagreement: Integ put out a cassettesingle on PROGRESSION recs, which according to Dwid pissed off Tony of Victory, who stopped sending them thei^

copies of the 7" (he said they could tell a new pressing had been done b/c they were coming out inJ a new color, and he received none) so when he asked for his copies, Tony sent them to him smashed into | bits. Dwid says they had decided then that everyone could fuck off and there would be no more records, I but they ran into Ron of the Accused who does Over-1 -kill recs, so he put out THOSEWHOFEARTOMORRW for J them;he said that their distribution (DUTCHEAST, which DARKEMPIRE also uses) has been good so far. E He said he started DARKEMPIRE so he could finally] see a label run right for a change, and he wants to be able to put out records that come with free shit and things like that, to make it worth everyone's trouble. He says DARKEMPIRE would be happy to sign bands but he hasn't seen any he likes yet, so he mostly just puts out his friends' stuff. If he does i sign any bands, he can set them up with European (tours and clothes company sponsorships.

Dwid says his attitude right now is that he's going to do his own thing «HB^^«* with the band and the label, and he doesn't want it to be popular or accessible to anyone, really, tho it does do something for him when he finds out that his music has had a really meaningful effect on the life of i an individual. He blew off the whole SXE and HC J scene in general; he says the band started [out]

but they left the movement behind a long time ago because they decided it was too trendy, and they disagreed with a lot of the kids over things such as vegetarianism. He himself is straight but he doesn't want it confused with a movement or a dogma. He says he's shocked to see the scene today so different, all the kids so soft and trendy–the latest thing in Cleveland is to be antiabortion, which he thinks is just not his business as a guy.

As for the lyrics, he says DEADWRONG and LIVE IT DOWN weren't vegan songs: they just described what a pussy thing it was to eat animals you hadn't had to hunt yourself, and how pompous humans using animals for makeup product experimentation is. Dwid told me alot of his lyrics are drawn from his experiences as a child and growing up, antd people often get confused by them because they don't realize that they don't necessarily follow a linear train of thought. The band isn't Christian (says he's not positive what he believes in, as far as that goes, from one day to the next) but the song KINGDOM OF HEAVEN was based on a story from the Lost Books of Eden(the books left out of the KING JAMES version of the Bible) about Jesus going down to hell to set free the souls unjustly held there, while his body was in the cave.

Dwid told me that he's learned that most people are evil, and that evil will always rise to the top and be victorious. He says he's been fucked over so much that his goal right now is to get revenge on everyone who has dealt him dirt. He says hardcore should be an outlet for the kids who have the

balls ☒ to do their own thing, who must suffer daily for it from everyone else, so that those kids can have *• ***mMMMM*** something to call their own. He got a lot ' of shit growing up, he was kicked out of high school for defending himself in fights, but he says that's OK because now he's making something out of himself while the people who fucked with him are working at McDonald's where they belong. He says people are born good or evil, to be either members of the herd or overmen in Nietzche's words, and he even went so far j as to compare the kids who get fucked with in high school to Christ, in terms of the burden of human scorn and persecution which they must bear. He also x says there's no way to deal with people who fuck with you or stand in your way except to take them down

Dwid told me about how the kids in the bands NAKED ANGELS and RELEASE compiled a list of all the bands that SXE kids shouldn't listen to or allow to play shows, and how INTEGRITY was at the top. He says he *h* doesn't believe in bands trying to tell kids what to do; 4 instance he doesn't stop the band when a fight ☒ starts in the audience because he doesn't believe ☒

in having a "teacher-student-relationship" with them. He says that when he met Ray and Porcell they were Z

really good guys, but that Krishna has no place in b

Hardcore–he sees the 'shna's around hinting to kids that they might actually get to meet their idols *Ay* from YOUTHOFTODAY and the CROMAGS if they join up. / He says that most music sounds like rehashed shit tg to him, of the stuff coming out now; just rlpoffs / of the old stuff which he still listens to. But, he Undoes like the new band RINGWORM from his region /^

(their album should be out soon on LOST&FOUND recs / or maybe DARKEMPIRE) altho he says they're sort of / unmotivated. Dwid says the name INTEGRITY doesn't mean they think they're holy or anything, just that they don't kiss anyone's ass; the band is a family and their beliefs are all similar. Finally, for all you kids whose IQs qualify you for tax breaks, the sleeve , notes in the first CD were a joke — altho he said that A Tony Victory actually did pose in Sassy magazine...!

Write to DarkEmpire Records, PO BOX 770213 ☒

Lakewood, OH 44107 for info about INTEGRITY or the / records DARKEMPIRE has out, or a shirt catalogue^ ^

Tony of Vfcfory Records

Tony operates Victory records, which publishes bands like STRIFE, SNAPCASE, and EARTH CRISIS. In S those hands Just finished a sensational tour toqether: Tony said there was a big turnout and iofs of kids were Lally into it. Earth Crisis should be Luring again this summer, and in May-dune Snapcase* will tour Europe with SickofltAll. ony s h

> putting out their next album on a major label, which he thinks is not cool; he doesn't like to see HC bands leaving the smaller parts of the scene behin on their LyLp. By the way, the new SNAPCASE album,

previously expected out around Christmas, is now due out March 2, 1994, because of the Earthquake in Calif^i# for some reason. Tony doesn't plan to sign any new bands any time soon, he says in the future his label should stay true to the older style HC, tho they are putting out a rockabilly album: "hi-fi and the roadburners, " partly because he loves that music and partly because he wanted a Chicago band on his label. Victory does distribute other labels such as INITIAL (sxe/hc-type stuff) DOGHOUSE(melodic sxe/hc) EQUAL VISION(Krishna) TEMPERANCE(HC I guess) ARTMUNKfpost- - hc stuff) and CONQUERTHEWORLD(melodic&foreignHC) Tony's old band EVEN SCORE is practising again, he says there is a real chance they will tour & record again. He says that his band has always been SXE and still will be; but he says that he is more laid back now, in that there used to be a need for a violent stance in the midwest scene but things are different now. He is happy 2 see less pointless fighting at the shows, tho people still dance violent(which he says is a fundamental part of HC.) He says violence was a sort of facet of his youth that he realized was unproductive, and that a lot of people who were into it were more bark than bite anyway. He looks at SXE as more of a personal thing now, since it used 2 get him down when he expected everyone else 2 be straight and he would get let down. He's been vegan 4 four & a half years, but that's also a personal value that he says people must consider individually. He has no problem with religion in the scene — he distributes EQUAL VISION, a Krishna label, because he says he supports anyone sincere about what they're doing. He ' did say that he thinks there are a lot of lazy kids out there, and that he thinks its Important to have a good work ethic and not just go back home after college. As 4 HC, he says he thinks its 2 segregated today into little subdivisions, that there's no unity and it will only get worse until it's just friends in different subsets going 2 see each other's bands. Finally, regarding Dwid's statements about Victory, he didn't deny sending him smashed records, but he did say that he sent them their records when they were pressed. He said "most of the whole thing was petty personal problems instigated by an outside source.

> 2 and a half years ago he put the 7" out of print because he was sick of dealing with the problem. Tony told me that he was surprised 2 hear Dwid was still mad, and that he "didn't want to go^thru

MKHBh u.. carrying grudges ..LMMKWNravKnMMBaMHMl
[Image not archived]

Steve sang 4 Cleveland bands CONFRONT MEANSTREAK. He's 24, and he'll be attending next year. He says most of the old SXE crew up with are now into smoking pot, and the scene is now mostly younger kids there. He t^{01}*^?®^{1}®^{0}^ band news:

SPLINTER is a great hard metallic HC from Akron, OH on the way up (send $5 cas* TENACITY records, PO Box 599 Dorchester, MA 02124 for their LP). RINGWORM has a new lineup, anothe quiter & a new drummer, and they're supposed 2 be even tetters the way It you can get it th.lr de.» was much better than their album, deeper & cleaner) The singer & guitarist of OUTFACE are supposed 2 be forming a new band with Walter(bass)&Sammy(drums) Of YOUTHOFTODAY, believe it or not(!) Steve S ^ d CONFRONT is reforming with Dwid on bass, and he also sings for DARKEMPIRE band BOWEL, which is a Qrindcore band with all the members of INTEG but Dwid. Guitarist Aaron of INTEG plays in 2 Discharge-style punk bands, THE WOGS and BRAINWASHED YOUTH. Steve Ascribed the DARKEMPIRE band MIGHTY SPHINCTER as punk GG (ALLEN) shit. He's also working on 2 new bands, an INFEST style band ARSENAL with drummer Tony of ^TEG and STRAIGHTEDGE YOUTH with Jeff Grey. He told me the latter band name was generic on purpose: hes going back to the basics with an oldschool sound like S B? SIDE and similar music, in an effort to bring

back what SXE was once about.

Steve says violence in every form has always been a part of HC, that it belongs there and that the music is meant 2 be aggressive. He told me tha MEANSTREAK was a project that never ^ally worked out because of arguments, so they only °, t

> sona on the ONLYTHESTRONG1990 compilation. He didn't express 2 much of a grudge against VICTORY for anything, tho he mentioned that at one time there was a problem between the whole Chicago and Cleveland scenes because of it. But enough of that.

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tv# IS #18 MN SEES
XUEJJ :3NIZ 3XS an 033
Ammunition Records
PO box 461

> Bellflower, CA 90707 Long Beach, CA 90815

TIM OF FOCUSED

^r Tim sings for FOCUSED, a Christian SXE band < from southern CA, which has been around for 4 years , & just put out a very hard, clean CD on Tooth&Nail records. Their second guitarist Jason just left them g in the middle of their winter west coast tour, he'll I be replaced by Andrew Reizuch, who has played before ' with other bandmembers in bands like BLINDSIDE. This J summer they'll be touring, playing in CA, Ohio, NY, Nebraska, & Colorado, and other states. Their next

H album is due in 1 to 1 & a half years, and Tim says ' it will be stylistically like SLAYER meets SPLIT LIP-

§ -more emo, but still with bite. They have a song on the AMMUNITION records comp coming out by April (it's

", described elsewhere in this issue) called "Thought, "

^Tim said it was "slow, hard, & dark." Tim says that

there's nothing wrong with him listening 2 SLAYER even ^tho he's Christian because he says their lyrics aren't Satanic, just brutal like the music they accompany.

TOOTH&NAIL records has a wide variety of other Ibands signed, from WISH4EDEN(grunge) to CRAWLSPACE W(Boston HC) with oldschool punk and industrial bands 'too; I think they're all Christian, tho.

| Tim says there's 2 much fighting in Huntington

' Beach. He says he loves the new stuff coming out in ; HC, but he'd like 2 see less tagging and shoplifting on the part of the younger kids in the scene. He says its mostly a peer-trend thing, and that he hopes his band will be good role models so that kids may do

> something positive with themselves and amount to something. He told me about his own confusion and mistakes growing up, that he doesn't want to see other kids go thru: in the mid-80's he said he used 2 do lots of drugs, shoplifting, etc., and he continued stealing after he became SXE in about 86. He was in jail in 1987, and he was going 2 have 2 do prison time; that was when, inspired by his father, he found Christianity; he has been Christian since. All the band members are Christian, tho they each attend a different church. He says Christian bands like his and UNASHAMED have led lots of local kids into that

religion.

> Tim wanted me to mention that he is a strong advocate of monogamy–he is about to be married 2 the girl he has dated for 5 years, and they have waited all this time before having sex so they would
>
> be sure they were doing the most responsible & safe thing. He is against abortion, among other reasons because he thinks people who are not being safe or responsible use it as birth control, and he doesn't understand how SXE kids can be vegetarien but not care about unborn life.
>
> Tim described himself as "stoked" when someone actually discussed thier antiChristian stance with him, but he thinks generally kids $_{\text{ius}}$^ behind his back and he is angry about that.

He thinks it is legitimate for his band 2 be judged on the basis of its religious stance; but he's angry that so many new kids judge him before they even know him. Tim told me they should be upfront and approach him before they begin to talk shit. As 4 other religions, he said that he thinks Krishnas are kind of silly 4 thinking that "sitting in

a corner chanting all day" will put them in touch with God. Tim says that SXE is a positive thing, but that alone it's not enough. If you want 2 discuss or debate religion or morality with him, I'm sure he'd be happy 2 oblige: he says that Christianity can be proven rationally and that he does take the Bible literally. _ _ So go ahead and get in touch with him before you — make any hasty judgements. — I I

SBILLY OF DEADWAIT 1

Billy plays drums for another southern CA SXE

^ band called DEADWAIT, from Yorba Linda. They're part 5 of the younger scene (they're still in highschool) but: ☒**r** their demo tape is great: very rhythmic, simple, older style HC with a lot of feeling & good quality sound

^ too. Last year they were called "PLUS ONE" but they i ☒**fl** got a new bassist and another guitarist & changed the* name. They're on a comp with CHOKEHOLD, LINEDRIVE, & | fl some other bands on HOLD STRONG records in Georgia, » " and they're recording a 7" for that label on March **1**

' 14. They'll be going on tour this summer, to states **3** like NJ, NY, Tennessee, Ohio, Georgia, and parts of **a** the South — they may be playing some with CATHARSIS. 3 ^ Billy told me they're not vegetarien, tho they're allS **Tl** SXE, and he says he thinks it's silly when people go

" vegetarien just because they're in the SXE scene. By the way, those were *candy* cigarettes they had after_ **Ml** their show at CHEAPGUYMUSIC in February...!

DEADWAIT owes alot to Isaac Golub of CHORUS OF1 b DISAPPROVAL, says Billy, for mixing and helping with® [J] their demo tape, among other things. He told me Isaac^ \ was there with them for 10 hours while they recorded;fe (and his backing vocals on HOLDING ON are the shit.

CHORUS will be touring Europe this summer, and they^ have a discography coming out on NEWAGE recs soon.

Billy told me that DEADWAIT's often negative, ffi doubtfilled lyrics are a reflection of their environ-^ * -ment; they are the only SXE kids among a bunch of (rich kids in their town, and it has made their singe^B & lyricist Chris "very bitter, " according 2 Billy, bun he still "holds his own." Billy says their new music, ® will be more complex, with difficult metal-influencedW guitar. He's not pleased 2 see religion in the SXE scene these days, he doesn't mind it by itself but he]j [w]says he goes 2 a show 2 see the band perform, not ☒ preach. He says the CA scene is getting 2 socially, segregated and 2 concerned with fashion & cliques &|

bullshit like that. Billy has mixed feelings about the **I** music coming out these days — he says alot of it sounds **I** too mainstream and "some of the things NewAge puts out [1] just totally suck, " tho his favorite bands are the new ones like UNBROKEN and UNDERTOW. Finally, Billy wanted |me 2 mention that DEADWAIT doesn't hang

out with other bands or the Huntington Beach scene, they've had little help from anyone and they've had 2 do most of it by themselves. He said "the NewAge guy Mike Hartsfield

said he was too busy to put us out, " when Isaac Golub approached him about it, "and Mike said we should change our name." Go figure. If you want to learn more

about DEADWAIT write: BILLY HAYES, 6561 FAIRLYNN BLVD,

YORBA LINDA, CA 92686.

; VINCE SPINA OF ^HARVEST AND EDGEWISE

Vince plays guitar for EDGEWISE, and he just

\ put out their new album THE MASSACRE OF THE INNOCENTS J on his new label HARVEST RECORDS. He told me that at this time only the cassettes have come out, because of a problem with the covers at the printing company.

g Also on his label are SHADOWSEASON, a melodic band, STARKWEATHER, a metal/HC band(their album sounds like their cut on the ESATCOASTASSAULT comp) and TURMOIL, a "moshy" new HC band whose 7" will be out soon.

EDGEWISE itself has been around since 1989; they were £ once a SXE band, but are no longer, due 2 changes in ***q*** lineup. Their singer (Vince's brother) will graduate ^ college soon, so they may be on ice or finished then.'0 Vince said they were in EDGEWISE from the beginning 4 ***h*** the sake of being in a band, not to take a SXE stance.® He said the scene in Penn was big about 4 years ago, but the shows stopped 4 awhile and now fewer people 3 show up. They usually play their shows out of state. Vince said the name of their new album had no real significance, that he was taking an art class at the time so he just put the painting on the cover and named the album after it. He said that, tho he couldn't speak 4 his older brother who writes the lyrics, he thought that their more violent lyrics were more an outlet in themselves 4 aggression rather than a real life threat. As for other bands, Vince told me that as of July the A band MAYDAY of Virginia was still around, and that he I heard that CONVICTION just broke up — he said their 7" on SMORGASBORG was good. Finally, he told me that he / heard that singer Dwid of INTEGRITY broke into a 1 A, morgue, cut the ear off a girl's corpse, and was d // wearing it around his neck. *

(that last statement is 4 all you fucks who got into the SXE/HC scene because they cancelled your favorite soap opera or gossip column. Call or write & we can set a time & date to fight, you fucking losers..) /

CHRIS OF POINT BLANK ^

POINT BLANK broke up in 1992, but ex-singer has) some things 2 say about shit that went down with his band. Lots of people hated POINTBLANK 4 different u reasons: MAXIMUM ROCK&ROLL (those pussy rejects) said 1 they were sexist & racist because of the song "WE (DON'T OWE YOU SHIT" on their first 7". It was an antibegging song (check that out, if you want to hear a racist statement: "songs against begging are racist." *t* you ignorant shit...) About that song, Chris told me it was written on the spur of the moment by someone they took into the band just before they went into the studio, who they kicked out right after they recorded it. He says

he regrets the song, but he isn't going — 2 apologize 2 anyone and he hates it when people talk shit about him who don't know him personally. Chris

[Image not archived]

told me that "unfortunatel^at the time he did agree" with the controversial song's lyrics, because he was "young, and didn't know better." Now he says he's seen more around where he lives to make him disagree with them, but that he's "not caving in to anyone's threats" about it. He told me that other people in the SXE scene at the time looked down on POINT B because they didn't hang out with the more established bands, and because there was rivalry between POINTB's hometown GARDEN GROVE and the more "cool" HUNTINGTON BEACH. The guys who were cool to them were ONESTEPAHEAD, who he said, were great guys, CHORUSOFDISAPPROVAL, and VISUAL g DISCRIMINATION (who were another band that got shit/ J because they were into violence.) Chris said that violence has a place in the HC scene, but only when its justified; he told me that when he was young he liked fighting, but now he thinks its stupid. He told me that POINT BLANK was not a declared SXE band, (that was another reason some kids hateds them) but that the whole band was straight. Chris hates the fashion — phases the CA scene goes thru, and he thinks its ridiculous when bands tell kids not to dance because

HC is all about getting frustration out.

POINT BLANK broke up because they were nowhere." After their 2nd 7" they kicked out second bassist, and they couldn't find a new

broke up and reformed as BONESAW, which he said was a mistake because they really didn't think it out, so^ their first recording sucked. They gave it up for 1^ and a half years, but now "after musical & mental ^ changes" they're giving it another try: the new album is due in May or June on LOST&FOUND records, and it J will be much heavier and more "uptodate" than their J

previous music.

OTIS REEM is a ska band centered in Greensboro, !

North Carolina. (4 info write David Drossman, 287 UNC-G Station, Greensboro, NC 27413 or call 919-334- **I** 2929 and ask for "Slinky") They play a newschool ska **2** sound dressed up with a lot of HC, funk, hiphop, etc.**a** influence. They put on crazyshit shows, they're all **1** good, straight guys, and they're not the Bosstones, so give them a chance. They have a 5 song demo tape^ out, they have a song due out on the SKA GONE SOUTH ^ comp on BOYOHBOY records, and they may split a 7" soon with the SKALORS. I Interviewed singer (one of

[Image not archived]

Mark told me that the bandmembers are a W I j-Iree because they need 2 be clearheaded 2b 7Ⓡ X 'musicians. He expressed trustration that h ***k*** ***9*** ***'***

☒up drugs, but he said that he had 2 9ive

. hemg ! star 1^ . 1 "" " "hwhne trade-ott tor

ffiEH doesn't have any enemies' thev°?[d] “ °T‹S 'besides they need ? L ~[th Y] °Ve ever[y]body, &

>t sbows.vx^eVLT^it'T^^^^^ [can]

Finally, Mark wanted 2 mention that he had stll^t Britch and David ("Slinky") for OTIS REEM shirts in orange and "those motherfuckers, they should first. "

;~ i.....„„..-.[r].::[s];x[E, ^a]

;of th^TOAS^ERs! a[r]fat 28-year o^s^6 [trOmb°ne player] all saw trvinn 9 . year-old sleazy man who we

⊠gins at a show 1^"°" ^'S^'t.^

""‹^ " [2] the world or bls 71

CATHARSIS who think that f

obvious errors of issue elsewhere here (INTEG. [But, on the] first 30 copies I did' seething hilarious: I accidently listed the VICTORY

y so itude. (...?) Finally, JACKTHELAD in Atlanta was

[Image not archived]

STUPID HARDCORE LYRICS -^^»^ Some bands try really hard, but just lookW® like fools when they venture into foreign territory: like hatecore bands that try tow be positive, 4 instance when BIOHAZARD singsw "I'm gonna take life by the balls and squeeze' until they crunch." *What* exactly did he want ,

to do to his life? Or emo bands that try to ***mK*** be hard, 4 instance when the DRIFT AGAIN guyiOw sings "it's a war inside myself, and I want to fight back." *Who* is it he wants to fight? Worst of all, there's the song by ENCOUNTER ("Break Free") where he's talking about breaking free from the need 4 acceptance or help from <**M** others, and he says "extend your hand & help mew _to break f_ree." Poor kid–he'll never escape..^ **I 'W^i^OiHK^**/ w wt **^^KWVMBGfll^^HBHBBH** *KViw*

^LYRICS issue i only

is a poem by jazz great Chet Bakerlj

(see also Appollyon's Whisper):

Smoke builds the stairway for you to descend^^^ You come to my arms may this bliss never end^a^S^ *Awake or asleep...every memory I'll keep when I'm deep in a dream of you*

LIFE HURTS

I hope some of you have found this Interesting. I've got big plans 4 this little factsheet, so let me tell you what's up: the first three issues are free, and came out (will come out, in the case of issue 3) in January, March, and May, respectively. Issue 1 is full of as much info and addresses of new bands & record labels as I cut fit. Issue 2 is

in front of you. Issue 3 will have more addresses, info, and interviews (I'm planning on SNAPCASE, 2DAMNHYPE recs, CHORUS OF DIS... etc.) So if you are missing any of these issues, just send me a stamp (2 for both) and I'll send them to you Starting in summer '94, I want each future issue to come out with a demo tape or compilation of demo tapes by the newer bands in the scene. This will be a chance 4 them 2 be heard across the nation, and 4 people who like this music 2 keep up with the newest shit. When I begin doing that, I will have to charge about $3 per issue to pay my costs, if these are going to be good tapes. If you are in a band who is interested, please write or call so we can work on this. Also, I'm going

to need a real readership to pull this off, so please, all you kids who love this shit get in touch so I can keep you uptodate and make you a part of this project. You won't regret it: I'm no flake, I do quality work, as these first three free issues should prove. Send me your address and let me know you want to be on the subscription list. Spread the word, let everyone know and we'll be able to make this count for something... The bands I'm looking at for the first demo comp are

smaller ones like CATHARSIS, DEADWAIT, SXE YOUTH, OTIS

[Image not archived]

ENDORSEMENTS

I still have to give it up to Best Health (see issue 1) for the best root beer, but STEWART'S Cream Ale has got to be the smoothest creamiest cream soda I've ever tasted. If you can't find it in any stores get in touch with

CABLE CAR BEVERAGE CORPORATION in Denver, CO zip 80229. If you live in LA, you need to

patronize the CANDY CASTLE in Westwood — it has all the drinks I've mentioned here, any kind

of candy you didn't even know existed, and then^ < some. The owner is a great guy with a heart of - * gold, he'll order anything you want; they just opened and they're trying to stay in business so help them out. Finally, OXBOW guitars in Chapel Hill, NC (919-929-2473) has got to be the only place to buy guitars and that shit — you know how most places are just wannabe rock stars# and corporation leeches who want your money? I just got a guitar there and the guy threw in a $100 case, cords, strings ...and

«&2

adjusted it to my preferences for free. He truly

cares about his work a_nd he does m_ailorder, check him out.

ADDRESS UNTIL JUNE 94: BRIAN DINGLEDINE 623 KELTON AVENUE

LOS ANGELES, CA 90024–2202 310-209-0926

ADDRESS AS OF JUNE 94: BRIAN DINGLEDINE

2695 RANGEWOOD DRIVE J ATLANTA, GA 30345

404|-414-0161
Inside Front IV
THE COMPILATION ISSUE
AUGUST 1994
Interviews with MAYDAY, RINGWORM, RICOCHET.
Write-ups on the bands on the NO EXIT compilation:
CATHARSIS, LINE DRIVE, XESSIVE FORCE REFT IC!
BLOODSHED, POLYESTER COWBOYS,

Issue #3 — Missing

Source: Hidden away in someone's private collection.

Issue #4 (1994)

Subtitle: The *No Exit* Compilation Issue
Date: August 1994
Source: <archive.org>

*** Introduction

Welcome to the 4th issue of Inside Front. I've been **working on this more than three months now, and during that time I've moved from Los Angeles to Georgia to North Carolina to(just last weekend) a new apartment in North Carolina; so if this issue is a couple weeks late, I apologize. But here it is, my first release on my own label and my 4th issue of the factsheet. I'd like to use this space to make a couple statements:**

1. **Hardcore will not survive segregation. If we all only support the bands we agree with politically 100% (and haven't heard any bullshit rumors about), the scene will become so divided that the individual parts will shrink away into nothing. Then there will be no forum in which to make statements in the first place. Go see a band, even if you've heard some bad shit about them.....get in a fucking brawl with them, whatever, just be there so shit will be able to continue. You know what they say: divide and conquer, subdivide. You've been warned — so Don't Fuck It Up.**

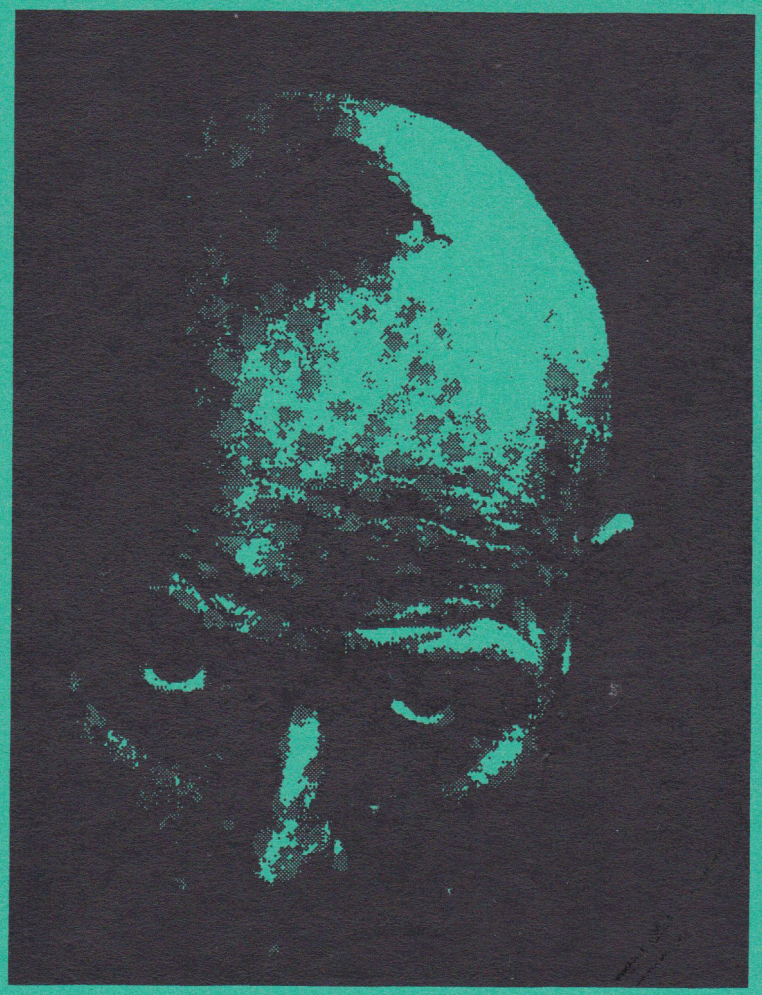
2. **I want this factsheet to stand as proof that *anyone* can and should make something of themselves. It doesn't matter if you live in North Carolina, if you hate the direction the scene is going, if you don't have a crew or any money or even a place to call home...you can make a difference in your life and the world around you. All it takes is hard work and persistence, to never fucking cop out and convince yourself that you need a break." That time you spend in front of the TV you won't even remember a week later, but if instead you're out busting your ass on something or another notOhk will you have memories and pride to last you a lifetime, you will also have the fruits of your efforts to reward you. Each of us only has a few decades left in this world. There's no time to throw away...you get back from life what you put in, so settle for nothing less than complete world domination.**

OK, a couple more notes: I am starting a distribution service(right now I can only do sales on consignment, sorry) so if you'd like to work with me please get in touch. And, of course I'm always searching for people interested in distributing INSIDE FRONT, please write if there's anything you can do. Finally, I'm going to start looking for bands for Inside Front

Inside Front IV

THE *NO EXIT* COMPILATION ISSUE

AUGUST 1994



Interviews with MAYDAY, RINGWORM, RICOCHET.
Write-ups on the bands on the NO EXIT compilation:
CATHARSIS, LINE DRIVE, XESSIVE FORCE, REFUGE,
BLOODSHED, POLYESTER COWBOYS, INTEGRITY

LOTS AND LOTS OF NEWS

records, so bands get in touch, I ought to be able to do good things for you if I'm interested in you.

This is a list of all the cool stuff we carry. Feel free and secure to order anything, I always write back, and the longest I've ever taken to return an order is one month(and I felt like shit about that, I usually take 2 weeks.) We're definitely going to be expanding this list, so if you want us to sell something for you on consignment just get in touch and we'll do it. We're not quite ready to buy things up front yet, but don't worry you can trust us(if I wanted to rip anyone else off I wouldn't be ripping myself off for $ to do this.)

INSIDE FRONT Factsheet#l: (January 1994) Lots of news, band & label addresses, lyrics, the usual shit. A classic. Costs one stamp.

INSIDE FRONT Factsheet #2:(March '94) interviews with Integrity, Victory recs, Confront/Meanstreak, Point Blank/Bonesaw, Focused, Edgewise/Harvest recs, Deadwait, Otis Reem, some news, etc.

Costs one stamp. |

INSIDE FRONT Factsheet#3:(May '94) interviews with EarthCrisis, Snapcase, Chorus of Disapproval, Chokehold, Bloodlet, Splinter, 6FeetDeep, 2DamnHype recs/ Dare2Defy, lots of news, etc. Costs 1 stamp.

INSIDE FRONT Factsheet#4:(August '94) interviews with MayDay, Ringworm, Ricochet, write-ups on all the bands on the ^^^^^compilat ion, lots of news. Costs one stamp by itself.

INSIDE FRONT Factsheet#5:(due out October '94) interviews are planned with Strife, Lash Out, Endless Fight recs, Timescape O/Feast of Hate & Fear, Abhinanda, Apartment 213, lots more shit and fucking news galore. Will cost one stamp.

INSIDE FRONT Revo>M0: mM®g "Fa^ *dsn®* ^{D} ^ Complex, intelligent, fucking hateful Holy Terror hardcore. Turned out great. $3 postpaid.

INSIDE FRONT Reaofuh #1: M© EW W (SsB^Saftfera ^{D}^

Features Integrity, Line Drive, Xessive Force, J |Catharsis, Refuge, Bloodshed, Polyester Cowboys3 LComes with InF.#4. Costs $3 postpaid. i

NEWS and REVIEWS

First of all, here in North Carolina: drugfree ska band OTIS REEM had recorded a very clean, HC-influenced 7" which is supposed to come out on Moon Records(Otis Reem: 1314 Brigham Ct., Chapel Hill, NC 27514)Greg SXE does a great, thick SXE zine here called Listen Up($3 postpid to PO Box 4122, Wilmington, NC 28406–1122) at least 6 issues are already out. Line Drive is a great SXE band here with a nontraditional sound, they're described elsewhere in the issue, their record label 1124 records also

does a decent slightly emo-influenced band BLINDSIDE from Pennsylvania. Next door in Tenn., Shawn Youngblood does a thick SXE zine called Clear Path($2 for #1, I think it's $1.50 for #2, 4028 Speck Dr., Memphis, TN 38108)his concentrates more on interiews while LISTENUP has more pictures & personal writings. Down in SouthCarolina there's a SXE zine called EVEN THE SCORE that I think is done by members of the band Stretch Armstrong(803-772-7116). LIFELINE is another band there(19 N. Grove Ct., Columbia, SC 29212). Down in Atlanta, melodic(7 secondsish)HC band ActofFaith just released a CD, and HoldStrong Records(Jeff, 340 Ivy Mill Ct., Roswell, GA 30076Jhas available a compilation 7" feAturing Chokehold, Deadwait, BurstofSilence, and Line Drive. Florida seems to be real happening right now: Bloodlet is supposed to be doing another 7", to be on Stability Records(665 Pioneer Pass, Valparaiso, IN 46383, 219-464-9225), which also has a 7" out by a band called Point of View. A new Christian band called StrongArm has a decent newschool demo out(2743 NE 18th St., Ft Lauderdale, FL 33305, 305-561-2764) Outback Magazine and 'Records(5255 Crane Rd., W. Melbourne, FL 32904, 407-726-8105) does a lot of stuff: 10 different issues of the magazine, a 7" & CD by melodic/ groove band TrialByJury, 7" by emo band Wavelength, Soulow demo and coming up are a Gasolene CD, more Soulow music, and a compilation Cd featuring Lifetime, Shift, Avail, Ashes, Grip, and more. Finally, in Miami Feast of Hate and Fear 'zine and label(PO Box 820407, South Florida, FL 33082–0407)do lots of shit: the zine is one of the best around, original and very intelligent with lots of

reviews and interesting interviews, such as the one with Charles Manson in the most recent(#3). He also has a pamphlet out called The Bible Reconsidered that intelligently attacks Christianity from many angles. On the label are 2 demos(l live, l studio)by Timescape Zero, and a split 7" between them and Subliminal Criminal. T. Zero have a sort of old-fashioned yet nontraditional HC sound, and they're good at it; they have an even better Lp comiong out eventually. Feast Of... has some other stuff too, and they're dedicated to getting their shit out at the lowest price possible ...often they sell it for only postage costs, so check them out. Another Florida Christian band. Tension, has a 7" due out on Endless Fight recs. OK Enough of the South! From sunny California, the Bonesaw CD is now available on LOST&FOUND recs(see Ringworm interview for address) It's fucking abrasive and sincere, my friend said it's the best thing he's heard since Integrity and I agree. To contact Chris of Bonesaw, write: 5771 Ludlow Avenue, Garden Grove, CA 92645–2014, 714–8942726. Process just finished a tour with their new drummer, they have a new 12" coming out that they say sounds different than the last one...write them at PO Box 2255, Crestline, CA 92325, 909-338-6836. Oh Shit, did I forget to give you Bloodlet's

address? It's PO Box 11036, Orlando, FL 32803–0036. They also may do an Lp on Overkill records, I'm told...see the ringworm interview for its address. A good mailorder in Cali is Fade- In(c/o Francisco Alegria, P0 Box 40901, San Francisco, CA 94140, 415-642-9562)...they carry lots of SXE stuff. That guy also does Chapter recs at the same address... a new EVERLAST(Chicago SXE HC)7" is due on that label, and he has out 7"s by Second Coming(oldstyle HC) and Restraint fucking great pissed off screaming vegetarien HC that sounds real tough.) Orange County, CA SXE heros Strife have a new album due out on Victory records that's supposed to be fucking incredible. They just finished a tour with fellow Victory band Earth Crisis, which has a new LP due on that label this fall. Victory Records: PO Box 146546, Chicago, IL 60614...they have a NEW PHONE NUMBER, so keep this in mind!: 312-549-4478. Also out on Victory will be an anthology of Memphis hardline

-ˆar J *Mot 3o* ˆ ˆˆ /A tkr

hSiM ***ˆcavasa*** of spate ohcˆbbS-

**band RAID, and a CD version of theˆclassic(fucking great!!)compilation ONLY THE STRONG ('90). Back to California: RINGSIDE recs(17860 Newhope St., Ste. A-171, Fountain Valley, CA 92708) has 7"s by Triggerman(emo?) Ignite(oldschool, for sure)Ice, and other bands. UNBROKEN of San Diego just put out their 2nd album "Life Love Regret" on New Age records(PO Box 5213, Huntington Beach, CA 92615), I think. It's Slayer meets Helmet, and that's a perfect description of it. If you like metal you'll fucking love it, it's incredible. Chorus of Dis. -approval just did a complete discography(including their messy demo) on that same label. MEANSEASON has an album coming out on that label soon, I hear it's got incredible metallic music, but the singing is really bad emo stuff with the guy's girlfriend doing backups(that's only what I've been told, mind you.) I know I was supposed to interview them for this issue, sorry guys. I've been too fucking busy to buy groceries, even. Anyway. Conversion records!same address as NewAge) has a "Man Will Surrender" Lp out, I saw them once and they seemed pretty punk to me. On to the midwest: if you skate you really should write to REACTION SKATEBOARDS, 127 Harvard Place, Syracuse NY 13210(1 think that's it, they just moved from PO Box 11543, Kansas City, MO 64138) they're a full-on SXE skateboard-making company. Vegetarien and shit too. Cool. Members of hiphop/HC band SomethingToProve are now in A Brother's Keeper(PO Box 11363, Erie, PA 16514–1363)and they have a similar sound on their demo, and a new 7" is due out. There's an interview with them in #2 of Chad Rugola's zine Break Free(PO Box 153, Allison, PA 15413). It's a good, basic SXE zine. I think the third issue has an interview with Catharsis & Inside Front. Also at that address is Big Mouth 'zine distribution. Chad used to do a small HC record distribution called Ground Zero, which is now done by Dari Fullmer, 4 Leona Teerrace, Mahwah NJ 07430–3025. The very best HC.SXE, and related music distribution I've seen yet is VERY distro(9 E. Saylor Avenue, Plains, PA 18702)-he has everything, seriously, including lots of stuff

I'd never heard of, and he's very prompt in returning orders. It's one of the best things around today, so check it out. Old Pennsylvania SXE band Conviction has apparently reformed under the name Vigil, but I heard they'll be playing some of the old songs. Yuletide Records(444 Gail Drive, Nazareth, **

PA 18064) just released the FRAIL 7"(young, messy but W very felt and sincere HC:612 Lakevue Dr., Willow Grove, ' PA 19090) I think the next Frail 7" will be on Kidney Rotan records(Razzle, PO Box 589, Village Station, New York NY 10014). At the same address as Frail is Bellwether SXE zine, it's like the band: messy but heartfelt.

**Some writings, some pictures, some interviews...the j usual. Someone who hangs out in those circles is Don * Binaco(342 Forest Drive, Neptune, NJ 07753)he played **

in the band SWORN which may or not be broken up. They had hard, very very newstyle music and highpitched W

**screaming vocals, they were a very SXE band. I don't **

know if they're broken up or not. He also does 2 cool * thick SXE zines, Steadfast and PressurePoint. You should write him about all that. Also in New Jersey is HARDWARE HC zine(25 W Price St #3E, Linden NJ 07036–42111 or 2551 Constance Dr., Manasquan NJ 08736). Also there I is the melodic(remind me of 7 Seconds) HC band Strength * 691, who do reaction records(20 Caton Avenue, Colonia, NJ 07067). They have a 7" out on their label, and I A think a compilation 7" out too. OK now up to Boston: I got a zine from ther called Monkeywrench, sort of punk/HC centered stuff...antireligious, a bit messy, S lots in it thought 17 Princeton St, Holyoke, MA 01040, W 413-532-4678.) Endless Fight records(address elsewhere in this issue)is putting out an Overcast album that should have that complex holy-terror sound. Converge is a similar band, maybe even better, and the new Earthmaker records(Jacob Joseph Bannon, 11 Sutherland St., Andover MA 01810)just put out their Lp for $5 postpaid. Converge is also on a 7" compilation with Chokehold, Bound, and Knockdown on Onlook recs($3 to Aaron Dalbec, 43 Essex St, I Marlboro, MA 01752). Boston HC band Daltonic has a new 7" out ($3 from Vigilance Rees, PO Box 44169, Tucson, AZ 85733.) and they have other stuff available on compilations from Hearsay tecs(PO Box 382288, Cambridge MA 02238...Hearsay also does lots of other bands like DIVE, and others, and compilations that include Converge, Chilmark, Intent to Injusre, many more. Hearsay also sets I up shows, I believe.) Contact DALTONIC at: Brian Hull, |

104 Newport Avenue, Attleboro, MA 02703...also at that J

address is the zine RETROGRESSION.(interviews with new A SXE/HC bands.) A damn good cassette compilation is out on REFORM recs(Jim Reed, 212 Canal Circle, Mt. Holly, * NJ 08060) that includes songs by Converge(Jake, 11

Sutherland St, Andover, MA 01818)Overcast(Mike, 19 Donna Lee Lane, Ashland, MA 017210) Conviction(I already mentioned they broke up, they had a clean metallic sound)Mode(screaming abstract-styled HC, 51 Letchworth Avenue, Yardley, PA 10967)Starkweather (fucking evil metal, PO Box 11739, Philadelphia PA 19101) Firefly(softy emo, they have a demo available at 287 Terrace avenue Trucksville PA 18708 or try to reach them at Chris, 363 North Washington St, Wilkes Barre, PA 18902) Blindside(as I mentioned elsewhere in here they have a 7" on 1124 recs, write them at Brian, 228 S. 16th St, Emmaus PA 18048...) DISREGARD(emoish, reminds me of Encounter a bit, write Justin 5303 Old Easton Rd, Doyleston PA 18901) INTROSPECT(gritty, original screaming rhythmic HC, they have a 7" on Fountainhead recs at 2865 South Eagle Rd, Box 392, Newton, PA 18940, write the band at Jamie, 153 North timber Rd., Holland, PA 18966) ands some other bands. I think SPLINTER of Ohio is going to put out another 7" on Tenacity Records(PO Box 599, Dorchester, MA 02124) but I also heard they broke up. They have that metallic angry Cleveland sound — On DARKEMPRE records in Cleveland(see Integrity writeup for address) are some new releases: the BOWEL CD, which is a parody of deathmetal, not too bad in fact(and at the end is the entire album of Cleveland first SXE band, the Guns, from a very long time ago) and the Asphalt CD(experimental diverse HC-related stuff.)Asphalt's drummer was David Nicholi, Integrity's previous drummer, who tragically died recently. Jeff Grey(291 Butternut Lane, Berea, OH, 44017) just released a homemade cassette discography of everything old oldschool SXE Cleveland band Confront ever did, live or studio: it includes their demo and some live tracks, as well as the 7".

Steve Peffer also does homemade compilations, he has one available for $2 that includes Ringworm(live), Gas-o-lene, Apartment 213, Whatever, and many more bands. He's doing a new one, professionally; bands, write him about it. (Steve, 1058 Homewood Drive, Lakewood, OH 44107–1420, 216-228-1004). Christian Cleveland HC band Six Feet Deep just put out a CD on R.E.X. records, it's pretty damn good, it sounds like old Metllica with the high-end pitch taken out.

(SixFeetDeep, 1310 East Avenue, Apt. W, Elyria, OH 44035) If youre waiting to hear from Face Value, give up — -their singer Tony Erba(who's no longer SXE) quit and they haven't been

able to find a new singer in a whole year. OK, now for NY news: UP FRONT put out a new 7" in Smorgasbord recs. Merauder is a very metal, NY-style Biohazard-influenced band with a very clean professional demo out. It's available from ASTOR recs (175 5th Avenue, Suite 2312, New York, NY 10010).

' They also have available the Darkside 7", which has a

NYHC oldfashioned sound and really is pretty fucking brutal(they have members of Sheer Terror but they re much harder), and the label is about to release a new NYHC complilation CD featuring Darkside, Merauder, Breakdown, Crown of Thorns, Warzone, Fine Line Fear, Killing Time, Maximum Penalty, Social Disorder, 25 Ta Life, Subzero, Stigmata, Rejuvenate, and Enrage. Also, Madball(Agnostic Front's singer's little brother's band, and it shows!) just released an album on Roadrunner records that's supposed to be fucking great. Their 7" on Wreck-Age records(451 West Broadway 2N, New York, NY 10012) certainly was. WreckAge also has out an album by DIE 116(members of Burn, Absolution, and Rorschach, abrasive rock'n'roll with a noisy, original style) and releases by Neglect(good heavy angry NYHC)S.F.A.(hatecore) Yuppicide(great punkish HC, very hard with melodic parts and biting sarcastic vocals) Bad Trip, and Mind Over Matter(I heard their first 7" and it was funkish, punkish HC...they have another 7" and an album out now, on this label.)

‘ BWWWj
DRUG
FREE
^W^^?
[Image not archived]

I interviewed Gary, one of the guitarists for Virginia T1 . HC band MAYDAY. MayDay has that Holy-Terror complex style I ' that is starting to get more popular, although they were doing it a long time ago; I wouldn't be surprised if they'd had lots of influence on the likes of Overcast, Converge, even Bloodlet. They've been together about three years, and Gary tells me they've been through too many member changes to mention. The only permanent member has been singer Lance McLeod, who also sang for Virginia band JAS IT STANDS. (By the way, the sample at the beginning ☒of the AsItStands song "Union With the Absolute" is from.

•.a Charles Manson interview.) Lance now does tattooing inti Florida at his studio ALTERED STATES(407-646-1566)but het

manages to keep up with the band by means of Continental i Airlines. MayDay has released a classic split 7" with \ Integrity on now-deceased ENDGAME records, a fucking incredible cromatic-chord-filled 7" called "the Underdark" on now defunct VICIOUS CIRCLE recs, and just this year a j new 7" "Lost in Sabbath" on ENDLESS FIGHT recs. It's their

most abstract release to date, by far, musically and lyrically, and it has the clearest most layered sound.

They also have a song on the EndlessFight HC '94 comp Over the Edge called "Arcane Eye." (Endless Fight: PO Box H

.1083, Old Saybrook, CT 06475–5083... the comp also includes jOvercast, Converge, Shift, Jasta 14, & many others) Gary told me that ARCANE EYE, which has very poetic/abstract lyrics (like all Mayday songs, even before it was cool) is about "the two sides of a relationship." Lance writes the lyrics and Gary describes him as "very creative" and says he throws all his ideas together in the studio to create the; j songs. Gary told me their name "Mayday" was basically *a* \ distress signal from this fucked up world, and he said *I* that the name of their first 7" "the Underdark" referred I | to "the place where real men walk" in the Necromonicon. ' (???) Mayday is working on a full-length CD right now, which will come out either on Endless Fight or on a German I label, perhaps on both. Gary told me that Mayday is not a . M SXE band, but has SXE mambers, and they have a lot of respect for real SXE kids..."Fuck all Sellouts." He said P there's not much going on in Virginia, but that Channel is a good Virginia Beach band to watch out for, and he mentioned Clutch, Bloodlet, and Overcast as other favorites. Finally, Gary wanted me to mention that HC is "a movement, not a business... keep it Real" and that kids need to turn out for shows to support local bands. Mayday truly does stick to the traditional HC way of doing things simply and doing them themselves; everything they've recorded has been on an eight-track recorder, but I'll be damned if it doesn't sound as full and clean as a 24-track, and that's no lie. For more information, write: Gary/MAYDAY, 3 Crossbow Court, Newport News, VA 23602. Thanks 4 the interview, Gary.

INTERVIEW

I interviewed Chris of Cleveland, OH band Ringworm. Ringworm formed in March of 1991 as an "alternative to the apathetic state of Cleveland hardcore" in the tradition of The Guns, Confront, False Hope, The Dark, and Idiot Humans. Their singer James and old drummer came up with the name Ringworm; it doesn't mean anything in particular. James, guitarist Frank, and the previous bassist Jerry(who was only in the band a month or

so(were also in a short-lived band called "Force of Decline" that had a song on the old Conversion recs comp "Voice of Thousands." (Conversion: PO Box 5213, Huntington Beach, , CA 92615) Ringworm itself has recorded a demo(by far the tightest, hardest, best thing they ever did), an album called "the Promise" that wasn't too bad either (I think you can get it from Overkill recs, PO Box 20224, Seattle, — WA 98102), two terrible punk cover songs on the DARK EMPIRE STRIKES BACK comp(DarkEmpire address: see Integrity' write-up) and a 15-second song on the BLUURG! compilation (who knows.) Chris told me that their lyrics deal mostly — with singer James's fascination with religion, that he's very interested in art and religion and that religion is a big part of Ringworm in a non-deathmetal way. Chris said they'd been labeled satanic, which is absurd, he said. He also said that he thought religion itself has no place at all in hardcore. Chris said that the HC community is a good and legitimate medium to express your opinions on Issues, but that Ringworm itself doesn t push any particular issues, that they were just in it for fun, & they also never wanted to get too big or make money off of music. Chris said that he agreed with Steve of Confront that violence belongs in the HC scene, that "LOOKOUT is *not* hardcore" and that ther are too many etiquette rules lately for shows. He said that as long as noone damages the clubs themselves there's not a problem. Chris thinks that veganism and religion has "destroyed what was left of the '80's HC scene, " and also accused hiphop of fucking things up by taking away the individuality in the HC scene; he said that noone looks any different now, and that diversity is needed or else HC will die. C r s described Ringworm as being lazy, but not at all into money-grubbing; they just wanted to make some decent music. Ringworm got a lot of shit for not being SXE or vegan, etc. and for awhile they were broken up because of getting too much negative shit. Now they've broken up for good over, apparantly, lack of commitment to the band. They have a final CD/album coming out on LOST&FOUND recs this fall(Lost&Found: Im Moore 8, 30167 Hannover, Germany.) which will include most of their demo and Overkill record, and a complete recording of their last show, which Chris says went well. Chris mentioned Six Feet Deep(even though he's not into Christiani y) an Bowel as two Cleveland bands he likes, and as for other bands he really wanted to point out Capitalist Casualt es from Santa Rosa, California, SPAZZ, NO LESS, Man Is The Bastard, and any band coming out of Sweden today. Chris is now in Cleveland band Apartment 213, which just out a 7" on DarkEmpire recs. Finally say Fuck You to an asshole from Akron, OH who told BORN AGAINST that they skipped a Kent, OH show because of $, that 2 band members had to work that night.

Write RINGWORM(r.i.p.) & Apt. 213 at Chris, 9520 Cedarwood Drive, Cleveland, OH 44133.

RICOCHET INTERVIEW

Ricochet has been around about two years; ^ey have released a messy, fuzzy song on Victory "only the strong 1993 compilation, and a 7" and CD on Initia^ ^°^®(P° Box 251145, West Bloomfield, MI 48325, 313-682-2395) The 7" had a very fast, energetic great HC sound, and the CD was similar only cleaner and a little less hard. I interviewed bassist and singer Craig; he said they don't want to be restricted by any labels, even though most of their audience is HC; he said they're try ng to reach as wide an audience as possible. They don t try to take stands on any issues, they concentrate on the music instead; they're not a SXE band either, though the lyrics to their song "Lesson" give that impression. Those lyrics were written by their previous singer, who was SXE, but quit. The other members split up his vocals between themselves when he quit, which gives Ricochet an original sound with the vocals constantly switching off. They've also added another guitarist, to give themselves a fuller, heawier sound. As far as issues in music go, Craig said he doesn't enjoy being preached to, although he admits music can be used as a forum to express opinions. He said that it was Snapcase who helped them to get on to the Victory compilation, and they got onto Initial records because the fellow who does it, Dennis, was a friend of theirs who wanted to work with them. Their next release will be a 7" on Anti-Music records(PO Box 20178, Ferndale, MI 48220) a label that helps lots of the local bands out there. That 7" will have 2 songs which Craig says will be more noisy, angry, and cerebral and the previous music, more complex and with harder vocals. He says that Ricochet is seeking a wider recognition, but that they are still most interested in making good music. For the cover of their CD, they used a car air-freshener in the shape of a crown that is popular(they don't know why)in Detroit, and just to take advantage of the 4-color cover they put on some different colored candy fish...they also put their sister's dog on the inside cover. Craig told me their lyrics are very abstract, on purpose so that people can come up with their own interpretations. There is a big SXE scene in Detroit, Ricochet's hometown, but not much else in the HC area; the old band PITBULL there broke up from internal tensions, because nothing ever went right for them. Craig wanted me to mention an oldschool punk/HC Detroit band called Cold As Life that has gotten a bad rap but deserves attention. Write to Ricochet at: 4167 Sunburst, Waterford, MI 48329. Other releases on Initial recs are: a 7" and 10" by Guilt, emotional HC; This World Rejected, fucking heavy Krishna metallic HC(their 7"...they used to be ZERO TOLERANCE, no they're broken up); and a 7" and CD by emo/HC SXE band Falling Forward.

[Image not archived]

BIG STAR

INDUSTRIAL DEPARTMENT I.*w.c.*.

NO EXIT SIDE ONE

The lyrics for this song, with a few minor changes, were printed in INSIDE FRONT#1 so if you're not old-school enough to have that, you're fucked (or, you could send one stamp and your address to the Inland Empire address and I'm sure

they'd set you up.) *catharsis* has a cassette out for $3 on Inside Front records, they are really proud of it: it consists of this song and 2 more. For information, booking, lyrics, correspondence or straight up toe to toe confrontations, write Catharsis at the Inland Empire address. Catharsis is:

Alexei Rodriguez: drums Chris Huggins: guitar F. Mark Dixon: bass Brian Dingledine: voice (& lead guitars) This song, the Line Drive song, and the master tape for the No Exit compilation itself were all recorded by Issa Diao at Sleepless Nights studios in July 1994. Issa is the man and we owe him a lot, thanks. Great studio, too. *[UME EX^O^E* UNIVERSAL PRODUCT CODE

"Bow down 2 the box & shut your eyes, let the state take over & feei you lies–consume whatever they want you 2 hear, unless it's hurting their business there's nothing 2 fear. Asleep in line just to buy their wares, never questioning their commitments just paying their fares — making sure that you could never live without this, what are you gonna do, question their iron fist? Fight in their wars 4 liberation, priming a 3rd world business location, we'd hate 2 give them independence, then they could educate & turn against us. A blindfold & a photo op, foreign policy is an excuse 2 open up shop; give us a flag & a god 2 worship then leave us a bill 4 your service on the doorstep — underestimate how little it takes 2 control your thoughts, cut & dried, mandated 4 your situation. Now you'll see that a commoner's vote can't cleanse this land, now you'll take the media blackout & learn 2 love it. Bow down to the Box...*

> Grey Kaiser: Vox Rob (NOT ROCK!) Kiger: bass Gavin Glenn: drums
>
> Owen Threat: guitar
>
> E DRIVE is changing their name to _IODINE_ as of the 1 of 1994, so keep that in mind. They will have an LP | as IODINE in winter '95, on 1124 records. They also | e a 7" called "Lead On" available on 1124 rec's (PO | 3051, Providence, RI 02906), a song on the "What | ds True" comp 7" on HoldStrong records(Mike, PO Box I 85, Atlanta, GA >0331.) and an old 7" "The Few" on I

Start rec's (PO Box 10110, Winston-Salem, NC 27108)
reach Line Drive(Iodine) write Grey, 300–35 Stone Mill!
., Athens, GA 30605 or call him at 706-546-4106.

"Bridges are built, no turning back, where do I go now — One way roads, twists of fate, there's nothing left now Guidance I need, I'll follow my heart, hold my head high now: Backstabbing fools, remove the knife, vengeance is mine now. Don't count me in as one of your kind, I'm my own person; make my decisions, run my own life...Never will I follow blindly."

Xessive Force has a V out on their own LIFE SENTENCE records(PO Box 52462, Irvine, CA 92619–2462) for $3.00. You can write to the same address to contact the band.

(As editor and publisher of this compilation I'd like to personally dedicate this song tomy good friend, ex-member of Xessive Force Billy Hayes. Whatever happens, stay true...you owe it to yourself. Thanks 4 everything.)! **refuge* i*

"Never again will I step aside, and be forced 2 live by T this injustice you serve. Now I stand erect and proud to execute the sentence you deserve...No way you can break this iron will, burning violently inside of me, for I'm a lock holding together this chain and you will never find the key. You worked it all out, or so you thought, but you didn't plan on me; I refuse to fit into your plan 4 racial supremacy. Hand in hand with my brothers I stand, £ a chain 4 you to face: with open minds against your ignorance we will win this race..." B

Scott: guitar//Marc: drums//Brandon: bass//Zac: vocals B REFUGE has a demo out. Write to them at 22770 LaPaix St., Grand Terrace, CA 92313 or call Zac(909-783-0796) or Scott(909-335-9582). They also do CONSTRUCTION 'zine and distribution from that address, you should check it...

NO I XIT SIDE TWO

"I fall so many times, so often I get attacked–Satan tries to trip me tries to hold me back. But with God j molding me into what I should be I grow in my walk and Satan falls behind me. He guides me on my path and i

corrects me in my ways, reading through his word I learn more every day. I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff they will comfort me. You O Lord, you are our Father and we are all the work of your hand." ;

BLOODSHED has a song out on the TOOTH&NAIL rec's Cd compilation "Helpless Among Friends, " along with Focused, Unashamed, Strongarm, & others. (Tooth&Nail, 92 Corp. Pk. C-404, Irvine, CA 92646) They also have a song on a Life Sentence records compilation(see X. Force writeup) due out winter of '94–95, with a number of other bands.

POLYESTER COWBOYS '=W?®p<

"Don't tell me it's her fault because you know that's not true — why should she pay the price when the crime .

is done by you? You say that she was asking 4 it, that s a lie...those feelings and pain remembered a thousand more times. What you did can never be justified, sex that was the price. She used to

that scars forever:

think that life was beautiful, now everything s ugly...

the excuses you

use

are nothing short of pitiful.

way

**she feels because of what you did, **

Think about the

those painful memories a thousand times relived;

scars run deeper than the wounds you inflict, she has to pay the price for what you did-thafs sick. Now that she's screaming are you satisfied, there's no way to

the

How would you feel

make up for the tears she's cried.

to be subjected to assault, living with the feeling that it was all your fault? The hell you put her through you will never never know, you chose to ignore as she _ .

— care; what's done is done T "NO'" But you don t car , — screamed, N. *nside says she s**

but something de p while she's
not the only one.
in bed asleep, "N01"
I SUFFBftHG
I IS kINp OF j I CENTRAL
I -R2THE FAWM
I wish you could see rea_ming_,
holding back th. n^ocleS-ier^_
[Image not archived]
Alexei Rodriguez-druas, vox//Christian Oglivie-bass, vox
Mike Nicholson-guitar

Polyester Cowboys was a great North Carolina punk band when I was growing up...they did a cassette, which is still available from Inland Empire for only $1; it comes with a booklet on the lyrics and issues. Write to . Cowboys at the InlandEmpire address care of Christian or Alexei. Thanks, guys.

INTEGRITY-/®?/®, ** Armenian pepseojiion
David Nicholi-drums.

Micha-bass//Aaron-guitar//Hawthorne-guitar//Dwid-vox irM I» <i«l 1 Y has a demo out on Dark Empire records (PO Box 770213, Lakewood, OH 44107, 216-590-7766 or 216-651-7444). They might have other stuff, so write them about it. They have an album coming out fall 94 on Victory records, which will include "Armenian Persecution." Dwid gets lots of money from a convenience store he inherited when his father was shot, and he often wears around his neck an ear severed from a corpse. And, both Integrity and Catharsis can be legitimately quoted as having said that "if you don't eat meat you're a pussy."

News Outside the USA

> **Now, there are some great bands outside the USA that really deserve everyone's attention. I don't know much about the rest**

of the world yet, but I'm learning... STRAIN is a NoEscapish band from Canada, only better than NoEscape: slow screaming great HC...(I think they're CD is on Overkill recs, that address is elsewhere in this issue). Chokehold is, of course, a well-known HC band from Canada as well, their music is available from ConquerTheWorId recs(PO Box 40282, Redford, MI 48240, 313-746-3393), among other labels. Finally, I heard a demo by a Canadian band called Grade, their music sounded really good(like Chokehold & BurstofSilence, only maybe more intricacies thrown in) so watch out for them. Not to forget Burst of Silence, they have a great 7" on

Stability records I think(that address is elsewhere in this issue.) Burst of...has a sort of traditional HC style, but with original stuff thrown in (like tom- beats in the place of the expected bass/snare beats) and it's all very well done. Now, on to Europe. IRONSIDE is a SXE deathmetal-sounding band from Britain on Subjugation recs(46 Caedmon Crescent, Darlington, DL3 8LF, United Kingdom...this label does a distribution as well.) The guy from Splinter has their 7" & he says it's great, you can get it from VERY distribution, I think, (address elsewhere in this issue). Andy Chatt does a big SXE/HC zine called DARKEST HOUR(45 Ascott Terrace, Leeds, LS9 9JB, England), it's got a slightly different flavor than most zines(maybe because it's from across the ocean? nah.) I think you can write to IRONSIDE themselves at 3 Paddock Close, Wyke, Bradford, BD12 9LB, England, but that address is from an old zine so don't stake your life on it. There's apparently a great HC/SXE scene in Umea, Sweden: Desperate Fight recs(Saxlund, Kemigrand 16, 907 31 Umea, Sweden) has out 2 records by a great band called Abhinanda(they sound like strife meets the best parts of Undertow) and a good compilation called SXE AS FUCK that features ABHINANDA, REFUSED(I've heard an album of theirs and it's great, a little like j

Conviction), DOUGHNUTS(an all girl SXE band, Desperate 1 Fight just put out their album, they sound pretty I

good, really) and some other bands, including Drift Apart, who have some good stuff out that I've heard. Finally the very best non-USA HC I've heard(and

definitely some of the best HC I've ever heard in my life) is the LashOut/ Contention split 7" on Stormstrike recs(An Der Rothalde 17, 79312 Emmendigen, Germany)...

Lash Out also has a 12" out on that label, and an album due...they sound like Integrity with a little more of the older straight-up style to them. Contention is similar though not quite as brutal, and they have a 7" due on that label(so does Ironside, I think.) This split] 7" and some of these other releases are all available I

on some USA distributions, so you have no excuse not to check them out. Also, try writing Desperate Fight recs (they're really cool guys) or Vegard Waske, a member of I LASH OUT(Nordskogun.l, 6400 Molde, Norway)

First of all, I'd like to mention that DICKIES clothing still has not let me down: cheap, durable, clean-cut... there's nothing better(1-800-DICKIES for free catalogue) The very best root beer I've discovered to date is IRON HORSE root beer(iron horse root beer co., PO Box 2401_57, _ Apple Valley, MN 55124) — it's malted as hell and as ^H smooth as cream soda. For some variety try sodas by SIOUX CITY(White Rock Products Corporation, New York, NY 11357)...they make a good birch beer, and sasparilla too as well as the traditional cream soda. Greg SXE, who's been a great guy in all my dealings with him, wanted me to mention JR Maloney at the LUCKY TIGER TATTOO STUDIO)740 Court St, Jacksonville, NC 28542, 919-346-1077)as doing great tattoos, like the big one on his back. Finally, and most important of all, we at Inland Empire Productions endorse the work of ISSA DIAO at SLEEPLESS NIGHTS STUDIOS..-he's recorded WORLDS COLLIDE, CHOKEHOLD, LINE DRIVE, CATHARSIS, (including the songs on NO EXIT by the last 2 bands) and many others. He does great work for a great price, write him at 203 Avery Glen, Decatur, GA 30300 or call 404-373-3981. Thanks for everything, Issa, we owe you. CORRECTIONS Fran J3 **Basically, I fucked up 2 places in #3: the zip code of punk rock 'zine _ *69 Shattered Realities*_ is 90807 (not 908021), and the address to contact Ohio HC band Splinter is PO Box 2352, Akron, OH 44309(the one I mistakenly gave belongs to Ohio scenester Shawn Fosnight.) _Soo_rrry.**

TH A N K S

There are literally hundreds of people who have helped me in some way or another, and I appreciate it all... the people particularly responsible for helping me get this compilation out are Christian, Alexei, Birch, of course all the bands on NO EXIT or interviewed in InF.#4, Jeff Grey, SixFeetDeep, Chris/Zed's, Chris for doing all the layout among other things, Issa, everyone who helps me with distribution, everyone who has sent me things

for review, Shawn Youngblood, Otis Reem, my girl Loara, Tom Parham Audio for doing the tapes

(l-800-BIN-L0OP)and everyone I've forgotten. Hardcore hero awards this issue go to Martin Maasen for keeping a positive attitude and a commitment to the scenefrom behind bars, and to Steve Peffer for being a hardworking and creative kid. I wish you all the best...

ON THE OUTSIDE LOOKING IN
AS THE SCENESTERS COME & GO
[Image not archived]
I PUT EVERY OUNCE OF ENERGY INTO THE ONLY THING I KNOW MYSELF
F^Su/iclS18bS, 1%f$'m'
[Image not archived]

INLAND EMPIRE is responsible for Inside Front factsheet, Inside Front records. Catharsis, LXC show booking in NC, and a host of other problems plaguing our society. It consists of Brian Dingledine and his friends Loara, Alexei, Chris, and a bunch of others who help out a lot and to whom I owe much: Birch, Christian, David, Mark, and others.

Issue #5 (1994)

Date: November 1994
Source: <archive.org>

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issue #5. november IB nonprofit sxe/hc directory: all facts, no bullshit.

" The designs on the front & back of this issue also appear on Inside Front shirts that we have available for $10 postpaid: 2-sided, black & blue on white, high quality XL shirts. These shirts are a fundraiser to keep my other projects, such as this issue, free...so if you like what I'm doing, please support me and help me to continue. Thanks.

I realize that there has been a rash of consumerism in hardcore lately, and I'm not trying to support that at all. When I first got into hardcore, if you liked a band or label you made your own shirt with their name on it, or painted their logo on your jacket and I still think that is the best way. These shirts are just a way for people who like what I'm doing to give me a little direct support while they identify themselves with my objectives.

[Image not archived]

Anyway welcome to #5 of INSIDE FRONT. I want to thank everyone for their support, every order or submission for review makes all the difference. If anyone reading this is involved in a band, 'zine, label, etc. of any kind please do send me information (and an example if possible) and I'll do my best to let people know what you're doing. My goal with this publication is the same as it has always been: to make information about as much of the hardcore & sxe scene as possible available to as many people as possible for as cheap as possible. I don't necessarily approve of many of the projects in here, but we've got to all support each other for this underground of ours to survive. I'm always looking for help with distribution, so whoever you are big or small if you think you know some people who'd like to see Inside Front consider ordering a stack of copies wholesale...you'11 find most of my prices real low. Thanks.

One more thing: the whole thing about Catharsis saying "if you don't eat meat you're a pussy" and Integrity having a new demo out in the last issue was a joke. I actually have more respect for most vegans, because most meat-eaters are just lazy...and why would „ Integrity need to make a demo after being around for

6 years? Next time, gentle reader, please keep your eyes open & don't be fooled by an obvious joke. OK?

INSIDE FRONT.



issue #5. november 1994 nonprofit sxe/hc directory: all facts, no bullshit.

Inside Front Distribution List

don't be afraid to order, I *never* rip anyone off (but when one of you kids sends an incomplete address, how am I supposed to get anything to you? Be VERY clear

^TRIPLE ISSUE #1, 2, 3: The first 3 issues (1/94-6/94) revised & combined. MBtfe More news & information than you can imagine, +interviews with . : INTEGRITY, VICTORY rec's, SNAPCASE, EARTH CRISIS, CHOKEHOLD, ||BLOODLET, CHORUS of DISAPPROVAL, CONFRONT/MEANSTREAK, ® POINT BLANK/BONESAW, EDGEWISE, FOCUSED, SPLINTER, SIX FEET DEEP, DARE2DEFY/2DAMNHYPE rec's, DEADWAIT, & OTIS REEM.

That's a lot for only $1.00 USA/$2.00 world!

Distributors: 4 copies for $2.00 USA/$3.00 world

ISSUE #4: Comes with a compilation featuring new music by INTEGRITY, UNE DRIVE, CATHARSIS, XESSIVE FORCE, REFUGE, BLOODSHED, & 1 more, +interviews with Mayday, Ricochet, and Ringworm, and LOTS of news.

I'm breaking even selling it for $3.00 USA/$5.OO world.

Distributors: $2.70 each USA/$4.OO each world

If you can't afford the whole thing, just send 1 stamp(2 IRC's) for the 'zine.

ISSUE #6: This will be out on or before March 1, 199# It will come with a ^compilation, which (if everything goes according to plan) will include * dALTONIC, * PROCESS, APARTMENT 213, ABHINANDA, LASH OUT, TIMESCAPE ZERO, BONESAW, BROTHER'S KEEPER, OTIS REEM, (& maybe more?) I'm planning on interviewing UNBROKEN, STARKWETHER, and many more. It'll also have the usual LOTS of news, etc. etc.

This will be REALLY high quality so it'll be worth the $4.00 USA/$6.00 world. Distributors: $3.00 each USA/$5.OO each world. A

INSIDE FRONT SHIRTS: Described on the facing page. Made by DarkEmpire. *These are, once again, a fundraiser to keep this going. $10 USA/$13 world. Distributors: $8.00 USA/$11 world.*

[Image not archived]

CATHARSIS DEMO: 3 originals & one cover: unique, sincere, intelligent, & *j$gS&* fucking angry holy-terror SXE HC. Let me warn you the first two (best) songs are (or will soon be) on compilations. Still, a likely ' collector's item...? Nice cover. $3.00 fc^!|.Q|) worU :

I also carry small amounts of other people's records to sell at W shows, etc. — So if necessary I can trade my releases for yours.

[1] Consignment is OK but I prefer payment upfront. Please try to 1 send cash, but if necessary make checks out to "Brian Dingledine"'

I IS COSTR AST OF SIS

NEWS & REVIEWS

First of all, news in North Carolina: we're setting up shows here once a month, everyone is invited: call Jim at 910-960-5530 for booking, etc. The first one was with Line Drive(an original, progressive he sound: Gray, 300–35 Stone Mill Run, Athens, GA 30605, 706-546-4106) Catharsis, War Prayer(very tight & powerful, some say death-metal?), and Peaceful Nonexistence(younger, more old-fashioned he). Catharsis has a song(l Corinthians 1:18–29 from the demo)coming out on the EndlessFight rec's CD this winter, and is recording a new song or 2 for a 7" compilation on Area 51 rec's, which will also include songs by Integrity, Congress, Backlash, and/or Wheel of Progress. (For Catharsis information, lyrics, etc. write to the InlandEmpire address. They'll be looking for a label to do a 7" with this summer) Area 51 (PO Box 1812, Reno, NV 89505, 702-626-5104) is a label run by a guy called Mike who seems to be oneof the coolest, sincerest guys I've met...So far on his label he's released a 7" by local Reno band Bludgeon(an unrefined, Integrity-influenced sound)...New Blood is another band from that scene. Back to the Carolina region, a cool South Carolina kid who's been setting up shows, etc. there is Eric Stout(104 Paris Lane, Summerville, SC 29483, 803-851-O132)if you need a contact there. In Atlanta there's Mike Mowery(50485 GT Station, Atlanta, GA 30332, 4O4-892-O757)who sets up shows & just released a 7" comp "what still holds true" on his HoldStrong rec's with Chokehold(rough, anti-religious), Burst of Silence(chunky, newschool), Line Drive, and Deadwait(felt, talented, youthful)...all great songs, but all of them besides the LineDrive one have been released elsewhere: the Deadwait song on their old demo(described in Inside Front#2...by the way, I've heard their new stuff & it's more flat, less powerful), the Chokehold song on their new 7"(Bloodlink rec's, PO Box 252, New Gretna, NJ 08224...for more information about them see In.Front#3), and the Burst of Silence song was on their 7"(Stability rec's, 665 Pioneer Path, Valparaso, IN 46383, 219-464-9225, this label also prints shirts). They have a cd "Burning" coming on that label, & the new Bloodlet 7" "Cherubim" just came out, its supposed to be incredible evil holy-terror music like their last 2 7"'s. Contact Bloodlet: drummer Charlie, 407-628-5337, PO Box 1 1036, Orlando, FL 32803–0036. Contact Burst of S.: Ryan, 905-318-1624, 125 Limeridge Rd. Unit 17, Hamilton, Ontario L9C2V3, Canada. Besides Stability rec's Indiana has Guilt mailorder(PO Box 30374, Indianapolis, IN 46230, 317-283-1513), which also books shows.

Besides Bloodlet, Florida has a whole lot of stuff going on: Strongarm(2743 NE 18th St., Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33305, 305-561-2764)is a Christian HC band with a sound similar to Tension, they have a demo, & a CD coming out in Spring 95 on Tooth & Nail rec's(92 Corp. Pk. C-404, Irvine, CA 92646) Greening is another new he band

from that area I've been hearing about(PO Box 4545, Winter Park, FL 32793–4545...I think they do a zine called "Embodiment of Rage" too). Also in Florida is Outback rec's/'zine(5255 Crane Rd., W. Melbourne, FL 32904, 407- -726-81O5)a growing force in hardcore today: he does a pretty good 'zine, indepth interviews with bands like Farside, 108, etc., personal rambling, great layout. On the label he's just released "Eternity, " a CD comp with Ressurection (noisy loose he, now broken up), his band Soulow(emo), Lifetime(softy emo), Ashes (he with a woman singing), Trial by Jury, Dayspring, Damnation, & Battery. The last two bands have the guitarist from World's Collide, Battery also has

^tUf- ^ M — Yr r- -s.- ***^t-r^' •*** /WiatMS* w x/ v : » "'A*"; , 1"™ members of Ashes & Flagman, they just put out a great old-school styled CD "Only the Diehard Remain" that has a lot of real feeling. Other records on Outback: Trial By Jury CD & 7", Soulow CD, Wavelength 7", & more. Now, news from California: I have to admit that the newer Unbroken LP on New Age rec's(PO Box 5213, Huntington Beach, CA 92615) is incredible — very metallic, sometimes noisy, emotionally-charged, original, powerful music. The new Process 12" on Conversion rec's(same address as New Age, but a different name, you idiots!)is slightly melodic, slightly raw, west coast hardcore. They have a couple songs out on compilations which are their best yet. (Process: PO Box 2255, Crestline, CA 92325, 909-338-6836) The Chorus of Disapproval discography is out now on NewAge, it's a good deal for all their stuff if you don't already have it all already, they did some fucking classic music...now that I mention it, if you love hardcore you should at least get the Minor Threat discography CD on Dischord rec's(3819 Beecher St. NW, Washington, DC 20007)otherwise maybe you'd just be happier listening to pure metal..? Any way — — I forgot to list the address of the band BLOODSHED in my issue #4, even though they were on the compilation that came with it, sorry! It's John, 8152 Seabird Circle, Huntington Beach, CA 92646, 714-536-8361. Ringside Records (17860 Newhope Street, Ste. A-171, Fountain Valley, CA 92708, 714-839-6805) is asmaller CA label that carries records like the new Ignite 7"(melodic, old- fashioned west coast sound, rockin', melodic, fast, members of Unity & No for an Answer) and the old Ice 7"(punk from Orange County, CA that tries to be funny more than anything else). Fade-In mailorder/Chapter rec's(Francisco Alegria, PO Box 40901, San Francisco, CA 94140, note the new phone #1:415-487-0255) has lots of shit going on: they released 7"s by Second Coming(older-styled, yelling basic hardcore) Restrain(great fucking stompable loose intense stuff, they broke up but their singer is in a new band, Coalesce, which Francisco says is really amazing — "a little like Helmet"–that will have a 7" out available from Chapter rec's)and Everlast. Due soon is "Serving the Need, " a CD compilation with 18 bands, includeing: Ashes(who will appear under a different name, since that band has now broken up) Undertow(who he also says has broken up) Outspoken (who have also broken up, so they will be appearing under their new name " 1134"–they've apparently got a new singer & a heavier sound) Unbroken(a live song) Cease(Francisco's band) Burst of Silence, Cannon(an east coast band with the Syracuse/EarthCrisis sound, their 7" will be out on Chapter rec's soon) Dismay(a

Connecticut band, slow, "like Burn only more metal") Everlast(a faster, more old- fashioned song than their 7") Falling Forward(melodic, "like Split Lip") Four Walls Falling, Mean Season, Soulstice(Francisco describes them as a "punker-sounding Earth Crisis, their 7" is on Scorched rec's, PO Box 76, Stanton, NJ 08885), Die Down(members of Undertow & Brotherhood) X-hale(emo from Sacramento, CA) Dead Skin Mask("like early Neurosis, " with the singer of Unit Pride) and Overcast. Whew! Anyway, Fade-In mailorder is probably second only to Very distribution in wide variety of music, & they have a more rare & harder-styled selection. Also Francisco is working on starting a monthly big-scale MaximumRocknRoll-style magazine called "Episode." Now we turn away from California...VICTORY records, which if you ask me has down a great job of filling Revelation's shoes after that label "moved on" to pop music & ripping kids off, has signed the Swedish band Doughnuts, and has plans to eventually put out a discography of the broken-up Memphis hardline band Raid(they had some hard music & some fucked up–oops.

"unpopular" — ideas, when Catharsis played Memphis a girl told me none of them are into sxe anymore). Due on Victory(eventually!...keep in mind they have the worst luck of any label as far as getting shit out on time) are LP's by rockabilly bands HiFi & the Roadburners, Earth Crisis, & Integrity.(<that's the sort of joke I warned you morons about in the introduction...Earth Crisis isnt quite as rockabilly as the other two.) Integrity will be recording in November to try to get their LP out by January. I'd like to mention at this point that people who don't buy records from independent distributors are fucking up. They 11 possibly be recording some cover songs as well, for compilations described elsewhere in this issue — that's sort of up in the air right now, though, (before 1 forget: Victory rec's, PO Box 146546,

Chicago, IL 60614, 312-549-4478) Dark Empire rec's(PO Box 770213, Lakewood, OH 44107, 216-651-7444) has released some new music: a 7" by Apartment 213 (brutal, ugly, obviously grind-influenced, with slow & hyperspeed parts & lyrics about serial killers & people getting hurt, a member of Ringworm...if you like the genre, this is some of the best-write to Chris, 9520 Cedarwood, Cleveland, OH 44133, 216-886-0731) and a CD by Asphalt(experimental, very eclectic, sort of self-indulgent hc-influenced noise). Dwid(dark emporer) just did the 2nd issue of his 'zine BloodBook(the first issue came out 4 years ago.) It's not too thick, but it is by far the most impressive zine layout- & quality-wise to come out of the hardcore scene, period. It's content is mostly humorous, usually intelligent, and always hateful...unfortunately shit like this doesn't seem to come around often, so check it out if you want to see something done better than the usual shit. I heard a rumor that Project X is reforming under the name Prohibition 2000, so keep your eyes open...but remember it was just a rumor. Cleveland deathmetal parody band BOWEL is broken up on account of their drummer, who was also kicked out of Integrity(now they have the old Outface drummer). Brother's Keeper (PO Box 11363, Erie, PA 16514–1363)put out a 7" themselves, on their own Lake Effect rec's, it's metallic(more Pantera-style than Slayer, though), slowish, & only occasionally manages to build up to the power it should have...however, I heard the

demo from which the 2 songs on the 7" were taken, & I thought the other songs were much better, pretty good in fact, so they probably have some potential. Chad Rugola (PO Box 121, Lehman, PA 18627–0121) does a 'zine mailorder called Big Mouth, & a zine called Break Free(issue 3 out with Chorus of Disapproval, Catharsis/Inside Front, Hubrubber, & other shit)he's also trying to start a record label and do a comp of PA bands, he's a cool kid. He used to do Ground Zero mailorder, which has now moved to Amy Halbohm(21 Lincoln PL, Waldwick, NJ 07463)...Ground Zero is one of the smaller distributions, but I want to mention it is the cheapest, coolest fucking mailorder in the US-check out these postpaid prices: $2.60 for the Earth Crisis 7" and every other Victory 7", $2.00 for the Endpoint "Circumvent" 7", $1.50 for the Crisis Under Control(Georgia HC) & Loyal to None(east coast he) 7 s, the Snapcase LP for $5.00, all Victory CD EP's for $4.50 & CD's for $7.50...all I can say is Fuck! All you kids who order from anywhere else what you could order from Ground Zero are straight up wasting your money like suckers! Send them a stamp for a catalogue. Also available from that address is their zine Anxiety Closet, it's not too thick but has some good thoughts & reviews in it. Turmoil(3O7 Center Ave., Jim Thorpe, PA 18229)has a CD out on a (major?) European label that exemplifies the new school northeastern he sound popularized by bands like Snapcase(to be honest I'm sort of waiting for it to go away)...their CD sounds very

clean, a little generic, more than a little generic lyrics, but definitely danceable. Fadeaway(Rob, 442 Baynes St. (lower apartment), Buffalo, NY 14213, 716-885-6297) was a good band with some new-school & some older influnce, great screaming & intesity of feeling in fairly simple music. They have a 7" split with an awful emo band called 2 Line Filler, and a 7" coming out on Conquer the World records...the singer Rob is starting a new band called Fuse.(Rob mentioned that he despised Conquer the World records; he also wanted me to recommend the Empathy LP on that label as being "incredible." The band broke up from too many difficulties).

Conquer the WorldfPO Box 40282, Redford, MI 48240, 313-746-3393) has a number of other releases, including a 7" by Backlash(Scott, Kean College of N.J., Bartlett Hall Apt. #607, 1000 Morris Avenue, Union, NJ 07083–7131, 908-629-7585), a band that been receiving some attention lately...they have a 12" coming out on the Euro-pean Break Even Point rec's. A guy in New Jersey called Joe(1136 Lamberton Rd., Trenton, NJ 08611, 609-393-0307) does a small distribution, a zine called "Core- -gasm(brief interviews, some ranting & reviews...now he's starting a newer, fancier zine called Nevermore instead), an appealing little free'zine called "Cup of Joe, " &

> also helped to put out the "in Our Blood" he comp, which had some great music from the northeast: bands like Converge, Overcast, Conviction, Starkweather, and Introspect...you can order that from him. 1124 rec's(PO Box 3051, Providence, RI 02906, 401-421-5283) released the Line Drive 7", the Blindside(Pennsylvania) 7" (sold out), and the Shatterhed 7"(the other two releases were hardcore but this is like college noise-rock.)

His upcoming projects are Blindside & Line Drive Lp's, & possibly 7"s by Nations on Fire(a European band of good repute) and maybe Spearhead(whoever the fuck they are!) The guy from the 'zine Surprise Attack(Eric, PO Box 90008, Harrisburg, PA 17109–0008, 717-545-7390) is cool as hell, I sent him one copy of Inside Front #3 & for some reason he sent me in return 5 demos and 25 different zines, even though it turned out he already had #3! I don't know how he can manage to do that, but write him about his zine & other projects, he's apparently a really good guy. Starkweather(PO Box 11739, Philadelphia, PA 19101) is a very original metal band, they have a soul-wrenching, stomach-twisting sound, they don't sound like anything else so I can't say much more about them briefly except that their lyrics are incredibly evocative & they concentrate on long, epicstyle songs with sickeningly unusual timing & rhythm changes. They have a CD out on 2DamnHype(a division of Dutch East India trading, PO Box 800, Rockville Center, NY 1 1571–0800) & a new 7" out, pressed in Europe but available from Very distribution(address in LashOut interview). More unrelated information from Pennsylvania: Art Monk Construction(PO Box 1105, State College, PA 16804–1105, 814-867-7658), a label known for bands like Lincoln, Donora, and Kerosene 454, is setting up it's own multi-label Lumberjack Distribution from that address, with other labels like Watermark, Gern Blandstein, & Gravity. Back to New Jersey, we find Windward rec's(PO Box 3775, Cherry Hill, NJ 08034)who have released 7"s by Flagman(emo)Ritual(members from Encounter) and Crud is a Cult(members from Flagman & Mouthpiece.) Now, in New York: the negative, tough NYC-style band Neglect(122 N. 7th St., Lindenhurst, NY 11757, 516-226-8593) has an EP coming out on We Bite America rec's(PO Box 10172, Chicago, IL 60610–0172) to follow up on their powerful 7" on Wreck-age rec's(451 West Broadway 2N, New York, NY 10012...they also have a good hard 7" by Madball, ex-members of Agnostic Front.) 25 Ta Life is a hard NYC band that has been getting a lot of attention, they have

a 7" out on Striving For Togetherness rec's(PO Box 564571, College Point, NY 11356–4571, 212-330-8287) Outside NYC, Third Party(21 Nancy Lane, Amherst, NY 14228) is a decent distribution & budding record label, this guy seems to be obsessed with "old-school" hardcore to the point that he's living in the past. Also, he said "the summerized interviews were such a turn-off that even for free" he wouldnt distribute Inside Front, but that if 1 *took out the interviews for him* he "wouldn't mind taking a stack..." He said he's "not saying that to be a dick, it's just constructive criticism..." What do you think, reader? Write & let me know what you think of the style of Inside Front, & also whether or not you think this guy is a fucking dick, huh? He distributes a lot of zines that are just wasted space & pathetic one-word-response interviews, & also he & his friends have the gall to make a mix tape of all their favorite older bands & sell

it for *$4* each, & call it the "Back in the Day" comp(...how much do you want to bet this guy is no older than me?), so 1 guess he & 1 just must have different goals in the scene. OK, now that I'm done ranting & raving, he does have some cool stuff going on, so write him & decide for yourself whether or not he's cool. In Boston: Hearsay records(PO Box 382288, Cambridge, MA 02238, 617-499-4845) has some newer releases: a comp 7" with ToeTag, S.T.P., Intent to Injure, & The Champions(all older-styled bands), a comp 7" with Kurbjaw, Cornerstone, Halfmast, & Emission(all older-styled SXE bands) and a split 7" with Loyal to None & Vision of Disorder(I've heard good things about the latter from a friend who saw them.) Moo Cow records(38 Larch Circle, Belmont, MA 02178, 617-499-7959) recently released a Shatter/Foreground 7"(I've heard Foreground, they have fast music & annoying high-pitched singing), & a Temperance CD/cassette, & repressed the 2 Chilmark 7"s & the Dive 7". Also available from his address is Moo Cow 'zine, not too thick, lots of reviews, sort of a variety of stuff ultimately in an emo vein. Daltonic(Brian Hull, 104 Newport Avenue, Attleboro MA 02703, 508-761-9799)is a good, chunky, faster basic Boston HC band, they have 2 7"s out, the more recent & much improved one is on Vigilance rec's(PO Box 44169, Tucson, AZ 85733–4169...this guy also does Research zine & other stuff). Brian of Daltonic has a 'zine at his address called Retrogression: it's pretty thick, lots of different stuff in it, all basically the standard sxe kid 'zine fare (sans preaching) but if you like it he does it better than most. A couple benefit compilations have come out: "Food Not Bombs" LP(Starkweather, Braille, Campaign, Current, Fingrprint, Franklin, HalfMan, IndianSummer, Premonition, Railhed, Ten Boy Summer, and Swing Kids, the new version of San Diego political band Struggle) to support a San Francisco organization(Gregg Bateman, 53 W. Park Ave., Lindenwold, NJ 08021), and "Land of Greed, World of Need" CD/LP(Ashes, Avail, Blindfold, Current, Farside, Function, Groundwork, Lifetime, Nations on Fire, Outspoken, Process, Rancid, Sparkmaker, and Undertow covering the whole Embrace LP) to benefit grass-roots organizations combatting homelessness.(Trustkill rec's, 23 Farm Edge Lane, Tinton Falls, NJ 07724, 908-842-3048). Green Rage is a Syracuse, NY band with a rhythmic, tribal, chunky sound like Earth Crisis only the screaming is crazier & the music looser...! think their label folded, but you can get their 7" from Very distribution. You can also get both 7"s by British band Ironside from Very, their older one "Fragments of the Last Judgement" was pretty good, heavy hc-influenced deathmetal but their new one is far too metal for my tastes. In Connecticut, James Shanahan of now-broken-up band Jasta 14 has a label, distribution, new band called Hatebreed, a record store in the works, and books shows...write him at Stillborn rec's, 453 Central Avenue, New Haven, CT 06511, 203-397-5316. Hatebreed is

supposed to have a split 7" with Integrity coming out on his label. Already out on his label is a 7" by Channel, a band from Virginia that definitely sounds quite a bit like MayDay but pulls it off just as well.

That's all for music reviews this issue. I've received a whole lot of 'zines, though, so I'm going to finish by listing the rest of them, basically in order of my estimation of their interest. A great European 'zine is Direct Approach(Henrik Nielsen, Horsedammen 9,

ST MF, 3000 Helsingor, Denmark)it has a good mix of good inter-views from the US & Europe, and fewer grammatical errors than a lot of US 'zines, which is sort of embarrassing to us. If you're as suspicious of corporate advertising, etc. as me, you'll enjoy Adbusters(The Media Foundation, 1243 West 7th Avenue Vancouver, B.C., V6H IB7 Canada, 604-736-9401) — it's a full-on professional magazine dedicated to "analyzing the mental environment" & becoming aware of all the lies & bullshit that advertizing & the media in general plant in our heads, & taking steps to change this problem in our culture. "Slap You Silly" is a great, informative little 1-page he newsletter, write Chris Davis(592 Pomfret St., Putnam, CT 06260) & ask for one. Clear Perception(Chris, 108 Brookhurst Rd., Bromborough, Wirral, Merseyside, L63 OET England, UK)is a brief but fairly dense sxe 'zine with information from both sides of the Atlantic. Still Standing(Mike, 318 West Sylvania, Neptune City, NJ O7753)is a pretty basic, generic sxe 'zine: photos, short-answer interviews, ads, a couple ramblings. Fed Up(8325 NW 8th St. Apt. A-4, Miami, FL 33126) has gotten better each issue, there's a lot of stuff crammed into it & a lot of genuine feeling, once again this is a younger sxe 'zine but it has its own personality. Reach(1637 Evergreen Hill SW, Calgary, AB, Canada, T2Y 3A9)is another zine that is pretty basic sxe stuff, but seems to have it's own personality as well as decent interviews & record reviews. Dogprint 'zine is fairly thick, but has big print; it's got some photographs, stories & lyrics, and brief interviews which aren't quite as good as the rest of it. Screams From Inside(PO Box 13044, Minneapolis, MN 55414)

is a zine with a more eclectic take on the punk/hardcore scene, from a sort of feminist perspective, it has lots of personal writing & musical tastes along the lines of Avail. Dangerous Ground(180 Cabrillo 21B, Costa Mesa, CA 92627) is done by a great guy, and wherever he writes in it it's great, unfortunately the interview & other influences from the kids in his area(who seem not to know why they're sxe except so they can have friends & make stupid, sexist jokes)sort of drag it down. A similar phenomonon takes place in CounterAttack(Arthur Martinez, 25482 Westborn Dr., Dana Point, CA 92629)where the interviewer comes off as more intelligent than the band & you wonder why he held back from giving them a hard time about it... CounterAttack is about 90% photographs, though. Kent McClard has started Heart Attack(PO Box 848, Goleta, CA 93116, 805-964-611 1) as an alternative to Maximum Rock & Roll, but it's not half as thick, doesn't have even as many he (or any other) advertisements, and it's reviews are less useful(if you can imagine that), so I don't think I would recommend it highly right now...maybe it'll develope into something good eventually, but it needs a lot of evolution. Finally, if you need MaximumRocknRoll's address, it's PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146–0760, 415-648-3561. The word is they're no longer going to take advertising or perhaps anything else from larger hardcore labels like Victory, so we may see a reorganiztion of this scene in the next few months. I'd like to close by mentioning that a real drawback to some of the music I get for review, but especially for the zines, is that a lot of it is pretty much all trying to do the same thing. It's a

Godsend when I find something original. 1 think we're all individuals by nature, so perhaps the problem is that we're trying too hard to follow each other's leads... well, fucking stop it! Write your zine about shit that only you know about, that is truly meaningful to you and that you don't expect others to be used to right away, so that each time one of us picks up a 'zine we'll have a new world opened up to us. That's too romantic a dream, but fuck it grant me an occasional stray from my usual low estimation of everyone else's ability.

[Image not archived]

The Future of Inside Front

In the future I'm going to be expanding this publication to include other writers. It will still have the straight news & facts about the sxe & other hardcore music scenes, but I'd like for it to nourish other parts of people's

minds as well. The 6th issue will include articles by Adel of Feast of Hate & ^ Fear and by Dwid of Dark Empire. If any of you reading this believe that you could contribute something interesting, informative, and original to the future of this publication, please write & tell me about it, & maybe we can take you on in some function or another. Hopefully as time goes on we'll be adding more & more top quality writers, until we have a magazine that people can look to for all sorts of information, education, and entertainment. Once again, your suggestions & feedback would be great...

I interviewed Vegard Waske of Norwegian he band LASH OUT. Lash Out is one 4 of the best new bands in hardcore today, they have a sound in the metallic holy- J -terror vein of Integrity mixed with that Scandinavien REFUSED style to create a

very original, fucking brutal intense sound. In 1/93 they released a 6-song demo, it's out of press but Vegard will tape it for anyone interested; they also did a 4-song 12"

a split 7" with Contention, and a new 5-song 12" which is their most evolved release to date, all on Stormstrike rec's(Kollmarsreuterstrasse 12, 79312 Emmendingen, Germany). You can get their music from Very distribution in the USA(9 E. Saylor Avenue, Plains, PA 18702...Very is this country's very best mailorder, it has the widest variety & fastest response). Vegard described them as being influenced by the most well-known he bands of today (Earth Crisis, Mean Season, etc.) and also by the music of Neurosis, the Afghan Whigs, and some deathmetal. He said their newer songs are very slow & crunchy-sounding, that they are leaving behind their faster music. Members of Lash Out play in many other bands, including an "oldschool posi-hc band" called Backdown(7" out on Stormstrike sometime), a band "influenced by Ashes & Shelter" called Thirst, & a "Mouthpiece/ChainOfStrength/Strife rip-off band" called XAspireX(CD out sometime on Crucial Response rec's: Peter Hoeren, Kaisersfeld 98, 46047 Oberhausen, Germany.. that label has a lot of European he releases, including Onward, ManLiftingBanner, Spawn, & more) Vegard told me that Lash Out isn't an

officially political band, though they do have some socially conscious lyrics, & he says that they do speak about them when they play live & that "if it contributes to educating people, there's nothing better." Most of Lash Out is vegetarien & some are SXE, though it's not an important issue; he also said that "like any SXE-influenced band, we have our Krishna-wannabe's, " though religion has nothing to do with the band. Vegard said that organized religion has no place in he, but that religious & spiritual philosophies can contribute interesting thoughts; he said that religion itself can be harmless and innocent but it can also be "a corrupt, hypocritical, submissive, oppressive, dictatorial, fanatical, sexist, homophobic, organized piece of shit." Vegard told me that many European kids listen to mostly US hardcore, both because there is lots of good music coming from there and more importantly because of the powerful influence American youth culture has had on European youth since World War 2. He said that there are always lots of US bands touring Europe, that some of them are terrible but people still go to see them because they're American. He said a drawback to this situation is that European bands have a very hard time getting recognition, but "if you work hard you can overcome anything." As far as the bands on tour from the US go, Vegard says "they're generally nice people, but Americans are Americans, if you know what I mean." He said that most European he bands use English partly because of the influence of US music, but most importantly because everyone knows it so it is a sort of universal language. He's impressed with bands that still manage to spread their message singing in their native language, but he thinks that since English is taught in every school that it's best; he also said that i that while there are drawbacks to this too, that the idea that you should be proud of & preserve your own language is silly half-nationalistic self-romantic bullshit. '

Lash Out would love to tour the US, but they don't see it happening any time soon because of the low interest of the US in European bands. They would like to hear from anyone who could help them with this, and they're also interested in releasing a 7" or split 7" in the US so as to spread their music as far as possible. It's hard to tour Scandinavia, because of the heavy snow & long distances(especially since they live in a town far to the north); most European tours take place in central Europe. Vegard would like to see more communication, "not only between the scenes in the US and Europe but also with other scenes in Japan, OCeania, Russia, and everywhere else that he is alive." He says that there seems to be more unity in the scene in Europe than in other places, especially in central Europe where it's easiest to travel. He says that Germany seems to have the best network, but Sweden is really happening lately. Norway is always 2 years behind in everything, but the southern part is becoming more active...Vegard told me the fashionable SXE style there is to wear tight white jeans. Lash Out just finished a complete European tour that their label Stromstrike helped to set up, he said that their label has treated them great; some other labels he mentioned were Progress(Norway), Burning Heart & Desperate Fight(Sweden), Sober Mind & Machination(Belgium), and Subjugation & Mrned with Anger(Britain). As for bands: in Norway, Vegard likes Amulet(emocore somewhere between Lifetime, Split Lip, &

Sleeper, they have a CD on Sober Mind), Contentionjlike Slayer meets Cromags meets Integrity, CD due on Stormstrike), • Onward(like Mouthpiece/ChainofStrength, CD on Crucial Response) and others: Despair^

Life...But How To Live It, Ambition, & Abandon. In Sweden, the city of Umea has one of the best scenes in the world right now: Abhinanda just put out their second CD on Desperate Fight rec's(kemig 16, 90731 umea, Sweden), it's incredible, Vegard describes them as "insane he influenced by Strife, 108, Ressurection, but with its own personality." Also from Umea with a CD on Desperate F. is Doughnuts, sadly the world's first allfemale sxe band to get any where... their cd was so good that they've been signed to Victory rec's now..! Vegard says that he hasn't seen too ' much sexism in Norway at least, that he feels that the girls there just choose not , 7 to be involved, and he says that he thinks "this says a lot about musical taste and /'z

the nature of boys & girls. Let's face it, boys are more aggressive, engaged in being ^y strong, and therefor find interest in noisy, loud music to satisfy their hormones." 'Ct!

J!

He does think it's great when women get involved in he, though. Anyway-also in Umea is REFUSED, they just toured Europe with 108 and they have 2 CD's out, they have a really heavy sound. All those bands & Solitude, Beyond Hate , & Drift Apart have songs on a Desperate Fight CD compilation.(write to Abhinanda at the Desperate Fight address, Doughnuts at Asa Forsberg, Kungsg 23, 90321 Umea,

Sweden, another mention slightly

and Refused at: Lyxzen, Bolevagen 19b, 90431 Umea, Sweden). Breach Swedish he band, whom Vegard compares to Snapcase. I guess I should at this point, for all of you who've never heard the Umea sound, that

is

it's

loose, screaming, chunky newschool stuff, the Conviction 7" might be a good

comparison. Other bands Vegard wanted to mention from the rest of Europe are: Fabric, Bob Tilton, & Understand (Britain), Undone(France) Stale & Stand As One

(Germany).

Vegard said Lash Out was glad they were lucky enough not to run

into any nazis during their tour in Germany, that's a very big problem there, both with nazi skinheads and with people who are "nazis inside their heads." But, he

told me that in the most recent German election, the right wing party got votes than last time. In Norway he said there are a few nazis but that so

are kept from being a problem. Vegard farther in the past, people are shifting Vegard also told me that Satanism and Norway, that lots of bands, "including

said, back Black some

though, that as world war 2 in the direction of prejudice.

fewer far they becomes

Metal have become very prevalent in good ones, " and many "extremist people'S

are involved. He said it was kind of unfortunate because that scene started out as a fairly positive thing, being not only anti-Christianity but also anti-racist, anti-sexist, pro-vegetarien and against anti-Semitism...but bands like BURZUM dragged the whole shock-factor thing in, and then "Viking-nazi bands" like Satyricon started to appear. Vegard said "the anti-christianity thing isn't important anymore, now it's

about being as controversial as possible, so you can get in the papers, & sell records" if you're a band. Churches are burned every month, hundreds of graves have been desecrated, and a member of Burzum killed the guitarist of Mayhem & in jail for 21 years. Lash Out had a 3rd guitarist who was into Satanism(the

is

positive, anti-prejudice ideology, not the newer fascist one) but he had to leave the band because of threats and other shit. Vegard wanted me to mention that though that guy is still their friend, that Lash Out has never been a Satanist band, and that the fliers that said "Molde Black Circle presents Lash Out" were a joke on the part of their record label. Finally, Vegard wanted to encourage kids in the US and everywhere to check out European HC, he himseld does a zine called Steps Towards Nowhere(3rd issue available for #3 from the USA, it has Contention, Abhinanda, & Doughnuts)...you can order that or write him for information about Lash Out at:

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Vegard Waske, Nordskogun 1, 6400 Molde, Norway.

[Image not archived]

RICK/S T R I F E

Rick sings for California band STRIFE. Strife recorded their first demo in 1990, but they weren't pleased with it and recorded it again that year with Mike Hartsfield (of NewAge rec's) on guitar — they were much more pleased with it the second time. The songs on that demo were All From the Past, Move Towards, Dedication, and ?. Then in 1991 they released a 7" on NewAge, "My Fire Burns On..", which has just been repressed with a different cover. Hartsfield had to leave after that because he was so busy with his other bands, Outspoken and Drift Again. In 1992 they released a 7" on Indecision rec's(a division of Indecison 'zine), which included all the songs from the demo, except a new song "Still Rise" in place of "Move Towards." That 7" is out of print now. They weren't happy with the sound quality of their recording, so as a joking refernce to the Judge "Chung King" recording they put "Dave Mandel can suck it" on 200 of the records...it wasn't an attack on Dave. Indecision rec's is releasing a new 7" by DIE DOWN, which has previous members of Resolution and Undertow, and Ron of Overkill rec's and the old band Brotherhood on vocals(it may be a temporary band, maybe a permanent one.) Rick told me it sounds really heavy, like older Undertow but "not as simplistic." After the two 7"s, Strife recorded songs for two compilations: "Am I the Only One, " for the "It's

For Life" comp on Consequence rec's(now out of press) and "What Will Remain" for the Victory rec's "Only the Strong 1993" comp. February of 1994 they recorded for their new "One Truth" album on Victory(PO Box 146546, Chicago, IL 60614, 312-549-4478).

Recording took them 2 months, and they mixed it twice before they were satisfied with it. The new album has new versions of both the songs they released on compilations and "Still Rise" as well, and the CD also includes new versions of "Inner Struggle, " "Calm the Fire, " and "?"...plus a new song that is 50 seconds long. There is an acoustic song on the album, Rick told me they did it "to see if they could, " and he says they really like it and it came off well.(he said it was a little like Metallica*) But, he said that "Strife is a *Hardcore* band, " and if they ever do change their style they'll change their name as well...but that they're not changing their style at all, that their new music is their hardest yet. He says they're all happy with the kind of music they're playing, they're not being pulled in any other directions with it. They'll probably be recording another 7" for Victory this winter; Rick said that they've been really pleased with their label, that Tony(who runs it) is a great guy and too many people have the misconception that making money is one of his top priorities. Mike Hartsfield is back with Strife playing bass now, because their bassist left before their summer '94 tour with Earth Crisis; a member of E. Crisis filled in for part of the tour. Strife is able to tour alot because all the members have great employers who are very understanding & flexible; Strife will be touring the US again in the end of '94, and then doing 2 European tours in 1995. Rick told me that touring "has helped them to get a lot of exposure."

Rick told me that he feels that the hardcore scene is going through a sort of bad time right now. He said that "open-mindedness is vital to progression, " and that the scene has become stagnant from narrowminded attitudes and it will consequently shrink in the future. The ones who really know why they're involved will remain,

until the cycle comes around again; that's what their song Shadow s End is about on the new record: "doing what you can for yourself & riding out the bullshit. Rick thinks that hardcore should be an alternative to the mainstream, but that "thd new scene has become just like the mainstream, what with kids concentrating on social status and similar shit...he says that "alternative music, gangster rap, and similar influences have infiltrated the scene, " and are spreading because "they are easier to swallow than the true ideals of punk/hardcore as it used to be, in that they demand less thought and self-pondering." He did say that he thinks after the scene dies down, it will come back better, as it always has. Rick was quick to point out that he's "not a perfect person, " but he says that "lots of people havei

gotten misconceptions of who they are & what they re doing...when you first enter I the HC scene, you get excited because you feel like you can be part of the "answer" to the world's problems...that can go to your head, and you begin to look down on those who aren't into your thing, you become self-righteous. You have to stay grounded in the understanding that you're only a piece of the puzzle." Rick suspects that lots of people have gotten into the scene for some kind of personal gain, that they have a basic idea of right and wrong but when they start doing a zine, label, etc. their influence goes to their head. Rick thinks that it's important that people not limit themselves to the sxe scene, or to any one scene, and that one must always be questioning one's own ideals. He said that the hardcore scene can be a great "educational tool" to expose people to a variety of ideas. Rick said that kids should not have to choose sxe, veganism, or anything else until they had been in the hardcore scene for a while & come to understand it's basic nature...he said that in today's atmosphere kids are pressured to choose labels & beliefs before they can think it out..."Ignorance and need for acceptance cause lots of people to do things that are in noone's best interest." A fundamental goal of their band is to let people know that "everyone makes mistakes, but you can learn from those mistakes and move forward in a positive direction" — also, to remind people that hardcore is most of all about having a good, clean, positive time, that it should be fun above all. Rick said that there are some things that have no place in the scene: racism, sexism, etc. He said that sexism has gotten lots of attention in he lately, which is good because it used to be even more of a problem in the scene than it is now. He said, though, that unfortunately "women's 'zines tend to be equally sexist and extremist" to men's; he mentioned Clearwater 'zine from Massachusetts as a 'zine that managed to be balanced and even-handed. He said that it's important that eyes are opened to any issue, and that it's good that veganism & sexism are getting lots of attention, but that people tend to fall into the trap of taking a militant stance for shook value, which isn't really productive. About Earth Crisis, with whom he toured, he said that they were some of the best people he's ever met, and that though he didn't think their singer Karl had any regrets about anything he had said that "frustration will sometimes lead to saying things." Rick said he thought they deserve credit for breaking the mold of "standing around waiting for something to happen." He also mentioned that the reason they didn't make it to Memphis, TN on their tour was that their van broke down. Rick said that "some people who listen to Earth C. misinterpret the band's goals, " and reminded them not to be too

Lockedaway insidemy min-

their own answers. Rick himself is out to "break down misconceptions about and others through education, " because he believes that positive words do change people's minds & hearts than angry, shouted words: "a change in permanent, but fear and wounds don't last." He says you can be strong in

[Image not archived]

knowledge and fight with words rather than baseball bats. As for the earth, Rick told me he "looks at it as a living thing suffering from man" — but that the earth is stronger and will eventually rejuvenate itself at man's expense, through plagues, etc. He fears that it is already to late to avoid this(though he doesn't see it as happening in the next generation), but at the same time he blames loss of hope and apathy for much of the destruction of today's youth, the earth, and other things. As far as political action, Rick said Strife's main political activity was to be an example in their community & try to open people's eyes to things...he admitted that he doesn't really believe in politics, per se. A couple great new bands that Rick **L ^tk.** mentioned were Falling Forward(on Initial rec's, melodic singing & hard music) and **[j** Sunny Day Real Estate(intense emo). He said that he loves Morissey's music and lots of emo music, but that he doesn't *live* it: that he avoids the mindframe of being self-centered on your own problems, though you do have to deal with your own problems first before addressing other ones. Contact Rick/STRIFE at 4488 Cedar Branch Court, Moorpark, CA 93021 (805)529–6835.

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Josh Baker does Endless Fight records, one of the best new up&coming hardcore labels. So far he has released the "over the Edge" Cd compilation(which was a sampler of Northeastern HC, big bands like Overcast, Mayday, Dive & Converge, coupled with some good new ones like Dissolve), the MayDay "Lost in Sabbath" 7", the Overcast CD, and(in disorganized cooperation with the band themselves) the Tension "Sickness of Our Age" cassette. Josh said that it was the Mayday 7" that really got his label off the ground; he told me that they are extremely popular in Germany, France, and Japan, and that they are releasing a 10" on Stormstrike rec's in Germany(address elsewhere in this issue). Also, either Endgame or Vicious Circle (two labels Mayday released records on long ago) is going to rerelease all their old $_4$ music and some live records, as well. I just got the Overcast Cd, and let me tell you it is some sick, violent, mindblowing holy-terror metal...more complex and < insane than words can describe, and they have a very original style of their own.w This is the first release that the band themselves have been pleased with. The Tension tape was supposed to be a 7", he told me to let everyone who ordered one know that there was a problem that was nobody's fault & they'll be getting the tape soon. The Tension tape is impassioned, fast, screaming hardcore, and their singer sounds like he means it; they described themselves to me as "a positive sxe band with combined religious beliefs, " but that religion really has nothing to do with thier band at all. (Tension: Joe Keit, 1401 NW 45th St., Apt. #6, Pompano Beach, Florida, 33064...305-783-0717) The next Endless Fight release should be a split 7" from Tension and Frostbite(CT vegan band, double

bass drums and chunky guitar, they had a song on the Over the Edge comp #1). After that will be a 7" by Dissolve, another band that was on the first compilation; they have a danceable new-school sound with heavy guitars and screaming...Josh told me they .

> are great guys, very dedicated. Another release coming up on Endless Fight is the second "Over the Edge" CD compilation; Josh wants this one to be more diverse in style and geographic origin of bands than the last one. He's still collecting bands for the compilation(that menas: if you're in a band send him your demo so he can consider you for this compilation or the next one!) but right now the list is: Cross Section(I heard a song of theirs, they have some brutal music & vocals, and female backing vocals that fit very well and make it very haunting and original) Catharsis (the song "1 Corinthians 1:18–29" off their "FALL" demo) Tension(either a song from their coming 7" or a new one) Fine Line(a Connecticut band with 2 singers & 3 guitarists that he says is "heavy like Earth Crisis") also possibly: Timescape Zero (the first two songs from their latest recording, "Life in Sodom" & "Seeing Things") Culture(a really great new hardcore band from Florida, I think you can get their demo from 10965 NW 1st Manor, Coral Springs, FL 33071, Shadow rec's in Maryland just did a 7" promo of them, and I think they're going to have something out on Conquer the World rec's, address elsewhere in this issue) StrongArm(a Christian band from FL with a similar sound to Tension, they have an album coming out on California Christian label Tooth & Nail, write the band at Nick, 190 SE 12th Ave., apartment 3B, Pompano Beach, FL 33060, they have a demo out) and/or Personal Vendetta(and old-fashioned North Carolina hardcore band that may have broken up.)!
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> Josh hopes to do a compilation every year, with successful & new bands on each one, so that the best new bands will get recognition; he says this is necessary to "plan for the future" of the hardcore scene. Bands that do well on his comp.'s he will work further with. He mentioned Dismay(from Conn., slow deep groove-oriented music) and Arise(very talented Boston band, related to Neurosis) as two good new bands. Write for more information about any of this to: ENDLESS FIGHT, PO Box 1083, Old Saybrook, CT 06475–5083...Josh is in Boston for a few months right now, so if you need to reach him quickly call his voice mail there: 617-683-9598. C

ADEL 156

> Adel Souto sings for Miami, Florida band Timescape Zero and writes the 'zine _Feast of Hate & Fear._ The name "timescape zero" is fromthe works of an historian & parapsychologist who had a computer programed to give

a number when fed with current facts and figures about the state of the world; when the computer reads "zero", that means the apocalypse has begun. For a further discussion of this topic see their song "(welcome to the) Kali-Yuga, " which concerns believers of most of the major religions: the spend their lives in fear of some final judgement rather than biting the bullet and taking responsibility for their life and actions. T. Zero has a studio demo, a live demo, and a 7" split with Subliminal Criminal available on Adel's FeastofHate&Fear distribution list — he has the world's cheapest prices: demos are free, you just send a blank tape & 4 stamps, 7' s are $2.50 USA, the (sold out!) 3rd issue of his 'zine came with a 7" for 8 stamps, & his new issue wieghs 4 lbs. & only costs 6 stamps. He also has a few other things on his mailorder list. T. Zero recently recorded for a 12", which fell through, so the songs will be coming out separately: one on the second Inside Front compilation in 2/95,

one 7" on a friend's label, a split 7" with Devoid of Faith on the label Trip Machine Laboratories, some songs on the Slimy Productions CD comp with some "big metal bands, " possibly a song on the 2nd Endless Fight CD comp, and other releases.(Write to Adel & he'll give you the complete rundown). T. Zero has an old-fashioned hardcore sound to them, simple hard floorstomping raw music with yelling vocals. The skinhead connection is: their bassist is really into S.H.A.R.P. (skinheads against racial prejudice, you ignoramus) and Adel used to be a skin, but now says he thinks it "kills your personality." They're looking for a new drummer, then they plan to tour the East coast. They were interviewed in Maximum Rock & Roll #133. Adel told me he wrote their song "Life in Sodom" when he was sitting in prison after accidently killing a man who stole from him and then attacked him.

He had just been released from a year in prison(of a 5-year sentence for assaulting a policeman than had been shortened because it turned out the cop lied in court) and figured that his life was just about over then. Fortunately he was not found > .«» guilty. A long time ago Adel played in a SXE band called "Violent Deed, "

B they played at one of the last YouthOfToday shows & he has been in touch off & on , with Ray Kappo-that's why they thanked Shelter on a thanks list, not because he has any patience for Krishnas. Adel was once SXE, but left the scene because of his **IlfHHl** distaste for the newer kids...he says "sxe used to be anti-obsession, now it is an

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obsession." He's not vegetarien because while he believes that what goes on in the meat industry is wrong he believes it's going to take place no matter what a vocal

minority does, and if it's going on anyway he says he doesn't feel guilty for taking part. He went through a period where he was down about life, a drinker and a nihilist;

but now he has a lot going for him and he wants to take care of his health and life, so he is straight. He still hangs out with some drunkards, who annoy him when they drink. Adel has lived in the USA & Europe, and travelled

a lot. He first moved to Miami when he was 11; he says that even though other people complain about living in Miami he's just happy to be settled down somewhere

As far as politics, Adel says that "the libertarien party is the most sensible;" he describes himself as being "not your typical run-of-the-mill anarchist" — he believes that everyone should be free from unjust laws, but he goes about anarchism his own way. Rather than being an "activist, " he says "his life is his political action:" he does illegal things "like everyone else" but he doesn't "waste time on causes, " instead he seeks to protect himself and his own. He says that for his own sake,

though, it's important that he keep an eye on politics, etc. He mentioned that it's a federal law that members of the American Anarchist Association and the Communist party cannot vote in elections. Adel's ideal government would be a loose central government with disability benefits and *just* laws, and he cites Morocco and Amsterdam as good political situations. Adel told me that he doesn't believe

that peace is really possible or even necessarily desirable.

Adel subscribes to a certain form of Satanism which he describes in detail in the

> 4th issue of his 'zine. He has nothing to do with idiots who think of Satan as an actual entity; rather, the satanism he is involved in is a school of thought. They use the term "satanism" because it is derived from the Hebrew word for "adversary, " & they want to emphasize the confrontational nature of their stance against main-stream society & religion today. In brief, some of his basic tenets are "do unto others as they do unto you, " be aware of your surroundings, and value yourself.
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> He values "quality over equality, " in human beings as in everything else, and he hates those who ignorantly misconstrue that phrase to refer to some form of racism Adel says that people shouldn't have to live by the Satanist rules any more than by any other set of rules, but he thinks they'd be a lot better off if they did, & he doesn't understand those who do not desire to. He recommended Nietzsche,
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> R. Redbeard, Robert Anton Wilson, and Anton LaVey as being authors that have some really g<x>d ideas to offer. Adel was once a member of Anton LeVay's official Church of Satan, which is more of a thinktank/ philosphical group than a church, but he says he was kicked out for being "too much of an individual"...he said that in that group you have to "follow the Satanic Bible word for word." He started his own group, Thee Ministry of Shaitanic Quabala, as a "freer" satanist group; Thee Ministry has been on back burner for about a year now. Adel told

me that in Satanism certain rituals are used, to reveal to people parts of themselves they become out of touch with(the animal side of humanity, and certain unused powers of the mind). DAAB-SOUL DESTRUCTION was band he was in that performed rituals, they almost got sued for one show where people complained of

aftereffects from the performance. The name of that band came from a rumor about experiments with astral projection by the US army in the 1950's. Adel's zine Feast of Hate & Fear is, I think, the best zine out there today: it's packed with concepts and essays that you should think upon whether or not you agree, thought-provoking comics and quotes, literally *four times as many record reviews as MaximumRockNRollfmuch better ones, too!), * all sorts of hilarious

humor, and it's very well put together and user-friendly to boot. Adel says he started the zine to be a contrast to the typical zine of today which is filled with "useless bitching and brainless articles, " by actually sitting down & thinking out zine they got. He told me that now apparently a more intelligent and interested readership has developed, so he has recently had a much more positive response. He said that his main aim with the zine is to find those like himself, that it would be nice to "enlighten others" but that he thinks that "most people are scum anyway" so that can't be a primary goal. He pays for the zine with funds from his job, and by ripping off corporate printing companies(that I guess I ^ shouldn't name here.) Most of the comics in his zine come from political comic books he collects from the 60's & 70's; he mentioned "Slow Death" as being a particularly good one. His 3rd issue had a hilarious (I mean that in a general sense) interview with Charles Manson...Adel has been in correspondence with him for a while, he told me that he's interested in him as a sort of "political prisoner" (?) of the USA and that he suspects that Manson is much more sane and aware of what is going on than he acts like he is. Adel wanted me to mention as a resource for video fans a distribution from which he just ordered the movie _Apocalypse Now_(my all time favorite) with an extra 90 minutes of footage...he says they have about everything you could imagine(the address is "The Catalogue of Carnage, " c/o Foxx Entertainment Enterprises, 327 West Laguna, Tempe, AZ 85212 -I guess it's $2 for a catalogue, which is a price that a sxe label would NEVER charge!) Write to Adel about any of his various projects at PO Box 820407, South Florida, FL 33082–0407, or call 305-947-8126. If you sned him some stamps I'm sure he'll send you all sorts of cool stuff...

TONY ERBA(x-face value)

Tony used to sing for Cleveland band Face Value, back in the day. Lots of rumors and other typical hardcore bullshit have been going around, including in this publication, regretably; so I wanted to clear it all up once & for all. FACE VALUE started in mid-'89, when Tony joined the band because they were looking for a singer(they had previously been called the Bagmen). Tony said that "those guys were never into punk

or hardcore, " they were never sxe, and when they were on tour they would go out to bars and come home to the house of a kid nice enough to put them up at 3 am, drunk. Everything was OK for the first 2 & a half years, they stayed in the background and Tony wrote all the music (the 7" and 12" on Conversion rec's: PO Box 5213, Huntington Beach, CA 92615) and did all the work to organize their shows, etc. Then, Tony says, the other members decided the band "needed to progress" so that they could "get professional and make a living off of it'; they insisted on no longer playing parties, on getting contracts for every show, on making really bad blues music. The two years from that point to the European tour were full of tension and then Tony left the band. Tony had a house leased with the drummer, which made it impossible for him to split with the band because it would have fucked up the rest of his life; otherwise, he says he would have quit during the making of the next album, which came out on Doghouse records(PO Box 8946, Toledo, OH 43623) and was terrible. He hated the record too, and he says he had nothing to do with the layouts, cheesy quotes on the sleeve, or anything else, because the other members had taken over by that point. When it came time for the European tour, Tony made an excuse for why he couldn't go along. The band got the singer from "the Virgin Destroyers" to stand in for Tony, and his lease was up right after they left so he packed up his belongings and he hasn't spoken to them since. He told me that they have "some Hillbilly singer" working with them now and their new material sounds like "10th rate Motorhead, " that no label wants to talk to them. He says he doesn't care what happens now, whether they become famous or fail miserably.

Tony told me that the interview he did with Maximum Rock & Roll was when he was still in the band, so for the sake of not looking like a fool he had to defend the music on the Doghouse Lp to the interviewer, even though he hated it. He told me the live 7" released by Nemesis rec's was supposed to come out with the Conversion 12", but the label didn't have it's shit togetherso it

had to be released separately. He said that Conversion treated them better than other Cleveland bands have reported being treated, but both the band and the label were disorganized. The limited release cassingle on Conversion had no new material on it, by the way: it was just a promotional release for the LP. Also, the Brainwashed Youth page in the Dark Empire Cleveland HC CD (which had a photo of Tony performing, and a clipping of some old Face Value anti-rock star lyrics) was just a joke on (Dark Emporer) Dwid's part, not an attack on him. Tony is actually friends with Paul Schlacter, the guy who did that band and also the Inmates and the band Darbocets.(Paul has moved to Las Vegas now, so all that is no more.)

»iz jawoMaw MlK!il!5^ M^-*« vr Tony told me Face Value got a lot of shit during their time: partly as backlash against Integrity and the Cleveland scene, partly for Tony speaking his mind on unpopular topics, but mostly for him just "not being cut out of a mold" like others in the scene. He says that though he hates joke-bands as much as anyone, there isn't enough of a sense of humor in the hardcore scene today, and the kids are just to uptight. He told me that "some of the younger kids should not

give the older kids such a hassle, because they were the ones who stuck their necks out to make possible everything that exists today." He also said that today's scene is too full of "stargazers" trying to be someone else, that too many kids try to

— emulate Dwid or other visible figures.(Dwid wanted me to mention at this point that the hair-beret and lunchbox thing is ***NOT*** his fault). At the risk of sounding nostalgic Tony said that he liked the 80's scene better because everything was

| fresh and new, there wa s more diversity and you never knew what to expect when you went to a show. The shows were bigger with a wider variety of bands, and while people were by no means unified "criticism was generally directed outward from the scene rather than inward." Tony's favorite bands were the older ones like White Flag, America's Hardcore, Sick Pleasure, Battalion of Saints, the old Mystic records stuff and bands from Oxnard California. He also loves Swedish

punk. Some new bands he enjoys are Bastard(from Japan), Moderate Liquidation (Sweden), the New Bomb Turks, and Out Cold from the US(he says they sound like the early Dwarves). Tony said Cleveland is pretty much dead musically now, but two bands there he liks are Cider(they sound like "1981 pub punk", they have a 7" on their own Noncommercial Records, the ad for it is in Maximum Rock & Roll #134 or 135) and Gag Reflex(sound in the style of Japanese HC, fast catchy non-stop and brutal.)

As for the whole controversy regarding Tony and SXE: he says that he was SXE since he graduated high school in the mid-eighties, but with all the shit

he got from people expecting him to be their perfect SXE idol(to be vegan, etc.)

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he went through a period of trying to not be constricted by people's expectations where he tried drinking, etc. again.(This same phenomenon seems to have happened to many members of the Cleveland scene...?) But it turned out he didn't like it at all. So now he is drug-free as a natural part of his lifestyle, not in conformity

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with a dogma. He told me that he thinks "Straight-edge is a good idea for a — movement, but some people take it the point where it becomes their entire identity rather than a single trait...and those people tend to be dicks." He also said the fashion side of SXE has gotten way out of hand. As for the majority of I

the old Cleveland SXE scene, he says that for most of the individuals involved J

it was just a passing phase of youth, that punk was never the center of their lives! like it has been for him for 10 years and will continue to be.

Before Face Value, Tony sang for a band called L.E.K.(he says the name I didn't stand for anything, it was just a product of mid-80's 3-initial syndrome | like MDC) from 1985 to 88. He described them as a fast, noisy band who made noj recordings.

Tony now plays bass for his new band, the H-100's; his brother Chris • Erba sings, and members of the band Gag Reflex play the guitar and drums. He 1

"" told me that this is not a project, that this band is going to be around for a long

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time and that this time, unlike in Face Value, all the lyrics, politics, etc. belong to him and are uncompromised. He describes the H-lOO's as a very dedicated D.I.Y.-ethic band, and said that musically they have a sound reminiscent of early eighties hardcore, without being a "retrogressive ripoff"; he said he thinks it is a good thing that their music is not closley related to the other music coming out today. He said that "BGK" is a big influence, whoever the fuck they are. They have a 7" coming out in February on a split label between Bloodclot records and SuckOutLoud records, it was recorded on a high-quality 8-track(like the one Mayday uses, not the one Polyester Cowboys uses.) The Inmates(the Paul Schlacter band with the string section of Integrity) will have a 7" out in 3 months on the same label, that was recorded on the same 8-track. More Cleveland news: the band Outface is now called Overfiend, and will have a release out on Revelation rec's(PO Box 5232, Huntington Beach, CA 92615–5232).

Finally Tony wanted to mention that he thinks zines today are pretty bad ...that NO ANSWERS was good when it started and the old NY zine Guillotine was great, but most stuff today is useless. He mentioned "Slug & Lettuce" as a cool free sort of punk zine, and he wanted to mention that Bloodbook #2 is coming out from Dark Empire (PO Box 770213, Lakewood, OH 44107) — it'll be out by the time this issue is. Bloodbook #1 was a sort of humor zine that came out 5 years ago, & #2 follows in that tradition: he says it's "pretty fucking hilarious & inventive." Write to Tony Erba about any of this shit: PO Box 561, Brunswick, OH 44212.

BANNON JtaO|®$_o$te0M

recently disbanded Boston band Converge, and he does Earthmaker

records and Yesterday's News 'zine. Converge did their first demo in 1991, when they were juniors in high school; then they recorded their 7", which was re-leased by Fountainhead records, which folded soon afterwards. Exchange took over Fountainhead's distribution, and according to Jake they "ripped everyone off." "Blind", the best song on that 7", was on the East Coast Assault compilation on 2DamnHype rec's. Jake said he thought 2DamnHype was "pretty silly" in that Dutch East India does all the printing, packaging, distributing, etc. for them, and he thinks that doing those things yourself is an integral part of having your own label. After the 7" Converge recorded what they refer to as "the metal demo"; the song "Savior Salvation" from that demo was on the "In Our Blood" compilation released by Reform rec's(212 Canal Circle, Mt. Holly, NJ 08060) along with songs by Overcast, Conviction, Starkweather, Soulstice, and others.

Another song from that demo(an earlier version of "1 abstain") will be coming out on a compilation from Connecticut, which will probably be distributed from the Earthmaker address when it's out, for those who are interested. In August of 1993 Converge recorded another demo, 5 originals and a Black Sabbath cover; the song "Sky"

from that session is on a new 7" compilation called "Soundtrack to the Revolution" on Onlook records(Aaron Dalbec, 43 Essex Street, Marlboro, MA 01752) with songs by Bound, Chokehold, and Knockdown...and the song "Zodiac" from that demo is on a 7" compilation with Daltonic, Dive, and Opposition on Hearsay rec's(PO Box 382288, Cambridge, MA 02238–2288). After that they re-corded the "Halo in a Haystack" LP which came out on Jake's Earthmaker rec's. Stylistically, their music started out as a version of the NY "toughguy" kind of

sound, became more and more experimental and original, and finally incorporated metal, emo, and post-hardcore influences to create the definitely individual sound on the new LP.my only criticism would be that the guitar sound sort of weak. Jake's vocals are the most throat-scraping screaming you could imagine.

Converge's bassist Jeff has left to go to college in Montreal, so they're pretty much broken up. In December they plan to record 2 more songs, which will be released on a 7", possibly on Earthmaker, possibly as a split with a

band called Channel that

which also put' for the low price The record is sold needs to make

Jake described as "chugga chugga toughguy" hardcore.

(Channel has a 7" out on actually did the Converge

Stillborn rec's, described in this issue.) Earthmaker

LP as a split with Stolnacke records,

out the Bound 7". Jake told me it was easy to put the LP out of $5 each, because records just don't cost that much to make, out right now, but he plans to repress it in a few months; he

back enough money to start putting out other releaes. There were plans to release material by Daitonic, Down by Law, and others on the label, but there are no concrete plans right now. Earthmaker is also a record and zine distribution,

which is still functioning right now. The zine Yesterday's News now Earthmaker zine; 1 read the 4th issue, from July 94 when 'News...it was a very unusual zine in that it was 100% poetry thoughts with some pictures and drawings thrown in. Jake says

that Jake does is it was still the and abstract that the new

issues will be more geared towards interviews and reviews, that he could never do another issue quite like #4 because "you never feel the same thing twid'e." " Religious themes appear often in Jake's lyrics and writings; Jake says that these "themes already have power and significance" so that when he uses them metaphorically they have an impact on people. He described Converge as having a kind of "tough love" towords God; that they don't take a particular stand, rather that his lyrics are meant to discuss his personal experiences in life instead of being plainly for or against any religion.

Jake cited Neurosis, Into Another, Swiz, Burn, and Dagnasty as some of

his most important influences. Some new bands that he recommends are 7% Solution ***^k***

(he describes them as "an emotional band"), Bound, Overcast, and Opposition. He told me that Opposition's new split 7" with Ipecac is great; it's on Figure 4 rec's (35

Eliab Latham Way, East Bridgewater, MA 02333, 508-378-8956), which is also going to release the last Dive 7". Jake is singing for a new band called Hangman, which he says will have an experimental, progressive sound something like Iceburn. Members of the bands Third Age and 7% Solution play in Hangman. Jake & Earthmaker have a new address: 580 Commonwealth Avenue, Apartment

24, Boston, MA 02215. (617-530-9670)..

saws:

DARK EMPIRE VIDEO Compilation Professional video featuring Integrity, Confront, Face Value, Ringworm, Bowel, Splinter, Diehard, Meanstreak, 3 Punk Batsards, and the Inmates. $15 cash($18 world). Also available: Confront Discography(made in Ohio, fuck Lost & Found!), hundreds of hardcore' and other videos, and the original demos by Confront, Integrity, and Rlngworm for sale or trade. GREY MATTER, 291 Butternut Lane

Berea, OH 44017.

GG Allen lives.

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INLAND EMPIRE PERSONNELS

MEGALOMANIAC: Brian Paul D. SECRETARY: Loara Lynn C. BEST MAN: Alexei David R. GG ALLEN FAN: Jeff Grey ATLANTA CORRESPONDENTS: Ray & Kitty D.

GROUPIES & HANGERS-ON: David Drossman, Chris Huggins, Christian Oglivie, Mark Dixon, your name here.

'ROOT 73EER ReAS'Lew

Well, IRON HORSE root beer STEWARTS cream ale still hold first place in their respective categories. If you want to try something that will fucking burn in your respiratory system, try OLD TYME Jamaican-style ginger beer. Other Inland Empire endorsements: DARKEMPIRE shirt company: fast, concerned service, and great work done real cheap. Thanks, Dwid. (216-651-7444) I'd also like to thank Kinko's copies for hiring only punks and criminals to work their night shift. Walter Kaufmann did the only good translations of Nietzsche, the other versions are all bullshit. KIWI makes the best shoe polish, it actually fills in the cuts and scrapes in your shoes; and OSTER makes the best hair clippers I've found to date. If you smoke, smoke DEATH cigarettes.'

[Image not archived]

Every band interviewed here for being so helpful, Dwid for the shirts & other shit, everyone who sends me records & 'zines & etc. for review(that's a real help!) everyone who's cool enough to correspond with me, the bands who are trying to get me something for my next compilation, everyone who's helped out by distributing (especially the ones who've paid me back God damn it) the small but true North Carolina HC scene(Jim and the others for helping to start shit up here), and you the reader for giving a fuck. I know this list is useless because it's so general, but otherwise I would have left someone out. Oh Yeah, thanks to Mike in Nevada for help with my phone bill and his interest in my band, etc. FUCK YOU to every band who sings about shit

that isn't true(like how they kill people...bullshit. If you really ever rounded anyone up you wouldn't be singing about it because you'd want to get away with it. Fucking straight-up ***liars.)*** and/or cancels shows without warning anyone in advance. We shouldn't waste our time on you.

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A W*SXE" MANIFESTO I tear no man or God for what I value Is not my possessions, sensations, or situation but my ability to make choices which are right for ^e..and that is the only thing that noone can ever take away from me. I am therefore prepared to suffer anything, even "eternal damnation." for what I have come to believe rationally through my own persnai experiences, for I have complete self-respect and faith in my ideals. I do not need a God, public opinion, movement, or anything else to support me in my choices, because I am secure In my own convictions; I have earned this by working every day of my life to improve myself: reading, exerasing, arguing, travelling, thinking, and using every resource at my disposal io its limit in order to become the best I can be. I am an individual whose love of life and reason to be rest on the foundation of myself alone; there is nothing else in the world I need-least of all drugs, social status, obsessions, irrational illusions, or anything else that will hold me back from enjoying my existence to the fullest.

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temporary address until May 1995:

[Image not archived]

213 east franklin street #34 chapel hill, nc 27514 usa

Issue #6 (1995)

Subtitle:
Date: March 1995
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issue #6, march 1995. comes with the POINT COUNTERPOINT compilation.
Circulation: #5 — 2000+ to date. #6 — 1000. #7 — 3000+ expected.
In my individual case, the cost in terms of time, money, self-respect, and clarity of thought is not worth paying for the things many people consider desirable, whether it he television, fashionable consumption, promiscuous sex, social status, chemical abuse, or irrational religious faith. I have never enjoyed those things so much as the personal achievement and self-control they destroy. I have never sacrificed myself to them and I never will; my life reflects these words. 1 could not change this characteristic of myself if I wanted to. 1 do not claim to know what is best for anyone but myself.

Welcome to Inside Front

I have long term plans and goals for this magazine. There's an information gap in the hardcore scene, and this journal is my attempt to solve that problem and to help to keep the music I love alive. I also aim to steal back straightedge hardcore from the pampered, soft, lazy, trend-following, fashionable, immature, crybaby, pathetic fucking losers who are trying to claim it for their own. Once again straightedge will be a personal approach to life, open to anyone who is truly sincere and dedicated to the improvement of him- or her-self; it will no longer be stained by the embarassing presence of those who neither know what they want nor what it means to work for it, or of those who want to reduce a noble philosophy to a conformist peer group. Time is short, you fucking sheep...

COLUMNS

As you may have noticed, I now have columnists. From now on each issue of Inside Front will include ideas and information provided by someone other than myself — so, obviously, don't confuse their ideas with mine. I'm just interested in printing views that readers might not get to see anywhere else, in hopes of forcing people to think, God forbid. Chances are if I want you to do a column for me I'll ask you about it myself, but if you think you have a lot to offer suggest it to me. I'm looking for useful information and truly controversial, underrepresented ideas, no generic dogma, emo weeping, or immature bullshit.

INSIDE FRONT.



HARD CORE JOURNAL

issue #6, march 1995. comes with the POINT COUNTERPOINT compilation.

Circulation: #5--2000+ to date. #6--1000. #7--3000+ expected.

T T E R S

In #7 we'll also be accepting intellegently written letters that have something really useful to say, and do it concisely. I don't know how much space we'll

have, so no guarantees, but if you send something great, expect to see it. To weed out the lazy, the illiterate, and the immature, all letters must be typed and written in essay form like a high school book report.

INLAND EMPIRE CATALOGUE

ISSUE 7: Out before May 1, 1995. Interviews with DOUGHNUTS, ABHINANDA, OVERCAST, and *many* others, a "how-to" column by Tony/VICTORY on running a small label, other famous columnists, world hardcore news and scene reports, lots of demo/record/zine reviews, advertising, all sorts of other useful information. Full size and *twice as thick* as #6.

3 stamps USA/$2.00 world (Wholesale: 20 copies for $5.00 US/$10.00 world)

_ISSUE 5i_nterviews with STRIFE, LASH OUT, ENDLESS FIGHT rec's, Tony Erba (H 100 s, ex-Face Value), CONVERGE/EARTHMAKER rec's, TIMESCAPE ZERO/FEAST OF HATE & FEAR, plus many, many pages of reviews & news. Still up-to-date, really useful, really cheap.

1 stamp USA/2 IRC's world (Wholesale: 24 copies for $3.00 US/S6.00 world)

ISSUE 4: Comes with the NO EXIT compilation, featuring INTEGRITY, CATHARSIS, LINE DRIVE, EXCESSIVE FORCE, REFUGE, BLOODSHED, & POLYESTER COWBOYS. 'Zine includes write-ups on those bands, plus interviews with MAYDAY, RINGWORM, and RICOCHET, and many pages of news..

$3.00 USA/$5.00 world (Wholesale: $2.70 USA/$4.00 world)

ISSUES 1, 2, 3: Co vers 1/94-6/94 in hardcore history. Lots of news and addresses, plus older interviews with EARTH CRISIS, SNAPCASE, INTEGRITY, VICTORY rec's, CHOKEHOLD, BLOODLET, CHORUS OF DISAPPROVAL, POINT BLANK/BONESAW, SPLINTER, FOCUSED, SIX FEET DEEP, DEAD WAIT, EDGEWISE/HARVEST rec's, CONFRONT/MEANSTREAK, OTIS REEM, and DARE2DEFY/2DAMNHYPE rec's/ALLTHAT megazine, & more.

$1.00 USA/$2.00 world (Wholesale not available)

INSIDE FRONT SHIRTS: Featuring the designs from the cover of #5, these are X- large, black & blue on white, 2-sided, printed by DARK EMPIRE shirt company. They're a fundraiser so I can continue to do my

projects for as cheap as I do, so if you like what I'm doing please try to support Inside Front and keep me from going bankrupt. Thanks.

$10 USA/$13 world (Wholesale $8 USA/$11 world)

_ENDLESS FIGHT "Over the Edge part 2" CD comp:_All the best new bands of 1995, on one cheap CD: CATHARSIS, LASH OUT, BACKLASH, CROSS SECTION, TIMESCAPE ZERO, TENSION, NEGLECT, DISMAY, ARISE, SLIP, DISSOLVE, HOLD STRONG, WITHDRAWN, STRENGTH 691, AGE OF REASON, JASTA 14, CULPRIT, DIVIDED WE FALL. Wow.

$8.00 USA/$10 world (for wholesale, write Endless Fight records)

_CATHARSIS "Fall" demo:_Unique, sincere, intelligent, intense, angry as fuck holy terror hardcore. Much acclaimed. Be warned, 2 of the 3 originals have been released on compilations...Lyrics available on request.

$3.00 USA/$4.00 world (Wholesale $2.00 USA/$3.00 world)

_POLYESTER COWBOYS demo:C_lassic NC punk/hardcore crossover. Includes booklet. *Costs only $1.00 USA/$2.00 world*

_STUDIES FOR A CRUCIFIXION #l:_lntense, controversial, nightmere fiction... touching on women's issues? Powerful, frightening, talented for sure.

2 stamps USA/4 IRC's world (Wholesale: 10 copies for $2.00 USA/ $5.00 world)

Make checks out to "Brian Dingledine." Anyone can distribute Inside Front, it's real cheap, and everything helps. Thanks.

DEMOS

**If you're in a band that is just starting out, and you are very serious about getting somewhere, there are some particular things you can do to increase your chances. First be sure every member of the band gives a fuck, because other-wise they'll fall through on you when you need it least. Have a set day or 2 every week for practise. At first you'll want to play every show you can, but after a few months of this when everyone knows your songs you'll want to cut your shows down to at most 1 per month per city, so people don t start taking you for granted. One great thing you can do is to start a project in addition to the band(booking shows, writing a zine, a label, etc.): this gives you lots more useful connections, makes people(especially the ones who run labels, etc.) know that you're serious and committed, and it gives you another forum to let people know about your band. Playing out of town is a great thing if you play the right shows, but a frustrating waste of time and money otherwise; make sure that it will be a well-attended show at which people will be paying attention to a new band of your style. Don't book a tour until you know every show will be like that. Finally, as for releasing demos, I've noticed a particular trend among bands that become successful,

and this is how you can follow it: go ahead and record a demo when you feel ready, and sell it to kids who like you at shows, but don't spread it around too much. Chances are, the first time you go into the studio you have little knowledge of how to do what you want, so treat this first recording and first demo most of all as a learning experience. Then a while later when you've improved and you know better from earlier experience, go into the studio again *(spare no expense, * as people will judge your band by the quality of your demo & you usually get what you pay for... if you wanted money to go to the movies & shit, you shouldn't have got into hardcore anyway) and record another demo. It really helps to take in a member of a much more experienced band with you, to give advice on the spot. This second demo should be really good, so send it to all the labels you know with a letter describing your band and it's goals, and look for comp's to submit songs off the demo to. When you're doing this, make sure to get advice & support from all the connections you've made from your other projects. Spare no expense to get this demo to all labels, distributors, etc. you can. Good luck!**

R E \Z I E XAZ S :

AFTERSHOCK: This band has the monotonous, slow & deep chunky sound with matching gruff vocals that are a little short on feeling & have a bit of that hip hop thing going on. Lyrics about having X's on your hand & in your heart. On the up-side their guitarist is very skilled & has a style 1 would recognize if I heard it again; because of him thiir Inside Out cover almost worksjbut it's hard to live up to all the feeling that were in Zack's vocals, & their singer sings by -the numbers anyway.) By the way you can also reach the 666 SXE shirt Co. at their address: they make shirts with wonderwoman wearing X's, & the like.

Tobias, box 631, 2 college st., providence, ri 02903

BIOFEEDBACK "hard times": From the Phillipines, so they deserve respect for getting their demo out to the East Coast of the USA. The key word to this is eclectic: there's influence from metallic hardcore, punk, and oi. Mostly English lyrics, some socially conscious, some more personal. The recording quality could be better but I understand they have limited resources. Write them at the address of the Philippines' undergound magazine: *ANTI FANZINE, c/o Dondi*

***Tawatao. 88 Basa St.. San Francisco Del Monte. Quezon City. 1105 Phillipines.* _CORNERSTONE:_ This demo is a badly mixed epitome of that new genre of h/c that calls itself "oldschool, " like Halfmast or any of the other bands who are trying, 8 years later, to sound like Chain of Strength did. Simple fast parts &**

slower dance parts, positive stance lyrics. They have a 9-song CD coming out on Lost & Found records(IM Moore 8, 30167 Hanover, Germany)that should be much better, and a split 7" with extinct SXE band UNIT PRIDE on the same label in support of the upcoming U P discography. They seem to be committed & seriousabout what they're doing. *Toby, 211 Greenwood Avenue, Bethel. CT 06801–2113, suite 153.*

**_CRIME AGAINST HUMANITY:_At their best, this band has a newer style sound with music you you could do those new 15-year old SXE kid hopping dances

to Their slightly self-righteous vegan lyrics may alienate you if you disagree, as may their "I'm so sad and weak" emo lyrics (by the way guys, it's a mistake to think people will be able to take your politics seriously if you present yourself from the outset as an insecure, fragile failure).. that whole thing is topped off by a motherfucking teddybear on the cover that says "hugs needed!" Listen, children, in this world you get what you earn, not what you "need " But if their music gets a little personality to distinguish it from other bands of their style they could do a great 7". I think I heard they've changed their name...? *Paul Shapiro, 11001 Riverwood Dr., Potomac, MD 20854 301-983-5091* _END IN SIGHT:_Good sound for a demo. At its best moments it has that Swedish hardcore sound (like a younger Abhinanda) that carries a lot of stop&go energy. Their singer needs to learn a little better how to let loose, and they could make some of their songs better by tightening & shortening them. They have a 7" coming out, & if they do improve it will be powerful and moving. Lyrics: anti-greed & anti-system, SXE themes, personal suffering, being yourself Not bad. *Mikke Niskanen, Skiftesgatan 14, 332.35 gislaved, Sweden.***

_ENRAGE cassette._Slick, New York metal about being ugly, depressed, and pathetic. _KURBJAW:_This is great. Older fashioned music that's catchy but hard, fast parts & mosh parts & self-improvement lyrics that continue in the direction of late 80's h/c with enough real feeling for it not to be a ripoff or second rate. No crying, the vocals are tough but not fake. The first two songs are on a comp by Step Forward records in Japan, the 3rd is on "The Point" comp on Reaction rec's (address in Inside Front#3), the 1st is on a Hearsay rec's comp described elsewhere in this issue, and the decent Minor Threat cover will be on a M.T. cover comp. *16 Clausen Rd., Edison, NJ 0881(that's all the zip I have) 908-583-7138.* _OPTION:_This is pretty well done, coming from a band I've never heard from before. The lyrics are personal, the topics not completely original but they're very well-written so you can tell they're real rather than copied out of a book Chunky, fairly fast, danceable music in a sort of Turmoil vein, only more metal squeals in the guitars and deeper, tougher vocals...OK I have to admit the word "Biohazard" came to mind once, but there's not enough to fuck it up. *918 Sanderson Ave. Apt. B Scranton, PA 18509 717-348-3054.*

_OUT OF SPITE:_This definitely has more a NY/Biohazard sound than Option did Fairly slow, hard, hip-hop rhythm music, and unbelievably deep vocals; corresponding lyrics about inner-city violence, building up aggression, and one about working hard to make something of yourself that I was glad to see. You

can tell it's a demo, and no new ground is broken, but then, it *is* a demo, right'' *4100 S.W. 107 PL. Miami. 33165 305-223-6461*

**_SWITCH STYLE:_The first song is built like a song of the first SICKOFITALL LP: fast verse, slow anthemic chorus, and it works well. The second song is more technical, with hiphop influenced rhythm. The third and last songs are fast, with the sudden chunky parts like in "what will remain" by Strife. Throughout it they keep a sound of their own, and vocals are in great English, with some feeling. I hope

they continue and are able to get somewhere despite living in Japan. *Kenzo Nakase. 1591–218 Matsudo, Matsudo-shi Chiba 271 Japan* _V/A "Dark Empire Strikes Back" Video:_The last two items in this section aren't demos, but I'm putting them here so they'll be in good company since they don't fit anywhere else. This is more than an hour worth of Cleveland hardcore: that is, generally mean and hateful metallic music with a theme of people getting hurt. Good variety of bands, the filming ranges from good to poor; my advice is that if you like Cleveland music you should check this out, you'll know more about it and the scene afterwards. My favorite part is the video of Meanstreak playing "Final Word" at the Chicago show when Integrity went there to cause trouble to Tony of Victory records(before they kissed & made up)...Rob of EndPoint (who is known for being an anti-violence pacifist) is in the front row & when they song starts he starts beating the shit out of everyone, including Dwid, who gets shoved on the floor and stomped on. I'm sure Rob doesn't want anyone to see this..! *$15 to Jeff Grey. 291 Butternut Lane. Berea, OH 44017.***

** _*NIK* "Tools, Radio, & Technology:_This is a homemade comp by Steve Peffer (of Inside Front shirt distribution fame). On casstette. Live songs by Integrity, Strife, Snapcase, Earth Crisis, Fadeaway, Ringworm, and others that have that bad bootleg quality that some of you weirdos seem to prefer. Also some studio songs by less known bands like Initiative, Grade, Envy, and Gasolene, that are generally a bit cleaerer. Steve has done other comps like this, and the good thing about them is that you get to find out about lots of different bands for not much money. *$5 to Steve Peffer, PO Box 770291. Lakewood, OH 44107***

RECORD AND CD REVIEWS _ABHINANDA "Senseless" CD:T_his was one of the best records of 1994. Fast, heart-felt, impassioned, screaming hardcore at it's finest, with chunky, metallic, and melodic parts in perfect cohesion to make it original and groundbreaking as well as intense. Every photo of them I ve seen shows a wilder, more involved, more exciting show than I ve seen in the US for a long time. The lyrics chronicle in moving words an individual's struggle to purify and perfect himself. This is what straightedge should be A few of my friends joke that this is a little on the emotional side for my tastes, but there's no emo here, just real feeling. I'm going to take a risk & say this CD does what the Strife Lp aims to do, only better. I'm not easily impressed at all, so you should see what all the fuss is about. *Desperate Fight Rec's. Kemig 16. 90731 Umea, Sweden* _ANGUISH 7":_You can expect quality from DarkEmpire, and even though this band got on Dwid's label by accident(long story) they do live up to it. Cleveland sound(deep, shrieking, evil metal, abstract bloody lyrics, sample from "Edward Scissorhands ...hold on, somethings wrong here...) — besides the sample, the other downsides are that their music is a little uniform(needs a little developing) in sound, and I can't tell if their lyrics mean anything. But, good. Good layout, 2.

***Dark Empire, the ultimate evil: box 770213, Lakewood, OH 44107 216-651-7444* _ATLAS SHRUGGED "The Last Season" 12":_The musicians of this band are very talented: they play tight, tribal-sounding, grooving metallically melodic(sometimes the other way around music) that is complex and impressive, often moving. Their singer however has a voice that, while it occasionally reaches a good scream, generally has an annoying squeeky sound. The lyrics and layout(which is nice as hell, for a self-released project)show that they are intelligent & educated, which is a rare and wonderful thing. They have a split 7" coming up with Lash Out on MooCow rec's. *Trip Machine, PO Box 36, New City, NY 10956* _AVAIL lp:_A friend played this for me. It's happy in a giddy, childlike, silly way like a cartoon. If you are too you'll love it I'm sure. (It makes me sick.) _BACKLASH "The Lost New Start" 7", "...Once Ago" 7", "Inside" 12":_I've listed these in chronological order, and each one is very much an improvement on it's predecessor. The first one was rough, yelled, simplistic h/c that didn't really build to much. The second was similar only tighter & more polished. With the new Lp, Backlash finally crosses the line to become a good band. They have a sound built on the old fashioned style, without staying in the past; their singer yells and his voice builds to real screaming intensity in some songs. Positive, proud lyrics, and energetic music. They may be recording a new CD for a label Chris Logan of Chokehold is doing. These releases are from all different labels so just contact the band: *Jon Backlash, 16 Simpson Ct. Bergenfield. NJ 07621* _BOUCING SOULS "Neurotic" 7":_If you haven't seen this band you'll probably just think this is silly happy punk music. But if you've seen them you'll enjoy it for its tongue in cheek humor.**

** _DOUGHNUTS "Equalize Nature" CDep:_This band is now on Victory rec's, so you can imagine this wasn't a bad release. It has the Swedish h/c sound like Abhinanda, only a little slower, rougher, looser. The vocals aren't quite as screaming as I'd like to hear from this girl (given the glimpses of her voice 1 get when she does scream), rather she sort of sings and shouts in a very original style that's by no means anything less than hard. Ecologically and socially conscious lyrics. *Desperate Fight records, see above for address* _DOWNER CDep_ This is low, grooving music with deep, sung vocals (ever heard Soundgarden?), rock & roll. Ex-members of Headfirst and Mission Impossible. Clear, well-done music that I can imagine hearing at a college party(not that you'll ever fucking catch me at one.) But it does have a little power to it, and it's on a cool label. CDLp out soon, I guess on the same label? *Ammunition Rec's. PO Box 461. Bellflower. CA 90707***

_EVERLAST "Drown the Self" 7":_Very metallic, EarthCrisis-style chunky guitar, sometimes fast & energetic. The lyrics are a sort of high screaming that is too incomprehensible to express any emotion, in the long run. The band apparently was too lazy to make their insert in time for the release of the record, which is just plain pathetic. I wouldn't say this is exactly generic in any way, though. & that's a plus for sure. *Chapter Rec's. PO Box 40901. San Francisco. CA 94140* _H-IOO'S 7"._**You know punk rock? Fast, ugly, screaming, loose, messy, rebellious,**

obnoxious, thrift shop, obscene-gesturing, no future, I-don't-care-fuck-you, violent, shocking, repugnant, old-fashioned punk rock? Well, this sure is it. Ex-member Tony Erba of Face Value on bass. *PO Box 561, Brunswick, OH 44212* _HELLBENDER CD:_This is more modern, rocknroll post-punk: melodic, noisy & loose, twentysomething stuff that's sort of harmless. The lyrics are really well

done & sort of speak to me as a guy also out of his teens but still trying to do his own thing- despite the fact that I feel I don't have too much in common with these guys. Write the band at *.307 Blueridge Rd. Carrboro. NC 27.510* _MADBALL "Set It Off" CD._2 friends of mine whose taste I really respect say this is the best record of 1994. 1 can't agree, but it is good. I thought their 7" on WreckAge was better, because this is sort of overproduced and too clean for the style of music. It has a style like Biohazard meets Agnostic Frontfmost of the band is members or relatives of the latter), and what they do like A.F. is perfect: Agnostic Front was, in my eyes, the ultimate h/c band, and Madball does sound legitimate and real. Plus it's great to hear something that's still hard as fuck without being fake. The major label overproduction is the only downside. _MEAN SEASON "Grace" Lp:_ Different from their 7". Complex, metallic music that is sometimes fairly intense, but the vocals throw it all off. They're weird, like nothing else I've heard: not hard at all. not exactly emo, not quite sung, but certainly annoying *Mew Age rec's. PO Box .521.3, Huntington Beach. CA 9261.5* _RAID "Above the Law" CD:_This is the discography that may be rereleased on Victory. The music is fucking brutal as hell in that scary screaming threaton- ing style that RAID carried to new levels of intensity. It's undeniable that this band was one of the best at what they did. Of course, their fascist, untenable ecoterrorist politics are a joke, as the fact that they and their record label only lasted a couple years proves. If anyone disagrees with me about the foolishness of hardline, 1 can prove it on a million fronts, so try me. It would've been funny if bands like Earth Crirsis hadn't failed to get the joke...

** _REMAIN "Die Alone ":_This music is very much like Encounter: melodic, emo-influenced, but still fairly hard, and building to occasional moments of real power. The mix is pretty bad though. The singer has barely enough convincing energy in his voice for his high sung/screamed words to not be annoying. The lyrics are intelligently written, socially/politically conscious, concerning poverty, apathy, environmental damage, suffering of the American Indians. If this had been a demo, I would have expected good things of this band; but, it's a CD, & they're broken up now. Oh well. *Ammunition Rec's, see above***

_SICK OF IT ALL "Scratch the Surface"CD:_Well, they're experimenting a bit with their sound, I don't know if that's because of the major label subsidiary they're on or not.This band used to be the perfect example of

basic hardcore: powerful rhythm, lots of energy & plain sincerity...they still have most of that & their shows are still great, but the straight h/c songs on here aren't quite as perfectly crafted and moving as on their last album and some songs flirt with new sounds that I would advise against for this band: distorted vocals, major key tunes, etc.

**_SOULSTICE 7":_I only got to hear this once, but it was far better than their earlier stuff I'd heard. The singer no longer sounds as bored as he did on their track on the "In Our Blood" comp, and the music is good straightforward h/c with a recognizable influence from other upstate NY bands (you know, Snapcase, Earth Crisis, etc.) that isn't overkill at all. I liked the old-fashioned raw mix. _STARKWEATHER "Divine Art" 7":_At it's heavy moments, this is heavier & more metallic(metal like Metallica rather than Earth Crisis) than their CD: doublebase drumming, stomachtwisting guitar, deep possessed strangled vocals that seem to come from a reservoir of pain...then it turns to haunting acoustics and singing, which in this case makes Starkweather a very original and groundbreaking band, **

it doesn't fuck it up at all. No address, so order it from Very distribution. _STRIFE "One Truth":_lf you remember the Judge Lp "Bringing It Down, " 1 think this is very much the successor to that album, stylistically and in historical context too. Complex music that bridges the gap perfectly between older-style h/c and today's metallic bands. Strife is a SXE band that represents many of the good (positive attitude, real subjects and approaches, sincerity) and refreshingly few of the bad things in the scene today, and it's paid off for them. The music is almost constantly intense, certainly emotional and fast enough to have lots of energy. Sometimes the gruff backing vocals don t work. & I don t see these songs becoming classic the way the ones on the Judge album did, on the downside Individually they're just not quite memorable enough. Some kids whine about the ballad at the end — those kids are just closed-minded and superficial.

Victory Records, PO Box 146546, Chicago, IL 60614, 312-549-44 78.

_THINK TWICE "Unrealized" Lp:_1 believe this is fairly typical of Crucial Response releases is that the music is fairly old-fashioned hardcore, which sometimes throws in enough complexity and originality to be really moving(but other times seems to be fairly by-the-numbers) and the vocals are not extremely powerful, sort of shouting in a voice that isn't very deep. Also, the German accent on the English lyrics(about not giving up, being united, money being bad, and being "lost in the darkness") makes me wish he'd stuck to his native tongue.

Crucial Response, Peter Hoeren, Kaisersfeld 98, 4200 Oberhausen 1, Germany* _SHATTER/FOREGROUND split 7":S_hatter sound very original in a noisy, distorted screaming way; lyrics about being dragged down by mainstream apathy, etc. Foreground is harder here than usual, but they still have weak, high-pitched singing vocals, fast music that doesn

t pack too much punch, and emo lyrics. *MooCow rec's, 38 Larch Circle, Belmont, MA 02178

_VISION OF DISORDER/LOYAL TO NONE split 7':_V0D is very powerful, angry and aggressive, for sure. They play NY-style h/c influenced by metal and hip hop, but fortunately not ruined by them. The singer lets loose so much when he screams it's scary. LTN is more simplistic NY h/c, less complex and not quite as intense, but still solid and good with original touches. A good record *Hearsay Rec's, PO Box 382288, Cambridge, MA 02238*

_"Boston is Burning" 7" comp:_Converge(pretty, extremely original, melodic, sung/ /screamed abstract/personal lyrics: impressive) Dive(intense, screaming angry hardcore that has all the feeling of the best punk/hardcore bands from the old days without sounding like anyone else, this is what I think of when I think of hardcore) Daltonic(simplistic, typical basic East Coast h/c with generic song structure and bad lyrics) and Opposition(badly mixed, basic hardcore that's not too special and has some *awful* meta 1 parts). A mixed 7", worth it, though *Hearsay records*

_"Boston Hardcore" *1"* comp:_Intent to Injure(Brutal, aggressive hardcore, well-done very fast parts contrasted with more grooving slow parts , the vocals match, but the lyrics are the one confusing element: they mix that questionable hiphop lingo some h/c bands regretably use with mystical, abstract lyrics that even include a reference to an ancient Greek myth..?) Dive(not as good here, an instrumental part that lasts for ever and lyrics that seemingly mean nothing, I don't know how he can scream them with such conviction) and Chilmark(imagine h/c meets gothic/atmospheric music, at first it seems like a good original idea, but after it's gone on for about 5 minutes the same way it s pretty dull).

Moo Cow Records

_"North by Northeast" 7" comp:_Kurbjaw(I reviewed this song in my review of their demo, it's the best song on here) Halfmast(definitely the leaders in the "imitate the old-school" movement today, if you miss Wide Awake and the old shouting, simple h/c this may be your thing...or it may strike you as not living up to the old days. They do have a really intelligent essay against the hardline "conversion by force" doctrine in their insert. Good for them) Cornerstone(sorry to say this is Halfmast, only half as good) and Emission(now broken up, I believe, they're not too different from these other bands, and not extremely memorable). Look in my "news" section about this label before you buy this... *Hearsay Records* _"Soundtrack to the Revolution" 7":_Chokehold(you probably know this band: low, chunky guitars, choked vocals with feeling, not extremely tight or anything but I guess lots of people like them because they seem real) Converge)! would say the same thing about this song that I said about their song on the "Boston is Burning" comp, it's not hardcore but it's good original, noisy music) Bound (distorted as hell, shreiking noise, short & intense, vocals

are very distorted too, good but it seems like they almost did it for a joke) and Bound(starts with a really good acoustic part that is too good to be generic, basic h/c music against addiction, a nice typical song.) Good collection of songs.

'ZINE REVIEWS

ACCELERATOR #1: Definitely a good effort. Newsprint, incredible layout, very well done. Thoughts and writings in an emo vein, and the longest interview I've ever read in my life with the band Samuel. Earned my respect.

***519 N. 4th St. Apt. A, Lewis burg, PA 17837-11O7–5O cents & 1 stamp* _ALLTHAT megazine #4?:_This very slick, professional glossy magazine concentrates on metal, the more commercial/successful side of hardcore, rap, and all the hybrids in between. Thick with band profiles, interviews, reviews, soundbites. *606 Willow Ave, Ste. #3, Hoboken, NJ 0 7030–$l .95* _BREAK FREE #3:_Full size, not extremely thick, clean layout, SXE fanzine in the spirit of that genre. A couple articles, some funny art about OJ Simpson, interviews with Chrous of D , Inside Front, etc...I found the latter very interesting & informative. Not the very best of its kind but well-done...by a good guy, too. *PO Box 121, Lehman. PA 18627–0121 (717–6 75–3766) $1.50* _CLEARWATER #l:_Hardcore zine, some photos, mostly personal thoughts and w discussions with a strong feminist slant. Pretty intelligent, mature, thick. *Catherine Vodola, 25 Mt. Hood Rd #2, Brighton, MA 02135 $1* _DIFFERENT LIFE:_Czech republic magazine, in Czech language. Deals mostly with political issues, anti-smoking & drugs, etc. If you're in that area, check it out. *Roman Soumar, Topolcianska 419/10, 41201 Litomerice, Czech Republic* _Eightfold Path #1 & 2:_A good mix of articles(original & reprinted) on everything from animal rights to sexism to book reviews to hilarious trivia, with personal stories that (unlike personal writing in EVERY other fucking 'zine) are truly # interesting and moving and are thus the highlight of the zine and make it a standout. Has a homemade feel without being unreadable, and a lot of heart. *Laura Vocat, Hl-2617 7th St. East. Saskatoon, Sk. Canada s7hla6 $2* _ENGINE #2:_1 think this is pretty old, but whatever. This guy also does a large scale, serious 'zine distribution under the same name, with a variety of journals.**

This zine fits a lot of good stuf into a small size: interviews with Dan O'Mahony and IT'S ALIVE 'zine, interesting Hawaiian stories by Lance Hahn, an intelligent discussion of(against) anarchy, a great article by an incarcerated man. *PO Box 640928, San Francisco, CA 94164–0928 (415-641-5098) free!*

_FLUSH #8, 9, 10:_Messy, random stuff: a few photos, lots of the usual personal thoughts, much of them in xeroxed handwriting. Random, messy stuff. Emo?

#3 7536–1520 Lonsdale Ave., North Vancouver, BC, Canada v7m 317* _HEARTATTACK #4:_ It's improving. Lots and lots of reviews of records & zines, from an Ebullition/emo/punk viewpoint.Columns that are a ripoff of the Max. Rock&Roll columns, & aren't as interesting. Good interviews with bands like Avail. Too much space wasted on pointless letters. But definitely cheap & useful *Ebullition, PO Box 680, Goleta, CA 93116 805-964-6111 $1 in the mail

_HELLBENDER #666, whatever:_Sorry but I think this represents everything that is wrong with kids doing zines. Fucking interviews that are LITERALLY nothing more than the editor asking the band if they like Slayer and the Beatles, then walking away. Random collages and opinions on a low level. OK reviews. If you're gonna do something, do something worthwhile and mature, maybe. *Jason Horton, PO Box 54 7, Vails Gate, NY 12584*

_INVERTED IMAGE #l:_This is certainly the epitome of the SXE 'zine genre: photo: short question & answer interviews with Mouthpiece and others, copied ads, « brief reviews of mostly SXE hardcore, etc. Good if this is your taste. He's also putting out the Moment of Truth(metallic h/c) CD on his label, same address: *Image Rec's, 81 Bradwood Rd., Buffalo, NY 14224*

_NATRRAIN #l, 2:_Well, you wouldn't expect to see this here. Abstract, comic-style art 'zine, with a focus on things that would bother most of you kids(the Marquis De Sade & other erotic/sadistic stuff, ironic humor, more sadism, and short articles on such things as existentialism.) Unlike any other 'zine... *505 Springlake Crescent, Unit #201, Virginia Beach, VA 23451 $1* _OPEN SEASON:_Damn this is a breath of fresh air. Older fashioned hardcore 'zine, one of the few left(including Dwid's Blood-book)...that means it has a great layout in-depth reviews, interviews with bands like Warzone, Toetag, and 25 Ta Life (in which he asks questions like "About 5 years ago me and some friends beat down the singer for Raze at a show in Buffalo. Was he a friend of yours?" anti "Where's a good place in your neighborhood to get, say, seafood?") Instead of a top 10 records list, he lists his favorite music to lift weights to. Instead of • generic "abortion is bad" articles from a 15-year-old's point of immature view, he discusses real shit like how employment agencies don't provide health insurance. Instead of cheap copied ads for little kids' labels that rip you off anyway he includes historic DarkEmpire and Confront ads & photos. Mature and cool. *PO Box 10282, Rochester, NY 14609 $1?*

_OUTCAST #2:_The guy from the band Crime Against Humanity(se demo reviews) is involved in this. Interviews with Earth Crisis & some smaller similar bands, writings: pro-Vegan, anti-American, anti-racist, about what it means to be SXE, a couple photos. You've seen it before, but maybe that wasn't enough. OK.

7807 Hamilton Spring Rd., Bethesda, MD 20817

_RERAKLISMEGENIS:_Lithuanian hardcore 'zine, in Lithuanian. Mostly comics with a political slant. If you're in the area contact them.

Mic, Taikos, 95–13, 2017 Vilnius, Lithuania.

_PLAIN JANE:_Xeroxed handwriting & reprinted articles about feminist concerns.

She does sonic good shit like reprint useful local phone #'s(rape crisis, etc.) *PO Box 10425 Wilmington, NC 28405*

_SACRED CHOW #4:_WeIl, this is Steve Peffer indulging himself in some infantile humor. Interviews with Apartment 213, me, and a bunch of others who all come off as idiots on purpose. Maybe that's your thing. On the upside, it comes with one of Steve's really cheap, cool tape compilations with everyone from Apt.213 to Halfmast to the Inmates to Initiative to the Mormons.

PO Box 770291, Lakewood, OH 44107 $2

_SALACIOUS CRUMB #4:_2 parts skating(even an interview with Soylent Green skateboards) and 1 part pop-punk/hardcore 'zine. Brief, & unbeautiful layout. If you live in England, this could be a useful contact for you.

31 Quakers Raod, Downend, Bristol, BS16 6JE

_SCREAMS FROM INSIDE #4:_Emotional hardcore/punk 'zine on newsprint. Lots of Carissa's thoughts and feelings written up for us, letters to her, mostly conversational interviews with Threadbare, Universal Order of Armageddon, brief record reviews. Emotional is the word. Two things that threw me for a loop: in her Strife review she says "if you're SXE you've got to buy this." What does being SXE have to do with it? Can't you be SXE and love the Subhumans(& hate modern h/c), or like Strife even if you're not straight? Suggesting that SXE kids "have to buy" a certain record just might contribute to the consumerist mentality that she & I both hate, and it also suggests that SXE is a culture rather than a philosophy — which may be true, but that's the worst thing that ever happened to SXE(for it to become a trend rather than an ideal) and I'm fighting it with all my strength. Second of all she described Inside Front as being about "...scene happenings in New Jersey." What the fuck?? What the fuck?? What the fuck?? *PO Box 13044, Minneapolis, MN 55414*

_SOCIETAL LETDOWN #2:_Short, highschool SXE zine. A couple photos, some pointless line drawings, some reviews that are actually good but give the wrong addresses for the labels, a brief q & a interview, thoughts you won't be able to relate to if you're over 17(or even under 17 but have a job!), decent format. *PO Box 1585, Wilmington, NC 28402...if he got this address right!*

**_STUDIES FOR A CRUCIFIXION #l:_This is unlike any of the other 'zines in these reviews: it consists of two long stories, which are really gripping and stomachturning in their intensity. Some parts are really hallucinatory, while still retaining enough humanity in the protagonist to move me, while other parts seem more autobiographic & are thereby even more powerful. You can tell the author was a writer first & a zine editor second, thank God. Broaden your horizons, try it. I think the second

issue will be out soon, longer, which will be good. *I distribute this from the Inland Empire address for 2 stamps.***

SURPRISE ATTACK #2:This is the ultimate SXE kid 'zine, & for once I don't mean that in a bad way because this is quality work. Imagaine taking about 9 little useless SXE kid 'zines & adding them together, completely upgrading all the layout, spelling, & grammar, & removing all the useless garbage and immature shit. Almost 1 centimeter thick with all the interviews, reviews, ads, photos, essays, arguments, columns, and everything else that fits, all well formatted. Of course since he's fairly young you may have to disagree with or scoff at some of the things he says, but this is a great effort, for sure. He also does other projects, like the short & autobiographical "King's Journal."

PO Box 90008. Harrisburg. PA 17109–0008 $2 and 4 stamps

_TENSION BUILDING #l:_Another SXE kid 'zine, good as they go but Surprise Attack is a tough act to follow in this field. Basic q&a interviews with Ashes, Framework, Starkweather(the latter seems a bit out of place), lots of badly arranged photos and ranting about militant veganism. Typical reviews, SXE kid opinions, a few "personal thoughts" in xeroxed handwriting. Fairly thick. There's some Hardline stuff in here...remember, kids, a system of morality exists to achieve certain desired ends. For you to say that your system is for everyone else in the world is to say that everyone else does — or SHOULD–have the same desires as you. That's narrow minded fascism that would make our world a much more boring place & I will fight the hardline movement like I would fight nazism *429 Osborne Ave, Morrisville, PA 1906 7*

_THIRD PARTY newsletters #3, 4, 5:_This is a very respectable venture on the part of this guy, to make free newsletters on the h/c scene & mail them out free. He should be commended. Brief but very to the point scene reports and information. This shit keeps hardcore alive, so write him & ask to distribute some.

***21 Nancy Lane, Amherst, NY 14228 send a stamp or two* _VIGILANCE/MOO COW Split Newspaper #4/14:_This is another great free news letter like the third party one, only on newsprint and 3 times as long. Reviews, a couple ads, and lots of those "personal thoughts and feelings" that you know I think are pointless(although these are certainly more mature than the usual shit.) I think they're going to continue expanding & adding other features. Cool. *Vigilance Rec's, PO Box 4021, Attleboro, MA 02703 $5 for 50 copies, ***

2 stamps for 1 copy, $3 for a 10 issue subscription.

_WORDS OF HONOR #l:_Fairly thick, not to well formatted SXE kid 'zine, with photos, handwriting & line-drawings, interviews with Avail, Bouncing Souls, & Shift(that should give you an idea of the musical content: happier, softer h/c) short reviews, xeroxed ads, brief thoughts, and a decent travel story.

Rob Tengowski, 3 Ditton Lane, Lanoka Harbor, NJ 08734 $1

_ZIPS & CHAINS:_This is great, a sort of European MRR(without pissing me off as much as MRR can) — that means it's really thick with all kinds of articles, interviews, reviews, and other shit on the European punk/hardcore scene, all very well done, mature, and professional, with a lot of integrity. Politically concerned, in a realistic way. In English. This is really cool. I'd love to go into detail, but my friend Christian Oglivy(anarcho-communist extraordinaire, of the legendary band Polyester Cowboys) stole my copy. Suffice to say bands from Yuppicide to Fugazi to Growing Concern are interviewed, articles on punk independant radio, letters, much more. I think it comes with a free patch, too? *Dario Adamic, C.P. 15319, 00142, Roma, Italy $3 USA, $2 Europe*

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[Image not archived]

UNBROKEN , „..._, ..

A few years back, In San Diego's hippy commune/hardcore show place the Che Cafe(l think It was the night Leave It To Clevo, a band actually formed to mock Brian, the first singer of Unbroken, opened for Born Against), I ran Into one of the guitarists of the then-unknown band Unbroken. I tried to make conversation, but apparently my flight jacket and steel-toes made him uncomfortable, and he acted like he was late to be somewhere. I asked him how his band was doing, what their new stuff sounded like: he said "Oh, we're a metal band now." I said "You mean like Agnostic Front crossover stuff?" He said "no, Just metal." Considering that, It's curious that when I Interviewed bassist Rob he wanted me to make the headline for this interview "UNBROKEN IS NOT A METAL BAND, NEVER HAS BEEN, AND NEVER WILL BE." He said that contrary to widespread popular belief, they're "not influenced by deathmetal bands at all" — Rob Is the only one who listens to that kind of music, and he doesn't write any of their music...and even he doesn't like Slayer, despite everyone from John of Very distribution to Nick of Third Party distribution calling them "Slay...oops, Unbroken." Rob explained that(regardlng their newest, most metallic album _Life, Love, Regret_) they "Just wanted to make a really heavy, depressing, angry album" and "It Just came out sounding like that." He said that they definitely consider themselves a hardcore band, not a crossover band or anything else.

Unbroken's first release was a demo with the first singer Brian In October of 1991...then they recorded the song "Unheard Cries" for the now

out-of-press compilation "It's For Life" with Strife & other bands(that song also ended up on their first Lp, "Ritual"), and a week later did a 7" "You won't be back" for New Age rec's(PO Box 5213, Huntington Beach, CA 92615). After that came the "Ritual" Lp on that label, followed by a split 7" with Groundwork on Bloodlink rec's(PO Box 252, New Gretna, NJ 08224) and a song on the "Lacking Mindset" compilation with Groundwork, Honeywell, & fellow San Diego band Struggle, and then their newest New Age Lp "Life, Love, Regret." They have a new 7" out on their friend (of Swing Kids, previously of Struggle)Justln's label, 31G rec's(P0 Box 17826, San Diego, CA 92177–8262) — those songs("And", "Fall On Proverb") also appear on a Lost & Found rec's CD which Rob describes as "a mistake"...he says It wasn't supposed to come out In the USA as competition with Justin's record, which Is only $2.50($4.00 world) anyway, so buy Justin's 7", not the CD. Coming soon they have a song on an Indecision rec's double Lp compilation (write New Age for Information) with Snapcase, Chokehold, Strife, Farside, Blackout, etc., about 15 bands total, and they also have a song(a cover of Joy Division's "Love Will Tear Us Apart") coming out on the Chapter records CD compilation. They won't have a song on Igby's Ammunition records compilation after all, Rob said, because of some complicated accidents. After all that they'll do a 2-song 7" on New Age. Rob described their new music as having much more solid song-structures than the Life/Love/Regret Lp songs did, and having a "more rocklsh" feel to It, like a "really heavy Quicksand." He says they're out of the depression they were in when they wrote their last LP, and they want to start writing songs that also deal with "love and happiness." There's also a chance the band may break up, as singer Dave lives In the Midwest part of the time and the rest of them are now Involved In other projects: Steve and Rob are In a band called "Holiday" with Berry, the of Amenity, and Oscar from Impel on guitar(Rob says Holiday sounds like "Stone Roses meets Janes Addiction"), and Eric and Todd are In a band that sounds like "Catherine Wheel-style college rock." Rob said that when New Age showed interest In the band, they "had only been around for a month, " and were "just excited to put out a record, " so In retrospect he wasn't too pleased with the 7"; he described the Lp as showing a little improvement, but New Age delayed re-

leasing It for so long that by the time It came out It didn't represent the band at all & gave people the wrong impression about them. He said that "noone started taking notice nationally until summer of 1994" when the new Lp came out. It was a really bad year when they wrote that album, in terms of money, families, living conditions, jobs, and everything else: Eric's grandfather died and his girlfriend left him, Rob & Steve lost their jobs and glrlfriendsfthough Rob eventually got back together with his), etc.,

and on top of that everyone was giving Unbroken trouble about not fitting the HC/SXE mold. So they did the Lp as a release of all their frustration, both musically and lyrlcally(they also each did their own insert for the Lp, as Individual statements)...and afterwards everything got better. Rob said the album was "for ourselves only, we didn't care what anyone said, all we wanted was to make ourselves happy — and we dld"–so they've been happy to see that so many people liked It, but that's not the important thing to them. One of the band members' Inserts mentioned how they didn't care what was written about the album In 'zines...Rob said that wasn't referring to any specific 'zine, just identifying the record as their own and announcing that they weren't concerned with others' criticism. We discussed some of the lyrics: Rob said that singer Dave "motorcycle boy" Claiborn Is sort of " a mouthpiece for the band, " In that he only writes a few lyrics. Rob and other members write most of the other words; Dave wrote "D4" & "Fall On Proverb." About the song "Razor, " In which Dave sings "before I consume your product...give me a razor, " Rob said "that song Is about how we feel that the only escape from government Influence, taxes, polution, " etc. "Is death. No matter how hard you protest, death" or living out In the desert as a hermit "Is the only escape." Considering this, Rob thinks we should "live life to the fullest and take (that Is, steal) as much free stuff as we can" before the end. About the song "Blanket, " which says "look to yourself before you look to another being, " Rob said "religion Is good and bad: it can give you more strength and happiness, but it can also steal you from yourself." The band ranges from atheist to agnostic, except for Rob, who Is interested in the modern paganism and witchcraft of Wlcca which he describes as the pursuit of the higher self and of higher consciousness of this self. He says "Paganism Is not prejudiced, It's really Into equality ...according to It everyone has their own path, and no religion Is better than any other." He says the rituals and meditation Involved in Wlcca "put him on another plane" and help him to have a positive outlook and more self-confidence. Rob mentioned that the southern California scene includes lots of people who are Interested In Paganism, for example, the old bassist of Mean Season. As for religion in hardcore, Rob said "It's stupid how people segregate themselves" Into religious sects because "there's already too much segregation In hardcore." He's pleased to announce that Unbroken draws all different kinds of people to their shows, mostly because they "leave the preaching to bands like Youth of Today" and don't strive to convey a certain view. Unbroken were frustrated that the phrase "Veganism is Good" was somehow printed on their split 7" with Groundwork, because not even all of Groundwork was vegan, and none of Unbroken IsfSteve was for two years)...Rob says that veganism Is great "if It's important to you"...animal rights Issues were once really important In his life and he was Involved In

Project Wildlife in San Diego, but that has sort of drifted out of his life. He does "think It's wrong to kill an animal for food, " etc., "but If you're willing to take that upon yourself" then it's your business.

I confronted Rob about Unbroken's often negative and self-pitying lyrics; he said that they believe that "hardcore has no boundries, " and so Just as he doesn't feel that music that Is too metallic or melodic should be excluded he believes that "there Is room for self-pity In hardcore" and that that was the way they felt at the time, so they certainly didn't want to just write "songs for people to sing along to, " which would be compromising themselves. Rob said that "hardcore has been a way of life for me since 7th grade, " and the band has always liked different kinds of music and expanding the horizons of music; he thinks "hardcore, too, should expand everywhere." Rob says he "likes self-pity lyrics" like those of Morissey, who has long been a favorite musician of everyone In Unbroken. He said that because Morissey Is "very passionate and intense, he could fit Into what hardcore should be, " If it were to be truly without boundrles. Regarding their notorious fashion style, Rob said that over the years of listening to Morissey everyone in the band eventually started to dress like him; people used to mock them for It, but now It's the "cool" thing to do. In addition to Morissey, Steve from Unbroken likes Johnny Mar (the guitarist from the Smiths) and Rob likes Front 242, Skinny Puppy, Dead Can Dance, Youth of Today, Unity, Elvis, Benny Goodman, negative Approach, as well as appreciating the writing of Edgar Allen Poe. Rob also cites his girlfriend and his other close friends, who he says are great people, as being Important influences In his life.

When Unbroken formed, SXE was dead in their reglon(lt had died with Judge, No For An ANswer, etc.) and the whole Ebullition thing was in vogue, so they chose that name to announce that they were still part of the SXE phenomenon, that "we didn't fall"; In retrospect Rob describes their attitude at the time as "cheesy." Since then, he says, the band has "grown up, " and now "Unbroken" is "just their name, " and has no deep meaning. As for their choice of cover art, the 7" cover(a photo of a burning hazard-test dummy) was taken from National Geographic... to them(in their "cheesy" period) It represented "mankind on fire." The first few pressings of that record had perfect, clear, readable Inserts, but for some reason after that they came out completely black and fucked up, unreadable. The cover for the "Ritual" Lp is a photo of a monk from a far-away Christian sect; to get Into the priesthood they must completley bury themselves for 72 hours, with their hands up praying. The photos on the cover of the most recent Lp were taken from the movie _Swing Kids_, which Rob says Is a sort of San Diego hardcore cult classic. Rob says he's very happy In San Diego; he likes how the scene there Is self-sufficient, healthy, and in-

sular, while at the same time closely connected to what goes on In the rest of southern California. He and the rest of Unbroken are very happy with their label, New Age, which is located there, and they're close friends with Mike Hartsfield, who runs it...Rob says that while he was lazy about filling mailorders, etc. in the past, that he now has a "second wind" and will be more organized and dependable. Coming up on that label are a Mean Season 12" Ep and a Mouthpiece 7". As far as San Diego 'zines, Rob recommended his brother's 'zine. Breaking Free, which is available from his address...#4 will be out soon for $3, the 3rd Issue was 89 pages and had Interviews with Dayspring, 2 Line Filler, 4 Walls Falling, etc... Swing Kids is the new San Diego band formed from the ashes of screaming political band Struggle(lt Includes Str. bassist Justin on vocals, drummer Jose, and Eric on guitar, who also plays In Unbroken). Rob describes them as "Incredible, undescribable jazz that breaks into fast, pissed-off punk, like Man Is the Bastard meets John Coltralne...unlike any other band." They have a 7" available from a label in New York, but you can order It from the 31G rec's address. Impel Is another San Diego band, they sound like Quicksand, says Rob, and will be releasing an Lp on Overkill rec's. San Diego scenester Mike Cheese's band Gehenna, which has a split 7"(probably with Cleveland grindcore liars Apartment 213) due on Area 51 rec's, may have broken up now. Other bands Rob wanted to mention as being worth attention are I Wish l("Fugazl-style catchy rock"), who have a 7" due on (ex-Chain of Strength) Ryan Hoffman's new label, Smooth Man Gun("Swiz- style") who also have a 7" due on that unknown label, Wallflower(from southern California... Rob claims they're "undescrlbale but Incredible"), who have a demo which will be released as a 7" on Comlda rec's, and Channel, from Virginia.

Write to Rob and Unbroken at 274 Montclair Street, Chula Vista, CA 91911.

SOCIAL DARWINISM: ANOTHER PERSPECTIVE by Christian Oglivy *The following article is in regards to Adel 156's article "SOCIAL DARWINISM" at the end of this issue of Inside Front. Christian, one of my close friends, wanted to reply to some of the ideas in that article, so I thought I'd fit both articles(this one at the last minute) into the same issue and give both sides of the story. Keep in mind that I don't really agree with either of these viewpoints, I'm Justifying to encourage my readers to think about things.*

— Brian, editor***

**I see Social Darwinism as an outdated and flatly wrong analysis of the developement of life under nature. I say Social Darwinism Is wrong because, more often than not, It presents a one-sided view of "nature" by placing undue emphasis on those ex-

treme forces life must struggle against. The most basic principle of Social Darwinism is the constant war of each against all In the race to gain a stake In the necessities of survival: food, territory, and life itself. For a good Illustration of this line of thinking let's look at what T.H. Huxley, a leading proponent of Social Darwinism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, had to say... *"The weakest and stupidest went to the wall, while the toughest and shrewdest, those who were best fitted to cope with their circumstances, but not the best in another way, survuved. Life was a continuous free fight, and beyond the limited and temporary relations of the family, the Hobbesian war of each against all was the normal state of existence. "***

This simply Is not true, at least in that the "normal state of existence" was not typified by all out war. Darwin did not even consider this a leading factor in evolution. Darwin did consider nature to be a realm of struggle and conflict at times, but he also saw how a great many animals used co-operation and mutual aid In the fight for existence. By combining together those animals, that if left solitary would fall to each other, could sustain themselves far better. He made this fact known In his work _The Descent of Man_ by writing, " *Those communities which Include the greatest number of the most sympathetic members would flourish best, and raise the greatest number of offspring. "* So, both Individual and collective struggle play an important role in progress under nature.

But even with this said, the main problem is that Social Darwinism Is rooted in the emphasis on constant struggle between all, and thus leads to the conclusion that you will have a victim and a conquered. And for the last century Social Darwinism has been used as a "scientific" rational and justification for oppression. Equality is nothing, control of the means of survival is everything. And when It comes to deciding who should share in the monopoly of power, and who should get eliminated, well, who decides? Those who hold power and the ownership of the means of survival? This would be the logical answer if we follow the theory of Social Darwinism. And the scary thing Is that we live In a world In which those who are in control use ideas like Social Darwinism to build their power structures up...but here in the "Western Democracies, " Instead of being killed off we just work until we drop dead or can afford to retire. So, who should be killed off? Those people who are not only "unproductively lazy, but greedy to live off a system in which they are subsidized by our tax dollars, " like welfare mothers who would make less working than If they recieved A.C.D.F.? Or how about those inner city poor people who hang around on the street corners Instead of going out to find jobs at those factories that have either moved to 3rd world nations or shut down because they became too expensive to operate(llke In Detroit, L.A., or a hundred other industrial cities across this nation.) And what constitutes productive, meaningful work? Everybody has their own Idea. I myself would rather stay home and read, write, listen

to music, sleep, and fuck than spend my time working a dead-end job for someone else. A good many people are apathetic, pathetic, and "weak" not because they are inherently so, but because we live in a world that promotes such behavior. Our leaders/masters would rather us be docile sheep, never leaving the herd, because

It makes things easier for them. People aren't born the way they are, we are taught and conditioned to act in a certain manner. So wouldn't It make more sense to attack the Institutions of mass control rather than just those people they have warped?

And on the subject of attacking, let me say that I DO see the struggle for power and the means of survival as an important fight. But I feel that the way one goes about that struggle Is what needs to be examined. I see the means as totally Inseparable from the end. To divorce the two would be dlsasterous. And here we come to the subject of "Fascist Anarchism." Fascism and anrachism are at completely different ends of the spectrum. Fascism Is defined as an an extremely regimented form of capitalist society In which the state apparatus has consolidated political and economic power Into joint Institutions. Fascism as a mode of capitalist organization died after World War 2: modern Western liberal democratic states are much more efficient at handling captial. Anarchism Is a bit tricky to define due to the fact that various antl-authorltarian tendencies use the label. I myself am an Anarchist-Communist or a libertarian-socialist. I advocate the absolute destruction of capitalism and all authoritarian institutions, l.e. the State. Power must decentralized as much as possible and should be controlled directly by Industrial and community committees and assemblies that are federated on a local, then regional, then continental and finally international level. People won't be "kept In line" since the bulk of crime today Is economic and when the producers control the means of production, they will have no reason to steal what they can get for free.

Now this may sound as if It could lead to another oppressive situation in which one sector dominates another, in all honesty, no one can tell what would happen during a social revolution, there is no blueprint; but if we live by the code "the means are not separable from the ends, " and are concise in our efforts towards building a freer society, then we stand a good chance of furthering our goal. It must also be understood that social revolution Is not going to break out tomorrow. Revolution is the upheaval that occurs at the end of an evolutionary process where a large segment of society developes a new understanding of class society and realizes that progressive change can only come with a transcendence of capltalist/authorltarian institutions...Oh, and by the way, during the Spanish Revolution of 1936 '9, Anarchists and other socialists fought hard against the Fascist military led by Franco.

To finish this article let me express a few of my opinions on music. Music is music. Various cultures have their own brand. I got Into punk because it seemed Intelligent. It seemed like people getting together to help and support each other(dare I say a touch cooperation and mutual aid?). Punk did seem to be a scene where people cared about being Individuals. I thought it was tough In not so much a macho way but more like that kind of tough that people who dare to stand up are. Not afraid of ridicule or gossip. Nonconformists. But alas, most of what was punk and will be punk isn't like that. It is just another faction, with some good and some bad. I as a whole Is not a rebel culture, but there are rebels In It. Punk and hardcore has meant and will mean a lot to me, but It will never change the world.

Also, two last things about Adel's column. Some hip-hop has a hell of a lot to say, and It would benefit one to gove it a listen, not just for reasons of fashion or trend. Second, what is Adel 1 56 trying to say about girls? I've known a lot of women who could kick most mens' asses any day!

Long live the free spirit! Long live solidarity!

EDITOR'S CORNER

Regarding the conflicting views of Adel and Christian, keep in mind I don't agree with either of them, but both of them bring up things that are Important to think about. As editor I think I'd better try to keep my views on Communism, Fascism, and Anachronism(–oh, sorry, Anarchism, ha ha) to myself. Comparing their two articles, It looks like Adel thinks that In today's world

the capable people are held back too much by Incapable ones, while Chrisitan thinks that In the right social situation everyone would be capable and noone would be In the way. Since Adel never got to see Christian's article, I have to put in a word on his behalf: no matter what happens, people will always have different levels of ability. That will never change. Now, what Adel leaves out is the fact that cooperation can be the most beneficial interaction between Individuals, and Christian Is right to bring that up; but as people will always have different levels of ability, It must be borne in mind that cooperation is only *mutually* beneficial when it takes place between individuals of similar capabilities. Otherwise the lazier, weaker, stupider, slower, less responsible person will end up gaining the most In proportion to his effort while the person who sweats and stays up all night working will get less for his trouble than If he had worked alone (In fact, that situation is *exactly* the one Marx describes when he proclaims "from each according to his means to each according to his need" as the foundation of communism.) Now a little charity is a good thing, It can keep the

world around us from getting too ugly; but I've learned earlier In my life that any relationship, on any scale, will break down If one party must do all the giving and receive nothing. So while It is a mistake to desire a world of "each at war with all" as beneficial to the individual, It Is equally wrong to believe that a universal cooperation could exist, because some people would simply not be able to contribute enough to make up for what they took away. As a communist, Christian should consider that It Is particularly Important for a communist society to Include only people of similar abilities, for more than any other that sort of society depends on the productivity and self-motivation of Its members. OK, enough of that shit.

I've noticed some errors so far In the rest of this issue: I think I left out Starkweather's address, it's PO Box 11739, Philadelphia, PA 19101. Also, the second time I say "Bound" In my review of the "Soundtrack to the Revolution" 7", I mean "Knockdown"...that was a stupid mistake. And, In my news section, when I say Converge has a split 7" due with "Virginia Maydaystyle band MAYDAY, " I really mean "CHANNEL" — they just sound so much like Mayday that I got confused! OK, thanks alot for your support and Interest, It means a lot to me. Take care.

Starkweather

Starkweather Is a band from Philadelphia, PA that has a sound unlike any other: ugly metal with excruciatingly complex rhythms, and vocals that change from raspy growling to haunting singing. They've released an out-of-press demo, a Lp "Crossbearer" on Harvest records(now available as a CD from 2DamnHype rec's), a 7" on the French label Inner Rage, and some songs on the new 2DamnHype compilation "Phllly Dust Crew" that also includes songs by All Out War, Dare to Defy, and Hard Response...the songs on the compilation are the same as the ones on the 7", plus another song, which also appeared on the "Food Not Bombs" compilatlon(Gregg Bateman, 53 W. Park Ave., Lindenwold, NJ 08021) with bands like Current and Franklin. They just finished recording 2 new songs and new versions of "Shards" & "Unto Me" from the CD for a 10"/CD on Very Distribution's new record label; after that release they will release another record on Very or on another label, probably by summer. Rennie described the new music as having even more odd tempos and "weird acoustic breaks" than their old songs; he says he finds "verse-chorus style songs really boring." After the Starkweather record, Very will probably do a record with acclaimed German (Slayer/Rorshach style?) band Acme. Singer Rennie and Guitarist Todd work together at a place called "Ragtime"; Todd and bassist Michelle have been going out for a long time, and drummer Harry Is the newest

member of the band. None of the band members have really been In other bands before, and the hand Is reallv all they do besides work accordina to Todd althouah Michelle does some

painting (she painted the cover of the All Out War 7", and, I believe, the cover of the CD) and Rennie does some drawing. Rennie says Harry Is the only member of the band that has any sort of conventlal musical knowledge, that the others are entirely self-taught and that Is partly why their style is so unusual. Todd says that, consequently, as a technical guitarist he Is "horrible, " and "can't play solos"; they don't play covers because It takes them "so long to learn their own music, " and because the bands they enjoy, like the Amoeblx, for example, are completely unknown to their audience. Todd even said that some of his songwriting comes from him trying to play other people's songs and "completely fucking them up, " then using the remainder as a new song.

The band is named after a notorious youth, Charles Starkweather, who went on a killing spree In the 1950's. Rennie told me they picked that name because "It fit the music, " not because they advocate homicide. He said that when the band started they decided to alm for a "more Intricate, off the wall sound, " because the other bands In their area all were trying to do the New York style. Rennie said his slnging/growllng vocals were Inspired partly by his variety of influences, from the Accused to some Japanese hardcore. As far as composing lyrics, Rennie says he Is constantly writing In notebooks he keeps around, and only fleshes his writing out Into song lyrics after the other members have completed a song. He's never really tried writing short stories as well as lyrics because he says he doesn't have the time. He told me about the lyrics to their song "Mean Streets": they were written about different parts of Philadelphia, and different shit that's taken place there: a homeless woman who set herself on fire In 1986, an Incident that Rennie and his friend witnessed once when they'd just returned fron New York: "Getting off the subway, we see this guy holding his throat with the blood going everywhere, these cops around him are like "everything's fine, " and we're like "yeah, OK, " because this guy's fucking dying...you know the cops don't want to touch him because they're so afraid of AIDS, " some girl who got killed In Rennie's neighborhood, and other events In Philadelphia. He described the song "Lazarus Runs" as telling

about a time In Rennie's life when he was living out In the woods. Rennie says their lyrics

are meant to tell stories from his life, he writes lyrics more to get things out of his sytem

than for other people to understand, he says It Is "stress management" because If he "didn't do that he probably would go kill somebody." He said not to ever expect any positive subjects In his lyrics, because that's "not

me." Rennie said It was "a contradiction" that he and Todd are In a band, since they're so antisocial and are not primarily concerned with whether people understand their music or not. Originally, Rennie wanted the band to be a studio project, but he says "you have to play shows if people are going to take you seriously — he enjoys the shows, but he can't stand all the driving and long waits that shows Involve. Todd says he'd like to do tours, but only "short ones, because none of us can afford to lose our Jobs, " since they're all in their mid-twenties and have a lot of financial concerns. Todd says that though he tries not to "I admit I get jealous and bitter sometimes" about bands who succeed really easily, Including some straightedge bands who seem to have a "built-in audience" Just because of their beliefs, especially In places like Jersey In Syracuse. For their part, Starkweather don't claim to represent any political stance at all, because they can't agree on Issues and most of all because they don't think It's their place as a band. Rennie graduated college with a political science degree, but he doesn't work In that filed because "it's a bunch of snakes." He works where he does, doing manual labor, because it's more honest and leaves him free to concentrate on music, etc. when he's not a work. He says he'll have to find a new career eventually, though, because over time manual labor breaks you down — you can't do It forever. Given the right deal, Starkweather would sign with a major label like Geffen: Todd says "small labels aren't necessarily nicer guys than big ones...working with bigger labels you have to make sure you're treated fairly, while with smaller ones you have

to watch out for Incomptetence."

As far as other bands to recommend, Todd cites All Out War("the best band In New York right now") and denies that they are more death metal than hardcore: "It depends on how you define death-metal and hardcore, those guys all come from hardcore backgrounds." He also mentioned Overcast from Boston, Lash Out from Norway, and Autumn("super-talented musicians, " some of whom are In their mid-teens, Impressively). Rennie mentioned some of his favorite musicians to me: Dead Can Dance, Inslaughter Natives from Sweden who did some work with the deathmetal band Seance, singer Diamonds Galas, old pre-lndustrlal band Elnsturzende Neubaten, and classical composers like Holst, Varesz, and Mahler. He also appreciates the art of Joe Coleman and some comic book artists: Bill Senkowltz(who does "Stray Toasters, " and, six years ago, "Electro-Assassins"), Dave McKean(who did some album covers and covers for the "Sandman" comic), and Ted McKeever. Rennie described himself as "constantly reading" and mentioned Joyce Carrol Oates, Doris Lessing. Mark Richardfauthor of "Fishboy", which he describes as "real lyrical") and John Gardner(author of "Grendel").

Rennie told me that Starkwesther doesn't really fit or want to fit Into any particular scene band- or crowd-wise, that they only bands they feel comfortable with are bands like Crlsls("who are sort of In the same boat we are, " he says. In reference to their unusual style) and that at their shows both "hardcore and metal kids show up, and they Just don't get along" — which causes fights and other trouble. Todd said the "metal kids have actually been way more accepting" of Starkweather's unusual style and lack of membership In any particular scene..."he doesn't hold it against" the younger hardcore kids, but he feels that his "definition of hardcore Is way different than theirs": "to me, hardcore is being almost 30 years old, working a full time job, driving seven hours to Boston to play for 30 people for $5, driving back home to go to work the next day without any sleep...and sticking with this kind of music for 15 years, sticking with It when it was dangerous, " like when he first got Into hardcore when he lived In upsate NY; he said he would get his "ass beat almost every time he left the house." Todd said Starkweather certainly doesn't have anything against younger hardcore bands or bands with different beliefs than theirs. In the case of straightedge, he said that he and Rennie live a lifestyle that Is straightedge in effect, but do not feel the need to proclaim It; they would have been willing to describe themselves as such until some of the straight edge scene became "an embarassment." Todd Isn't too concerned about drug-users, he says they're free to kill themselves off: "then I can get a better parking spot!" Rennie says It's only a problem for him when they break Into his car for change, or hold a gun to his head, like his ex-roomate's drug-dealing friend did a few months back.

Looking around on these streets, there's nothing left to do; penance through your charities, now it's turned on you. Demons looking in on me, slipping through the cracks, watching, starving, waiting, timing their attack.. Beyond the flesh that Imprisons, beyond the death you've envisioned, beyond the fear you'll embrace, giving your life a foul taste; System's overloading, fear envelopes me-˜Cry out for redemption, blind, forgoteen–seen

All the while fighting, trying to get on top–once the focus changes all your senses...

stop. -TA/'TBGTR.l'ry.

This song Is the product of a mental debate I had concerning my obligations to straight-edge. I wanted to determine whether I should use my position to attempt to Influence others Into becoming straight edge, or take a hint and let everyone live as they please unless it somehow comes to affect me. And then react accordingly through violence.

I feel that there is no hope of having a drug free society and I don't even know if I would want such a thing to exist. And why should I be so vain as to think that I could change the world? I arn not a role model and I never

Intended to masquerade as one. My being straight edge was for myself, my friends, and my freedom.

As I look out around me at the streets that surround my house, the city that hosts my freiends and family, all I see Is parasites living off one another at any cost. The demons I see looking In on me are a constant reminder of the true face of humanity. And they're watching, starving, waiting for the most opportune time to attack. These demons place so much Importance on escaping their mundane everyday Ilves by doing these drugs that they eventually forget these lives and become someone else. People that I've known and treated like family have turned Into everything I hate most In the world. I try to think rationally, I even try to remember the friends that they were, yet when I do all that I see is strangers out to take all that Is mine...with the audlcty to believe that I somehow "owe" them for evolving Into so much more than the pathetic beggars they've inevitably become, living their lives for the quickest sense gratification possible.

Now don't misunderstand me, I feel no regret, for like them, my feelings from our past relationship have dissipated. I no longer need their companionship. The people they used to be are now barely memories, like the smoke fading from the bridges they've left burning behind them. I now sit back and enjoy watching their downfalls, knowing I am much better off than them. But I still can't help but wonder what they could have become.

POINT COUNTERPOINT Compilation I had a lot of trouble with many of the bands that promised me songs for the compilation that comes with this 'zine. Many cancelled on me because of laziness, avoidable problems, or sheer ineptitude. I'm not saying that they didn't have their reasons, but so long as people in hardcore permit reasons like the ones they had to hold them back, hardcore will go nowhere. Special thanks to Apartment 213 for apparantly *lying to* me and saying they'd sent me a record-ing when they'd never even planned to. Kids, don't trust that band or work with them, they'll fuck you over in an instant...seems like they're so busy floundering about, fucking themselves up they can't help but fuck everyone else over in the process. Still, 1 think I've got a good compilation here, so enjoy it & write to any of the bands you like. I've included a write-up on each one.

In the fall of 1995 whe they're both out of press, I'm going to release the _NO EXIT_ compilation and this compilation, _POINT COUNTERPOINT_, together on one CD.

**LASH OUT: "As Life Takes the Knife to its Heart" *Blew out the candle, brought the night to my house; I invited it inside, let it conquer my mirror... read their hooks and laughed, in a locked room I kept my child — took it out to be shot in daylight, it had my dreams on its chest when buried. Nameless faceless cornered son of mine... Felt the warmth of cold steel and the loneliness of the silence and the emptiness in my power, the strength of a sodacan. Homeless breathless broken son of mine... Planting

seeds to stomp the flower down, send it off shore just to let it drown adrift at the sea of nothing peel off the wounds to stop the bleeding Meet the circle, the center of your history, the wheel of life. It controls your blasphemy, you go into struggle to take your own flag and to protect the worn path, sing death's***

silence, silence.. Air fills the holes, the shadow takes my place, water fills the veins, the lies occupy my tongue: breath bleed breed the dark seed... The pieces play the game. I inhale the true day: the past oozes from my cracks, history turns its yellowed page... Nameless... trapped by the mask, chained to the man... Homeless... torn, bitter, bruised Life manifests itself...

LASH OUT are: Anders, Frank, Havard, Bjdrnar, Vegard. Write to Vegard Waske. Nordskogun. 1, 6400 Molde, Norway. If you dare, call Havard at +++47-71-2553-91 L.O. appears courtesy of Stromstrike rec's(Kollmersreuterstr. 12, 79312 Emmendingen, Germany, phone/fax +++49-7641-570832). Doghouse rec's distribute L O. records in the U.S. Thanks to Brian and all that support us, this one is for you! Coming up are L.O. longplay CD on SSr in April, pretty heavy & mean, that's what we think. Look out for LASH OUT on the Endless Fight CD comp, a split 7" with Atlas Shrugged on MooCow rec's, a split 7" with Brother's Keeper on Lake Effect rec's(most probably), and other projects, so watch out.

BROTHER'S KEEPER: "The Gift"(As the colors fade) *Turn back the world, as I recall, my dreams built on your back 1 watch you fall — progress the world regress inside — your dream built on my back this time — Look at this cage that we construct around our age, don't turn the page or you might miss the gift I gave you, the gift 1 meant to save you like the gift meant to save me–As the colors fade 1 can't recall the dreams we made Hard to find this gift that transcends time, yours to mine, generations left behind, far from sight — Our dreams fade to black and white.*

B.K. have a 7 out on their own label & three other new songs coming out on compilations. Write: Lake Effect, PO Box 1 1363, Erie, PA 16514–1363
ABHINANDA: "Inner Qualities" + "Dragon"

INNER QUALITIES: You will wake up someday and realize I'm more than just this shape, your dream is a conflict created by my appearance, just mundane speculations, foundations built on sand. Your state of hate is no more than fear. I'm not free from hate and fear, actions and words really scare me. You know I'm more than bones and flesh, external characteristics are not the guide to the inner self. You're limited by your glory and pride, just dogma; your insecurities will never let you see over your predicted judgement. You've built a wall of stone around your beliefs: I'll try to prove that even stone can be pulverized. It's just a proof of how blind we are how we can judge because of what we look like, we are all the same inside. Remove the stupid blindfold of prejudice and let the inner qualities shine. And when you know me. it's your right to go on and hate me. It's blind hate.

DRAGON: Purification is at hand, it's time for a higher level: your crime will be forgiven if you surrender to my prayer. Your destiny is hell and your morals will burn with you if you refuse salvation. Respect is salvation. The dragon of knowledge descended from heaven to prove that respect is more than the answer to the eternal quest of disharmony, to prove that the time has come to show respect. TO SHOW RESPECT...

Jonas/drums, Kris Stone/guitar, Adam/guitar, Mattias Abris/bass, Jose/voice. Abhinanda appear on the Desperate Fight rec's "SXE as Fuck" CD comp, and

have a CD "Senseless" out on that label. More Abhi releases coming on D.F. and releases by many other bands, including Reach, Ressurection, Drift Apart, Final Exit... CDep by Shield(x-Solitude) just released on D.F. Write Abhi/Desperate Fight rec's: Kemigr 16, 90731 Umea, Sweden.

CATHAR$IS–"Om* *Fight." Song Migm^y ig* CONFRONT pioni *^^i, * OH. *U>e mast get out. pacoaitceA staaigAt and arotA togetAea to end atl tAis Ante. Prejudice is so ^ucAing (along: MacAs and aiAites, s&iaigAts and gays, men and women can ie equally >sktong. Ide must unite: tAis is OUR /^gAt.

Bass/F. Mank Dixon, Dlums / Alaxel, Vocals* 8 *Gaitans/Dingledine. Recorded 11/94 at Sleepless Nights Studios. Atlanta, 4g IssaC'Lisa without the L") Diaou. (doite to Cathansis cane ok Inland Empine. Thanks: Otis Reem, you.

BACKLASH: "Self Assured"

I can't remember the last time I walked with fear in my step or my talk. I'm good to go whenever I say so. And when I'm filled up... I overflow! Confidence, confidence is in me. No more at the right place at the wrong time, now all my times are prime times. I won't fall, I won't stop or stall, because if I do I'm going A.W.O.L. Don't misjudge me and call this conceit. I'm just making sure my mistakes won't repeat! I'm sure! I'm self-assured! I'm not lost, I have no regrets or second thoughts. I'm willing to do what it takes at all costs. With the skills I've gained and my state of mind, I'm on top and won't fall behind. I must confess I possess the best of anyone else, because I'm above the rest. I think positive, give all I can give, 100% because that's how I live. Don't ever think on the negative side because negativity does not coincide with confidence and the positive vibe. Never let anything stop that strive!

Pete/vocals, Scott/guitar, Ron/bass, Jon/drums. Recorded at Trax East Studios in 8/94. Thanks: Dwid & Integrity, Mike '51 (previously from Reno), Catharsis, Josh/Endless Fight rec's, Break Even Point rec's, Scott Foster, Chris Logan & Chokehold, the other bands on this comp, and every-

one else who's helped us out. Fuck off. Brian/Inside Front. "Self Assured" is on our 12" "Inside" on Brk. Even P. rec's.. Write: 16 Simpson Ct., Bergenfield, NJ 07621 201-384-5944.

TENSION: "Greed"

I'm sick and tired of the rich man's attitude, I'm sick and tired that the poor always lose to a seed of hate that breeds in everyone, that walks the earth today, a seed of hate that grows and spreads until someone has to pay. I hold on. 1 fight against your system that's not right. You lost control, let it unfold the hate you breed, the hate you know, the lack of trust, the hate you show, the pain you feel, the pain you spread, the pain inflicts until someone's dead, the pride you had outgrew yourself, the pride you had out knew yourself, the cause that you so rightly fought: getting ahead at any cost, your greed. We've reached the decisive hour to rise up stronger and mightier, I struggle to replace the old. One class holding the future in our hands, in the words of a revolutionary. I speak bold against this exploitation. Your system has broken down so badly that the dominant class is unable to rule. The strength and power of the rich is in their money but the strength of the oppressed is in our numbers ...YOUR GREED IS WHAT HOLDS US BACK.

Chris/drums, Ray/bass, Mike/vocals, Joe/guitar. Write: Ray, 9617 Riverside

Drive, Apt. C6, Coral Springs, FL 33071. Other TENSION music is available from ENDLESS FIGHT records.

TIMESCAPE ZERO: "Honor Among Theives" *Rob from the rich & give to yourself, thinking in the end you'll share all this wealth. Whether it be a stranger or friend, you'll steal from either–to this there's no end! Beat down for a rock, to this your fellas flock. I won't join your gang, 1 won't talk your slang, your actions I won't mack! Honor among theives, sinking in a ship of fools. Somehow you think "Boy, I'm making all the rules!" Sorry, but your rules don't apply in this game. Don't know what you're looking for, here there's no fame!*

Beatkeepr/Kyle Miller, OilOi! Bass boy/Stan Obal III, Riffage/Bry, Angry screaming guy/Adel 156. Copyright 1994 Timescape music. Write: PO Box 820407, South Florida, FL 33082–0407...for a list of cool shit(free demos), honestly cheap material($2. 7"s) & a hell of a lot more, send a stamped, selfaddressed envelope. Band correspondence is welcome. Also, anyone with information on good books, magazines, fanzines, cults, & weapon manipulation techniques is strongly encouraged to write!

**ATLAS SHRUGGED: "Tribe of a Man" *The fumes included along with the heat engulfed by hunger and suffocated by smoke collaborated by my hands and fire fills

me with rage. Breathe in my smoke, my dance–the tribe of souls, of man–from fileds, to castles, through kingdoms a fire, a smoke, a war. Drown our earth in an ocean of fire, a tidal wave by man himself. Lion king leads his clan away, away to die in the jungle where the pain is stripped away. The tribe of a man, himself and all his wealth, a pocketful of fire and smoke, smothered by a war. Engulf me, burn away...follow me into oblivion.***

Chris Weinblad/vocals, John Focht/bass, Mark Calimbas/guitar, Terry Brennan/ drums. 7 song Lp out on Trip Machine Laboratories, split 7" with Lash Out on MooCow rec's out 5/95. Band members are also in the bands Palentine(with x-members of Uppercut & Minds Eye, sound like "Statue meets Turning Point, " 7" due on Trip Machine) and GMK(with x-members of Dahlia Seed & SWAT, sounds "somewhere between Iceburn & deathmetal, " 7" also due on T.M.) A full A S. 7" may be released on Trip Machine in late "95, as may a Dahlia Seed 7", a CD from NY's Bulldoze, and other records. Write: Trip Machine/Atlas Shrugged, PO Box 36, New City, NY 10956–0036.

OTIS REEM: "Persistence"

I fight this "real world, " its rules designed to hold me back from finding out who I am, from straying from a predetermined track; trying to keep me in line in time with another's beat, providing the means for self-destruction for those who can't take the heat — You can't take the heat! (ska!) Have patience, your time will come; your turn will come like everyone's does so don't give in, keep holding on. Don't run away, you've got inside all the strength you need, no need to ever run and hide. Saboteurs left and right, someone always in the way There will be suckas out to get you at every turn who want to see you stray from the path that you have chosen, the path you know is right; but keep an open mind, believe in yourself and there's no way you will lose your fight!

***You can't get anywhere without persistence, in this life you've got to have persistence. It's what survival is about, because luck doesn't last. Stand up for yourself, you've got to make yourself see that to get by in this life it's all you need There's just no room for apathy, a life without cause is a wasted existence. Realize your dreams through persistence. You can't pull yourself up by putting me down, just look out for your friends, family and yourself — know your limits but don 't limit yourself and persistence will help you through!* Chris Huggins/guitars, F. Mark Dixon/ bass, Alexei Rodriguez/vocals-drums- timbalis, David Drossman/vocals, Birch Graves/ alto sax, Erik Nugent/baritone sax, John Caison/trumpet, Daniel Rice(standing in for Brian Thacker)/trombone. Recorded Feb 11–12, 1995 at Overdub Lane, Durham NC(919-309-0838), engineered by John Plymale. Song by Drossman/Rodriguez/hug-

gins/Dixon. Backing vocals: Rodriguez/Huggins/Drossman/Graves/Dingledine. Special thanks: Daniel (for filling in for Brian), John Plymale(great engineering, once again), & ourselves! Otis Reem: 901 Kings Mill Rd., Chapel Hill, NC 27514. If you like this, order O R. song "The Sophomore" on a split 7" with the Fiacsos from MOON rec's(P.O. Box 1412, New York, NY 10276, 201-857-7044). Two OTIS songs will also be coming out on a CD comp from Inbred rec's(407-381-2522).**

NEWS, UPDATES, REPORTS

For shows in NC call Jim at 910-960-5530. We have a 30+ band festival due to happen here April; 21–23, 1995, so consider checking that out if you can. VICTORY records seems to have a new phone # again: 312-666-8661, but they still have the same address(PO Box 146546. Chicago. IL 60614). They've Just released a CD of all the old Victory 7"s from '89-'92, and rereleased the ancient NYHC Cause for Alarm record on CD; about to be rereleased on Victory Cd's are: the first Earth Crisis 7" "All Out War, " and the brutal Vegan(politically untenable & fascist) RAID discography. Also due are a Snapcase Ep, the Earth Crisis Lp, something by Swedish band Doughnuts. Rockabilly band HIFI & the Roadburners just put out their full-length on Victory, if you don't like rockabilly don't knock it...that just might mean you're closed minded. I know I'm gonna retire into rockabilly when I've done my time In hardcore, ha ha. Also, Tony has put in a lot of work In his label & It's one of the best things In our scene today, so don't knock Victory Just because they've gotten farther than your messy Immature shit 'zine. VICTORY also does a distribution about as big as the legendary VERY dlstrlbution(Very:9 E. Saylor Avenue, Plains. PA 18702).. between the two of them you can find almost any h/c record still in press. The Incredible new INTEGRITY LP Is also almost out on Victory, it Just has to come back from the factories. Frank of deceased, rabid Cleveland band RINGWORM now plays In Integrity. Also In Ohio, DOGHOUSE rec's(PO Box 8946, Toledo, OH 43623) now carry about 50 different t-shlrts for their various emo/hc bands. The label itself Is moving towards softy shit, but they distribute the German label Stormstrike which has really great, hard holy-terror music like Lash Out. So If you want that stuff In the US, contact them. Another label that does distribution Is Conquer the World(PO Box 40282, Redford, Ml 48240)...but they're Irresponsible about getting things out on time, among other things, and they're getting a bad reputation.. I expect their days In this scene are limited. They've been advertising their latest releases with slogans like "not for the toughles" anyway, so go figure — maybe they'll "move on" to pop music next. A label that seems to be getting pretty serious about distributing records is TEMPERANCE(Central Square, Suite 24B, Linwood. NJ 08221, 609-926-9542) — I don't know about their recent releases, though; I haven't heard them yet but they don't seem to be exactly hardcore...

**notice a trend? SECOND NATURE Is another 'zine/dlstrlbutlon to keep an eye on(PO Box 11543, Kansas City, MO 64138). The Andrew Thomas Co.(55 Searle St, Plttson, PA 18640) Is primarily a SXE shirt company, but they distribute records, demos, videos, & 'zines as well...while we're on the subject, ROUND FLAT rec's(63 Lennox Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14226–4226) has Inherited an entire warehouse full of weird, discontinued major label records & has a catalogue full of them-so for a look at some unusual stuff, write them. Some of It Is rare punk/hardcore, and they have some records for as cheap as $2 for a 12". Wow. They have normal records too. Speaking of distributions, hardcore hero Vegard Waske of Lash Out is starting a European distribution, DEUCE...so If you live there, write him about that at the Lash Out address. Some upcoming releases from Crucial Response rec's(Peter Hoeren, Kalsersfeld 98, 46047 Oberhausen, Germany) are the Spawn CD, the Man Lifting Banner CD. the FarCry CD, and I guess a repress of the classic Brotherhood record on CD. Be warned that when I sent that guy some of my stuff to distribute, he sent me records In return Instead of the previously agreed on cash...records I'd never heard of, and not enough of them, too. For a really good newsletter with scene reports from all over the world, contact Yann Boisleve(BP 7523, 35 075 Rennes Cedex 3 FRANCE) Back to the USA: Mike Rhodes/Area 51 records has had to move, so his previous Nevada address Is no longer In effect. I don't know If he has a permanent new address, but if you need to reach him try writing him care of Mike Edwards(PO Box 10221, Scottesdale, AZ 85271)...the 7 comp with Integrity, Catharsis, Backlash, & Congress Is still coming on his label; I think the Bludgeon 7" on his label Is out of press, and the Gehenna/Apartment 213 spilt 7 on his label Is either delayed or cancelled due to Apt. 213 being lazy fucking jerks and possibly liars too. 717 records Is a new label In Pennsylvania, they'll be releasing a Penn h/c comp 7 soon with Deckard, Brother's Keeper, Option, and Outcome. Those are all good bands so it should be a good record...write 717 at the address of Break Free 'zine In the reviews. Also at this address Is Big Mouth 'zine distribution, and they have some other projects coming up. Another new record label is FIGURE FOUR(35 Ellab Latham Way, E. Bridgewater, MA 02333); they have a split Ipecac/Opposltlon 7" out, and a Dive 7" and Bound 12" coming. Rick, the singer of tough NYHC band 25 TA LIFE(86 3rd Avenue, Patterson, NJ 07514) has a new 'zine called Back Ta Basics coming from that address. ENDLESS FIGHT rec's(PO Box 1083, Old Saybrook, CT 06475–6083) just released the Dissolve 7", which I've heard is complex, metallic, really good h/c-lnfluenced music. Their newest release Is the "Over the Edge" two compllatlon(see the Inland Empire distribution list for more Information). In the future are a Catharsis 7" & paraphernalia. Boston emo/weird/hardcore band CONVERGE Is not really broken up, they have 3 new songs for a spilt 7" with Virginia Mayday-style band MAYDAY on converge's own EARTHMAKER rec's(580 Commonwealth Avenue, Apt. 24. Boston, MA 02215, 617-530-9670), which will also be releasing a 7" by 7% Solution, a band with a "chaotic & crazy" sound, that may be metamorphoslzlng Into a new band, as yet nameless. Lost & Found rec's(see Cornerstone demo review for address) may be releasing the entire discography of Con-

verge material on one CD. Virginia holy-terror band MAYDAY Is slowly working on a 4-song 9" record/CD to come out on Stormstrike records; they're supposed to spend June '95 touring Europe. Florida holy-terror band BLOODLET(PO Box 11036, Orlando, FL 32803–0036) has two CD's coming out on Overkill rec's: a discography of all their old stuff, called "Eclectic, " and a full-length of new songs and revised versions of "Eucharist" and "One and Only." If you're concerned about animal rights, one of the best new things to happen In that field Is Animal Cause(427 Mountain Rd., Holyoke, MA 01040), a newsletter and animal rights literature distributor with many pages of pamphlets and books available, most of them practically for free. It's done by some sincere hardcore kids, so check It out. Young SXE filmmaker David Berryman(True Alm productions, 3324 Spruce Lane, Grapevine, **

TX 76051, 512-480-8529) will be touring the country this summer to do a documentary on SXE hardcore In America. It you want to support one of your comrades In supporting the scene and making a great movie, contact him — he needs all the help he can get. And, well-known or not, you just might go down In history. PUNK UPRISINGS(Susan Wills, 6013 Bonnie Bern Ct., Burke, VA 22015) does a cable access TV-show and prints articles in music magazines, both available across the country, concerning hardcore and punk.

Oh yeah, one more thing. The following bands and labels have contacted me to complain about the conduct of Hearsay records: Cornerstone, Overcast, Converge, Endless Fight rec's. Area 51 rec's, and many more that I can't recall, plus many different individuals. Apparantly Hearsay never sent copies of records to bands who gave them songs for the records — for instance, all the bands on the North by Northeast" 7" comp, and some other bands — and when approached about it they never got back to the bands...instead they disconnected their voice mail and refused to return letters. Hearsay also bootlegged the Dive/Opposition split demo onto a 7", and bootlegged old Converge and Overcast songs onto a 7" with no permission. That's fucked up. Consider it before you work with Hearsay again.

SCENE REPORT: North East Coast Provided by Tom Cavanaugh in Syracuse. Syracuse band CROSS-SECTION(2 singers, one guy, one girl: melodic sound, one 7" out already) Is recording for a 7" to come out on a European label, and neighbors SOULSTICE are recording a full-length for Scorched Earth rec's(PO Box 76, Stanton. NJ 08885) Deathmetal-Influenced Syracuse band BLOOD RUNS BLACK are recording a CDep for Harvest rec's. GATEKEEPER is a band formed by members of broken up GREEN RAGE and singer Shane from Framework...they have a demo out. Emo Syracuse band CAMPFIRE, which has Joel from Encounter and Josh from Trustkill 'zine, have a CD available from the Trustkill label. Boston crazy metallic band OVERCAST has a long overdue 7"

coming out eventually on Inner Rage records In France, get It from Very distribution...it's called "Stirring the Killer" and a new version of the song "Grlfter" from the Endless Fight rec's CD. "Scar the Mind" from that CD, and an unreleased song "Forecast." JASTA 14 are back together with a new singer, after their old one Jamie of Stillborn rec's started the band Hatebreed.

REPORT FROM MIAMI & THE WORLD Adel 156

Timescape Zero is looking for a new drummer and bassist. A new band called

> **CULTURE (sound like Mean Season) have an LP due out on Conquer the World records. Hardcore Isdead here! No Joke. This is the part where I would usually mention fanzines, but to be honest with you there isn't one worth mentioning that comes out of Florida(except mine, of course).**
>
> **Some interesting things abroad are fanzines like Nice Guys Finish Last(P.O. Box 43285, Las Vegas, NV 89116). It's $4.00 postpaid and has tons of dark humor In an angry and cynical way, giving you tons of stuff against humanity with articles like "Serial Killers–Nature's Garbagemen" and "Humans–What's the Use?" Another one that is likely to piss off every PC kid in the world is the (In)famous Answer Me!(1608 N. Cahuenga Blvd #666, Hollywood, CA 90028). It's $4.00 postpaid and Issue 2 comes with the top 100 serial killers of all time and interviews with David Duke, Anton Lavey, and more. Issue 3 has the top 100 suicides of all time and Interviews with NAMBLA, Boyd Rice, and Al Sharpton, and a crank call to Dr. Jack Kevorkian. Issue 4 out soon with Lord knows what.**
>
> **Bored at night? Looking for good flicks? Try "The Catalogue of Carnage " They sell human body parts legally, but they have a great video catalogue for only $2.00. It has**
>
> **a version of Apocalypse Now that runs with an extra 90 minutes of unseen footage! They carry the live suicide of Bud Dwyer(with a .357 to the head complete with blood gushing out his nose like a garden hose). Each video Is $17 each, or $14 with their coupon. They have tons of European and Japanese gore flicks and much much more.(F.E.E. 327 W.**

Laguna. Tempe, AZ 85282)

> **For those of you interested In more information on the article I wrote on Social Darwinism, you can reach the headquarters of the**

Abraxas foundation by writing them and sending a stamped self-addressed envelope(PO Box 300081, Denver, CO 80203). That s all the Information I really have at the moment. Enjoy all you do, and remember Life Is War, War Is Life...live with it!

SOCIAL DARWINISM *by Adel 156*

At the most primary level, one could easily define life as a by-product of energy feeding upon energy. We are all locked in a game in which life feeds upon life. We are all the participants In this feeding frenzy that constitutes the unchanging perfection of Nature's Order. Unfortunately, there exists today an ever-widening schism between the world of Man and the world of Nature. Humanity In its confusion has "attempted to "transcend" and dominate Nature. It has In no way whatsoever succeeded. In fact, anyone seeking testament as to why mankind has failed need only contrast the qualities of Nature with those of Man.

Nature Is typified by strength, humanity by weakness. Nature adheres to an Im-mutable Order, Man to an ever-Increasing chaos. Nature recognizes absolutely no equality, while humanity preaches an all-pervasive equality and freely hands out unearned "rights" In an attempt to make this doctrine a reality. In short, Nature Is fascist, humanity democratic. Nature extracts and replaces whatever It deems necessary. Humanity votes and often gives those unable to decide which pair of shoes to wear the right to chose who will run an entire nation!

All men whose actions serve the will of Nature serve their own will, for man Is synonymous with Nature and not, as Is commonly assumed, separate from It. Nature Is prejudiced, Nature is does not believe in equality. Nature has written the law: *Quality over Equality!* The evolution of life Is the most striking Instance of this fundamental truth. Evolution Is a process of elimination, In which those not able to survive DIE OFF! More often than not, they are KILLED OFF!

Let's get one thing straight, before you start calling me a racist! When I say "quality over equality, " I am not talking about one race being superior to another. Rather, "Inequality" becomes evident when we judge one not by race, color, creed, religion, etc., but by individual talents and superior qualities rather than membership In a category.

Should a man (no matter what color!) receive handed-out "rights" or benefits because he is not only unproductlvely lazy, but greedy to live off a system in which he Is subsidized by our tax dollars? This Is the problem with equality and the welfare system. Today's economic structure Is set up for the strong to be dominated by the meek. We are all working in some

sort of rat race to pay for welfare and healthcare for those who wish to simply live off YOU. Therefore the weak and lazy are living off the sweat and blood of the strong, who get up off their asses to face the world and do something productive!

Man must see that Nature (although not a "thinking entity") believes In eugenics (upbreeding through genetic selection), "thinning the herd" (depopulation by killing off the weak), dysgenlcs (exerting a detrimental effect on later generations so as to depopulate), constant struggle, and inequality. Man has to adhere to this law, plain and simple. We will not be able to realize any kind of harmony until this is realized. It requires a vision of

harmony as set down by Nature's brutal perfection. A violent harmony which not only embraces truth, love and understanding, but also war, strife, and inequality.

I can see It now, groups of Ebullition and Heartattack fans outside my door, picketing. Hate mail from those who openly promote love and peace, calling me a fascist. They themselves are afraid of the strong dominating the weak.

What does this have to do with *hardcore musid?* Everything. Punk and hardcore were a way to get away from the norm, away from mass-herdlsm, mass-conformity, blind faith, and empty-headed consumerism. Yet today the hardcore scene Is dominated by self- righteous, holier-than-thou white middle class children who either try to tell you In which direction your politics should lean or how to act on the streets with this fake tough-guy "I should be listening to hip hop right now" attitude.

I am what Is called a "fascist anarchist" (sounds like a contradiction in terms, doesn't It?), or, as most people like to put It, a Social Darwinist. I believe In no political oppression, yet feel that people need to be kept In line. Not by politicians and their laws, but by the natural order. The Infamous Ideology of the strong over the weak, of might makes right! I get hell over this all the time. People are quickly offended and begin to preach a doctrine of living In peace, like that would be some "heaven on earth." Sorry, Charlie but I believe those to be offended are just the weak afraid of being dominated by the strong, or as I like to put It...they've never been to Jail.

> Now let me explain myself, In 1989 I was arrested and falsely charged with assault and battery on a police officer. I served one year on a five year sentence before I was finally Judlflcated (l.e. released as *not guilty.* The story of what happened to put me In that situation is actually not important. What Is Important Is what happened to me when I was already in that situation, that led me to the belief system of Social Darwinism.

In science. It Is believed that "entropy (chaos) Increases in all closed systems." This Is shown true In two situations, In Jail and In life. Jail Is a closed system, enclosed from society and giving way to chaos. I saw that jail Is like the world, only In a smaller, closer space. You have racism, death, drugs, sex (both hetero- and homo-sexual), and most Importantly in jail the strong dominate the weak. The weak, like In Nature, die off.....or are KILLED OFF! I've seen actual 98-lb. weaklings turn Into Intellectual or physical strongmen–and those who did not, were killed.

I then realized that life is tough, and you have to be tough to survive. Now when I say "tough, " I'm not talking about a Biohazard/Sick of It All "I'm a mean guy and I can kick your ass" type of tough. That's Just a front put on by men and boys who couldn't fight their way out of a girls' school. I'm talking about a kind of tough that you only need to prove to yourself: When confronted, react. When left alone, leave all else alone. A kind of tough that only 1% of kids In the hardcore scene can even come close to comprehending. They listen to bands that sing about the harshness of the streets, but In reality If these bands were to witness Just a sampling of what Jail Is like, they would either shape up and, realizing what life Is all about, cut the act, or (more likely) run home to their middle class suburban homes and hide behind their mother's aprons!

I realize one main thing throughout this whole piece I've written. I could be writing a ten page essay or a three hundred page book, but the end result Is still the same: those who are offended are the weak, afraid of being dominated by the strong, and those who agree and adhere to this philosophy are the strong, ready to take over this mess created by the weak that have been in power for so long! They have been pretenders to the throne for long enough! Kali-Yuga for all motherfuckers...

(Hate Mall to: PO Box 820407, South Florida. FL 33082–0407.)

ROSTER:

GIRL 1 LIKE VERY MUCH: Loara Cadavona

LIFETIME FAN: Dwid

**KINKO'S FRIEND: Skinhead Shawn RECORD EXECUTIVE: Josh Baker CLOTHING BY: Dickies Corporation bands who ended up on the compilation, **

those who support me across the world, anyone who hits back when hit.

Fuck off: Everyone else, I guess. Whatever.

ROOT BEER REVIEW

All I have for you this issue is a delicious recipe: take one bottle of IBC cream soda, drink one mouthful from it, and pour an equal amount of whole milk into the bottle so it is full again. The milk and soda will mix naturally,

making the cream soda twice as creamy and thick...it may sound odd at first, but it's truly delicious. While I've got your attention, here's some trivia for you: major label metal band BIOHAZARD used to be nazis. My friend has their first demo, and they sing lyrics like "we'll march across the world with American Nazi pride" and "master race in unity, that's the way it oughta be." I know their label is scared as hell that someone will find out, so spread the word. (In fact, airhead pop band Ace of Base also includes former nazis, so I've heard.)

SCENE REPORT: The Netherlands

I got this from Jan Maes of SELFWORth 'zlne(Bosserveld). 32, 6191 SK, Beek (L), the Netherlands). His first Issue will be out soon. The best SXE scene there Is In the south, with bands like FEEDING THE FIRE(very angry, fast socialist SXE HC, one ep & a split ep with Spawn), BACKDRAFT(members of FTF, similar style, only slower; ep on Crucial Response rec's), & new band OPERATION BLUEBOOK. Reach these bands at the address of BURIAL 'zlne(Rob, Op De Knlp 134, 6467 Gx Kerkrade) by Rob of FTF & Backdraft. Another new band Is RANCOR(they play with a drum machine). Ironside-metal-style band PUTRIDUS split up recently. CRIVITS Is a NYHC style band(Jeff, Klaas Katerstr. 7, 3119 LH Schiedam). MAINSTRIKE Is a new band, kind of like Gorilla Biscuits, with members of broken up classic politlcal/sociallst band Man Lifting Banner. _'ZINESJ_ssue 2 Of CLOSER STILL Is coming, as Is Issue 2 of SXE zine VALUE OF STRENGTH(Jp, kloosterstr. 53, 6369 AB, Slmpelveld). Sander, who used to help with Closer Still, now does MONKEY (J.A. Felthstraat 43, 9725 AN Groningen) — the first Issue has Interviews with Abhlnanda, Downset, and Shortsight; DISTANCE #1 will be out soon(Ralph Wilms, Den Roover 7a, 5953 BM, Reuver) and hc-sxe 'zine REFLECTIONS #3 is out now(Johan, De Nijverheld 30, 7681 MD Vroomschoop). TREESOME Is a new SXE record label, with Its first release out soon. (Ferry, PO Box 5284, 6130 PG Slttard). All addresses are In The Netherlands.

***INSIDE FRONT:* H MM®® ® _MK_**

ZINE COVER PHOTOGRAPH: Ahhinanda. TAPE COVER: Show riot in NC

***"One of the questions was "Steve, what does straight edge mean to you?', and he answered Hitting people really hard, and not knowing why'."* -Dwid, apparently misquoting an interview with Steve of Confront from his own 'zine, Bloodhook #1.**

"If you "re a hammer, everything looks like a nail."

-Scott of Bloodlet, repeating what he said was his favorite Nietzsche quote, even though I've never seen it in any of his books..!

ADVERTISING

Advertising in Inside Front starts in issue #7, the first full size issue. I'm not doing this to make money(it'll just cost me more for the extra pages), but rather to make my 'zine even more informative: the idea is that maybe other people can describe their projects better themselves than I can, but they have to give me a little help with my immense production fees in return for the space. If cash is difficult for you, call and maybe we can arrange a trade. The deadline for advertising in a given issue is the last day of the month before it is scheduled to come out. I reserve the right to refuse anyone I want. These are the rates:

> **$15: 5" tall by 4" wide ad, plus 20 copies of that issue, too! $10: 3" tall by 4" wide ad.**

$1: classified ad(30 words or less, plus your address).

MRR, watch out- now all those SXE kids that hate you have an alternative!

CATHARSI *Snews*

Catharsis is a band from North Carolina with an original, holy-terror breed of hardcore sound. Right now we have a demo available from Inland Empire(3 originals, 1 cover)...the first song from the demo is on the No Exit compilation that comes with Inside Front #4 and the second song is on the second "Over the Edge" CD compilation from Endless Fight records- both of these compilations are available now from Inland Empire. We have a new song coming out on a compilation 7" with Backlash, Integrity, and Congress on Area 51 records; that will be available from Inland Empire by April, it is our best song yet by far. In April we will also be doing shirts and stickers with Endless Fight records(we're working on making them more than just merchandise for consumption). This summer, a 7" of all new Catharsis songs will be released on Endless Fight rec's, and possibly on a different label in Europe. We'd love to play anywhere we're wanted,

basically all we need is gas money and advance notice. Call Inland Empire at 919-932-6467 for booking.

> INLAND EMPIRE PRODUCTIONS PERMANENT ADDRESS: 2695 Rangewood Drive, Atlanta, GA 30345 USA

My private address until 6/95: Brian/Inside Front, 213 East Franklin St. #34, Chapel Hill, NC 27514 USA. Phone 919-932-6467.

Issue #7 (1995)

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*** INTRODUCTION: HARDCORE VS. HERDCORE

Welcome to Inside Front #7. I feel a brief statement of purpose is in order.

You only get a brief seventy years or so in this world, and the whole time somebody is trying to tell you what the fuck to do. Whether it be a street gang of drunk, overweight bullies, the police force (which is often the same thing), some "militant" (read as: "fascist") extremist group, or a more subtly manipulative group like your friends, family, and coworkers, everyone thinks they know what's best for you... and if you're not convinced, they certainly feel justified in lying to you(as Plato actually admitted in the _Republic_) or using force to get you to do what they are sure is "in your best interest." Most people aren t bothered by this; there apparently isn't much they want out of life and they're happy to let others make the decisions about what nonsense their brief, futile lives will contain.

But some of us, a minority to be sure, have real desires and designs regarding what we want for our lives in this world. Since our time here is limited, we can't waste any of it wandering around in other people's circles. If there are things you want in this world, you have to make the most of yourself in every way you can, both mentally and physically, so you can be sure that when the opportunity comes you will have the resources you need to achieve your goals. It's obvious that most people in Western society today don t want anything badly enough to be driven to make much of themselves.

Still, each one insists that everyone else should follow his system of morality. But the facts are that what is right for one person is _not_ necessarily in the "best interest" of another. As individuals, we all have different needs and desires. How could it be otherwise? Pay attention and you'll notice that those who are convinced that the same thing is in everyone's best interest are always recommending something that happens to fit perfectly with their own needs. What they may or may not admit to themselves is that if they can convince everyone else to seek the same thing as they do, life will be easier for them. Either it never occurred to them that different people have different desires, and what is right for one may be wrong for another, or they just do not care about the happiness of anyone but themselves. I know what is in my best interest, but I also know it is not in the best interest of everyone else...why would it be? If it was, that would be an unusual coincidence. For instance, as basic economic theory teaches, there are limited resources in the world but unlimited needs–how, then, could they be distributed to the satisfaction of *everyone?*

There are some who will desire the same things as you: if you unite and work together with them, you will all be better off. Others will have desires that conflict with yours; if you have respect for yourself and faith in your beliefs, fight against them

ENCONTRE

ISSUE 7

JULY 1995

and don't believe them when they say that what they want is "best for everybody." How the fuck could they be sure what is best for you? Nobody can know what is going on inside someone else's head. They'll try to convince you the world is one way or another with their bullshit dogmas and manifesto's, but the fact remains: how could they know what you need? *Only you can know that.* Understand that when they try to convince you of the "absolute truth" of their traditions or doctrines, they are really just using the most devious method of all to try to beat you in the competetion between your desires and theirs. But once you realize that they are doing this, this method no longer works and they will have to fight fair...which most of them cannot do.

In these societies of today, where mediocrity is not only standard but encouraged, even enforced, those of us who know what we desire and are willing to fight for it must have a community in which to interact. That community is Hardcore. Hardcore belongs to the cream of the crop, the overachievers, the ones who always wanted and accomplished too much to be members of the rank and file. In this community we can come together, to work together where we desire the same goals, and to compete against each other where our goals differ. By its very definition, hardcore is an environment for individuals who are prepared to go all out, to settle for nothing less than the best from themselves–nothing more, and nothing less. Trends come and go, but fundamentally, it has always been this way. Hardcore is not for everyone, it's for those of us who are out of place in the rest of the world.

Speaking of trends, it seems that recently the hardcore scene has been becoming more like the rest of the world: rather than seeking to discover and pursue their own individual goals, people seem to be accepting popular dogmas and trends, and following them without questioning them. Lots of kids in hardcore today seem just like any other kids, just doing what their friends do, not demanding anything more from themselves or from life. These children wander through life, really doing nothing at all or nothing except what is absolutely necessary to superficially back up the he rd-mentality beliefs they are so self-righteous about. But hardcore is not for these people, and they will eventually realize this and "move on." Those of us who know what it is we want for ourselves, and know what hardcore should be and must be, cannot let these children weaken our faith in the scene. As individuals, we must keep on working for the sake of ourselves; and as individuals, we will reap the rewards of our labor. The rest of the world never did understand and never will–but if you know what is right for you and how to achieve it, you don't need anyone else's permission.

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shoulder! Anything the head with the

First times buyers reasonable-looking guns, palm sized ditties.

"Hell, If you shoot

Their dislike for what they call "nigger guns", makes funniest thing Is how most of the clerks claim that .22 or

RIGHT!

gun than yours. So where does It end? Guns are stupid. Case closed. *(Ascension: 25 Mt MA 02^35) .*

small caliber handguns called "Saturday Night Specials." TOO BAD!

become jeered at when they move away from the hand-held canons, like

that thing, you're likely just going to piss them off...that's all!" Red-faced and embarrassed, the guns, expensive guns, guns that fire enormous bullets filled with "stopping power", guns so

The biggest obstacle about buying a useful gun is your ego. Many of you out there just

customer gets led powerful the recoil ."Listen here, th^tfp 9mm is no ins^ad of firing It!

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_' ' POINT/COUNTERPOINT' ' _ Discussion Section

'GUNS ARE FUCKING STUPID" by *Lynn Roberts*

(Editor's note: this was reprinted from the 'zine Ascension *without permission, for the sake of printing an opposing view. All apologies^BuT~Hey, punk rock, rob and steal.)* Don't fight me on this one. Guns are fucking stupid. It's pretty simple really. They are built to kill. To destroy. They are not fun. They are not cool, . They don't

make you “hard.” They make you a target. I heard that an old friend of mine wants to get a gunTo complete his “gangsta” image (I think the word he used was “roughneck.” Equally cool though). That’s just sheer stupidity. What could you possibly ever need a gun for in the middle of the suburbs. What could you possibly need a gun for at all. He wants a gun so he can show It off. To impress people. Yeah, weapons are _real_ Impressive. You don’t need a gun to be “hard.” You don’t need to *be* “hard.” There s this girl In my philosophy class. Every day in class, no matter what we are discussing, she brings the NRA and gun control issues up. She belongs to the NRA and goes out shooting every weekend. She is against gun control (duh) and believes that “every good (I assume she means real) American should own a gun” (actual quote). Yes, I have a problem with this. I don’t believe in guns, period. She says it s fun. That there’s nothing better than taking your frustrations out when target shooting. It’s sad that shooting at things has become a cool way to spend your weekend. A way to relieve stress. Something is definitely wrong here. I don’t know. I just don t understand that logic. I _can’t_ follow that logic. Guns are unnecessary. Killing is unnecessary. This is unnecessary, or at least It should be. I shouldn’t have to write about this. It shouldn’t even be an Issue. “Guns are made to protect.” Yeah right. Guns are made

wait, lets ask Jim Brady. See what he has to around the inside of his head before It ran out of his neocortex.

Clerks also tell unsuspecting customers that gun”.

drool on about this subject.

steam.

Not only did the tiny

The .22 that broke round “stop” him, it

No laps

did a nice job of removing most of

little guns are so Inaccurate,

that you’d be lucky

to hit someone with such a “girl’s

[Image not archived]

LET’S GET REAL HERE!

Entirely too much emphasis Is placed on a handgun with the magical power to disintergrate someone In a single shot. Any study of bullet wounds will show that once a bullet enters the body it Is unpredictable. Caliber, velocity, foot pounds of energy are nothing more than macho hee-hawing. Small caliber handguns have alot going for them, not the least being the ammo they fire.

Small caliber ammo will burst into a human body just as well as any other bullet, then unlike more powerful ammunition, It loses a lot of energy, gets deflected off bones or even solid tissue and from there It’s anybody’s guess where It will end up. While larger caliber ammo will usually punch right through the Intended victim. A .25 caliber

might tunnel around a person's Innards, chopping up the intestine here, fragmenting Into a lung there, before lodging itself alarmingly close to a possibly vital organ.

A wound like that might not even kill a person. Not outright. Such a wound might be exactly the type you want to inflict. Why limit yourself to just killing someone. It isn't always necessary or even desireable to kill someone, after all.

Even If not instantly dead, the person shot stands a good chance of dying, If medical attention Is immediate. In any ways, you, the shooter, are the one who gets to play god and decides how fast the medical help is arriving.

One last comment on the holy doctrine of "stopping power". The ability to Instantly kill or incapacitate a person with a single shot depends mostly on placement of the bullet — not the bullet Itself! Police files are full of Instances of guys charging someone, soaking up many rounds of "one-shot-stoppers" that kept right on coming!

If you stop to think about it, some people are completely incapacitated by the mere sound of a gunshot. I know of one Instance where a man was shot at with a blank/cap gun, who fell writhing in the street and had to be helped to his car by his friends, although no damage had occured at all. Hell, people sometimes faint when you even point a gun at them. Imminent pain or death can have a profound and lasting psychological or physiological effect.

Small caliber handguns are far mare concealable. In that alone they win hands down! An ace bandage wrapped around the stomach will hold one so close to you, that you can wear a t-shlrt and not be noticed.

Small caliber handguns are also cheaper, so Is the ammo. That means, for a price of a Dirty Harry gun, you can purchase up to SIX .25 calibers and hide them all over the freakin' place. One In your bedroom, one in your car, one in your office. This Just increases your chances of being armed when accosted. Pius It also gets around the hassle of permits, since you won't be carrying It, It'll just be around.

In my experiences with these little guns (I do own one, you know) these little suckers are pretty accurate — for a couple of reasons. First, most gun battles take place within 10 to 15 feet. You can also use the one handed method, without taking that double handed karate stance you need for larger guns. The gun's lack of recoil is a plus, meaning you can shoot without taking a chance of flinching when pulling the trigger, thus meaning keeping your eye on the target. In short, a person can feel more comfortable with a belly gun than other weapons. That means less practice, and less money wasted on practice ammo fired Into some cardboard Indoor range backdrop.

Finally, and I could get into alot of trouble for mentioning this, the barrel is just about an Inch long so It still can be silenced. Not by legal means as a store bought silencer, but by an illegal homemade method. Just duct tape a 2 liter soft drink bottle over the muzzle. Of course, your precious accuracy might suffer with such a rig, but there are advantages to this silenced weapon.

So tell everybody out there, fuck the snoots that look down upon small caliber handguns. Just see what their wrists look like after target practice. Better yet, point a .25 at them and ask them If they would mind being "stung".

EDITOR [1]S RESPONSE

Using a gun in our society, even in self defense, Implies a value judgement: that in the situation in question It is more desirable to risk spending a number of years In prison than it is to suffer the consequences of not using the gun. Our legal system enforces harsh penalties on those who use force, often even when it is used in self defense, and on top of that the way the system works there Is no guarantee that you will only be punished for what you actually did: once arrested by the police and taken to court you may be punished for things you did not do. Thus it stands to reason that using a gun is only appropriate when the alternatives are death or permanent bodily harm to you or your loved ones (and remember that those things can happen to you in prison as well), and when you

are sure enough of your control of the situation and your own skills to *know* that using the gun will achieve the outcome you desire.

Not only Is using a gun an action to be avoided in almost all situations, but having a gun and not using It Is equally dangerous.

Taking out a gun, that you are not prepared to use, In a dangerous situation will only make the situation more dangerous. The other

parties Involved will feel that their lives are at stake and will act accordingly; If your bluff is called, you have done nothing but make things much worse. Also keep in mind that it's usually pretty easy to tell the difference between someone who Is serious and someone who Is bluffing.

Finally, having a gun around that Is not necessary Is extremely dangerous: all sorts of accidents Involving guns take place every year. A good example, which is particularly relevent to Inside Front, took place a few months ago: the band Tension, who appeared on the Inside Front "Point Counterpoint" compilation, was supposed to record us a new song for that compilation. However, the day they were scheduled to record their singer was fucking around with one of his guns and knocked out his front teeth. He went to the hospital and they had to give me an older song of theirs that was less representative of their recent music. In a similar event, Mike of Area 51 records had his girlfriend shot in the head by one of his friends, who was fucking around with a gun he thought wasn't loaded.

Therefore I have to agree with Lynn that having guns you don't need, for any reason *(especially* for "Image" — what, are we In fucking kindergarten?) is stupid and dangerous. All you wanna-be tough guys who don't feel like a man unless you're talking about or carrying around guns are nothing but weaklings, sissies, and cowards who obviously need a prop to make up for your (understandable) lack of self-respect. However, In our rapidly decaying society, there are many places where a person will be In danger *every day* of finding themselves in a situation where it *Is* better to have and (skillfully, responsibly) use a gun. As Lynn writes, "guns...should be unnecessary" — unfortunately, in many places, they are not. I don't live in an *extremely* violent area, but here's an example from my >wn life: a few months ago, I narrowly (I was

five minutes late leaving my apartment) missed an Incident on my street where an Insane man took a rifle and began randomly firing at people. Two men were killed, and a woman was shot In the hand. The police showed up, but were unable to stop the madman. What finally happened was an unarmed civilian Jumped on the man from behind and wrestled him to the ground, quite possibly saving the lives of many other people on the crowded street. The only contribution the police made was to accidently shoot this hero in the shoulder. This whole event added fuel to the fire of the local movement to make guns Illegal here, which strikes me as pretty naive: the cops will always have guns, and the criminals will always figure out how to obtain them as well...and as we've seen from this example, cops and criminals have a pretty firm monopoly between themselves on the wounding and ending of innocent life. If the Innocent civilian who ended this crisis had had a gun on his person, chances are that things would have been resolved more quickly and safely (i.e. he wouldn't have been shot in the shoulder, and possibly he would have stopped the murderer before he killed the two bystanders.)

I'm not suggesting by any means that we all should have guns, I've already outlined the dangers Inherent In that. But for those of us living in places like urban Miami, where Adel lives, there Isn't much choice. Of course a gun will be useless and extremely dangerous to Its owner If he is not careful to learn as much as he can about It and to be responsible with it at all times. I myself do not and never have owned a gun, even though some of the people I am "in conflict" with do. At this point the dangers that I would be protecting myself from in owning a gun simply do not outweigh the dangers that owning one would bring. Hopefully, they never will, for as I said a gun Is only useful when you're faced with a choice between death or dismemberment and likely prison time. That's not a choice most of us face daily, thankfully; so for us, having guns Is not only unnecessary but also stupid.

UES JN HARDCOBL

Dear Inside Front:

In regards to your outspoken criticism of bands who do not live up to their own lyrics: I guess Earth Crisis has a right to their opinions, but It's too bad they have everything totally wrong. It bothers me that there are some people out there that actually take this band seriously. What they say in their lyrics is basically the same as fascism. Roundups? Dragging vlvlsectionlsts Into the streets? Sounds like it could have been something written by Vladimir Zhlrnofsky or someone from the Nazi party.

It would be one thing If Karl and the rest of the crew actually did these things; then you could at least respect them for following through with their philosophy...but I doubt it. (Or maybe, just like In that Sharon Stone movie, they really do these things and then write about It, because who would actually sing about real crimes they had committed? Pretty smart, guys...yeah, right.)

It almost seems that these militant vegan kids just need a cause. They weren't born poor or a minority so they decided "hey, I'll go vegan." I think veganism is great but not when It's done for the wrong reasons; all those kids skanking to "Firestorm" In their bedrooms isn't getting anything done. I mean, there Is so much more to veganism than just saving the animals, what about the ecological, political, health, and humanitarian reasons Involved? If E.C. was really Into promoting veganism and not just into sounding tough they'd realize that there are better ways than singing about killing lab scientists to further veganism. Gandhi got a lot more accomplished than the black panthers ever did.

So Just don't buy the new E.C. record (it's pretty shitty anyways). If you have to have a copy of It make a copy of someone else's, and If you go to a show where they're playing think about the mentality you're supporting before you start dancing and singing along. Thanks for the opportunity to speak my mind. If you want to talk about any of this write to Seth Freedman, 104 Croke Springs Place, Chapel Hill, NC 27516.

— Seth, Vegan, Age 19.

Dear Seth:

Thanks for the letter. I think the band you mention is representative of a dangerous and embarassing trend in hardcore today. I've actually written the band a couple times, inviting them to join me in a debate In the pages of Inside Front, and I've spoken to their label about this too, but the band apparently does not feel proud of themselves enough to get back to me...so I'll feel entirety justified now to take every shot at them and the pathetic trend they represent that I can.

The growing trend I mentioned Is the idea that It's OK to sing about things in hardcore that obviously aren't true. In the text that follows I will demonstrate first that the lyrics of these bands do describe falsities, and then the III effects of this, before returning to the subject of whether lying should be accepted in hardcore lyrics.

"Street by street, block by block, (we are) taking It all back, the youth Immersed In polsen turn the tide, counterattack..." — that's in the present tense, indicative, l.e. It's meant to be a true statement, at least as far as grammar goes. You'll hear over and over that (whiny voice here:) "It's meant to be taken *metaphorically"* ...that Is, these bands don't deny that when they sing "round them all up, the time for lynching Is at hand" or speak of dragging vlvlsectlonists into the street and shooting them that they are lying. In the rare case where they don't qualify their statements as being Iles, you can check the dally papers for proof: do you see anything about militant Syracuse vegans on trial for homicide? No. They're just liars, case closed.

In addition to not living up to their lyrics in the present, there Is firm evidence that demonstrates that none of these children plan on *ever* following through with their threats. You would expect that someone who speaks of direct, violent action would exercise and lift weights, to be more capable of successfully carrying out this action, wouldn't you? A friend of mine, whom I count as a very trustworthy source, interviewed singer Karl from Earth Crisis and asked him why he does not lift weights

or work out, so that he would be able to live up to his threats. The 98-pound weakling replied, word for word, "that just wouldn't be me, man." Exactly. It Is In Karl's nature to lie about

being violent, it is not in his nature to Improve himself so that he will actually be able to follow through. Karl went on to say "I like to keep myself scrawny, like I was in high school, where everyone would beat me up; that's how It is to be one of the oppressed animals today, and I like to remind myself of that." Reminding yourself of it Isn't worth shit unless you're going to do something about It, and if you can't do anything about It because you're too lazy or whatever to get yourself In good shape then you're nothing better than a hypocrite. Don't try to tell me Karl is in good shape — I've seen his band and talked to him and he's about the weakest-looklng little kid I've ever seen In my life, especially for someone who's had 24 years to get In good enough shape to back up his words. And believe me, you don't have to be scrawny If you're vegan; John Joseph and Harley Flannagan of the Cromags have been vegan for years and years, and they're two of the healthiest, most muscular people I can think of. Not making an effort Is all that keeps you skinny...and you have no excuse not to make an effort to be ready to back up your words, unless you don't mean those words as anything but LIES.

As for these lies being "metaphors" for the rage these children claim to feel: why are they afraid to Just come out and tell the truth about their feelings and their actions? Could It be because they're not actually doing anything of real substance? If they are doing something viable and worthwhile, why don't they sing about that Instead, to show that there really are realistic things that can be done to change this world for the better? That would be more beneficial for everyone. For instance, Karl adopts stray animals and takes care of them when no one else would: this Is a truly admirable, humanitarian action, and If he sang about this hundreds or thousands of kids across the world would realize that they too could do this. On the other hand, when he sings about murdering vlvlsectionlsts, this Is something most kids can only sit in their rooms fantasizing about, rather than acting to get anything done. If he really cares about his cause, why then does he waste his time like this?

This brings us to the PLACEBO EFFECT: by singing about things that are never followed through on, these bands and their listeners — get the Impression that they are accomplishing something, without actually doing anything at all. Words change nothing, only actions can make this world a better place. If these bands would shut the fuck up about how they are killing people and concentrate Instead on actually providing a visible and Intelligent example of positive *action, * they would accomplish a lot more. If they really care about the Issues they claim to be concerned with, they would do this. In the meantime, kids Just go to the shows, sing about killing drug lords or whoever, and go home feeling like they've done some good and they're a part of something special. Bullshit. My own suspicion Is that these children value the* Image ot *toughness and action more than the reality. As such, they should be taken about a seriously as any other lying, Image-conscious junior high kids. Who gives a fuck about*

them when there are others offering realistic, Intelligent suggestions for positive change In our world?

Another example of a band that seems to think It s OK to tell lies in hardcore Is Excessive Force...they are the ones responsible for that "the time for lynching is at hand" quote I mentioned above. Incidentally, they are a proudly meat-eating band, but their name was suggested to them by Karl himself...he also suggested the cover of their 7", which had on it a picture of a policeman beating someone with a stick. (Between the lynching line and that cover, we already are dealing with some really fascist-looking shit here...) I spoke with their bassist (who is actually a really nice, respectable guy) about this, and he said that they Just wanted to have kids come to their shows to "get aggression out of their system, " that the lyrics were Just fantasies for these kids to sing along with so they could go home feeling more relaxed or something. What, is there nothing to be angry about In this world? Is there nothing to be worked up about, to be aggressive about? There are all sorts of problems plaguing our society and our planet that deserve real rage that *need* this rage as a response, so that people will be motivated to do something about them. Once again we have the placebo effect here, only In this case the band actually admits to using It: rather than Inspiring their listeners to, after the show, go out Into the world and make a positive change, this band apparently seeks to drain their listeners of whatever frustration they do have, to send them home after the show listless and apathetic to the problems

around them. This may sound like a stretch, but seriously, what else can these kids do? If they actually follow through on the course of action the band has been recommending and go lynch people, they'll be In serious legal trouble and the world will be, if anything, a worse place rather than a better one. Thus, this band, and all those like It, are doing nothing for their listeners, their world, or themselves by spreading these obvious Iles. Once again I suspect that their desire to seem tough Is getting In the way of their actual desire for change.

These cases of bands defeating themselves with their own lyrics sadden me, because I believe In and desire many of the same things they do. And If you, their listeners, also believe in the same things as these bands, you should be angry for the same reasons I am. Demand that these bands live up to their words, demand that they really make an effort to change this world for the better rather than indulging themselves In Iles to prop up their own faltering egos. If we, the listeners, really care about the issues these bands are singing about, we will settle for nothing less than the truth In their lyrics and corresponding action in their — and our–llves.

And here we come to the real question: should we accept falsity and Iles — by whatever name they may be called — as having a legitimate place In hardcore? I know that hardcore is and should be a very diverse culture, and I don't claim the right to tell anyone what to do: this is only my opinion. But we have to draw boundries somewhere, or else the word itself, not to mention all the noble ideas behind It, will become meaningless. What first drew me to hardcore, what 1 always loved about It above all and what I felt separated It from every other form of music and culture,

was its *realness.* While gangster rappers sang often ridiculously Impossible songs about murdering people, and metal bands sang puerile bullshit about fake satanism and gore, hardcore bands told the truth about their lives, their struggles, and their achievements In the real world. In 10th grade when I had no selfrespect or goals for myself, hardcore was there to offer a realistic alternative to apathy and self-hatred; it Inspired me to make something of myself mentally, physically, and morally rather than going through life blind and miserable. In 11th grade when my closest friend was pregnant by her ex-boyfrlend, the example my favorite hardcore bands had provided helped me to take the matter In hand to the best of my ability, to make things as easy for her as I could and to force her ex-boyfrlend to take some responsibility. In 12th grade, when I would walk home late at night, seven nights a week, from my minimum-wage food-service job, hardcore bands kept me going with songs about tenacity, dedication, and having a good work ethic. All throughout high school, which was often a literal warzone between myself and bullies of one sort or another who wanted nothing more than to humiliate me, the music and lyrics of bands like Agnostic Front and Sick of it All(circa "Push us too far...") reminded me that I could and should stick up for myself in any way that was necessary — without stooping to mindless violence when It was not appropriate. Over the years since those days, hardcore has remained just as Important In my life, If not more so. Whether I was employed full time or enrolled in college, the ethic and example of countless hardcore bands has always Inspired me and driven me to demand more of myself and from life. I'm sure this Is true for countless others like myself — and this is all because hardcore is *real* music about *real* issues. Every other kind of music provides some kind of stupid bullshit about this or that, but hardcore bands have always sung about real life and about achieving something in It.

I think that it will be a dark day If we lose that aspect of this "scene." Above all else, that detail sets this music apart from the rest, and set us as Individuals apart from the more meaningless and trivial existence offered by the rest of this society. If bands like the ones I've mentioned above manage to make lying acceptable and popular in hardcore, this music will be no different from any other: it will offer mere posing and bullshit as a response to the challenges of this world, with complacency and nothingness as the ultimate results — as I've explained above.

It may Indeed seem like I am being overly alarmist about this whole subject, but consider this experience of mine and think again: at a recent hardcore festival, I was speaking to a cool straightedge kid (from, you guessed it, Syracuse, NY) about a particular band whom I felt didn't live up to their lyrics. He said, and I'll never forget this, "yeah, but I don't really think any of

Fortunately for me, I have been In a prison now for a couple of years which Is different from others within the VA prison system. Racial tension is virtually non-existent here, so It never has a chance to create problems amongst the different racial groups. We share a peace unheard of at other prisons in this state. If you have any control over where you will go to do your time — pick a peaceful place. Since violence and prison are synonymous, and i violence is punished severely–you'd be wise to remem-

ber that you want to get out of prison A.S.A.P. because after your sentence gets "run up" (Increased due to Infractions or crimes committed In prison which are punishable by longer terms of confinement) a couple of years — you will sorely miss the shorter sentence you had before getting into more trouble.

Next Issue I will discuss the correct "walking attitude" you must carry with you when you enter prison; why It's important and what It entails. That's all for now! I welcome your letters:

Martin Maassen #1 7941 1

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$10, 000 stereo systems and speakers. Who really owns this equipment In their house? NO ONE. Check out your songs on your cassette tape (have the studio record them for you) on the walkman that you bought. This Is how most people will hear the songs. If everything sounds good then you're all set–lf not, either wait a few days and keep listening, or tell the producer/engineer what needs to be done.

Next, after the songs sound the way you want them to, have the studio record all your songs on the DAT tapes (one Is a backup In case the other Is lost) and a track sheet. A track sheet lists the song titles, and times. Track sheets are required by all pressing plants.

Are you ready to go home? Look at your checklist. Do you have 2 DAT's — a backup and master, a cassette tape with your songs on It, a track sheet, and most of all: songs that you're

happy with. Good. Now you're all set to send a DAT and track sheet off to a pressing plant to be made into a record, CD, or cassette. Next issue I will discuss with you pressing plants and artwork. Peace — Josh ENDLESS FIGHT

RELEASING YOUR OWN RECORDS, PART ONE

*_A Column by Josh Baker_*

So you want to release a record. If that's about all you know, I'm going to take you step by step from the studio to the distribution. Throughout this column I'll give you hints that I learned from doing my own label, _Endless Fight Records._

First off, you've got to find a band you want to release a record by (assuming you're not In a band). Make sure the band knows their songs through and through before you look for a recording studio. The old adage "time Is money" is truer than ever in the recording studio.

You found a band that you like, but you don't know how to find a studio that fits your needs. What are your needs? — Do you a)have a budget b)have a time deadline or c)a transportation problem? You've got to write down your needs before you check

out your local papers for a recording studio. Nobody else knows what you want except you.

You've checked your local papers for studios — have you tried looking at your favorite local bands demo's or recordings to see where they recorded? This way you know how the studio sounds before you go in, and you can even request a tour of, or samples from, specific studios. It's your money, spend It wisely.

Most studios charge $15 to $35 per hour. Take all the necessary Information and choose the studio thats best for you. Call them up and set a date to go In.

For two to three songs about 6 to 8 hours Is sufficient for your first trip to the studio. Remember to be on time. You're paying for It even If your late. And why make the producer/ engineer mad if he's playing god on your album? He can be your best friend or worst enemy. If they know your budget and that It's your first time in the studio, they may cut you some slack and give you extra time and/or free help. Always let them know your previous experience In the studio so they know how to help you. And If you can bring along a friend who has had studio experience it may help you greatly. Notice I said ONE friend, Not Five. This many extra people justs adds to the noise and can effect your recording for the worse.

You've been practicing your songs for weeks and you know them blindfolded. Exactly. Know your songs, and the order in which you will record them In. Let me give you a big hint: Skip the five minute dream Intro that you play at every show and makes the crowd go nuts. It only gets boring to listen to and when a label hears It, they turn the tape off. Everybody wants to hear well written songs.

So your set up in the studio and you've brought these Items with you:

1. extra guitar strings

2. extra drum stlcks/drum heads

3. a good quality blank tape

4. two DAT tapes (8–15 dollors each)

   (DAT means Digital Audio Tape. This is what the final recording goes on. I recommend TDK.)

5. a Walkman or radio with a cassette player.

Finally after four hours you have finished recording three songs. Now It's mixdown time. Let the engineer mix down first (If you dont know anything), then listen to his mix and decide what you want done. Do the guitars need to be louder? The drums softer, echo on the vocals, etc. Mix down Is what your final product will sound like, but don't be fooled by the studios

EVOLUTION OF HARDCORE-M BE

by Todd Forkin of Starkweather

I started listening to punk rock/hardcore in 1980. It was a strange time, because the music was making a transition from its punk rock roots to something much harder, faster, and angrier. It was in this transition that I discovered the Dead Kennedys, Black Flag, and the Germs. These bands had taken English punk and had fused It with an anger and aggression that was wholy American; the hatred was less focused and more widespread, it rid the music of the self-pity that had ruined punk rock, and it was more defiant. It had become the music of freaks and outcasts, and it was once again dangerous. In 1980 the combat boots, ripped jeans, and homemade T-shirts we wore weren't a fashion statement, they gained us no acceptance, no new friends. What they got us were beatings and abuse. We were fucking freaks, and we dressed the way we did to show the rest of the world what we had always known Inside: WE DID NOT BELONG. In 1980, we were hardcore because there was nothing else we could be. It picked us, we hadn't picked it.

While the Dead Kennedys raged with political satire and shock value, It was Black Flag and the Germs whose music bypassed our heads and went straight to our hearts. They were the embodiment of the alienation I felt: raw, brutal, and full of the bite, hatred, and defiance I felt my whole life. It's hard to imagine today that any band could have as much influence on anyone's life as those bands had on mine. The Germs' "Gl" LP, which is still available on CD, has probably stood the test of time better than the Black Flag EPs, and the Dead Kennedys' "Fresh Fruit for Rotting Vegetables" LP. The Germs were the perfect marriage of aggressive music and the mind-numbing lyrics of Darby Crash. Crash was an enigma: outward appearance would lead you to believe that he was no different than the legions of spiky-haired drug-addled punks that roamed LA, but then there were Darby's lyrics. He Infused the Germs with a literary sense that few bands before or since have been able to achieve. From the stunning "Richy Dagger's Crime" to "Manimal, " Darby, the idiot savant, spilled blood for us.

It was in "Manimal" that he captured the heart of what hardcore was about In 1980 and In doing so captured the hearts of every freak that had only felt partly alive before this music gave us fire:

Manimal

I came into this world, like a puzzle panther, waiting to be caged but something went wrong

I was never quite tamed

I crossed the paths of right and wrong and saw them take their toll

I saw armies that marched and like animals they crawled

If I am just an animal then I can do no wrong but they say I'm something better so I've gotta hold on

Here's my disclaimer: I don't think the term hardcore | came about until about 1981, when D.O.A. released their j "Hardcore 81" album. I've used the term for convenience. I'm sure some people will argue that some of my facts are wrong, and | some will claim that these bands weren't even hardcore; but to them I say I was there and you probably weren't, so fuck you, write your own article. For those of you swept up in this bogus wave of "Old School" nostalgia, that was never my Intention. Maybe Brian's Intention in printing this article is to show what those days were like, in an attempt to bring hardcore back from the weak, pathetic, safe form of music it's become. Remember: nostalgia Is for the weak and weakness will be the death of i hardcore.

Todd/Starkweather, P.O. Box 1 1739, Philadelphia PA 19101

Next Issue, expect the next columns in the series from Martin, Todd, and Josh, plus more shit. Some of the new columns we have planned are: "Life in the Armed Forces, " "Advice for Bands going on Tour, " and "Elementary Sewing"... so that all you fashion-victim baggy-clothes weirdos will be able to adjust your wardrobes to be more appropriate for real fucking life, if you think you have something good to offer as a columnist, please do write and offer your services.

SINGING WITH

DWID by Dwid/INTEGRITY,

with Inside Front

A *dialectical discussion of screaming. Whatever.*

INSIDE FRONT: Explain for the neophytes singing from the stomach rather than from the throat.

DWID: You have to train yourself to be able to do it. Sit-ups and stuff like that condition your stomach muscles, and once they're In better shape you can focus on those muscles at practise and get a better idea of how to work them — like when you're actually singing, have your hand on your abdomen and try different things. If you sing just from your throat alone you blow out your voice. Really the only thing doing situps does is that you can visually see the muscles in the abdomen, and then you can focus there better. If you work out you II have a better understanding: when you work out you look at the muscles you want to develope better, you can see them and focus on them with your mind and isolate the muscles you're working. Sit-ups help you do the same thing when you sing.

IF: Is it true that the longer and more frequently you sing, the more range and lung power you have?

D: It depends. Some people aren't cut out for it. For some people, it's like working out with weights, you work out your vocal chords and singing becomes second nature and your voice will never give out. Other people just don't have a chance, as hard as they try it's always bad.

IF: What are some other exercises you can do to increase your lungpower and singing ability?

D: Also, take in a deep breath, as deep as you can hold, hold it in for two seconds, and then blow it out slowly until there's no air whatsoever left in your lungs. You could do it ten times a day, or five sets of five. Another thing you could do is tilt your head back within an hour before the show, and you know how a runner will stretch out his legs, you tilt your head back as far as you can, and take your lower jaw and protrude it like you have an underbite. You can feel it stretching out a bit. Also, making a low, growling sound while your head is tilted back, and shaking your head back and forth a bit helps to a degree.

IF: Just don't do that in front of the club with everyone watching you.

D: Well, you look stupid...

IF: Talk about what you told me Ray Cappo told you about certain roots you can use for your throat.

D: He said to bite into a ginger root and kind of drink the juice from it — it's comparable to biting into an apple, but just sucking the juice from it, not eating the actual apple fiber. Take one deep bite. It's very bitter. You have to tilt your head back and drink It so that it reaches your vocal chords. It seems to rejuvenate your voice. I don't know exactly how it works.

IF: So it's something you would use if you were on tour?

D: Yeah. I've used it before. It rejuvenates your voice, but it also makes you sing in somewhat of a different way. Basically you could apply it if you sing somewhat like Ray does — or did — I don't know if he uses it any more — but the effect you'll get is a more raspy, not so deep, trebly sort of voice like Youth of Today. You use It sporadicly during the day, just use It until you feel your throat is clear.

IF: Is it true that you used that when you were recording for the new Integrity record?

D: No, I used hot coffee. Hot coffee blows out your throat though. It gives you a different effect where it's kind of gargled, but clear- -it's like your voice is clear, because it clears out ail the mucus and the blood, and all the other crap. It also affects the swelling of the vocal chords, it makes them less swelled. You drink the coffee before and during while you're singing. Using coffee you can go as hard as you can, but It blows your voice out, you can only sing for a short time. You could last for a show, but the next day your voice would be bad off. There's a lot of different things that can affect your voice and make it sound different, different conditionings, you know? If you drink lemonade, that fucks your voice up — in my opinion. Some people like their voice to sound like that, Gorilla Biscuits-style, squeeky, cracking, breaking. If you wanted to do a Gorilla Biscuits cover, that would be the ideal drink, your beverage of choice. Try drinking straight lemon juice and you'll see.

IF: It's just the hot water in the coffee that affects your throat, right, because if you drink cold water, your throat freezes up and you can't sing for shit.

D: Well, some people can. I guess it just depends on the way you sing. Or when you drink milk, you have a lot of mucus in your throat, you get a gargling sound, like you're drowning, not like a deathmetal sound, just like you're drowning, like you suck. One of my friends, when his band recorded, he chose to drink a quart of chocolate milk before he did his vocals, and it was very difficult to get the vocals to flow right.

IF: So don't drink chocolate milk.

D: Everyone who reads your zine is a vegan, though.

IF: How about when you're on tour, do you have any advice on how to maintain your voice over, say, forty days?

D. Practise before you go, which is something that my band doesn't do, because they're jerks. While you're on tour you're supposed to not talk after the show, but the problem is, then you're percieved as a dick, stuck up and stuff, so there's no way to do that unless you re in a rock band. Kids want to interview you, kids come up and ask "is it true that you beat up this guy or that guy, " you know... Another thing is to avoid smoke. If you're a smoker, you tend to not get as sick on tour, because your vocal chords are already conditioned to pollution. But try not to practice around smokers, even though I'm the pot calling the kettle black in this, and pot is the key phrase, since, you know, I'm in a band...no, don't put that? One guy In my band smokes constantly at practice and it really irritates my throat. But then I guess, on the other side, I guess it's good that he does it, even though I wish he didn't, because when you go to a show and it's in a smoky club, there's a lot of smokers, a lot of people who are insecure.

IF: What do you do when you're playing a show and you're running out of breath?

D: Go on a diet, you fucking geek.

IF: No, I mean like people who jump around a lot on stage when they sing, do you have any advice for how to do that?

D: Well, I don't jump around that much, you just saw us up in DC. Basically it depends on your vocals — if you're in a Discharge-style band where you can say two lines and then just jump fucking mad, and then come back to stand in one place and say the two lines again. My voice Is too deep most of the time to be able to go off as much as I'd like to go off. Like John Joseph's voice in the early Cro-mags, that Isn't as strenuous as vocals go, he's not at the bottom of his range, he's more like talking; that allows more physical action to go on, you can more easily jump around and get crazy and have a great show than if you were singing very deep, shouting. He's on the other side of the spectrum from me, even though his vocals are among the ones I most admire in hardcore.

IF. Now we go on to studio effects. What studio effects have you used before that you would recommend?

D. That s up to your own dlscresslon. I hate to say this, because I don't want other people to do It too, but one thing that I liked, when we first did our 7 and the Grace of the Unholy" tape, I used to do all the vocals with a whisper track, and then go over that with a shouting track of the same words, so It would have an effect on it that's not an effect you can get. Then I would put more reverb on the whisper track and

it would coincide, it would be underlying the shouting track, because It was at lower volume.

IF: Is it hard to get a whisper track to work, do you have to turn up the levels In the studio really high, or what?

D: You could do it however you wanted, you could mike it at the level of a conversation, whatever. Any studio should have the capability of picking up a pin drop, unless It's a four track. Probably. You know, whtever.

IF: Any other suggestions for the studio?

D: It's unlimited, there's so many things you can do. Experimentation is the best; when people use other people's ideas, it's not as good, it's not as creative. One basic thing you can do, If you're in a starting-off band, whether you're a singer or any musician in the band, Is to go to the studio and sit in for a couple bands' mix-downs prior to your recording, that way you can see what effects are at your

disposal, what kind of tricks you may be able to puli off in the studio, and maybe you can pick up some things that you shouldn't use.

IF: If someone's voice runs out in the studio, what are some things you can do about it?

D: Go back next week. It's a double-edged sword, but basically one thing you could do if you want to have a really energetic live show

with a sound pretty close to your record, is to try not to put as much gut into your record, into your vocals, because you're going to regret it on your tour when you do forty dates In a row and you have to give It your all, and you have to have a "bluesy, " heartfelt performance, it s going to kill you. Take it from me. I know what it feels like to have your throat fucking bloody as hell, ripped up like you swallowed ten yards of barbed wire, curled up In a ball in the back of a van with a bunch of guys smoking and having a great time maybe one guy with a blister on his finger from playing drums. Other than that, you're fucking in your own hell, and you created it for' yourself — so at that point when you're feeling the most down and you hate the band and you hate the fact that you're physically maimed then you grab your notebook and your pen and you fucking start writing some lyrics against the world, so you may find your silver lining, even though at the time it doesn't feel too silver, maybe like a silver dagger in your throat.

IF...So do you think that singing the way you do causes long term damage to your throat?

D: Oh, definitely. I've looked down my throat in a mirror, my throat Is screwed up. I went to an ear-nose-and-throat doctor a while after a tour when my band was having down time, and the guy was like "Oh my god, you have strep throat!" They did a throat culture and when It came back I didn't even have it, but he said "God, this is the worst case of strep I've ever seen..."

IF: That's bad. Can you feel the effects of that in every day life?

D: If your throat is all screwed up then you're more susceptible to getting sick. I think M.A.D. have it in for me because they always send me to tour Europe In the

coldest seasons-l'm just kidding, but basically, it's hard as fuck to sing like that, but it's harder when it s cold out — the other reason being, you know like I said before we have people In our band who smoke cigarettes all the time and when you're In a van with the windows rolled up and the heat on, the dry air and the smoke is circulating so you never can feel better

Another thing Is, when you're touring nationally or whatever, through different climates, It also screws you up because your Immune

system is down. Taking a multivitamin helps. Hardcore is more of a sport than, you know, guys in rock bands, you have to perceive

yourself more like a basketball player, or a boxer, or some athlete who exerts himself, and you have to try to take care of yourself

accordingly. If you don't eat right, If you don't have an OK dlet-and you can be vegan and have an OK diet with protein, believe it or not, despite what some kids look like, because I know some kids who are vegans who are In great shape–...being in shape Is a definite plus if you're In a band, because you'll be able to perform better.

[Image not archived]

/ interviewed Doughnuts during their USA tour with Snapcase, in June 1995. I'd sent them a written interview earlier, to which they had never responded.

INSIDE FRONT: First off, how did you choose the band name?

ASA/DOUGHNUTS: We were playing punk rock, we were going to do a show, and we didn't have a name. This guy suggested the name "dead doughnuts, " which means "dead monks" in Swedish — IF: "Doughnut" means "monk" in Swedish? Why "monks, " then? A/D: We were going to wear monk clothes and kill ourselves on stage. We didn't do that though. We were supposed to change the name after one show, but everybody started calling us Doughnuts, and that's it, we kept it...what a bad name...

IF: So you're stuck with It now, just like Snapcase. Have any of your members been In other bands?

A/D: Yeah, we played in punk bands, and one of our guitarists | was in a heavy metal band...

IF: Any bands we would have heard of In the United States..? A/D: No...no!

IF: How is the tour going here in the USA? How do the shows compare to the ones in Sweden?

A/D: It's going great. There are more people, and the people talk to you more. But there are more fights, also — I've never seen a fight before, in Sweden. Still, I like it here; this is the first time I've been here. We've gotten a lot of support. We were really nervous when we got here, there was a lot of pressure on us because we were the first European band to come here, and the first girl band, and this is our first tour. We had done a tour of 3 , days, and that was It.

IF: So how did you and Victory records come to work together?

A/D: We released the "Equalize Nature" record, and the label Desperate Fight sent a copy to Victory. When Tony Brummel got it he called me.

IF: So it was not too hard, then.

A/D: No, I didn't really understand why...

IF: Did you get much other interest from the United States, 'zines wanting to interview you and so on?

A/D: Yeah, we got a lot of mail.

IF: Was that before or after the deal with Victory?

A/D: Well, before, but also more now.

IF: Tell us about the new record, the music on it, how it compares to your last record.

A/D: I don't know, more heavy, more heavy metal...but really I'm not so satisfied with it, because Tony Brummel told us "oh, you have to do it *now, * you have to do it now..." We recorded that, like, six months ago.

IF: Did you record It at the same studio?

A/D: Yeah.

IF: And you feel like you've progressed since then?

A/D: Yeah. But we could have done better if we'd had more time, because we had to do the songs in a short time, we felt like we were rushed. I hope people will like it.

IF: What about the subjects you address In the lyrics on the new record?

A/D: It's about vegetarianism, veganism, straightedge...it's mostly like what I feel...personal lyrics.

IF: Did Doughnuts release anything we wouldn't know about in the USA, anything besides the "Equalize Nature" CD and the song on the "SXE as Fuck" compilation?

> A/D: We've done two compilations before, one I won't talk about because it was so bad, one was "SXE as Fuck"–and we're going to be on "SXE as Fuck #2." We don't have any other plans for future releases. Now we just have to make new songs so we can put out a full length.
>
> IF: So you're going to put out a full length record on Victory after this EP?

A/D: Yeah... I think so. ☒

IF: Did your band start out aiming to be an all girl band?

> A/D: No. We were friends, we all went to concerts, I started going when I was eleven years old; we always wanted to play hardcore but we were too bad so we had to play punk rock instead, but finally we got good enough.
>
> IF: Do questions about being an all-girl band bother you? Do you feel stigmatized, being the only visible all-girl band in hardcore right now?

A/D: Yeah, but what do you expect? We're the only all girl band, so people will have to react somehow. It's not wrong that they do, as long as they also listen to our music.

IF: So how do you get treated in hardcore, at shows, etc., do you

get treated any different than you expect other bands would be?

A/D: No, I don't think so...except for one guy who followed our

bass player all around In there tonight...

IF: Well, if you think there's a problem, there's a lot of people here tonight who'd be happy to do something about it. That's surprising that you don't feel like you're treated differently in hardcore as women, since here in the West that's usual in pretty much every environment. OK, as a band that happens to be all women, do you take a particular interest in "women's issues"?

A/D: No, we don't. I think that every girl band, they're often

feminists, but they do it in the wrong way because they write

lyrics like "Oh, fuck your boyfriend, kill your boyfriend, men are stupid assholes and they only rape you, only want to have sex or fuck you or hurt you, " or stuff like that. I don't feel treated different, I'm not treated different just because I'm a girl — if they want to be feminists, they have to do it In the right way: equalize everything.

IF: A pet peeve of mine is fashion magazines like Vogue and _Cosmopoliton_ that make women all feel like they're fat and need to look a certain way, how do you feel about that subject?

A/D: I don't like it, because they put out an idea of how we're supposed to look, but I haven't seen a person who looks like that in my whole life. The pictures, they airbrush them, no one looks like that. "Spread it, " the song on "Equalize Nature, " is about that. It's about a friend of mine, her friends always told her "oh, you're so thin, " and they didn't think that it hurt her, but it did. She was laughing and stuff like that, and they they didn't think about it, but it hurts when people call you stuff.

IF: Some cultures and societies In this world impose more standards and bullshit requirements on women than others–what do you think about that? Do you think that all cultures are equal, or that some are more desirable than others because they involve less prejudice and oppression? For Instance In parts of Africa they practise clitoridectomy, "female circumcision, " do you think that Western cultures have the right to Intervene, In a case like that? A/D: To Interfere? Yeah. I think it's so wrong to do that to women.

IF: You think that it Is wrong in any circumstances?

A/D: Yeah.

IF: OK. Who was that naked on the cover of "Equalize Nature"?

A/D: It's our drummer's ex-boyfriend.

IF: Had she broken up with him before or after the CD was released?

A/D: After!

IF: So what was he doing, being naked, doing that, anyway?

A/D: I don't know. It was the middle of winter, and he was standing on the roof In front of eight girls, naked, and he was the only guy. We didn't even ask him, he just came up to us and said "oh, I can do It."

IF: So he did know he was going to be on the cover of the CD. A/D: Yeah.

IF: Oh. I was thinking you just took pictures of him, and then decided to put the picture on the CD cover to make his life miserable because she'd broken up with him! So why did you choose that design for the cover? What was the Idea?

A/D: He's naked, and that's close to nature. Actually, we should have had a girl on the cover, but that might have been taken wrong. For guys, they can take their shirt off and walk around, they can walk around half-naked and noone will think that they're [cr]azy, but If a girl were to do something like that they would call her a whore or something. I think that's wrong. Why can't you take your shirt off, It's your body, It's nothing unnatural, but If I did that...

IF: You d have more people like that guy following you around.

A/D: ...people would think I was crazy or something. I don't think that's ever going to change, but I want It to. That's why it's called "Equalize Nature, " like with the animals, I want everything to be equal.

IF: About the song "Self Destruction" on the "SXE as..." compilation: do you think "self-destruction" really is "in our nature"? And If that's so, then what can we do?

A/D: Oh, now I recognize this Interview, I read it, I recognize that question!

IF: Oh, so you did get the interview. *So why didn't you answer it?*

A/D: I don't know! I don't know where I put It. I thought about this Interview. Just recently, I was wondering where I put it. As for that song, I do think It's In our nature, 1 don't know if It was

In our nature from the beginning, but now we haven't got any

enemies, we're at the top of everything, and nothing can hurt us but ourselves. And we do that. Everything we do Is destroying us.

We eat meat, and that destroys this planet, kills the animals, and

everything leads back to us, like a circle, and we're here, just blind, killing ourselves.

IF: So do you think we have any hope then, or not?

A/D: I don't know. If people realize It, there might be hope, but I don't think we have so much time left on this planet...

IF: Is there a story behind the lyric "rats spread disease" In the song "Drench my Thirst"?

A/D: Yes. It's about the Nazis, Hitler said that the Jews were rats, and compared them to rats, and said they spread disease.

And about the song "No Oxygen for the Dying Breed": many may have understood it wrong, It's really just about me. Many people may think It's about humans, and that we're dying–three weeks ago, a newspaper In Sweden printed four lines of those lyrics, and they wrote that I had written about "the bad sides of society, " and that's totally wrong, they didn't even ask me about it. I tried to call them, but I couldn't reach them; I was so angry. It's just about me, about a period of my life that was really depressing.

IF: OK. So veganism is an important political stance to your band. A/D: Vegetarianism. I'm not vegan. I'm vegan when I'm here, but where I come from for me it's difficult to be vegan because it's so expensive and my mom and dad won't pay for it...

IF: You live with your parents?

A/D: Yeah, I do.

IF: Do a lot of people your age live with their parents in Sweden? A/D: Well, I'm only seventeen, so...

IF: YOU'RE ONLY SEVENTEEN?

A/D: Yeah...

IF: And you've gotten to the United States!?

A/D: But If I had to choose between straightedge and vegetarianism, I definitely would be getting drunk right now...

IF: Can I quote you out of context on that last bit? "I definitely would be getting drunk now..." Are there any other issues that are important to Doughnuts?

A/D: That's the most important one, to me.

^' Besides your band, are any of you active in any other ways to spread this message, or to do something in favor of...?

A/D: I try to force it on my parents, I try to force it on my brothers, I try to force it on my friends.

IF: As far as vegansim goes, what do you think of bands that take a more militant stance on It, bands like...

A/D: Earth Crisis.

IF: Yeah.

A/D: I've heard a lot of things about Earth Crisis that I don't like, I read that they want everybody to have a machine gun, and they're against abortion, their lyrics say "you're a demon with blood on your hands..."

IF: ...and, they also say "a bullet for every demon"...

A/D: I don't think that military stuff like that would help anything, because If you're going to tell people something, and you're acting with violence, then they won't listen to you, because they'll think you're extreme and crazy. If it's the "final exit, " then you have to, then I would do something like that, but otherwise, no... Straightedge is against violence, and you can't be straightedge If you're into something like that.

IF: Does this cause you any trouble, that you disagree with some of Earth Crisis's beliefs, since you're on Victory records with them?

A/D: No. I haven't talked to him personally, It's just things that I've read about them, I don't know If that's always true...

IF: Any good new bands that you'd like to recommend?

A/D: Abhinanda.

Contact DOUGHNUTS at:

Asa Forsberg

Kungsg 23

90321 Umea, Sweden

abliinanda

INSIDE FRONT: Why does everyone In Europe call your band “Abhlfuck”?

JOSE/ABHINANDA: Because we’re a bunch fuckers I guess! Actually we started the whole thing because It was easier for people to remember the name “Abhlfuck” than the real one.

IF: What does that name mean, and why did your band choose It?

a/fc It means “ever Increasing bliss” and we got It from the first Shelter album. We chose It because it was weird and the word has a cool meaning (and It was when Shelter came and everybody started to talk about hare krlshna...)

IF: How long has Abhlnanda existed? Please list all your releases until now, Including compilation tracks, and list your releases you have

coming In the future. Give addresses for the different labels if possible.

J/A: For almost two years now. Our first release on cd was 2 songs on the compilation NORTHCORE (burning heart records, box 138,

737 fagersta, Sweeden), after that we released our 5 song cd “darkness of Ignorance” on Desperate Fight rec’s. As a follow up we

contributed 1 song to the “sXe as fuck” compilation, also on desperate fight. All this shit happened In 1994. The same year , we also

released our full length debut “senseless” (desperate f.). We have 2 songs (demo versions of 2 songs from “senseless”) on your tape

comp. The 17 of april (1995) we’re heading to the same studio we used to record “senseless.” Our plan is to record 6 new songs to

be released on D.F.r. and probably on an American label too. Our 2nd full length release will probably be released In august/September later this year.

IF: How do you feel now about the first cd Abhlnanda released? Will that ever be available again?

J/A: Well, oh, no comment...actually I like It (thats me, the other band members don’t share my opinion...) but it will never be repressed (the master tape doesn’t exist anymore...)

IF: Abhlnanda takes stances on topics such as violence, veganism, drug-use, and the envlroment. Besides raising these issues through the band, do your band members take any other actions regarding these Issues?

J/A: Just on a personal level. We’re not involved In any kind of organization as far as I know. The best action Is to try to live up to the things we “preach, ” which Is quiet hard sometimes.

IF: Are there any particular Issues you’d like to use this interview to speak about? Please feel free.

J/A: There Is one thing. It’s about the hardcore scene In general (I mean on an International level). What I have noticed lately is that we

put more energy into destruction than Into construction. For example, the constant jealousy over the sea... the typical “oh, the the scene Is so sincere over there In Europe,

blah, blah, " and over here it goes like this: "oh, why don't we have good bands like in the US, " etc.

Maybe that was a bad example but I quess you got my point.

IF: In your song "love story, " are you advocating celibacy?

Abris/Abhlnanda: No, I'm just promoting love, love that goes beyond lust and *ego…"mylusJ^nTye^* I want real love, not just something built on fading beauty, etc...If someone really loves a person and wants to show their affection by having sex or whatever I'm not going to stand in their way.

IF: Your song "Competition In Hatred" seems to be taking a stance against violence and "fighting fire with fire". Are those things never necessary at all? If they are necessary sometimes, when?

A/A: Of course you should defend yourself If somebody tries to hurt you, but If someone just Insults you...It's very easy to stay away from fights, but it's even more easy to get Into one.

IF: The song "Fallen" presents a negative view of yourself — don't you think hardcore should be about supporting a positive self-image, and not describing yourself as being the "weakest of the weak" and begging for help?

A/A: I agree (I didn't really like the ending part where the backups go "fallen-still falling", I wanted to show a more positive side but... what can I say). Some of my new lyrics are much more positive. But "fallen" Is one of the songs people seem to relate to the most.

IF: Can you tell me any particular stories or experiences In your lives that led to the writing of the song "senseless"?

A/A: Commercials are a very good example: I'm being "Influenced" by them all the time and I know It. Similarly, all the so-called friends

who want you to start drinking just because It's "their idea of a good time." I will not be dragged around.

IF: Why did you choose the picture on the "senseless" CD for the cover? What does it mean to you?

J/A: We were in a hurry and It was the only good stuff we found.

IF: Your band name has a Krishna meaning, doesn't It? How does Abhlnanda feel about "Krishna consciousness, " and religion In general? Is Krishna consciousness popular In Europe?

J/A: Well I don't really know If It's a Krishna meaning (probably...) or not but It's sanserif which Is krlshna related...none of us Is a devotee or Into Krishna C. as far as I know. But, I know that krishna consciousness Is accepted within the band, just as any other religion. It's like "if It makes you happy go ahead". That goes for everything. It doesn't matter if you're Krishna, alcoholic, black, white, sxe, etc. — you can be an asshole anyway (or the most brilliant person In the world). I guess Krishna C. was quite popular but the trend Is dying out.

IF: What are shows like In Umea? How do they contrast to shows in other parts of Europe?

J/A: I guess there is a kind of "rich kid mentality" here in Umea, only the "best"(well known bands with a name") are good enough. What I've experienced out In the rest of Europe Is that there are much smaller scenes, but they are way more supportive.

IF:Will Abhlnanda ever tour the USA? Would you ever go to a USA label?

J/A: When the new record Is out, we'll check out a few offers we've had from some US labels who want to do it over there and If there is a deal, there will be a tour.

IF: What bands have influenced Abhlnanda?

J/A: A lot! I can name you some: Beatless, Madness, Lifetime, Superdong, Fireside, Strife, Primus, No Use For A Name, Guns'n'Roses, Inside Out, 108, Shelter, Madball, Yngwe Malmsteen, Outspoken and many more...

IF: Guns and Roses?! Please mention a few newer bands (l.e. not major label 80's metal bands...) that you think are really good and deserve attention.

J/A: Shield and Purusam. I know both bands are Desperate Fight bands but the thing Is, If you have a record label you can put out the newer bands you really like...

IF: Speaking of, why did you start Desperate Fight records? How far do you plan to take It?

J/A: We started It because we needed a label to put out Abhlnanda's first release. When I nootlced that It worked out we just kept on releasing stuff. How far? Well as far as I can. I want to put out everything I like and possibly make a living off of It. That Is, as long as I dont have to compromise with prices, distributors, etc...

IF: Who Is your partner In Desperate Fight and what does he do ?

J/A: Dennis from Refused. He packs stuff, answers letters, etc.

IF: Why do you only release CD's, no vinyl?

J/A: Because It's Impossible to press vinyl In Sweden. It costs tons more than CD's and nobody buys the shit. Sad, because I love vinyl.

IF: What are the new releases you have coming up on your label?

J/A: Final Exit- old school hardcore. Purusam- weird stuff, Kinda Snapcase-esque with alot of acoustic stuff and alot of female backups. Abhlnanda- 4 new songs.

IF: How do you feel about Doughnuts leaving Desperate Fight to get on Victory records?

J/A: Really good, I hate the girls in that band! No, just a joke. I think it's good for the band and for European hardcore overall. Now the labels over there are more likely to sign foreign bands. Refused will be on Equal Vision, for instance. The tour possibilities will also be better.

IF: What are the other bands on your "Straight Edge as Fuck" compilation doing now?

J/A: Drift Apart- Smoking pot! No, they are still around as a studio project. Some of the members have a new band called Abandon. Doughnuts- I guess you know... Beyond Hate- Drinking brew...some of the members are In Abandon. Abhinanda- New cd single out on Desperate Fight very soon. Solitude-...Is actually the same band as Shield. They released a cd ep for not so long ago. They'll record an album for Desperate

Fight in June. Refused- just touring alot. US tour with 108 In July and Euro' tour with Snapcase in August.

IF: On the back of that compilation is printed "love and compassion for ALL living things, by any means necessary." Do you mean that compassion is necessary for plants, insects, and germs? If so, why? How does one show love to a mushroom or to a fly?

J/A: Well, well, well...that was written for a long time ago. Just try to show compassion so far it's possible... I was very into promoting vegetarianism and veganism back then so I wrote that.

IF: Do you think a cruelty-free world will ever exist?

J/A: I hope so but I don't think so...I think that a change of mentality for over 90% of the worlds population is required and that sounds like an (Impossible) utopia.

IF: How do you feel about hardline bands, and bands like Earth Crisis?

J/A: I don't know that much about any hardline bands so I can't really say anything. I guess we live to far from bands like Hardline, Vegan Reich, etc so it's kind of hard to answer you this question. Lyrically I don't like them that much. Actually I've read some lyrics from some of the so called hardline bands that are really naive and bad... I like Earth Crisis musically and I like the way Karl writes the lyrics. I really respect them because they introduce their ideals and beliefs in an intelligent way, (that helps to make people think...) — all the interviews I've read with the band are really good too, and they were really nice people when we met them in England...all this

doesn't mean I have to agree with everything they sing about. I guess I have other solutions to the same problems.

IF: How important do you think being vegan is, as far as Straight Edge goes?

J/A: I think veganism is really important. I also think sxe is really important(at least for me...). Both sxe and veganism are personal

choices that can go hand In hand but doesn't have to...as any personal choice, begin with living it yourself.

IF: Photographs, vinyl records, and similar items contain animal products...do you feel that it is hypocritical for vegans to use, buy, or own these Items?

J/A: Both yes and no. Some items are really unnecessary and should be rejected (for example paintball ammunition- contains gelatin-). But, there are a lot of things that we directly or indirectly need. I guess we have to look back to my utopia theory of the "perfect world" on this one, It's our attitudes that have to change. All the this stuff produced with "non-vegan" stuff can surely be produced without any.

IF: How long has Umea been the center of European hardcore? Why do you think it became one? What is the scene like there right now? What will it be like in a couple years?

J/A: Is it really? Well maybe it Is at the moment...! guess the main reason it became one is because we have tons of good bands and people here. It's a little bit stagnant at the moment. We're In a stage where alot of faces will change... What will the future hold? Only time will tell...but I tell you there are some new killer bands on the way...the established bands are more concerned in trying to conquer new areas in music.

IF: How many UMEA bands share members of other bands? Which bands, and which members?

A/A: Actually not that many at all. The more known bands don't share any members at all. But, I tell you, every member of every single band has a side project...(these probably will end In nothing). Proof is this "sxe as fuck compilation number 2" that's in the works, there are 11 or 12 bands on it and of those, at least 8 bands don't share any members at all.

IF: Is fashion important to the hardcore scene in Umea? What do people there tend to wear?

J/A: Not really. I must admit that the typical "skate" outfit (baggy pants, big hardcore tee's, baseball caps, chains, etc.) is the most popular but I'm so used to it that I can't see it as a trend/fashion anymore, it's just natural.

IF: Do many people skate in Umea? Where and how?

J/A: Yes, both skating and snowboarding are very popular activities. There isn't a special spot. Skating is allowed everywhere, if you don't disturb anybody, so people skate almost everywhere.

IF: Is Nazism a big problem right now in Sweden? How about in Germany? Is that what the song "Inner Qualities" is about?

J/A: We don't have any problems in Umea, but every now and then you can read about them in the newspapers doing some shit, mostly in the big cities. The song "Inner Qualities" isn't exactly about nazis (at least they stand openly for their beliefs). Here in Sweden we have really bad problems with the "hidden" racism and fascism. Face to face everybody is nice and cute but as soon as you turn your back, they fuck you over really bad. I think those assholes are the worst, they make nazi skinheads like like some really "nice guys",

(understand what I mean) Mostly these people hide behind a "nationalist" title.

IF: Sweden has a more socialist government than the USA — Do you think that the is a good thing? Where do you stand politically?

J/A: I guess it doesn't matter. Before this socialist government we had a more conservative one and I can't see any difference. I guess

socialism In Sweden died back in '85 together with Olof Palme. Personally I don't stand politically anymore because I have lost all faith... Actually we have it kind of good in Sweden, I mean nobody is dying cause they don't have anything to eat. Sweden is technical advanced, we have good natural resources, we have only 9, 000, 000 inhabitants, so I think it would be kind of hard to sink this ship between one day and the next.

IF: How do you feel about the relationship between the hardcore scenes in Europe and the USA? Do you think in the future they will be more united, or less?

J/A: I think a bond of unity Is growing. A lot of USA bands are touring Europe these days and most of the "bigger" hardcore labels over there will have at least one European band before '95 is over...both Refused and Doughnuts are touring the USA this summer. Who would have believed this six months ago? Let's wait and see how that

ends. Abhinanda will probably fly over too in the near future. If the bands even get only 10% of the support American bands get over here, we'll have a united "International" hardcore scene soon.

IF: What do you know about what is going on in hardcore in other parts of Europe, for instance, Britain, Germany, and Italy?

J/A: Britain have a good HC/punk scene, but there isn't a sxe scene at all, just a few dedicated persons. There is more of a "crusty" scene over there. The typical sound at the moment is something similar to the Ebullition bands. Germany has alot of hardcore at the moment. Bands like Sick of it All and Biohazard have over 1000 people at every show...the sxe scene Is strong in some parts. I haven't got all the new stuff coming out from Italy but apparently there are things happening all over there. What I like about Italy is that they have worse English pronunciation than mine...(which Isn't the best...)

IF: In the song "serenade", you thank all of your friends for their support — where would Abhinanda and Desperate Fight records be right now without that?

J/A: Nowhere!

Abhinanda has a new 4-song CD "Neverending Well of Bliss' out on Desperate F. now for $7 world. Write them at: Abhinanda/Desperate Fight, Kemigrand 1, 90731 Umea, Sweden –fax +46-(0)90–196032.

*reviews section*

A couple words about the reviews: Steve Peffer of Lakewood, OH is now reviewing demos for us, I (that is, Brian, the editor) no longer

do this., .l cant do everything, you know? So all the demo reviews, except for the "last minute additions" section are by him We felt

hke he was qualified to take over the demo reviews because his tastes are a pretty accurate representation of the tastes of most

J hardcore kids like himself, who comprise a sizable part of both the readership of Inside Front and the group of people

who will probably be hearing these demos anyway.

?St °f the reviews, that 1 did: rather than ¡ust 9ive credit to a release because effort was put into it, which is admittedly admirable but not necessarily a measure of quality, I try to discuss each magazine or music release in terms of its actual likely value to an individual who listened to or read it. With so much material in the hardcore market today, it's hard to find music or reading that will rea y ave a powerful effect on anyone. My reviews reflect this. So if they seem overly negative at any point, just keep in mind that

is is in everyone's best Interest: when a truly memorable work comes along and I give it a good review, that will actually mean *h* y°U arS Pr°Ud °f y°Ur W°rk, Send " t0 US, and We,, describe H as "II a® we can to as many people as we can reach °n the °ther hand, 'f y0U think we won, t find your work t0 be or'ginal or moving enough to warrant a good review, you just might be right, so feel free to not waste our time — or anyone eise's–with it.

[Image not archived]

BATTLEGROUND: "The War Still Rages On " — Pretty tight chugga chugga style hardcore with a lot of sing along/dance it up parts that the kids would probably get their kicks off clap-dancing to (A fifteen yr. old sXe kid dance). There is a very irritating guitar solo that had my finger going crazy on the fast forward button during one of the songs. In a gruff-sounding Biohazard voice, the vocalist sings about topics like letting your guard down, being fucked with, ...and their is a song called "sXe solider." Get the picture? This could easily be considered "Tough Guy HC." *507 williams pkwy , Eaton , Oh 45320*

BLOOD RUNS BLACK: FUCK! Heavier than Nerf Crisis ever thought they were and more chunk than a bloody, fat piece of steak. I picture crew cuts, tatoos, and homemade Sick of It All tank tops. There seems to be a Chorus of Disapproval and Point Blank influence here, and they sort of remind me of a more pissed off Backlash. Lots of double bass. Goddamnit! These guys are Fucking Pissed! This makes me want to go out to an emo festival and swing a meat cleaver through the crowd. I don't know whether they're straightedge or not, but FUCK YOU if that makes a difference as to whether or not you buy it!! FUCK OFF!! I fucking HATE YOU!!

300 Belmore Drive, North Syracuse, NY 131212

COMPRESSION: They sound like Prong, ft gave me a headache. I couldn't get through this, sorry. Go fuck yourself.

P.O. BOX 6726 , Towson , Md 21265–6726.

CROSSCHECK:-" First Offense "- Very slow and very monotonous music with vocals where the singer seems as if he has better things he'd like to be doing. He just sounds really UN-interested. I don't know, I guess I just don't get it. Their hearts are in the right place though, judging from the lyrics, which range from the topics of child abuse to anti-religion.

2019 15th st. , Moline , II 61265

CUTTHROAT -"swollen shut"-: A real heavy guitar sound with an excessive amount of guitar animal squeels. A lot of start and stops along with grrrruff vocals...Wait a second! These bastards can't fool me! This is Pantera trying to pass themselves off as a hardcore band! I thought I smelled a rat. I'd mention the lyrics and the adress, but the band is obviously too concerned with having a nice big thank you list insead of including them.

FACTION ZERO: All bands of this kind seem to sound the same to me. it's not that there bad neccisarily, just very common. These guys remind me of Sick of it All, but not as melodic. Vocally it's a carbon copy of early Raid stuff. I'm assuming they're a sXe band, from reading the lyrics. Like I said, not really bad, just nothing special.

33 lockwood p! , Clifton , N.J. 07012

MK ULTRA-"Statues"˜: Crazy pissed off hardcore with that really cool crusty bass sound that I love. Very chaotic. The singer seems to be giving It all he's got by screaming his fucking head off. They remind me of channel, but nowhere near as emo.

The thing that turned me off was the annoying samples in the middle of the songs which give them kind of a hip hop feel, which is nothing I was ever to keen on.

P.O. BOX 86902 , Carol Stream , II 60168–0902.

OUTLAST: An awesome and much heavier version of Chain Of Strength with vocals a little more like Abihnanda. Lyrics about veganism and how they refuse to be like anyone else. This is the

> kind of stuff that the guy from 3rd party would call "Old School!!". A fantastic release from a young band that I am really looking forward to seeing more from in the future.

Henrik Lindqvist , Rattareg. 112 , 583 30 linkoping

> _STRUCTURE 24_-"Our Disposition"- Chaotic, loud and chunky, but still manages to be quite melodic with a lot of little parts that remind me of Snapcase. There's even a acoustic part that they somehow manage to pull off kind of well. Lot's of changes and great drumming. Vocally, they have nothing to brag about, with a standard Grrrr style. Lyrics about the enviorment, love, and things of that nature. Oh! Did I mention they are sponsored by Vans inc. — Oooooh! How impressive!!

6513 Cape Court, Falls Church , Va. 22043

> _TRIPFACE_- Guidance"- The music has that twangy Rock n' Roll guitar sound that's considered Hardcore, just because Face Value did it. Vocally, they remind me of Turmoil with lyrics about brotherhood, feeling alone, and not backing down. It's also got a bunch of annoying samples between songs, one of which sounds like Jim Carey so that's 1 0 points against them.

P.O. BOX 254 , Laurel , N.Y. 11948

> TRIAL. Super chunky music with a great deal of sing along parts emotional vocals with well written lyrics about not backing away, respecting yourself, and not putting up with everyone's bullshit.' They remind me of Abhinanda meets Chokehold, but 10 times more pissed off. There's a song about the oppresion of Native Americans which is extremely well written and structured it just blew me away. I'm liking this more and more every time I listen to it. This is what Hardcore Is about!!

427 11th ave. , E. Seattle , Wa. 98102

LAST MINUTE DEMO REVIEWS BY THE EDITOR HIMSELF

COMPRESSION '95 Demo: Despite Steve's stiff criticism of this demo, I felt that it deserved a second opinion. It's definitely not hardcore, but a lot of hardcore fans

could possibly enjoy this. It has a lot of repetitive groove to it, perhaps like old Helmet, and the singer has a gruff shouting voice. The music is very polished and complex, with fast drumming when the grooves aren't going on, and occasional melodic parts over the deep rhythms. There's a haunting intro that I enjoyed. You can tell they're working hard.

P.O. Box 6726, Towson, MD 21285–6726

_GEHENNA DEMO:_Thick, ugly, ragged holy-terror style hardcore, with a sound a little similar to Mayday in places and(damn, I hate to say this, knowing how guitarist Mike Rhodes/Area 51 feels about this) even a more vicious, angry Unbroken. Hoarse, gutteral screaming lays over fast, ugly guitars and drums which alternate between double-time speed and mid-tempo marching speed rhythm. The lyrics are the element that makes this demo really memorable: revenge has made me lose control"..."! don't regret that 83% of this world is shit"(why 83%?)..."the bottom line is blood"..."draw back the hammer to write your name in hell — straight edge–l win again. All I can say is, these kids are gonna have a lot to live up to, as far as backing up their lyrics with action goes...I figure next time I see one of them, I'll box him, just to see If they're for real. Their singer did get his jaw broken in a fight recently, so I guess that's a start..'.

Revolutionary Power Tools. P.O. Box 83694. San Diego CA 92138–3694

SHOW REVIEWS

BLOODLET:This is pretty much the only band I've seen recently worth reviewing. I think they are the best live band in the world that is together right now, and that's no cheap compliment. Their performance certainly blows away their recorded material. I saw them twice in the spring of 1995, first in Fayetteville, North Carolina and then in Los Angeles, California. They played In North Carolina at a tiny, sleezy redneck bar to an audience of about ten fifteen-year-old trendy straightedge rich kids and five dirty burnout metal potheads. Some stupid fucking kid broke the last microphone that anyone had, so it took about two hours of repair work before they could go on–l think Jimmy, who repaired the microphone so that at least distorted noise came out of it If nothing else, was the only kid there that night who contributed anything at all to the show.

Bloodlet finally set up their equipment and got on stage. From the first chord they struck, everything was changed and I forgot about the shit club we were in, the shit kids around me, and the shit equipment they were using. Their band was as tight as a machine: they would be playing In some fucking up offbeat time signature I'd never heard before, and suddenly stop in the middle of a verse, pause for some random amount of time — say, nine seconds — and come in together perfectly, playing in some other unheard-of signature. They played in scales I've never seen before, and use entirely original song structure: there's little or no verse/chorus arrangement, instead each part builds to a trancelike Intensity and then bursts into another. The songs

ran together into a stomach-twisting, disorienting soundscape, punctuated by unusual breaks: a Jazz-like improvisation part (which displayed the jazzstyle musical mastery that this band possesses), hypnotizing "tribal" drum parts on the toms, and a climactic epiphany at the end of one song that was almost In a major key. Despite the low quality equipment at the bar they sounded unbelievable: the guitars were as deep and thick as I've ever heard, shaking the floor, the drums were clear and punchy, and even through the duct-taped microphone Scott's possessed, deep, demonic shrieking came through clear. Scott would lean back, eyes rolled up towards heaven as he sang, and then hang his body forward, pounding the microphone against his dreadlocked, unwashed head as he waited for his next line to come. The string section all curled around their guitars, undulating in time with the music like some weird form of underwater plant life. Finally, In the back, their drummer was working so hard that every muscle and vein stuck out from his sweat-drenched body.

Then the P.A. system spontalneously exploded Into flame — I felt like doing the same thing — and the show had to be closed down. A few brave kids ran outside, carrying the flaming speaker, and managed to extinguish It.

I know It sounds like I'm writing a fucking tacky rave review for a lame metal band's press kit, but I'm just trying to get my point across: these guys are the real thing. They were just as intense when I saw them in Los Angeles under better conditions. Most bands these days are just a few kids making noise together — cool, not nothing special. At this point in their career, Bloodlet is more of a religious experience than a band, so if you can see them somehow, do it. God knows where they'll go

from here, they may fall to shit like every other great band, but right now they're unbelievable. Seeing them actually put my faith back in hardcore, that there are still paople out there breaking new ground, challenging established frontiers, and fighting to make life more intense and meaningful for the short time that we have it. They're supposed to have two CD's on Overkill records coming out this summer, one a compilation of all their older material, the other a record of new material. Write Bloodlet at: P.O. Box 11036, Orlando, FL 32803–0036.

BOOK REVIEWS

GET IN THE VAN: I don't know what Henry Rollins is doing these days, I know I disagree vehemently with lots of it, and I know it's got nothing to do with hardcore. But I'm forced to agree with the review Matt Average of Maximum Rock and Roll gave this book: it's a great record of times past In the hardcore scene, that should inspire kids of today just as much as the events It chronicles Inspired kids In the early 1980's. This Is a collection of Henry Rollins tour diaries from the beginning of the decade to about 1986, as Black Flag rose from nowhere to success within the punk rock world. These diaries tell stories of violence, innocent people getting fucked up and assholes finally getting what they deserve, of hard work, playing something like

90 shows across the world In 95 days, of dedication, continuing with what you believe when neither your friends nor your enemies understand what you are doing and both try to discourage you, and of living life to the fullest. Through this record we can see the world through the eyes of the younger Rollins (before he became accepted by the mainstream and disgusting magazines like fucking _Playboy_ started recommending his new band) as his band plays shows In the dirtiest parts of every city In the western world and he struggles to fight past people and all of their fake bullshit to make something of himself. Regardless of what Rollins became, this Is a moving chronicle of life simultaneously at Its ugliest and most glorious. I want to live a life like that, packed with as many extremes as I can fit In my short lifespan; so I recommend this book as inspiring reading material for anyone who thinks hardcore is more than just a fashion statement or a superficial political movement. The price Is, of course, far too high for anyone who Is doing better things with their money than buying fucking $25 books... but do what I did, take an afternoon In a so-called "alternative" bookstore and read It in the shop. Punk rock!

2.13.61 press, P.O. Box 1910, Los Angeles, CA 90078

Distributors for Inside Front are always in demand! You can get 20 copies of this issue for only $5, so it shouldn't be too hard for you to help us, and the people where you live, out by taking some off our hands. You could sell them for a quarter each and make your money back. Get in touch and we'll work something out, any help we can get is much appreciated.

lUCTlWEAJBVs

ACME 7":A few bands have the undescribable, inexplicable ability to hit you in the face every time you hear them, and Acme is(was?) one of those few. This is one of the most brutal, abrasive records of the year. It sounds like Bloodlet covering Slayer: they have the ugly, gritty, loose heavy guitar sound like no other band that tries to pull it off, the songs are full of dissonance and fucked up notes from unholy scales, it all speeds by you like a fucking 18-wheel truck in a storm of double-bass and distortion. The vocalist's screaming is so hoarse, high and distorted that it sounds truly otherworldly. I couldn't ignore a moment of this If I tried with both hands. This band outdoes any other in the intensity department — truly murderous. Nice packaging, as well. Edison records(the Very distribution label) may release their next u^ord. This might be out

of press, but track it down at any cost.

Machination, Jeroen, P.O. Box 90, 8500 Kortrijk, Belgium

_AFTERSHOCK 7":_Much better than their demo. Tough music: chunky deep guitars, chunky deep vocals, very gruff. The lyrical content of the first song Is weird: It's a sweet love song. Hmm. But the chorus is set up great: deep as hell shrieking in one speaker, speaking in the other, wow. The other song Isn't quite as off- putting lyrically, It's about prejudice, and the music is even more forceful than the first song:

very NYCHC sounding, fast with a *crazy* double-bass part and very catchy chorus: "you're not a God". *666 SXE, 99 Reservoir Rd., Westhampton, MA 01027*

_AUTUMN "Wire Hangers" 7":_The music is fairly complicated, modifying the usual chunky hardcore guitar with some higher, more melodic lines over it. Fairly fast without being speedy. The thing

that stands out about this band, however, is the singer: he generally sings In this high voice. Members of this band were In Forethought, I think, so that would explain the voice. The music is often decent, sometimes powerful, but the singing is a little annoying, it has more of a metal touch to it than in bands like Grade or Lash Out, and it's not as possessed and moving as Starkweather, so in my case it just doesn't do much for me. On the other hand, if you're one of those emo children who(for some inexplicable reason) wants to listen to "hardcore" but Is scared by singers like Anthony from Killing Time or Scott from Bloodlet, this may be what you've been looking for.

Joe/Nevermore, 1136 Lamberton Rd, Trenton, NJ 08611

_BREACH "Outlines'[1] CD:_Fuck, there's some great music coming from Europe. Breach are Abhlnanda's dark side. Both musically and vocally they sound a lot like the incredible demo that Ringworm made: chunky, fast guitars, tight punchy drums, rhythms that really grab you and throw you around. The guitars are particularly low and extremely forceful in their constant speeding-chunk assault. The singer has a deep, choked-up screaming voice, no foreign accent problems In his English. It's all so powerful that it's far from generic; no solo's, but sometimes the guitarist adds the next octave to take It one step further. A great release, aggressive, abrasive, makes me think of shows where people have bloody noses before they even get through the doors of the club.

Burning Heart rec's, Kolsvagatan 4, 731 33 Koping, Sweden. _BROTHER'S KEEPER "Ladder" CD:_Brother's Keeper is definitely one of the more original straightforward hardcore bands out there today. This CD is the next step in their progression into their own style of danceable (hiphop influenced?) beats, drawn out yelling vocals, and chunky guitars that play complex melodies and rhythms without losing any intensity. It all comes together to be really tight, powerful rock and roll/hardcore. You can tell a lot of effort went into this. Production and packaging Is great. Six songs, two of which have been previously recorded, but only one released, to my knowledge. The singing takes getting used to for some people, and I don't know If all of these songs are as memorable and perfect as the veritable anthems they've been releasing on compilations lately, but this is one of the best and most sincere up-&-comlng bands of this year, so take them seriously and keep an eye on them.

Confined records, P.O. Box 771, Eaton, OH 45320

_CHANNEL (2nd) 7":_Self-released, which Is cool. These young kids apparently are big fans of noisy, messy, gritty bands like Ground-work, and so while their last 7" sounded like Mayday this one sounds like Groundwork. However, the insert(which is unnecessarily messy to the point of complete unreadability) Includes some really defensive ranting about how they don't care if people hate them because they're not

political enough. As I said, the music Is dirty, speedy, noisy, harsh, powerful — still, it doesn't quite go far enough to go over the edge like the Enewetak 7" does. It's a good, expressive, tormented record, but as Steve Peffer said it may be too "artsy" for its own good: deliberately messy layout, deliberately messy music, deliberately "I hate myself" lyrics. Picky reviewer criticisms aside, I guess it does stand up to this issue's other 7"s. *Clay Garden, 610 W Princess Anne Rd. A-1, Norfolk, VA 23517* _CONGRESS "Euridium" 7":_"Euridium" Isn't in my dictionary, so...? Also be warned they're selling this 2-song 7" for $6 to the world. Oof. That aside, it's a solid, tough record: the music Is fast, alternating fast melodies(speedy open-E chunk Included) with slow, metallic, sometimes catchy(partlcularly the line "in circles, I walk alone") choruses. The singing is deep and tough, and let me repeat that the metal influence is clear. I think their song on the "We Shall Fight..." 7" was more memorable than these. The packaging is gorgeous. This band is definitely headed for big things...but maybe they shouldn't have ripped off the Integrity logo so blatantly. *Edward, Burg 12, 8820, Torhout, Belgium*

_CRISIS LINDER CONTROL "Initiation" ._This is from Atlanta, so you know it's going to be old fashioned (all the hardcore in that city is like '85 7 Seconds stuff) and It is. Very old fashioned, really fast hardcore/punk in a fairly positive, melodic vein, sometimes in a major key, energetic, the singing is that old fashioned speaking/yelling thing with a melody added In pretty frequently. Simple, straightforward lyrics about solving social problems like gangs, pushing away religious extremists, and friends who have gone thler separate ways. Of course this isn't as good as the old music in this style, and it's not breaking any new ground today, but if you like this kind of music and are unhappy that there isn't much of it around these days, here's a whole LP of It.

Break Even Point, Via Vallebona 28, 00168 Rome, Italy

_CROSS SECTION "Abandoned" 7":_Above average chunky/melodic music that gives away that they're from the Syracuse of Earth Crisis and Framework. Two singers, one a fourteen pound screaming pro-life kid(who, when I saw them play, said that although they weren't tough their friends Earth C. would protect them, as if the

latter were scary) the other a woman with a *beautiful* haunting background voice. The first two songs are about failed romance, the third apparently about a successful one. The music with the crying guy and the woman's gorgeous voice does express well the sort of emotions that I felt back In junior high school when I first got rejected by a girl, so if that's the level you're at this record will be really moving for you. Too bad the vinyl is the thinnest, cheapest, ugliest(shit-brown rather than black), most practically transparent, most likely to skip & scratch I've ever seen. Band address: Jason Derose, 4857 Glenfield Dr, Syracuse, NY 13215. *Significant rec's, PO Box 25596, Charlotte, NC 28229–5596* DIVE (untitled) new 7":You can recognize this because there are people with umbrellas on the cover. Thick, fast, crazy music alternating between old-fashioned speed and more rhythmic parts, a little loose, melodies that are abrasive rather than melodic, the vocals distinctive in their strained shrieking that occasionally has a bit of a singing edge without getting weak. This is definitely Dive's

best release(they're broken up now) and it's a great 7", It's intense and moving. It works best when they're at the frenzied pace rather than the mellower parts, but there aren't too much of the latter. *Figure Four, 35 Ellab Latham Waye, East Bridgewater, MA 02333* ELEMENTS OF NEED 7":Even worse than the Sea Sheperd 7" cover, this record doesn't even have the band's name anywhere on the cover. Instead, the cover and inside are littered with silly shit like bread recipes and pictures of children that make me suspect this band is not extremely concerned about anything in particular. The music is far too weak to be hardcore, and not quite crazy enough to be punk either, but it's definitely original enough to be worth a listen by fans of this genre: they do the usual Groundwork/Frail/ Bleed style ugly noisy out-of-tune thing with the high distorted screaming, but they vary it a lot in some interesting ways by throwing in lots of real quiet, almost soothing, haunting parts and doing other experimental things. That original, experimental element is what makes this band memorable. They have 2 splits coming: one with Frail on Frail's label, one with Jasmine on Kidney Room. *Fountainhaed, 2865 S. Eagle Rd. Box 392, Newtown, PA 18940* _END IN SIGHT "Deep Wound" 7":_More of that great metallic, chunky Swedish hardcore. This is a young band, still struggling to find something to make them really stand out from the other metallic, chunky Swedish hardcore with fast parts and yelling vocals, but in the meantime they've released a well-mixed, Abhinanda-esque record of very listenable, good music that Is only memorable in a couple places. Given time they(or members of them, since young bands tend to break up) may go on to play some good shit in the league of Abhinanda and other good bands In that scene. ENEWETAK 7":Crazy, speedy down-tuned, de-tuned, distorted psycho noise. Shrieking Is slightly distorted, definitely incomprehensible. The second song starts with a slightly more distinguishable melodic noise part but then erupts again Into audio psychosis. This ugly shit could never be used to advertise anything. This Is what real "punk rock revolution" sounds like: ugly, dirty, threatoning, incoherent. Get a fucked up haircut, break some windows, be jobless in San Diego and live on stolen food. Great.

RevolutionaryPowerTools POBox 83694 San Diego CA 92138–3694 FAULTLINE 7":Oh no, this Is on the same shit vinyl as the Cross Section 7", and I got It without a lyric sheet(l got It secondhand though, so who knows?). OK, this is one of those hardcore records with the traditional guitars, the semi-acoustic parts, the mediocre mix, the strained yelling vocals, that really needs something(more intensity, at least) to set it apart. I saw them live and they seemed sincere. There just isn't a memorable moment on this 7". *Alliance, 20 High St., Westport, CT 06880*

_INTEGRITY "Systems Overload":_Jon/Backlash called this the record of the year, and I'm forced to agree with him for a number of reasons. First, Integrity has been together in one form or another longer than half of today's kids have been into hardcore, and they show no signs of "moving on" or slowing down. Second, rather than resting on their laurels and trying to remake their last LP, they set out and successfully break new ground on this record. Thirdly, not everyone loves Integrity, and they don't love everyone either — unlike Sick of it All or even younger bands like Snapcase,

Integrity does not try to avoid controversy. Conflict Is a healthy and necessary part of hardcore, and while other bands try to be everyone's friends so everybody can rock out and enjoy them together, this band isn't afraid to speak their minds, even if It will piss everyone off. Thy've fought past all the bullshit and rumors everyone has spread about them to become, despite five years of ostracism and boycotting, one of today's most successful and influencial bands. Finally, the music: from the first, Black- Sabbathian notes of the first song (as a Charles Manson sample plays over it), the listener can feel that this will be another classic of rage and frustration. The mix is raw as hell, like an old punk rock record, but still bass-heavy and powerful. The music Is mostly split between slow, heavy rhythm parts (which, as I said, betray

> soTMe Black Sabbath influence, if you can imagine a '90's 'Sabbath) and fast, hectic parts (which bring to mind such crazy, hateful eary 80s hardcore bands as Negative Approach and Antidote) Dwid s screaming is more torn up, trebly and throaty than his older work and the guitar solo's are more old-fashioned as well, having a sort of 80s straightforward quality to them. Besides a couple
>
> ? in the r6C∘rd , hat sort of fade together, each song Is individually memorable, set apart by experimental parts or just plain

At ^ Snd ∘f the CD they d0 a cover ∘f "Revolution , W y les' WWch 1 wlsh '"^ had n't Included, and they

> ' 1987 demo(whlch has 2 listenable songs) and their 1989 demo, which I like better than their 7" from that year.

Victory, P.O. Box 146546, Chicago, IL 60614

~~INTROSPECT (double) 7":~~ This band has developed a distinctive style, melodic, quiet, weak parts with slightly off-key weak singing, that spring into more distorted, faster, uglier, out of tune parts with throaty, slightly vulnerable screaming. The songs on this are however, less individually memorable than the older ones I've heard. I kept waiting for something to grab me really hard, and it often almost happened but never really did. I think this band should have released a single 7" with their best songs(so they could have concentrated harder on getting a good recording, and had better packaging than just a yellow xerox) and released the others on compilations or something. They weren't ready to put out a longer •eease., they should also have left off the moments when they were fucking around. I'm just saying that because I hear a lot of

'n thelr Ori9inal' an9st-y tormented style... They have a split 7 coming out on this label with Channel, and will have a song on a compilation on Doghouse with Cable & 2 other bands ^a*r!*m ^ad ' *2365 5 Ea9 ∘e ™- Box 392 ' Newtown, PA 16940* £ECAC_LTomato2)_7- There's a fine line between ugly, disjointed punk/hardcore music and out-of-tune sissy change-nothing college rock, and musically this 7" falls to cross

— ɹ — — song on the split with
Opposition, and that was more than annoying enough — only that was
want tn K t ˜ — record Just makes me
want to beat these kids up for their lunch money. Song titles
include^ "aversion to maturity" and "the self-detonating nuclear family." Now they're broken up and ex-members play in happy-go- lucky band Avail, go figure. Plus, a whole insert worth of their nonsense and silliness (plus deliberately childish samples on the record) had me wanting to buy them a one way ticket to, say, Watts, L.A...or Fayetteville, N.C...or maybe Siberia!

Fountainhead Records, address above

_KRITICKA SITUACE:_Some music is so moving that it similtaneously freezes me in place and makes me want to hit people — there is a lot of that on this record. While lots of the records reviewed this issue are admittedly good, only a few, like this one, really make me feel anything. This came out a few years back but it takes a while for shit to get to the USA from the Czech republic. Melodic vocals, like 7 Seconds meets the Grade/Believe CD perhaps, lay subtly over late-80's fast hardcore, slightly metallic(but tastefully metallic, like the Judge Lp, not overkill like today's second rate Slayer cover bands) and powerfully driving old-fashioned fucking hardcore that sounds genuinely like It could have come out when Youth of Today still existed. The record begins with an incredible build with the melody in one speaker and a chunky guitar in the other that more than held my attention all the way through. Gorgeous, professional mix and packaging, lyric sheet in English, the lyrics are sung very convincingly In Czech — and the lyrical content puts US bands to shame who have nothing more serious to sing about that a friend who started drinking: they reveal and discuss the real dangers, dreams, and struggles of living in a region of genuine political and social turmoil. If only more hardcore was like this: heartfelt, powerful, and concerned with real issues that strike the band members close to home. Old-fashioned, great hardcore.

Day After, c/o Mira Paty, Horska 20, 352 01 As, Czech Republic _KURBJAW 7":_Self-released. Kurbjaw's last release was a great demo, perfect sound quality, great powerful old-fashioned hardcore. This release finds them breaking new ground, experimenting a bit with different song construction and parts, which is a good thing. Unfortunately the mix and recording quality isn't as good as the demo, and while some parts are moving and Interesting they would be much better If the recording was clearer and heavier. Also, since they are trying to diversify a bit, they don't have a really firm grasp of the new things they are Incorporating, so sometimes they come off and sometimes they don't quite. But at the root of It they're still a very good straightforward hardcore band, and once they get a better recording and a firmer grip on their evolving style they should put out some memorable music. They've just changed their name to Spirit...

Guage. Jim Smith, 190 West Prospect Avenue, Keyport, NJ 07735 _NECKBRACE 7":_ Big flaming X on the cover. Basic, mldtempo, simplistic, 1990's hardcore, you probably have heard It like this

before. This 7" pretty much sums up on one record all the most basic song-structure/ guitar-sound/shouting-style tendencies |n today's non-groundbreaking modern hardcore bands. The lyrics are all about being SXE, but they're not *too* generic or overdone It's not bad, just basic, as I said, and not breaking any new ground I'll grant that the music and singing is fairly hard. Band address: 77 Sheridan St., East Bowling, Bradford, West Yorks, BD 4 7RN UK *No Cruelty!, Spltalstr. 43, 79539 Loerrach, Germany*

_ONE LIFE CREW "Crime Ridden Society"T_his band is descended, in a roundabout way, from Confront, with Meanstreak being the transition. If you knew those bands, you should know what you're in for: old fashioned, simple, very angry tough hardcore. This is a record that, rather than coming off as wanna-be "old-school, " has a very genuine feel to it. Let me repeat myself and say it is definitely angry tough-guy hardcore, Steve's famous deep choked up vocals discuss such topics as how you can't keep him down and how he's going to make you fucking pay. You can hear a lot of other bands in the sound, song-structure, lyrics, and sometimes even guitar lines on this record: lots of Judge and Breakdown, a little old Sick of it All and Chain of Strength. I don't think any of these songs are quite as perfect as Meanstreak's "Final Word" was, but if you miss those bands I just mentioned this record should make your day. It's coming out on both record and CD, and the CD has 9 songs, including a revision of Conf rent's "Our Fight" in which they give that band Catharsis a lot of free publicity.

Victory Records, P.O. Box 146546, Chicago, IL 60614

OPPOSITION 7": Six songs, no rip off here...and it's on the most delicious-looking, gorgeous fucking clear greenish vinyl I ever saw. Holy shit, it's beautiful. OK, I know, I know, the music. They have Improved since the split with Ipecac, the music is noisy and disjointed(seems like I have a lot of that for review this issue...), pretty much constant in its approach with a few softer, more melodic parts...with, you guessed it, hoarse screaming vocals — this is good, but as most releases do it lacks something to make it really memorable and great. I think they're broken up now...?

Figure 4 rec's, 35 EUab Latham Way, E. Bridgewater, MA 02333 _REFUGE 7"T_wo well-recorded songs, much like(but improved from) their song on the NO EXIT/lnside Front #4 compilation. Acoustic part at the beginning with a sample in the background, then the guitar comes in really heavy, then it all goes chunky, then it gets fast and their singer starts shouting about how "you can't hold us back"...you get the idea, I guess, it's set up just like most other hardcore music today. Also, their songs are a little bit longer than they need to be. But, I can recognize their music without being told who it is, because of their particular take on the chunky rhythm thing, and their singer's voice which is often strained a little. I don't want to give the impression that I don't like this record, it's a well-done, non-groundbreaking effort. I'll listen to it again.

Construction rec's, 12344 Pascal Ave, Grand Terrace, CA 92313 _SEA SHEPERD 7"T_he layout(lncluding the cover) of this 7" is pretty confusing, and It's not just

because I can't speak French(which alternates with a little English throughout the extensive insert and liner notes). The music is sort of like Acme: loose, disjointed, epileptic, but there is more emphasis on the bass guitar and on melody, and it just doesn't hit me in the face like Acme, it's nothing special. The vocals are hoarse and shrieked, without being quite as intense or insane as Acme. If you like Acme and want more, try this out as a second or third best, I guess. *Left Wing rec's. Prof Bromstr. 4, 6525 AV Nijmegen, Holland* _SHIELD "Build me up, Melt me down" CD:_lt's on Desperate Fight, that says something already: the music is recorded and mixed as clearly and perfectly as could ever be desired, the guitar sound Is heavy and chunky enough to make me do a doubietake when I hear it, there Is a gorgeous classical-style acoustic part, the songs are well-composed, the music is on the cutting edge of modern hardcore. Of course, Desperate Fight has sort of emo tendencies as well, and (unfortunately) that is more obvious here than on any of their other records to date: the songs are all about crying, being scared, and breaking up with girls, the vocals are sometimes screamed well but other times moaned or sobbed, and at one point a girl does some really bad singing back-up vocals. I can't relate... *Desperate Fight, Kemig 16. 90731 Umea, Sweden* _STARKWEATHER "into the Wire" 10"/CD:_The record starts with low, ominous feedback that makes your hair stand on end, then hectic, tribal tom-drumming comes In and Rennie starts singing in a haunting, fallen-angel background voice. Distorted guitars begin, winding stomach-turning, complex, unnaturally timed melodies around the drums, and Rennie starts shrieking, until the listener feels as if he's being wrapped in thorns. The song builds to a climax that feels more like being tied with barbed wire and thrown onto a freeway, and Is over. Each of the four (very long) songs on this record spreads out around the listener like a vast wasteland. While they are more metal than hardcore, Starkweather is one of the most intense, original, and genuine bands around today, and this

record, while It follows in the footsteps of their previous complex music, tormented vocals, and poetic lyrics, is even better than their ; previous releases. The melodic, quiet moments are even more quiet I and haunting, and the crazy, screaming parts more so as well. Few bands can communicate such a broad spectrum of genuine feeling. I *Edison Records, P.O. Box 42586, Philadelphia, PA 19101* _THENCEFORWARD "From Within" 7":_Nice thick vinyl, which is | important. High screaming by an angry kid with his voice breaking | (he speaks sometimes too, not too powerfully but also not too ; dully), fast music that Is basically old-fashioned hardcore with i influence from melodic hardcore(like Encounter) and a little from more metallic music. Lyrics strike out against religion, cops, corporate Iles, etc. in a convincing and coherent manner. The record begins with a sample taken from a video game, which makes me take them less seriously...and the high screaming will turn many j people off...but it's a good angry kid record. The songs just need a little individuality so this band will stand out from all the rest.

Phyte, P.O. Box 14228, Santa Barbara, CA 93107

_TIMESCAPE ZERO "Born with the Fear of Dreaming" cassette:_This was supposed to come out as a 12", but instead many of the songs came out on compilations and It is now released as a demo. Inside Front may be releasing this band's next record, so keep an eye out for that. Anyway, this cassette Is ten songs of Cro-mag

style tough, simplistic hardcore: speaklng/yelling vocals, basic catchy guitar lines and punchy, straightforward drums, fast, angry music. Every song goes striaght to the fucking point, so each one is catchy and memorable. Songs from this have come out on the Point Counterpoint, Over the Edge 2, Florida Slammie Awards, etc. compilations, but just go ahead and get this demo so you'll have it all in one place: It's fucking cheap and DIY, ail you have to do is send a blank tape and 5 stamps to:

Feast of Hate... P.O. Box 820407, South Florida, FL 33082–0407 _25 TA LIFE 7":_Very raw and rough, both in the recording and the music itself. While this is *definitely* NYC-style hardcore, It doesn't sound anything like Agnostic Front, despite frequent comparisons... maybe that's just because full-body-tattooed-and-pierced 25 Ta Life singer Rick went with A.F. on tour a few years back. The music is basic, tough, gritty, old-fashioned, and mid-paced, with some metal influence on the guitars(some high solos and occasional metallic guitar screeches) and simple, straightforward drums. The vocals are different and original, Rick shouts In a very slurred voice. Some of their stuff Is generic toughguy hardcore, but some of It Is actually memorable enough to remember the words to and get excited about: "Inside Knowledge, " for instance, a moving song against racism. I've also heard two songs of theirs due for release on compilations, "Keeping it Real" and "Reality's End" — these songs are very similar to and at least as good as the material on the 7".

Striving for Togetherness USA, Kevin Gill, P.O. Box 4571, College Point, NY 11356

_UNBROKEN (no title) new 7":_This Is cool because It's very DIY, and so only $2.50 USA/$4.00 world. Two songs sounding just like their last LP: very thick sound, minor key, metallic melodies on gritty guitars, sort of monotone screaming over it, "painful" subject matter. The first song Is actually a little too melodic, compared to their other music, until the last few seconds of it. The other one is more the harsh, fast sound Unbroken does well. Their bassist told me last issue their next music will be happy stuff about love... | *31g rec's, PO Box 178262, San Diego, CA 92177–8262*

_GRADE/BELEIVE split CD:_We definitely have a competitor for record of the year here. First of all, these bands got together to give us 60 minutes of music for only $6...that's ten cents a minute, and there are some minutes of music on here I'd pay $10 for by themselves. Imagine if Lash Out and Unbroken combined their very best moments, took the music one step further so it was twice as brilliant and original, and released a whole record of It. The singers alternate screaming with some melodic singing, but the singing isn't weak at all, it acts as another Instrument in the rest of the music to make everything even more complex and the result Is compelling, impressive, and powerful. And when they scream, you can tell they fucking mean it, listening to them makes me want to break things... The guitars have a style all their

own, both doing all kinds of shit at once that all fits together, acoustic parts combined perfectly with harsh, metallic driving parts. The record moves forward at mldtempo, at a marching pace, and alternates a few haunting/grlpping eerie parts with the rest, extremely Intense fucking hardcore. Perfect mix, absolutely clear but raw enough not to be flat and dull. One question...which band Is which?!

Kyle/Grade: 663 Sheraton Rd.. Burlington, L7L 4B3 Canada _IPECAC/OPPOSITION split 7":_Opposltlon is loose, their singer screams hoarsely, they sound a lot like the new Dive 7" only not as well mixed, and not quite as intense...they are a bit more off-beat and complex, as well. Not great, but maybe they have potential. Ipecac Is loose as hell, fucked up distorted music with annoying shrieking that sounds a little like vomiting(go grab a dictionary for their name). Their side of the insert is a pretty useless mess, as many would say their music is. On the other hand, It's a fairly original useless mess, and being an ugly useless mess is definitely punk rock, so they certainly get credit for that. Maybe we need more of that these days when everyone sounds like ACDC or Snapcase.

Figure Four records, address above.

_OTIS REEM/FIASCO'S split 7":_0tis Reem alternates tough, heavy hardcore-influenced guitar-driven music(with horns!) with very dancable offbeat horn-driven ska. During the heavy parts they have some really deep, tough-guy vocals, and melodic singing during the ska parts. In short, this song Is alot like (& similar In quality to) their great song on the Point/Counterpoint compilation...with one exception: rather than the straightforward, inspiring lyrics of that song, which spoke of making something of yourself, this song describes the revenge fantasies of a bullied high-school kid In subtle, tongue-in-cheek fashion — so that's a big difference. The aptly-named Fiasco's, who would perhaps have been more aptly named "the Disasters, " are fucking horrible, stupid ska, on purpose. *on Moon records, NYC, but order it for $3 from: Otis Reem, 901 Kings Mill Rd., Chapei Hill, NC 27514, 919-929-4818*

_OVER THE EDGE Volume 2 CD Comp:_18 of today's newest HC and metallic bands, and enough of it is really good to make it worth it. Lyrics are Included. It opens with TENSION, who play really energetic old-fashioned fast & simple HC, the singer shouting in a youthful voice about being oppressed. Then DISMAY and NEGLECT take the stage with deep, depressed metallic HC, with deep, depressed metallic vocals(the Neglect song has a loud-vocals/quiet- guitar mix that sounds real bad at first, but it ends up being a much better, more powerful, less monotonous song than Dismay's). Then LASH OUT play the best song of the CD: it's completely original in structure, fucking heavy and perfectly mixed, very complex, chunky metallic guitars doing ten things at once, the singer screaming through the song until at the end he breaks out singing(without sounding like a sissy at all) and the listener is left breathless. Next, ARISE plays an also original song, it starts out loose and unusually structured with the singer shrieking in a high tortured voice, breaks down into a very long unusual acoustic part with jazz drum-fills, and builds to a chunky, definitely insane climax. Sounds a lot like Overcast playing a song off the first Doors album, for

good or for ill. Next is CATHARSIS with the song "I Corinthians 1:18–29" off their demo...they have a long song, the singer screaming about religion, the music oddly timed, fast, and a little unusual, it builds to a holy terror climax. BACKLASH has another great song here, perfect sound, old-fashioned very rhythmic danceable hardcore with choked singing, energetic drums, and a distinctive guitar-style (pauses in the middle of riffs, sudden transitions), proud lyrics. The OVERCAST song is off their CD and the CROSS SECTION song is off their 7". TIMESCAPE ZERO sounds as much like the Cro-mags as ever: old-fashioned, simple hard music with an angry guy shouting over It. The other bands are less memorable versions of the previous ones: STRENGTH 691, AGE OF REASON, WITHDRAWN, HOLDSTRONG, JASTA 14, SLIP, 2 more. *Endless Fight rec's, PO Box 1083, Old Saybrook, CT 064 75–5083* _SEVEN ONE SEVEN 7" compilation:_Booklet included, which is a plus. OPTION starts out with bass, then hip-hoppy drums kick In, then gultars(which definitely need to be heavier next time) and deep singing vocals, at their worst like Metallica. DECKARD is melodic, singing melodically, definitely not hardcore so I feel unqualified to review their song. I like the second side much better: the OUTCOME song is sort of hilarious: the singer mixes traditional hard -core shouting, deep deathmetal grunting, and plain speaking, all at once. I've heard two of those styles together, but all three at once Is sort of funny, like overkill...It's certainly not generic at least. The music is pretty heavy, pretty loose, a lot like the Restrain 7" if you were lucky enough to hear that. Finally(and I hope you've read this far because this makes all the difference) Is BROTHER'S KEEPER: a song recorded the same time as their song on the Inside Front #6 compilation, tight, clean, powerful as hell, metallic clear guitars and their singer's trademark drawn out heavy metal yelling(which Isn't bad here at all, despite Itself, and it's original.) Strong rhythm, and lyrics that I'm sure anyone who has taken on a serious project at the expense of their friends and loved ones can relate to: "each step I take I feel like I'm getting closer, to what I do not know, but I stand alone...how could you leave me here, or was it me who made you go..?" For the $3 it costs from them, It's certainly worth It to check out these different bands. Also at this address is Big Mouth 'zine distribution.

717 rec's, PO Box 153, Allison, PA 15413

_"WE SHALL FIGHT IN THE STREETS 7" comp:_Could be this year's definitive hardcore 7" comp. CATHARSIS, INTEGRITY, BACKLASH,

CONGRESS. The Backlash song "Why I'm Mad" Is unbelievable, every time I hear It I want to beat the shit out of everyone in reach. Incredible. Simple, pure hardcore, without a doubt: hyper speed parts, crazy dance parts, choked raging screaming, no fucking compromises. Fuck, this song Is what every slxteen-year- old across the world standing up against adversity for the first time should have access to. Congress Is a great rising band from Belgium, same song structure and approach, only more metallic (vocals deeper, guitar shrieks, acoustic part) with antl-rellgion lyrics. Both those songs have perfect sound quality without being overproduced at all. The Integrity song on here will throw everyone for a loop...but this Is punk rock, fuck everyone, right? It was recorded in '87 when they were real young(they were called Diehard then, but Dwid

was singing) on a 4-track. Mike who released this comp loves It, but the poor sound quality will probably alienate all you weak-stomached kids who have been reared on Snapcase mixes. Finally, the Catharsis song: It's our newest one, we're much more proud of It than anything off the demo. Tighter, denser, more hectic and eerie music, deeper/more powerful vocals, better mix. Beyond that I'll have to let the music speak for itself, but suffice to say that for once we really felt like we made all the ugly shit we've had to deal with worthwhile. The 7" Is packaged in a very

D.I.Y., non slick way(remember this is hardcore, not new wave), and Inside Front did the booklet for It: it's a thick booklet with Interviews with two of the bands, a couple photos, lyrics, essays, and more; it definitely adds to the record. Don't miss this!

Area 51 rec's, P.O. Box 1512, Reno, NV 89505

_INLAND EMPIRE STRIKES BACK VIDEO COMPILATION:_1 think it's great that Jeff Grey keeps putting out these videos. This is the second in the series, following the first edition that included the famous "Dwld-stomping" incident. First up is a clip of Unbroken playing "I just can't cry enough" by the Smiths, and Mike Rhodes of Area 51 records is in front of the stage getting the shit kicked out of him by Mickey Mouse Hartsfield of New Age rec's. Next, Chris Malinowski (formerly of Point Blank and Bonesaw) loses a tooth during a particularly violent Rain Like the Sound of Trains show in west Los Angeles. Other highlights of this video Include Steve Peffer getting chased down and forcibly fondled by members of emo band Lifetime, and Jeff Grey himself getting kicked in the face by Adam Anguish as O.L.C. plays his favorite song, "Vinyl Nerd": 'I'm a vinyl nerd, I can't hold back...I'm a vinyl nerd, don't touch my stack!' A must-have video for any 'zine editor who Isn't in enough trouble with his friends already.

$10 to Jeff Grey, 291 Butternut Lane, Berea OH, 44017.

[Image not archived]

_ALL THAT #5:_This slick, glossy, hip/hop/metal/punk/malnstream "hardcore"/ etc. magazine has finally put out an issue that is thick enough to make for good, interesting reading(there Is a lot of bullshit in it, so It has to be long or there won't be enough good stuff). I enjoyed the Interviews with Neurosis and Starkweather, and there are other decent ones in here: 108, Shelter, Paris, Answer Me 'zine, and Emporer(black metal insane losers), plus interesting columns by some guys from Starkweather & Tesco Vee from the Meatmen, and reviews: some good, some not useful.

$2.95, 606 Willow Ave. #3, Hoboken, NJ 07030

_ANTHEM #1, 2, 3:_Three issues of this 'zine have come out since my last issue did, so that says something already; also, the fact that the kids who do this send me copies to distribute free. Very youthful SXE kid 'zine, and It shows, but they're aware of that so it comes off more as enthusiastic than naive or immature. Brief, but It's practically free, so what did you expect? News sections that are actually pretty useful and reviews that are longer (& possibly more useful) than those in 'zines twice as big are the highlights. The kids who do this happen to be Christian.

stamps. 10025 Thomas Payne Clr., Charlotte, NC 28277

_ANXIETY CLOSET #5:_Lots of clip ads and clip art, a silly picture of an iguana on the cover, an interesting letter from Kodak explaining that ALL FILM USES ANIMAL PRODUCTS: PHOTOGRAPHY, MOVIES, X-RAYS, ALL OF IT!(this may be troublesome to those of us who are vegan), OK interviews with Crisis Under Control & Black Train Jack, not too In-depth reviews, lots of mental wanderings about all sorts of shlt(putting on shows, racism, fashion, etc.) by the publishers of this 'zine, and an articles about "Babysitting the H-100's" that got that band's bassist Tony Erba really pissed off. Longer than their older Issues, definitely real long for its price. Messy printing.

$1. 4 Leona Terrace, Mahwah, NJ 07430–3025

_ASCENSION #1:_Lynn Roberts writes about what it's like to be her, that is: an emotionally turbulent girl struggling to deal with social superflclalltes and similar issues inside and outside the hardcore scene. For It's kind, It has a great layout and Is pretty coherent. *($1?) 25 Mt. Hood Rd. #2, Brighton, MA 02135*

_BACK TA BASICS #'s 1 & 2:_Handwritten, messy as hell layout that for once I guess I won't hold against the zine, because I think they do It that way on purpose. More show reviews than anything else, the focus of this '.zine is on NYC hardcore in 1995. Interviews with tough bands from In and out of NYC like Cornerstone, 25 ta Life(thelr singer does this 'zine), and Bulldoze, lots of NY show fliers and photos of such bands as the Cro-mags, Crown of Thorns, Agnostic Front(fuck yeah!), Madball, etc. This is my advice: this 'zine covers a lot of hardcore bands and culture that most of us outside NYC won't know about otherwise, so It's a useful resource, despite any drawbacks it may have. Respect goes to Rick for being a NYC guy who makes an effort to contact people outlsde his city...lots of NY people don't do that today.

$2.00 86 3rd Avenue, Patterson, NJ 07514

_BELIEF #5:_Very fine print, which Is a great thing. Lots In here, & a personality of its own. The writer doesn't really seem to be a hardcore person so much as someone who likes it from a

distance(he says "I have no reason to be all pissed at the world, I still like punk, but it was always more an entertainment to me"), along with liking pop-punk & other stuff. Half the 'zine is reviews, including a couple show & comic reviews...the music reviews don't go Into too much depth, but there's a wide variety. The singer from the band Atlas Shrugged helps with this, & both of them do good, in depth rant & rave columns. I suggest someone beats the shit out of this guy so he'll have something to be angry about ...then this could be a good *hardcore* 'zine, not just a good 'zine. *$2. 2214 Lake Forest Ct., San Bernadino, CA 92407–2478.*

BLOODBOOK #3:Everyone In Cleveland seems to be extremely sensitive lately. That said, this issue of Dwld's meanzine has the same indispensible quality the last Issues had: unlike other 'zines in this genre today, you can still remember reading it ten minutes after you put it down. Interviews with Frank Novlnec(who talks shit about his old band Ringworm, every record label he's ever been on but one, and everyone

else In the world) One Life Crew(who threaten everyone except Catharsis, they were saving that for the record), Porcell(who talks about his old band Project X), and Pushead(reprinted from MRR#8, and he had some great fucking stuff to say, this guy knows what are hardcore and life are about). Also featured are revlews(mostly sarcastic), including one in which Dwid explains that I am a "friend hurter" who is

"going to get fought." That's next to the ad for Inside Front. This Issue Is shorter than the last one, but It comes with a 7" of two Septic Death(Pushead's old band) covers by Integrity. Great stuff: the same sound/mix as the new Integrity record(except the rhythm section sounds remarkably like something from '83), fast, fast fucking punk/HC music, hectic, crazy, Dwid even adds a whisper track: "mediators of the world...seek what Is yours...why don't you listen, why don't you work, why don't you *care?"* Great shit. *$3.50 to Dark Empire, P.O. Box 770213, Lakewood, OH 44107* BOYS IN THE HOODS #3:The highlight is the incredible photos of Integrity looking like Youth of Today, which Dwid actually cut out of this 'zine to put in Bloodbook. A guy from 717 rec's does this. Clip ad's & photos, brief confusing Interviews with Snapcase and Option, a well-researched article on animal rights & cruelty, a "Girls in the Hoods" section done by a friend of his which Includes a questlonneer about dreams and a story about the demise of a pet cow, 'zine reviews too brief to mention, and a couple other tidbits. General impression: short, nothing too original or groundbreaking, but has some potential...Inside Front #3 wasn't perfect. *($1?) 870 Front St. Apt. 2, North'd, PA 17857*

DIFFERENT LIFE #6:This Is In the native language of the Czech republic, so it won'y be much use to those of us who can't speak that language. But to those who can, this looks like it is a great source of Information: It's a really well done, full size, well formatted 'zine with extensive Interviews and extensive reviews. Interviews this Issue Include Farside, Down by Law, Spleen, and No Reason, and the music they review ranges between Channel, Neckbrace, and Rain Like the SOund of Trains, with an emphasis on the softer side of American hardcore/"post"-hardcore. The ad

rates are Incredibly cheap, and they accept them in English.

Roman Soumar, Topolclanska 419/10, LI tomerice 412 01 Czech R DOGPRINT #4:lntervlews with Railhead, SOA rec's(ltaly), Endpoint, and Unbroken, which are not too short but not extremely revealing, well-copied photos and ad's(except for the Inside Front ad, which looked like shit, but that's our fault for designing it badly), one of those emo ramblings sections that I found to be as useless as I find all other emo ramblings, and 'zlne/record reviews that are too short and overly positive to be much use. Also contains a section of brief quips from different people about the issue of abortion.

P.O. Box 34, Suffern, NY 10901

_EXHIBIT A # 1, 2:_Thls Is different than most of the 'zines in here: done by a girl skilled in graphic arts, it's filled with soundbitestyle eye candy and the format Is gorgeous. So it's easy, entertaining reading with some good visuals, but there's less real substance than my personal tastes demand. To give you an Idea of the usual

content, she has a humorous interview with Otis Reem, an Interview on defunct happy melodic "hardcore"(?) band Black Train Jack, write-ups on MTV's "The State" and James Bond, and opinion pieces on such things as "If punk sells, Is It selling out" (she says no), "Why I like L7", and "A day in the life of a sober person." You can probably tell that this won't appeal to hardcore purists among us, but there's some entertaining stuff here. OK.

$2 to P.O. Box 534, Venice, FL 34284

HARDWARE #6:This is a hardcore 'zine on newsprint that I can actually sink my teeth into and get some information from. While It contains the usual stuff(advertisements, record & 'zine & show reviews, news, letters, opinions, Interviews, a couple photos) it's all done well enough to set a high standard for others to follow: the reviews are intelligent and clear(though sometimes a bit brief), the advertisements and photos are real clear, the news is In-depth and useful, the opinions are educated and intelligent, the old lyrics they print are good to remember, and their interviews are — believe It or not–actually USEFUL because they choose little-known bands who are original in some way(this Issue: Los Crudos, a h/c band from Chicago that sings In Spanish, Assfactor 4 from South Carolina, Devoid of Faith, and Monster X, the first SXE grind band). Definitely great, and the price is perfect.

$1 to David Koenig, 216 West Munsell Avenue, Linden, NJ 07036 _ESSENCE #11 :_Thls 'zine has apparently been around in one form or another for a long time. It has a "personal" sort of feel to it with a lot of random stuff mixed In: vegan recipes, useless reviews, lots of "personal" writings by kids about their "feelings" and etc., copied ads. Musical concentration seems to be pop-punk. *#37536-1520 Lonsdale Ave N. Vancouver, BC Canada V78M 3L7* _IDIOT NATION #6:_A zine done by a guy who has a lot of riot grrl friends, and the numerous "cute" hand drawn comics and, more interesting and In-depth than that, opinion pieces In here reflect that. A brief but not entirely useless interview with Threadbare and reviews that are usually but not entirely useless. Ads from large punk and hardcore labels, plus a couple photos.

$1 to 6678 Washington 3w, University City, MO 63130

INTERPOL TIMES #8:Sort of a SXE kid 'zine, but the person who does it goes about it In his own way so comes out different than the others. It has the usual discussions of methods of education about animal rights, which this time are more intelligent & considered and give good examples, the usual brief reviews and copied ads, but this time a slightly wider variety, the usual interviews, but this time they're with the Couch Potatoes from England and the Suspects. Also Includes a many-page comic strip about a future conflict between punks and police. Not an incredible zine, but It has a personality, thank God.

D. Merklinghaus, 11150 Sunrise Valley Dr, Reston, VA 22091 _LITTLE BLACK BOOK #10:_This 'zine is a pretty useless tiny, mostly local messy publication full of random opinions, random reviews, random shit, Christian shit. The reason I mention It is because the guy Rob Scott who puts this out also sets up regular, dependable shows at a YMCA in Canton, OH(1 hour outside Cleveland). Audiences tend towards

the emo/trendy kid side, but a show is a show If you're a band on tour or need more exposure. *4009 Harrison Ave, NW, Canton, OH 44709... 216-477-7308* _LOSING PROPOSITION #1 :_This is a sxe kid zine, but despite having big print it's enormous — so If nothing else there's definitely a lot of stuff In here, especially for a first Issue. Lots of copied ads,

some show reviews, but most of all lots of opinion columns and

interviews that come from the world of e-mail and the "internet." (disclaimer: I'm personally distrustful of the whole computer world, because I can't see why someone would want to cheat themselves

of their five senses and just drown in verbal masturbation all day

...and It's true that the stuff In L.P. taken from e-mail Is a little flat). Many Interviewees, Including Lifetime, Snapcase, Revelation rec's, etc. and the opinions center around veganism, abortion, etc. *$2? to Brandon Streets, 75 Pemberton Ave, Oceanport, NJ 07757* _MONKEY #1 :_Thls editor used to work at "Closer Still" 'zine, which I never saw. The English Is really good. There's a lot of

> conversational writing from the editor, which actually isn't too bad (although of course it's still not too *useful), * It gets his personality across well. Interviews are the highlight: the Interview with Abhlnanda is conversational and In-depth, better than mine, for sure, and he uses the same effective approach with rock band Downset(who he actually calls on some of their shit) and the now-defunct Shortsight(whose singer explains why she fought a girl who was smoking at a no-smoking show!!). It has the usual OK photos and unnecessary "personal feelings" stuff, and a few In-depth reviews. That's all that's here, but It's definitely an above-average 'zine. Unfortunately the price is $3 Europe/$4 USA.* Sander K., Heymanslaan 22.a, 9714 GL Groningen, Netherlands _*NATRRAIN #3:_ This is a well-done DIY comic book for people who are into huge, muscular women dominating weak men in violent and humiliating ways. It comes close to the edge of good taste, and passes over it a few times, but I guess It's all In the name of Art. If this sounds like your cup of tea, then It probably is.*

$1 to Jen Campbell, 505 Spring Lake Crescent #201, Virginia ☒ Beach, VA 23451. How did this end up In Inside Front?

> _NEVERMORE #1 :_This Is a good step forward from Joe's previous 'zine, and his continued involvement with this and with releasing music on his own suggests dedication. This is a half-size 'zine, not too thick but fine print. Brief interviews with Mouthpiece, Endpoint, Farside, Integrity, and Autumn, brief reviews that at least cover some ground, a good NJ area scene report, ad's, and an "emo corner" that unfortunately(and much to Joe's chagrin) I'm forced to join with Bloodbook in not condoning.

$1 to Joseph Kuzemka, 1136 Lamberton Rd., Trenton, NJ 08611 _NO LABELS #1 & 2:_New, thick, well-done zine. Lots of photos,

but they're very clear. Focus on NYC, but not exclusively.

Interviews are long, conversational, well-done...#2 has one with Killing Time(!!) that was cool to see, plus Strife and some nonhardcore bands like Quicksand, Doc Hopper, Black Train Jack, and

Farside. That's one of the downsides to this 'zine: there's a lot of softy music covered. Also, especially In #1, various things here and there give away the youth of the editor(youth Isn't a bad thing, of course, but besides the fact that this 'zine is put together in a really professional, well-done manner he doesn't seem to be extremely old for his years or whatever...actually now that I think about It he seems more mature than most sxe kids 3 years older than him. That doesn't say shit though.) OK reviews covering lots of stuff, only a little of which is pure hardcore, and teenage angst poetry shit that should definitely not be here, it doesn't belong with the rest, which is quality Journalism.

$2 to Mike Thomas, 1148 5th Ave #7D, New York, NY 10128 _OUT-STRUCTURED #4:_Gorgeous, gorgeous layout. Basically a poetry /writing 'zine with random articles, etc. on this or that that the author is Interested In. There's an interview with Starkweather that is one of the best Interviews I've read in a long time, it was _well-tran_s_cribe_d and accurately represents their personalities and what they have to say. Most of the 'zine is (very well-reproduced) art and poetry-type stuff that Is too well done to be emo trash, but is in a similar, negative, self-hating, self-indulgent, semi- incoherent vein. Some other features are brief reviews of violent movies such as Pulp Fiction, a script for a scene that was apparently edited from that movie, and a guest discussion of SXE and substance abuse that doesn't end up being real conclusive. Overall this Is very well-done, especially for It's format/approach. *$1.50 to P.O. Box 403, Lee's Summit, MO 64063*

_OVER THE EDGE #2:_This is quite an undertaking, a hardcore 'zine from Europe with an aim to cover hardcore across the world like Maximum Rock N Roll covers punk. It's much slicker but much briefer than MRR. Interviews range from Sick of it All to Abhlnanda to Battery to old Ol band the Business. Plagued by poorer English than European 'zines like "Monkey" and numerous computer problems that misplaced parts of the text, this Issue falls short of their lofty goals. But their hearts are in the right place and they've put at least one issue out since this one; and with a circulation of 1O, OOO» they're on their way. Good luck. *Sonnenallee 91, 12045 Berlin, Germany, fax#049-30-7867040* _POSITION RELEASE #1

& 2:_Thls Is a pretty much by-the-book sxe kid 'zine with messy layout, clip art & printed fliers, brief Interviews, very brief reviews, opinions on random stuff(or not so random...: vegetarianism, drugs, etc.), brief show reviews, a few photos, etc. It does Improve some in every way from #1 to #2. Focus Is on Massachusetts area, for instance the bands Interviewed In #2 are Converge, Third Age, and a Daltonic exmember. The editor seems to be a good kid.

$1 to Matt Pike, 94 Paradise St, Chicopee, MA 01020

_RADIO RIOT #1-36, 1991–1994 COMPILATION T_uck every other 'zine on this list and get this one. For only two fucking bucks it's worth all the rest put together. Radio Riot was a 1–4 sheet newsletter/rant & rave thing put out monthly over a few years, and here are all the Issues together...reading through It you not only get to enjoy the diverse stuff In here(the editor's thoughts

and experiences, record reviews, humor and news and stories, and all sorts of other unexpected stuff, all of which Is superbly written and Intelligent) but also get to watch hardcore history , unfold before your eyes: memorable records come out, now- forgotten rumors circulate, events take place... some of this will bring back fond memories, some of it will fill in details you missed , to explain things that confused you(or perhaps you knew more than the editor did about some things, and can laugh at his confusion), , some of it many of us missed entirely so it makes for good reading now. I admit freely to my general distatse for zines, but I find myself reading this one for fun...even when I should be doing something else. And there sure is a fucking lot in here to read. If you get one magazine this year, make it this one.

$2 to Matt Gard, 75 Nichol Avenue, New Brunswick, NJ 08903 _RETROGRESSION #8:_Wow, 8 issues. This is a SXE kid 'zine, but it's definitely good enough to stick out. Hectic layout packed with clip art(lots from comic books), good clear photos, and lots of ads, mediocre interviews with Unbroken and Shades Apart, a number of OK reviews, coherent enough opinions and lots of weird random facts and blurbs that do betray intelligence and humor.

$2 to Brian Hull, 104 Newport Avenue, Attleboro, MA 02 703 _SECOND NATURE #2:_This is a big, thick, slick 'zine. Quality, photos, and layout are all beautiful, very well done. There's a self-indulgent interview with his friends' band Coalesce that is so long, rambling, and moronic that it Is painfully unreadable. Fortunately the rest is better: a hilarious in-depth interview with a freestyle biker(you know, one of those people who do fucked up things on bicycles), good interviews with sponsored skaters and Integrity and Chokehold, show reviews, a whole lot of record/'zine reviews, (which are OK, could be longer, and they don't fucking print addresses! What are you, stupid?), and other stuff, all well done. A lot of energy went into this and it's

worth reading just j for that hilarious Interview I mentioned, which Is one of the best interviews I've seen in a while. Price is a little steep, of course... *$3.00 to P.O. Box 11543, Kansas City, MO 64138*

SELFWORTH #1: Small short sxe zine from Europe, the English is readable but not as good as It is In "Monkey" zine, for example. Interviews with Backdraft and Rancor which are not extensive, but Interesting because both bands have something to say(about socialism, In this case). Besides that there are a few oplnion/position pieces, one of which Is about drug legalization...! | didn t really think It was well-reasoned, and some "personal feelings pieces, only one of which I found really interesting. There's a scene report In here that I did, I'm not pleased with It. j *Jan, Bosserveldlaan 32, 6191 SK Beek (L), Netherlands*

_SIEGE #Zero:_Short, half-size 'zine, mostly focusing on opinions and | thoughts contributed by various writers(focuslng on sxe and various good and bad trends within It, how the new US congress is , wrongly cutting welfare programs, etc.), plus a few photos(not too gorgeous) and a few brief reviews. None of what Is said is stupid or incoherent(which seems to be an achievement in the 'zine world these days...) but I would have liked to have had more to read.

Sf *to Jim Wilson, 6513 Cape Court, Falls Church, VA 22043* _SURPRISE ATTACK #4:_Half — size, but thick. A variety of different , articles and opinions from various writers, some of which actually ! managed to rise above the crowd of generic 'zine bullshit. Articles include why prohibition wouldn't work(actually this is one of the more misguided articles, or else at least I wasn't aware that prohibition was even an issue these days...), growing up In an environment of teenage violence and how to defend yourself while remaining intelllgent(this I could really relate to), veganism and selling out(who would have thought...), and growing older while remaining In hardcore. There are a good number of mostly hardcore music/'zine reviews, which are lengthy enough to be useful, and interviews with Outcome, and Blindside that are sort of silly(this Is a frequent consequence of being friends with the band you Interview, avoid it like the plague). There is some writing from the

f editor, describing his membership In the SXE gang "Courage Crew", that seems to have a(mostly satirical?) emphasis on toughness and violence. Decide for yourself whether or not that's true, If It's a good or bad thing, and whether or not these kids can live up to their words...but in the meantime, ft's not at all a

I bad SXE kid 'zine, especially if you keep In mind that It is one.

$1 & 2 stamps to P.O. Box 90008, Harrisburg, PA 17109–0008 _TERMINUS #1:_Thls zine Is so beautiful In layout & design(color cover, incredible printing and graphic design, gorgeous pictures everywhere...by far the prettiest I've ever seen, obviously he has a job at Kinko's or something) that it would be impossible for It to live up to that in content — and the huge print and full page graphics don't help. There is some decent stuff In here: fairly Intelligent discussions of straight edge, (against) hardline, and other subjects, and a horrifying reprint from The Hot Zone by Richard Preston. The interview-by-mall with Mayday Is terrible in that the questions fail to

provoke more than syllobic, meaningless responses. The last part of the 'zine is basically a catalogue for a distribution this guy does. Finally there's a useful random news section like the ones in the first few Issues of Inside Front: but some of the information has become hilariously distorted. Here's my favorite instance of this: a Victory records catalogue came out a few months back that said, in jest, "Integrity has halted all negotiations with Mephistophiles, because singer Dwid is now the proud father of a baby girl." Well, the news section of "Terminus" reads: "Congratulations to Dwid for his new baby girl, Mephostophills" — what the fuck??!! Also, it drives me crazy how the editor says "heavy as fuck" all the time. I fucking hate that. *$2.50 to Al Warden, P.O. Box 19142, Boulder, CO 80308–2142* _TIRADE #1 :_This is basically a collection of opinion pieces on every stereotypical subject of contention in the world of sxe kid zines. There are articles about how organized religion is bad, abortion Is usually bad, staying true to straight edge, not using corporate bar-codes on records, homelessness, animal rights and veganism, you get the Idea. The arguments aren't Incoherent, but you could get the entire gamut of opinions from any SXE kid on the street, not much less Inteligently expressed either, and certainly just as well researched...! don't know why these people figure anyone who does care about these subjects would want to read their personal opinions about them instead of going to the library and checking out some books that contained real facts and useful information.

Jim and Carey, 94 7 N. York Rd, Elmhurst, IL 60126

_TRAIN OF THOUGHT #2:_Brief. but to the point SXE/hardcore 'zine from Britain. Short but interesting enough Interviews with Lash Out, Immoral Majorlty(ltlay), Above AII(England), and Neckbrace. Also, a few very short(too short!) reviews, and a couple quick artlcles(advice on doing interviews, and media hypocrisy over the killing of gorillas and chimpanzees in Africa). That's it.

Alan Davis, 11 Hughenden Rd., Clifton, Bristol, England

_2600: The Hacker Quarterly — Spring 1995._0K, I don't know shit about computers, but this 'zine is definitely useful to anyone of a generally criminal mindset, with articles about myths vs. facts about Automatic Teller Machines, how to make phone dialers to rip off long distance companies, etc. Of course, if you do know about computer stuff this will be a lot more useful to you, with articles on programming, the internet, hacking, etc., listings of underground computer conventions, reviews of books on hacking, classifieds, and more. The highlight is the letters to the editor section, In which a lot of hilarious stuff of dubious legality is discussed. Gorgeous, professional, and definitely extremely Intelligent... Most of the control systems by which the Western world is operated (oppressed, as some people see It) are accessible to hackers on the internet (or whatever that jargon Is, I don't fucking know) so It would definitely be advisable for individuals interested in keeping up with the government and big business to learn about that shit and start reading this 'zine, once they know enough to understand. *$4.00 to P.O. Box 99, Middle Island, NY 11953, 516-474-2677*

NEWS ET CETERA

First off, here at Inside Front we're looking for a computer expert who would be willing to dedicate their time to retyping and formatting the magazine. We really want to improve our appearance and make this magazine more user-friendly. Anyone, anywhere, who feels like they are extremely dependable, motivated, and trustworthy is encouraged to contact us about it. We can only offer nominal

payment In return, since we are still a practically non-profit production, but you will be given credit (your name in lights, etc.) and all

the other benefits of being a part of the Inside Front staff (access to new music and publications, resume experience, etc.). Please do contact us if this sounds like something you're Interested In, and we'll discuss the details.

„ Second, a few additions to the list of distributors in this issue: in the Maryland/ D.C. area you can contact Chris Falk of "Die

hard distribution(P.O. Box 1641, Columbia, MD 21044)–he carries music like Mayday, etc. In Missouri, Revival Distribution (P.O. Box 83, Ballwin, MO 63022–0283, fax 314-230-5455) carries a mostly Krishna catalogue of records and 'zines. Swedish label Burning ear (ox 1 38, 737 21 Fagersta, Sweden, fax (0) 223–145 42) carries some other labels' material, though I believe it's mostly local uropean stuff like Desperate Fight. In the Czech Republic, Day After records(Mira Paty, Horska 20, 352 01 As, Czech Republic) has a wide selection of material from many different kinds of labels that It distributes, it's quite possible they would distribute for other labels

as well... Finally, In Australia, Spiral Objective Is the biggest distributor, but you'll have to hunt down their address, because we don't have It at this time. Archybishop! Mailorder is another Australian distribution (66 Canning Ave, Mt. Pleasant, WA 6153, Australia) to try contacting.

On another note, regarding the Trial demo which Steve reviewed in this Issue, that band Is broken up now. Some of the musicians have formed a band called Hourglass, and their singer, who is a travelling juggler, is doing spoken word pieces on various records, including the new "State of the Nation LP(S.O.T.N. Includes members of old SXE band Inside Out). 25 Ta Life has a 6 song CD coming out on We Bite America records, which I believe is now under the administration of Victory records. New school North Carolina sxe metallic band Falling Down have' a 7" coming out on the record label of Even the Score 'zine(P.O. Box 210231, Columbia, SC 29221). Here in NC, Jim Resta is still booking shows at 91 0-960-5 530.

Ska/hardcore band Otis Reem will be releasing a cassette and an incredible 7" In the coming months. European band Congress has a 12" coming on Stormstrike records, and both Backlash and Integrity are supposed to have EP's coming out eventually(the former on a split label including their own Separation rec's, the latter on Victory rec's). Figure Four records(35 Eliab Latham Waye, E. Bridgewater, MA 02333) is releasing a 15 song LP by Hatchet Face, who used to be called Bound–Bound had an extremely intense, noisy, ugly distorted sound. The hardcore band Endeavor has just released a 7" intelligently entitled "Think, React, Think, Contemplate, Act To Bring Them Down" on Ferret rec's(72 Windsor Drive, Eatontown, NJ 07724). Experimental, talented melodic emo/noise band Converge has a new 7" out on Orionquest/Heliotrope rec's, 20 Gerald Rd. #2, Brighton, MA 02135.

Finally, there are a few good hardcore newsletters that come out every month which will help to keep the reader up to date on hardcore news: Third Party newsletter (21 Nancy Lane, Amherst, NY 14228) is the only good one in the US that comes to mind, since Moo Cow is rumored'to be quitting permanently. In Europe, try "How We Rock, " (P.O. Box 476, Bradford, BD1 1AA, Britain) it's extremely detailed and inforamtive about European hardcore. Finally, a monthly newsletter that comes out of France and lists hardcore news from all over the world (and includes interview with little known SXE/hardcore bands from places like Poland, Argentina, and Portugal) is published by Yann Boisleve (La Bonnemais, 35 590 La Chapelle Thouarault, France.)

DISTRIBUTION

Whether you are a record label, a 'zine editor, a band, or just a kid looking for music or reading, nothing is more crucial than knowing about distributors. So, this issue we are including a list of many of the useful and dependable hardcore/etc. distributors (and stores) across the world. Next issue we will probably do a listing of people who book shows, or of small labels, or some other bullshit, so whatever you do, send us the information and we'll publicize it for you. Please make as much use of this list as you can, and keep in mind there are many more dedicated distributors where these came from. OK, here you are, go crazy:

USA DISTRIBUTORS

CALIFORNIA

BLACKLIST MAILORDER: (475 Valencia Street, San Francisco, CA 94103–3416, phone 415-255-0388, fax 41 5-431-0425)–A very big, "not fot profit, " definitely punk rock record, etc. distribution.

ENGINE FANZINE DISTRIBUTION: (P.O. Box 640928, San Francisco, CA 94164–0928, phone 41 5-641-5098) — A 'zine-only distribution with a wide range of reading material available.

EPICENETER ZONE: (475 Valencia Street, 2nd Floor, San Francisco, CA 94103, phone 415-431-2725) — This is a punk rock, volunteer-run record store/radical library/community space collective. They are involved in a variety of projects, from art and film exhibitions to Food not Bombs meetings and the Prisoner's Literature Project. In fact, they might be too busy to distribute for you.

FADE-IN MAILORDER: (Francisco Alegria, P.O. Box 40901, San Francisco, CA 94140)–! never really thought this guy was extremely dependable, but he had a big catalogue of SXE and hardcore stuff. Try writing him to see what he's doing lately.

(Secret SXE Record store Project): (for details, write to 5771 Ludlow Avenue, Garden Grove, CA 92645–2014) — A SXE record store is on the way that will shake the Orange County scene to its very roots. Write for details. Top secret

**COLORADO , **

PROCESSION MAILORDER: (P.O. Box 19142, Boulder, CO 80308–2142) — The editor of "Terminus" 'zine does this small SXE record distribution.

CONNECTICUT

ENDLESS FIGHT RECORDS: (P.O. Box 1083, Old Saybrook, CT 06475–5083) — Former rugby star player Josh Baker distributes some hardcore records now.

STILLBORN RECORDS: (P.O. Box 3019, New Haven, CT 06515, phone 203-397-5316) — Jamie/Hatebreed does a similar distribution

FLORIDA

OUTBACK RECORDS: (5255 Crane Road, West Melbourne, FL 32904, fax 407-728-4161) — In addition to doing "Outback" 'zine, a big slick magazine about a little hardcore and a lot of alternative music, these guys do distribution as well At least I think so ILLINOIS

VICTORY RECORDS: (P.O. Box 1 46546, Chicago, IL 60614, phone 312-666-8661)–0ne of the largest & more dependable distributions around...a whole lot of stuff is available, the markup isn't too high on prices, and they'll work with almost anyone in hardcore MASSACHUSETTS

ANIMAL CAUSE: (427 Mountain Road, Holyoke, MA 01040, phone 413-532-7079) — I haven't heard from these guys In a couple of months, but they're good people. This distribution carries some 'zines(focus on animal rights and SXE), but mostly books and pamphlets on animal rlgthts and similar issues.

CRESTFALLEN DISTRIBUTION: (Melissa Neufell, 65 Edwin Road, Waltham, MA 02154) — The girl who does this distribution with Mike from Crestfallen zine, has done more to support hardcore by just writing people and sharing news and music

than most bigger labels have ever done. She and Mike carry mostly 'zines, a few records...their distribution is young and growing, and they're very sincere.

POSITIVELY PUNK MAILORDER: (P.O. Box 381799, Cambridge, MA 02238)–Sizable punk rock music distribution.

REJUVENATION SHOWS/DISTRIBUTION: (P.O. Box 3, Manomet, MA 02345, phone: 508-224-6587) — This kid just started, so who knows about him, but we'll see; give him the benefit of the doubt. He books shows too, and etc...

MISSOURI

HOMELESS RECORDS: (6678 Washington 3w, University City, MO 63130) — This guy carries records and zines from a decent variety of punk and hardcore labels.

SECOND NATURE DISTRIBUTION: (P.O. Box 1 1543, Kansas City, MO 64138) — Last time I checked, the editors of "Second Nature" 'zine were doing a pretty big distribution as well...SXE/HC stuff, you know.

NEW JERSEY

GROUND ZERO DISTRIBUTION: (21 Lincoln Place, Waldwick, NJ 07 463)–Simply the cheapest distribution in hardcore. The average 7" sells for $2.25, that would sell elsewhere for $3.50. They have 12"s by Victory records bands for $5.50. Damn! Most of the selection is on the weird, alternatlve/punk side, but for these prices you could order them to use as high-fiber food.

LUMBERJACK DISTRIBUTION: (P.O. Box 1105, Sate College, PA 16804–1105, phone 814-867-7658, fax 814-861-7658) — These guys are a serious, big scale distributor (that means direct to stores and shit)...but the hardest music they seem to carry is the softy stuff of Watermark and Doghouse records, they're mostly emo/ "punk", and when I or my friends have tried to work with them we've sort of been blown off. Their loss.

SOUND ON SOUND RECORD STORE: (160 Woodbridge Avenue, Highland Park, NJ 08904, phone 908-985-3345) — Matt Gard, of defunct 'zine "Radio Riot, " owns this SXE/HC/etc. record store with some other people. They buy, sell, trade, and do lots of other shit I'm sure. A very commendable project to undertake.

NEW YORK

ROUND FLAT RECORDS: (63 Lennox Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14226–4226) — This label sure has a lot of shit to distribute. Mostly punk, but some hardcore, and lots of weird shit like out-of-press "underground" major label music, etc...

THIRD PARTY DISTRIBUTION: (21 Nancy Lane, Amherst, NY 14228) — In addition to the monthly hardcore news sheet Nick does, he also carries a lot of new SXE/hardcore records; he does a pretty serious, big-scale distribution.

OHIO

CONFINED RECORDS/MAILORDER: (P.O. Box 771, Eaton, OH 45320) — In addition to releasing the Brother's Keeper CD, these guys also have a smallish (20-some titles?) hardcore/SXE distribution.

TWO FACED DISTRIBUTION: (1058 Homewood Drive, Lakewood, OH 44107–1420) — This kid, Steve Peffer, is the Inside Front in-house distribution kid, so of course

you know he does quality work. He carries a smallish number of titles, but only really good, often difficult to find stuff. He's open to working with others and he carries some good records (Grade/Believe split, etc.) for cheap prices. Try it.

PENNSYLVANIA

ANDREW THOMAS DISTRIBUTION: (55 Searle Street, Pittston, PA 18640, phone 717-655-3501) — These kids distribute records, demo's, and zines by both hardcore and alternative/emo/punk bands...they have about 1 0 to 20 titles of each. They also print shirts.

BIG MOUTH 'ZINE DISTRIBUTION: (Chad Rugola, P.O. Box 153, Allison, PA 15413) — The editor of "Break Free" 'zine, who is also involved in 717 Records, does a small hardcore/SXE 'zine distribution as well.

FOUNTAINHEAD DISTRIBUTION: (2865 South Eagle Road, Box 392, Newtoen, PA 18940, phone 215-860-6944) — These guys, who also play in Introspect and release records, distribute a whole fucking lot of hardcore, emo, and "alternative"/punk records, over 100 titles. _VERY DISTRIBUTION:_ (P.O. Box 42586, Philadelphia, PA 19101) — The nation's widest selection of hardcore and all related music, you can find everything here, and it's run very professionally. Their recent move has slowed them down a bit, temporarily, but fear not...

VERMONT

IGNITION RECORDS: (P.O. Box 220, Vergennes, VT 05491)–A brief selection of hardcore CD's, records, and cassettes, with some Oil thrown in...?

VIRGINIA

SIEGE RECORDS/ZINES/DISTRIBUTION/SHOWS: (Jim Wilson, 6513 Cape Court, Falls Church, VA 22043, phone 703-532-3365) — This guy does hardcore/emo record and zine distribution, plus sets up shows and does other shit.

Third Person Distribution: (9609 Pampas Drive, Chesterfield, VA 23832) — small, new hardcore distribution.

WORLD DISTRIBUTORS:

ENGLAND

SECOND THOUGHT: (Alan Davis, 'The Sheiling', Bridge Road, Aidershot, Hants, Gu11 3DD) — newer SXE zine distribution.

GERMANY

FUNRECORDS: (Mittenwalder Str. 30, 10961 Berlin Kreuzberg, phone 030–6938380, fax 030–6932551) — Hardcore/punk/Oi!/ska mailorder and record store, run by good guys.

NO CRUELTY: (Spitalstr. 43, 79539 Lorrach) — "Hardline"/vegan straightedge record and 'zine distribution. They've been jerks to us here at Inside Front, but for the sake of making information available I'll mention them just this once. They seem like extremists...

OUR WORLD: (Matze, Bachstr. 1, 73269 Hochdorf) — Good, dedicated hardcore distribution.

STORMSTRIKE RECORDS: (An Der Rothalde 17, 79312 Emmendingen) — This up-and-coming heavy hardcore label also seems to distribute lots of records for other labels and bands.

NORWAY

DEUCE DISTRIBUTION: (Vegard Waske, Nordskogun 1, 6400 Moide) — The drummer of Lash Out does this new hardcore distribution. _GOODWILL ZINE DISTRI BUTION:_ (Even Score, Skjeraberget, 4350 Naerbo) — Hardcore 'zine distribution, I guess.

HOPELESS FIGHT: (Kai Akerstrom, Knut Hamsundsv. 15, 3600 Kongsberg, Norway) — SXE 'zine distribution. That's all I know.

SWEDEN

DESPERATE FIGHT RECORDS: (Kemigrand 1, 90731 Umea, Sweden, fax +46-(0)90–1 96032) — These guys have been known to do a little distribution, if you twist their arms a bit.

REPORT: ITALY

by Simone/Experience

We have various record labels which I do like alot cause they're orginizations of people who truly believe In HC. For them it's more than music, more than a "movement, " it's their life. They all seem sincere to me so:

SOA records of Rome is dedicated in putting out Rome bands and other HC bands at affordable prices (also grind bands, in fact they > produce Agathocles). The "Rebirth" LP Compilation Is already out and contains the best of Rome: Spawn(the Italian ones), Separation, Concrete, Evldence(these two bands drive me crazy! Both are worth the price of the LP), XTImebombX, Student Zombie.

SOA also released a cool 7in. by Open Season, a storic Rome band, which Is still available, and a CD by Growing Concern, a 10" by Concrete, and an Opposite Force mini CD. And then we have Green Records, a label focused mainly on sXe bands (But

they have no problems In putting out any kind of HC bands) The three guys from Green Records also set up shows (They did the "two days of struggle") last April, (If anyone's Interested in having pictures of the event please contact me and I'll see what I can do).

GREEN RECORDS has been putting out lately a lot of goodles(trust me, the last few records are fucking amazing, the bands have reached a very good level I like them a lot.)

Like SOA, Green puts out records with a very good sound quality (This is the difference from the past) the records are totally DIY and non profit (every cent is put back In the scene).

Latest Greenrecords super-cool releases: HEADSMEN LP, IVORY CAGE 7" BURNING DEFEAT 7", PERMANENT SCAR LP, "BANDS FOR ONE STRUGGLE" LP compilation featuring: (Burnin' Defeat, Ivory Cage, Spawn, Feeding the Fire, Ironside and more). Soon MINDLESS COLLISION will record a 7" for GREEN. GREEN and SOA started 4–5 years ago — they started with a little distro.

Now Giulio and Nicola of GREEN are involved In a little store in the north of Italy (Padova) that recently is selling a lot of stuff from VERY DISTRO. So you see, It's very up to date you should write to SOA and GREEN to have all the Itallian newest HC releases.

MELE MERCE (Rotten Apple) is a DIY label, who puts out generic HC, with these bands: POINT OF VIEW, CHEMICAL POSSE (angry shouting HC) DIVE INTO THE EXTREME and soon a compilation 7" (with BURNING DEFEAT, OUTRIGHT. MUDHEAD, BLIND DEVOTION CAME, DIVE INTO THE EXTREME) The guy who work at it is very honest and dedicated, write to him!

CIRCUS RECORDS Is a label who that once was focused on old styles Italian punk HC, now the guy who work at it is concentrating on the SXE scene and a compilation cd is soon to be released. This will be low priced and will contain almost all of the Italian HC bands. Try it, check it out, cause It's a record that represents the entire scene.

YOU'RE NOT ALONE RECORDS is a label from Milano. Things planned: a compilation 7" with Milano's only bands, and then an AGEING 7" (split release with Twilight records). They set up shows in Milano. "You're Not Alone" is also a 'zine, but sorry It's written in ltalian(last issue contained ENCOUNTER, EVERLAST, UNDERTOW, UNBROKEN, CHORUS, WATERFRONT). IDLE TALK demo is out now(Milano band playing HC with lots of tempo changes) it seems that DAYSPRING has sent a song for a future compilation, on this label soon along with other bands (whose names yet I don't know). Write TWILIGHT RECORDS it's a hardly born label — only projects now a 7" by AGEING in the spring, and a compilation 7" with BY ALL MEANS , BLIND DEVOTION CAME, etc., etc.

BY ALL MEANS is a band that's been around for a while. They recorded a demo in 93' and put a 7" out on INAVDITO REC.(which Is out of press now).

B.A.M. Is a band with strong politicaL messages and the LP has a big layout with translations. Their lyrics are about religion, emotions, hardcore, being drug free, and animal rights issues... they represent the type of band that can be compared, in terms of political messages, to Struggle, Groundwork and Downcast.

The music has no particular influences: voice is very loud, but in

the long run didn't express any emotions. Sometimes music's fast, sometimes moshy.

BY ALL MEANS Is five guys who are really concerned about HC as spreading ideals and I guess they place more importance on their message rather than their music which, anyhow, expresses really well their state of mind.

SOCIETY OF JESUS is basically same members as BY ALL MEANS but their goal now is different: The band play the super fast angry shouting HC(sometimes with

a bit of grind) ''holocaust" music. Songs are pretty short, no introspective lyrics. Now their message is focused on be against militarism, being anti- authoritarian, nonviolent, and supporting animal liberation. Some songs are in Italian, some in Spanish!

A split 7" with SUBSTANCE is out now on INSOCIALE REC. Substance was an emotional HC band. The music Is so intense, so deep I suggest you to give them a listen because the 7" is pretty cheap.

CONCRETE...very talented musicians here. Lots of people agree with the fact that CONCRETE is the most kickin' ass band in Italy. They play a sort of evll-slow-core holy terror music, super metallic, destructive, sometimes noisy, brutal every show Is a massacre of the ears vocals are soo scratchy they have 10" out on SOA which I suggest you to pick up cause it's awesome. LP soon on same label. Don't miss it!

AGEING is a band that came from the ashes of THINK TWICE (a legendary Italian HC Band who released a 7" and an LP on Crucial Response Records, they were the first Italian band touring the USA, they played with Mouthpiece). Crucial Response Records: c/o (Peter Horen, Kaiserfeld 98, 46047, Oberhausen, Germany) AGEING is a very mature band both musically and about their age. They're all over 25, the singer is 32! They play new school HC without particular influences, very stylish, with pretty mellow vocals, lyrics In English and no accents! They have songs with the classic "edge" feeling so they have something in common with bands like Onward, Abhinanda, Drift Again, Temperance, etc.

If you like Drift Again thn you'll like Ageing, but still they maintain their personality. Lyrics deal about SXE and human rights in general. A split tape with Mindless Collision is soon to be released on my own label (Experience Records).

IVORY CAGE is a band form the North, they play powerful new school with a little bit of metal, with meaningful lyrics, sometimes In English, sometimes in Italian. I can define their music as intense, moshy, stylish HC, (in the vein of the 1st Earth Crisis 7", but not that angry). Socially conscious lyrics. They're very

powerful now, cause they have a 2nd guitar player. Check out their 7" on GREEN RECORDS.

MOURN is a new band playing original and technical HC. they give me the same feelings as bands like Frail, Iconoclast. They're very musically talented. I have the demo, and the music is so full of emotion, screamed vocals, every song is different from the next. They're very loud and aggressive live, so deep, so emotional, so full of energy. Check out their demo at their address.

EVIDENCE: All I can say about this band Is that it Is the most original band in Italy. The vocals are mellow, but incredibly depressed and sometimes angry. The demo has a cool recording and is very good. Music's slow, repetitive. BUT SOOO BEAUTIFUL! They're out of Rome...the singer Is a bit crazy, during the Experience show all the crowd watched him on stage while he cut his chest and arms, with all that blood on the stage. Incredible! Check them out — ask for the demo from SOA or CONCRETE.

OUTRIGHT is a band that has not been seen for a while. They play very dark HC with loud vocals. They remind me of some bands that play mosh-core on the U.S. east coast now. So "dark-slow-core" is the key word here. Two songs on the CIRCUS CD Complilation.

PERMANENT SCAR is the Burning Defeat brother band...in fact they share same vocalist and guitarist. It's difficult for me not to give them a very good review because they're one of my favorite bands EVER. I can call their music music for the heart. So incredibly sweet and sad. They're pretty similar to the older and newer LIFETIME stuff, very fast, but very melodic. When I got the advance tape of their LP, I got crazy, it still rules my turntable every day! The LP will very soon be out on GREEN. Get it or lose it. Simply awesome!

HEADSMAN play super loud dark HC in the vein of Integrity and Unbroken. Lyrics are from a depressed point of view. Their first stuff was very "death-core" and very Integrity-influenced, their 1st demo had an incredible power, it's still available. Now their LP Is more HC (talking about musical side of HC), incredibly stylish, precise. Introspective lyrics. I can honestly say that the voice is the loudest I ever listened to, probably the best part of their music. I think if you like Integrity, Unbroken, Outspoken, you'll like Headsman very much. The record is out on Green with a good sound quality (they recorded on 24 tracks) it's called "The Morning." This is , along with PERMANENT SCAR LP, my favorite Italian release ever.

MINDLESS COLLISION is the MOURN brother band. They're all young and talented. On the stage they are very exuberant, their music is very heart-felt, they shocked me at the last show, when they started jump around, they got crazy, finally lying on the ground.

They play fast parts that sound like Mouthpiece, Chain of Strength. The slow parts are more emotional and original.

When they're on stage they look like totally different people than in normal life, they kick out all their frustrations live. Soon they'll release a split tape with Ageing on my label.

BURNING DEFEAT: Their music fits very well in the "emotive" side of HC. Lyrics are very introspective dealing with homelessness and human right subjects, also with depression.

Their music is sometimes aggressive, more often sad...really sad. A friend of mine cries everytime they play live. Vocals are wonderful. Give a listen to their 7", and you'll agree with me, I'm sure. Their 7" is out on Green, it's called "Singling Out the Aims" TIMEBOMB: Their music is very very loud. I'm lucky if the vocalist didn't broke my ears at the "experience" festival. Their message is focused on veganism, animal rights, socialism (capitalist greed), and straight edge. Three words to define their music: loud, dark(incredibly dark! Holy Terror here!), and angry. They have a 7" out on SOA and two songs on the Rebirth comp, on Rebirth records.

BLIND HATE are a very young band, maximum age some months ago was 15, now is 18 cause they have new guitar player and two singers. I think they sound very new

school but not mindless, very genuine, intense, lived. Every show they played people got crazy. At the experience show their instruments were always out of tune because people were on stage, lots of confusion! Their music has the Earth Crisis, Restrain, Green Rage, Everlast, Integrity feeling. Order their demo at my address (experience).

BLIND DEVOTION CAME They've been described as "Brooklyn"-core but I do have reason to think this definition doesn't fit them. They have ex-members of IMMORTAL MAJORITY (7" out on GREEN rec's, now broken up) and IVORY CASE (7" out on GREEN). They play pretty loud sad HC, sometimes angry, sometimes depressed. The voice is very original because the singer uses effects (it's not the typical "Macho" NY voice) We are awaiting a song from them on a compilation done by MELE MARCE, and one on the CIRCUS CD.

GROWING CONCERN: maybe you already heard from them. They got reviewed on HEARTATTACK #5. Both their CD's are available from SOA Records. Once (three or four years ago) they played fast youth-crew HC with choruses, straight HC; now they've progressed, their new album was mixed by Don Fury. They're out of Rome, where they get an incredible audience. They did a European Tour and It turned out great. Their new CD has been described as Black-Sabbathlan, although once again I don't agree.

Still, they do a cover of " Hard Times" by Black Sabbath!

NEW BANDS UPDATING LIST

The scene is fucking growing!!! These new bands just played first show in the last two or three months:

PRODUCT: SXE HC In the vein of STRIFE and stuff like that (also undertow influence).

ABSTRACT: Melodic HC band, kinda in the vein of CAMPFIRE... IDLE TALK: Fast HC, old school feeling, then slow, demo out now. STRESS OUT: I have yet to hear them (someone told me the classic "they play SXE HC", PLEASE GIVE ME A BREAK!

MISTRUST: (SXE HC) (!!!)

HOLD THE REINS: (I don't know them)

GHCP: "GOVINDA HC PROJECT" — the 1st Krishna HC band in Italy, they live in a Temple and play melodic HC.

ADDRESSES:

SPAWN: write at "Rebirth"

SEPERATION: write at "Rebirth"

RIGHT IN SIGHT: write at Experience

DIRGE(HC ala Inside Out): Pierpaolo Morgia, Via Puccini 1, 0129,

Urte, (VT) '

NO CHOICE: write at Experience

LESS THAN ZERO: write at "Experience"

INSIGHT: write at Experience

LABELS

GREEN RECORDS c/o Giulio Repetto, Via Falloppio 38, 35100, Padova, Italy

SOA RECORDS c/o Paolo Petralla, c.p. 15338, 00143, Roma Laurentino

TWILIGHT RECORDS: same as IVORY CAGE

YOU'RE NOT ALONE Records (soon Idle Talk demo and Ivory Cage/Burning Defeat split 7") Di Giulio Matteo/Via Motta 6/20144/Milano, Italy

REBIRTH RECORDS: write to SOA and ask

EXPERIENCE RECORDS c/o Simone Barbieri, Via Degli Scarlatti m' 187, 41100, Modena, Italy

MELE MARLE RECORDS: write at Experience

CIRCUS RECORDS: write at Experience

DISGUST ZINE (written in English, Try It!) Francesco Brunotti, VIA Sesto Pompeo 1 05100, Terni, Italy (stuff about sexuality, SXE, emotions and anger)

INSOCIALE RECORDS (Society of Jesus/Substance 7") c/o Mario Luppi, Via D'Avia Nord 54, 41100, Modena Citta, Italy

MINDLESS COLLISION c/o Giovanni Di Martino, Via Cesarea 1/1, 42016, Guastalla (RE), Italy

GOVINDA HC PROJECT Bignardi Massimo, Via Madonna Pell. m"64/a3, 20010, Bareggio (Ml) Italy.

IVORY CAGE Andrea Bassi, Via Stendhal m"5, 40128, Bologna

MUDHEAD (Fast Cro-Mags Style, LP out on SOA) Alesssandro Azzali, Via Lecco m"12, 22030, Eupillo, (CO), Italy

MOURN: same as Mindless Collision

BURNING DEFEAT Andrea Ferraris, Via Galimbert m"1/a , 15100, Alessandria, Italy

SOCIETY OF JESUS Mario Luppi, Via D'Avia Nord m°54, 41100, Modena Citta, Italy

BY ALL MEANS: same as SOCIETY OF JESUS

STRESS OUT: write at "Experience" Records

BLIND DEVOTION CAME Alessandro Zagni, Via Terranova m'20, 41100, Modena, Italy

HEADSMAN Enrico Poli, Via Cosme Tura m'33, 41012, Carpi, (MO), Italy

EVERSOR (Melodic-Heart-Core, CD out! Ask Green rec's about It) Marco Morosini, Via Cervi 19, 61011 Gabicce Mare (PE), Italy SOTTOPRESSIONE (old school HC) Federico Odone, Via Martinego M'26, 20139, Milano, Italy

AGEING Stefano Bertelli, Via Togliatti m"31, 46029, Suzzara (MN), Italy

CONCRETE Tommaso Garavini, Via Morlcone m"23, 00199, Roma TIME BOMB Giorgio Fois, Via Luigi Rolando m'20, 00168, Roma OPPOSITE FORCE (Heavy-Slow-Edge, song out on Rebirth comp.) Simone Tripodi, Via Salaria m"1388, 00138 Roma

COMRADES (Hard-Core Super-Grind Brutality, Communist) c/o Paolo Petralla, c.p. 15338, 00143 Roma-Laurentino, Italy

EVIDENCE Gianluca Cipolla, Via Della Magliana m*76/g, 00146, Roma, Italy PERMANENT SCAR: same as BURNING DEFEAT

BLIND HATE: write at “Experience” Records

CHEMICAL POSSE (Hate-Shouting-“Fuck the system”-Punk-HC) Maurizio Pinti, Via Jesi m*274, 60024, Case Nuove D’Osimo, (AN) , Italy

PRODUCT: same as AGEING

IDLE TALK: same as YOU’RE NOT ALONE RECORDS

ABSTRACT: same as TWILIGHT RECORDS

MISTRUST: write at Experience Records

HOLD THE REINS: write at Experience Records

STUDENT ZOMBIE (Female-Vocals-Chaos-Angry-HC. RIOT GRRL

HC, the 7“ is out now, it is acoustic emo-Core, very beautiful ask SOA) address same as CONCRETE.

Remember at J. J. addresses aare *j n*

REPORT: S. FLORIDA

Compiled from Rich Thurston and Adel 156.

Timescape Zero is back together. The original drummer has rejoined and they now have Mike Marlbell on bass(ex-Machlne), who Is quite possibly one of the top bass players In Miami. The LP that was scheduled has been canceled and has been released Instead as an 8-song demo. Rich’s band, Culture, will have a full length on Conquer The World Records due out In June and will also be doing a double seven Inch/ minl-cd on Belgium’s Sober Mind Records. Culture will be touring the east coast In May and June so keep an eye out. You can reach Culture by writing to: 11263 West Atlantic Blvd. #308, Coral Springs, FL 33071. Adel says Culture sounds like a mix of most of the heavier stuff on “New Age rec’s.” There are few zines out now In the Ft. Lauderdale/ Miami area. Adel 156 has his zine, Feast of Hate And Fear (always a good read) P.O. Box 820407, South Florida, FL 33082–0407, in the works for the fifth Issue, It will have interviews with Rudy Ray Moore (aka Dolemite the Human Tornado) and Richard Ramirez (aka the Night Stalker) as well as the usual tons of articles and reviews. Adel’s interview with Charles Manson from his third Issue will be coming out6 In a book called “Behind the Wall of Sleep” — It Is a two-volume set and his ‘zine will be credited, (“doing a fanzine can bring you fame, fortune, and good things, ” says Adel). Rich’s zine “Twentyfour” Is still In the works. He says he’s “taking it slow for quality’s sake.” Bands interested In being reviewed send a copy of your own muslc/descrlption, and anyone wanting to contribute, send to the Culture address. Adel describes the other ‘zines as “silly childish ramblings about how good the Offspring are” (Open zine) or “emo-only” (Caffeine zine). As far as clubs to play at down here It’s difficult. In Miami there Is The Kitchen Club. It’s a rather large venue that bands like Into Another, Sick of It All, Cro Mags, etc. A new club In Ft. Lauderdale called The Crash Club Is rumored to start having hardcore shows. It’s a smaller venue, but for a touring band It would be worth stopping there. The Brothel

Is a skate park turned venue In Melbourne, FL. It's hot, smelly and a whole lot of fun. Always cheap door prices and a good atmosphere to play in. This leaves us with Tampa, FL. There are two clubs: The Blue Chair and The Stone Lounge. The BLue Chair Is a record store that has shows after hours. Good stage and decent PA. The Stone Lounge is a larger venue with a great PA. Any show In Tampa would be good. The kids there are very supportive. If you're In a touring band and want to play Florida write the Culture address and Rich will give your info to the right people. Thanks.

[Image not archived]

BUY KETKO^KESSION OR I'll ^ET EARTH CRISIS TO EAT *yOUl* **Fer** *H***ft iff**, f^n^ $2.00 peftag* pit A* **te» Brian Ha/I** + *104 Ncwycrt* **Ave** + **Attleiere, MA** *O27OJ*

REPORT: NEW JERSEY

VISION have finally began to play out again after a long sabbatical. They have gotten a few new members and gotten rid of a few old ones. Apparently, they have a new cd In the works, but no word yet as to what label will be the lucky one to release It. Rumor has It that they're still under contract with the label that released there second cd, Criminal Records(no current address). ENDEAVOR Is a great new band with a very thick Groundwork sound to them. They have a 7" out on FERRET RECORDS(72 Windsor Dr./Eatontown, NJ/07724 which is two songs full of fury. They have a second 7' coming out now that a member of the band is putting out(ENDEAVOR: 37 Woodman pl/ Matawan, NJ/07747). LIFETIME are a bit active again. They just put out the "Tinnitus" 7" on GLUE RECORDS(GLUE RECORDS: 51 Columbus dr./Franklin Park, NJ 08823). Except a new cd from them sometime soon on Maryland based Jade Tree Records(Llfetlmne: P.O. Box 10404, New Brunswick, NJ 08906). Mouthpiece are still around even though you wouldn't know it due to the fact that they hardly play out. Rumor mill has It that this summer's tour will be their last. With that, who knows If their new 7" due out on New Age will ever see the light of day(Mouthpiece: 15 Glenmawr Ave, Trenton, NJ 08618). If you haven't heard Kurbjaw yet you should definitely look Into them. They're a great "mosh It up" style with a good groove to them. They have a 7" out on Guage Records(c/o Jim Smith III, 190 W. Prospect Ave, Keyport, NJ 07735, ph. 908-494-5724, email Kurbhead @ Palace.com) They're true to their words and they say that If you give them gas money and a place to sleep they'll play! Support them. (KURBJAW:SEE GAUGE RECORDS). I'm sure you've all heard of BACKLASH by now. They were given the run-around by New Start Records. They have two 7"s out on CTW and the other Is self released (I think). They have an LP out on Break Even Point Records, which they've released on CD themselves with the 7" (BACKLASH: 16 Simpson ct./Bergenfield, NJ/07621). STRENGTH 691 are playing out periodically. They have a self released 7" out now. They have sort of a good, solid hardcore sound with a hip hop feel to lt(STRENGTH 691-RE-ACTION RECORDS:20 Claton ave./Colonia, NJ/07067). 25 TA LIFE are a good hardcaw band out of Patterson, NJ with an extremely heavy raw sound. They have a 7" out on SFT Records and a few tracks on different comps(25 TA LIFE: 86 3rd. ave./ Patterson, NJ

07514). ONE NATURE are an amazing punk outfit from this area. You mix Lifetime "Tinnitus" and Dag Nasty "Wig Out" and what do you get...these guys! They have a self released 7" out and TRUSTKILL Is releasing another(ONE NATURE:po box 253/Bound Brook, NJ 08805). Speaking of the famed TRUSTKILL boy, his new zine Is out and is AOK. he hasn't been having any shows, but when the summer hits I'm sure that will change (TRUSTKILL:23 Farm Edge Ln/Tinton falls NJ/07724). THE BOUNCING SOULS, NJ's Infamous punk rockers, are on sort of a hiatus. Bassist Brian, apparently badly hurt himself while snowboarding, so they are taking a break. They are, however touring this summer and are also recording a new cd for BYO Records(THE BOUNCING SOULS, PO BOX 974/ New Brunswick, NJ/08903). Old school rockers SHADES APART have just released an album with Revelation and it sort of surprises me that they haven't gotten bigger or more recognized until now. They are still playing out frequently, and they are still kicking butt.(SHADES APART: po box 5082/ North Branch, NJ 08876). SUBMISSION Is a fairly decent band with a distinctive Chokehold sound. They are your run-of-the-mill sXe kids, but they are dedicated and they care. Write them for their demo and watch for their 7" on SCORCHED EARTH RECORDS(SUBMISSION: 11 Corey Dr./ Trenton, NJ/08628). SCORCHED EARTH also released the Soulstice 7" some time ago(SCORCHED EARTH po box 76/ Stanton, NJ 088850076). There's a lot going on In the distribution field around here. As of right now, my distribution Is getting off the ground and Is called THE OTHER SIDE DISTRIBUTION. I have a small selection, but It's growing everyday. Perhaps the biggest thing here, and the closest thing to challenging Very dlstro, is FOUNTAIN HEAD RECORDS/MAILORDER and DISTRIBUTION. They have a great selection that is constantly growing. They also Just began their mailorder so get in touch. They are also the ones to go for your t-shlrt needs. Also look for the Introspect 7"s and the Ipecac 7" on the same label (FOUNTAINHEAD

RECORDS/MAILORDER 2865 S. Eagle rd./box 392/ Newton, PA/18940). Amy and Dari do both GROND ZERO DISTRIBUTION and ANXIETY CLOSEST FANZINE. They have probably the cheapest prices around and their zine is incredibly thick with short Interviews, ads and oplnions(GZ DISTRO/ANXIETY CLOSEST: 21 Lincoln pl/Waldwick, NJ 07463). WHY? DISTRIBUTION Is something i have just stumbled upon not too long ago. They have a nice, thick catalog with lots of great stuff for all your musical tastes, from punk to oi! to hardcore to rock stars(WHY?:po box 309/ Wharton, NJ/07885-0309). Other distribution's that are Just getting off the ground or stray from your normal dlstro Is CONSIGN DISTRIBUTION. As of right now, Mike has mostly zines and a few 7's but he Is growlng(CONSIGN DISTRO:318 W. Sylvania/Neptune City, NJ 07753). A kid named Tim is selling crazy amounts of videos that he himself taped. He has a four page catalog of videos to sell with a lot of great stuff and cheap prices(TIM'S VIDEO'S: 50 Basswood ct/Red Bank, NJ 07701).

ZINES YOU SAY? Perhaps the best zines going out here right now Is HARDWARE FANZINE. Pretty much dedicated to the "Old School" , this makes you proud to be in hardcore. A cut and tear layout along with some fine newsprint makes this a win-

ner (HARDWARE FANHZINE: 2557 Constance dr/Manasquan, NJ 98736)...Another great zine Is NEVERMORE FANZINE. The first Issue just came out and it has Interviews with Autumn, Endpoint, Integrity, Farside and Mouthpiece. A great first lssue(NEVERMORE FANZINE:1136 Lamberton rd/trenton NJ 08611). Some other zines and address' are STILL STANDING FANZINE: 318 W. Sylvania/Neptune City, NJ 07753... STUDENT DRIVER: 14 Beasley st./W. Orange, NJ 07052.

Since City Gardens closed down there really hasn't been anywhere for the bigger bands to come through and play. There are a bunch of kids In New Brunswick and the surrounding areas that are putting on shows in there basements and a club called the DOWN UNDER has shows once in a while. I'm not sure, but I think the kids from STRENGTH put them on. The kids from ANXIETY CLOSET put on shows very frequently. For some reason though, Weston always seems to play.

The best thing In NJ In a long time just happened. A new record store called SOUND ON SOUND has just opened. This store Is awesome and caters specifically to hardcore/punk and Indie music. It Is run and owned completely by hardcore kids. Support these guys so we won't lose It like NYC lost Reconstruction. I'm not sure if they're doing mailorder yet, but write them anyway (SOUND ON SOUND: 160 Woodbridge ave/Highland Park, NJ 08904).

That's about It for NJ. I hope I filled you In or gave you an Idea as to what's going on here. As for me, I do Nevermore Fanzine/The Other Side Distribution/ and Reform Records. RR #1 has put out the "In Our Blood" cassette comp w/Converge, Starkweather, Overcast, Soulstice, Conviction and 8 others. A second one Is In the works as we speak. If any bands out there need a place to stay while traveling through NJ or are looking for shows in this area while on tour, buzz me and I'll help out anyway that I possibly can.

Joseph f. Kuzemka/1136 Lamberton rd./Trenton, NJ 08611/ USA phone: 609.393.0307 fax:609.921.2679

CLEVELAND REPORT

No shows, no clubs, no excitement. An area once exploding with tension now drowns in pigshit. As far as the few bands around worth mentioning: of course INTEGRITY who have a new Ip "SYSTEMS OVERLOAD" out on Vlctory(!!) and have played sporadic gigs on the east coast with new second guitarist Frank Novinec (ex Ringworm)-their newer stuff Is a marked return to a more hardcore approach in the songwrittlng and attitude dept...

Dark Empire band ANGUISH have broken up...APT. 213 has not released anything new as of yet, although they supposedly have new material In the can...rumour has it Chris Ringworm Is on the way out as their second guitarist. Their last Cleveland gig at Cheerlo's (local bar doing It's first show) lasted about three songs as the punks and H.C.'s and Parma kids destroyed the joint as the vice squad raided It...

REPORT: U.K..

Cleveland's newest and most notorious band (and the only straight by the numbers, early '80's punk/H.C. band left here), the H-100s, have quickly gained a large amount of noterlty for themselves with a killer Raw Power meets Japanese H.C., with a '80's L.A. attitude, sound and spirit. Out of the Cleveland gigs, only one was actually able to be completed with actual music being played by the band, and even that one ended in a total riot with pigs, etc... the other two saw the clubs (Gallery; Cleve. Public Theatre; Duane Wood's Left) absolutely totalled and the band hauling ass outta there quick. Their single is In it's 2nd. pressing and available through the Bloodclot address at the end. The INMATES (Integ's Melnick bros., Paul Schlacter (Cider) and Wedge (H-100s)) are due to release a single in June on Bloodclot- they played one raging show at PEABODY'S last summer before they disbanded, but the single fucking blazes..ripping Chaos UK-type stuff. RANDOM STABBINGS is a new Parma band who kinda sound like early Germs/Authoritles-they played one gig at the red-eye(local glam club fooled Into a Sat. afternoon H.C. gig) and sounded pretty good, especially their bratty, neurotic vocalist...another newer punkish-H.C. band who are scene trouble makers Is INITIATIVE (played the cheerlo's and red eye gigs; need practice but have the right attitude)-some other good gigs were the recent NEW BOMB TURKS shindig at the Agora, the Smears at the Grog Shop, and the surprise GAG REFLEX 3-song reunion at the Gallery, which saw them forcibly ejected as soon as the club owner found out that the drummer Wedge Is In the H-100'S!

More BLOODCLOT news: They will release another H-100's single out In late summer, 6 new tunes including "Brown Sugar", "Rathole", and the title track "destroy Cleveland".By winter will be a H-100's full length on Ben Barnett's(Drop Dead) label Crust. Bloodclot will also be repressing the incredible CIDER ep that came out last summer on Non-Commercial records, and they also have acquired the CRUST records screens for shirts & patches of bands like Gauze, BGK, Confuse, etc.(+Negatlve Approach, Infest, Neurosis, Life's Blood, Heroin, Oi Pollol, Chaos UK, Operation Ivy, etc.) — shirts $8 & patches $1, professionally screened on the Dark Empire equipment.

Well-that's about it. This town sucks(like the PTL Klub said once) and its only gonna get worse due to no clubs willing to book threatening bands, vegans who work at steakhouses, etc..the only recent gigs were the INTEGRITY/H-1 00'S/APT.213/OLC(EX- MEANSTREAK) broohaha at Peabody's on June 3rd. and the CODE 13/HIATUS/H-100'2/APT.213 at the Parma VFW on June 22nd. Recent feuds Include Cleveland's pathetic skinhead gang "Last Resort" vs. the Erba bros.(H-1 OOS) and Dwid(INTEGRITY) vs. everyone!

-Goodbye and hail Japan,

— NOAH LOWANCE

_AODffeSSES: -_DARKEMPIRE(lnteg., APT. 213, many many more) po box 770213 lakewood oh 44107

Bloodclot Rec‘s(H-100’s, Inmates, Proctologists, etc.) P.O. Box 561 Brunswick OH 44212

APT 213: 4463 Homestead, Brunswick OH 44212

REPORT: CZECH REPUBLIC

This is Roman from the fanzine DIFFERENT LIFE. We are into HC & punk music and have five issues of our ‘zine out.

The Czech scene Is getting bigger and bigger.

KRITICKA SITUACE is a hardcore band from Prague, their first Lp Is on Day After rec’s, and a new mini-Lp is coming. They play fast, political great music and members of the band do hardcore shows in Prague. (C/0: ROBERT VLCEK/ ZEMEDELSKA 12/ PRAHA 6/ 60 DO)

CLEAN SLATE is a band from Strakonice and Prague.

They play melodic hardcore with English lyrics and 3 guitarists. They have a demo out and an Lp due on DAY AFTER rec’s. (C/O same as KRITICKA SITUACE).

EXIT ONLY- untypical HC hardcore band from Litomerlce. Intense with personal lyrics. (C/O: PETER VESELY/ DALI BOROVA 20/412 01 LITOMERICE)

Other HC bands: NO REASON, and NAKED FACE

(C/O: DAVID AND TOMAS HOLY/ MLYNSKA 1066/ 38601 STRAKONICE I) , SURFACE(C/O: HONZA RUSO/ NA OMRADE 521/ 386 02 STRAKONICE) , APPLES (C/O: HONZA KOSTENEC/ ZAHRADNT, 386 01 STRAKOMICS) Labels: DAY AFTER Records: last release was LP/CD/MC FOUR WALLS FALLING, Food For Worms. In the works are NOTHING REMAINS LP, EVERSOR 7”. (C/O: DAY AFTER/ MIRA PARTY/ HORSKA 20/ 352 01 AS)

MALARIE RECORDS- Many titles from hardcore to punk. Also have distribution of LP’S, CD’S, tapes and ‘zines.

(C/O: MARTIN VALASEK/ ROPICE 281/ 739 56 TRINEC 6) If you want to hear more about our scene, write me at:

DIFFERENT LIFE, ROMAN SOUMAR, TOPOLCIANSKA 419/10, 412/01 LITOMERICE, CZECH REPUBLIC

A number of bands are planning on releasing stuff over here at the moment, Including ABOVE ALL (SXE from the south of England...Tony, 507a london Rd., Westcliff On Sea, Essex.) and LIFER, an SXE band from Scotland(Leo, 91 Albert Street(1f1), Edinblrgh, EH7 5LY.) The LIFER 7” will be a split release between the band and XCLEAR PERCEPTIONX. Both MANRAE AND SCHEMA should also be putting out 7”‘s soon (MANRAE, Glen Bowen, 39 Laural Rd., Blaby, Leicester, LE8 4DL). UNBORN (vegan SXE...PO BOX 487, Bradford, BD7 1YN) have recently recorded for a VEGAN EARTH ORDER COMP. CD and an upcoming YULETIDE RECS comp., and Rat from UNBORN has also recorded a STATEMENT track for the V.E.O. comp. SURE HAND RECS(vegan SXE) now has Coca-Cola design SXE shirts available and

more stuff planned (SURE HAND, PO BOX 487, Bradford, BD7 1YN). Recently released are the NECKBRACE 7" (Which came out on XNO CRUELTY REC'SX, Spitalstr. 43, 79539 Loerrach, Germany.) and the second BOB TILTON 7"(ON SUBJAGATION RECS. which also recently put out the BABY HARP SEAL 7".. 46 Caedmon Crescent, Darlington, DL3 8LF).

Quite a few zines have come out recently or are due out in the near future, the latest issue of SIMBA has just come out (Vlque, 20 Brangwyn Way, Brighton, Sussex, BN1 8XA) as have ARMED WITH ANGER #4 (featuring VOORHEES tour diary, articles etc..$2 from AWA, PO Box 487 , Bradford, BD7 1YN and AWA Rees. (VOORHEES LP etc.) and dlstro is also run from the same address) TINDERBOX #1(with EMBLEM RECS., REVIEWS etc..2 IRC's from Rob, 31 Quakers Rd., Downed, Bristol, BS16 6JE) and TRAIN OF THOUGHT #2 (with ABOVE ALL, NECKBRACE...from Alan, 11 Hughenden Rd., Clifton, Bristol, BS8 2TT). CLEAR PERCEPTION #2 should be at soon with FRAIL, Peter/ CRUCIAL RESPONSE rec's, etc. (Bromborough, Wirral, Merseyside, L63 OET) as well as a new Issue of ATTITUDE PROBLEM (Steve, PO Box 2576, Hardcore House, Colchester, Essex, C03 4AY... Steve also does the HARDCORE RULES newsletter and A NETWORK OF FRIENDS Distro.) and the latest HOW WE ROCK (PO Box 487, Bradford, BD7 1YN), a hardcore Information 'zine.

[Image not archived]

p.o box 42586, Philadelphia pa 19101, usa.

kids, we decided to waste more of your (err... 1 mean OUR) money Just to let you know about very, here at very, our hard-working staff works around the clock. 7 days a week. 365 days a year to give you the best possible mailorder service we can. we have a huge 40+ page descriptive monthly catalog full of hardcore/punk rawk goodies. Including vinyl (our specialty), cassettes, compact discs, shirts, hoodies, hats, fanzines, stickers. zines, & a hell of a lot more that we don't have room to mention, we usually get most of your favorite new releases as soon as they come out. not to mention, we offer honesty, fast service, convlence, & cheap prices, our prices are generally the same as ordering direct from the labels themselves: most 7"s for S3 or $3.50. Ips for S6-S8. full-length cds for S8-S11. shirts for SI 1. all _postpaid_, but see. with us. you can do ah your hardcore shopping in one stop, we even have a priority mall option which only costs about S3 per order & will make the postal service shake their asses to get it to you faster, oh yeah, did we mention our catalog gives full reviews on all the music we sell? that's so you don't waste your money on stuff you won't like, don't worry, we promise we won't steal your money & run like some other mailorders did (without mentioning any names), this is a brand *new start* in mailorder, we've been called *"this country's very best mailorder"* in Inside Front fanzine #5. & to be quite honest, that wasn't the first time we've gotten props, & we're pretty damn sure it won't it be the last, cocky, aren't we? yes. and that's because we _can_ be...

need us to do a little namedropping? well, some of the labels we carry include: Ammunition, Art Monk Construction, Blackout, Bloodlink, Chapter, Conquer The World,

Conversion, Crucial Response, Dark Empire, Day After, Desparate Fight, Doghouse, Drive, Ebullition, 1124, Endless Fight, Equal Vision, Excursion, Final Notice, Fountainhead, Gem Blandstein, Glue, Harvest, Hearsay, Indecision, Initial, Inner Rage, Jade Tree, Kidney Room, Lookout!, Lost & Found, Machination, Moo Cow, Network Sound, New Age, Old Glory, Outback, Overkill, Reflection, Reservoir, Revelation, Rhetoric, Ringside, Scorched Earth, Significant, Slamdek, Smorgasbord, Sober Mind, Stability, Stillborn, Stormstrike, Tidal Too Damn Hype, Trip Machine, Troubleman, Trustkill, Vermiform, Victory, Watermark, We Bite, Windward, Wreck Age, Yuletide. & many more.

so there you go. what more can you ask for? well, we can't give you free shit., that Is. unless If you send us your old WWF wrestling figures, anyway, so now your asking yourself either one of 2 questions: (1) "How do I get that fantastic very mailorder catalog?" or (2) "Just how long have I been living in this closet for ? . for either question, the answer is simple: Just put 3 stamps (or SI overseas) & a note that says "me want catalog*' with your address on it & put it all into an envelope & send it to the above address & then run out to your postperson everyday shaking your fists & screaming "Very! Very! Very!..." until you get it. oh yeah, if you Just wanna have our catalog sent to you every month for the next 6 months. Just send us a measly S3 (US/Canada), or S6 (overseas) & you'll get it as soon as it comes out. every month for 6 months, or if you are _just plain lazy_. Just check out our punk ads in Maximum Rock N' Roll every month for a sample of the newest stuff we've got. you won't regret it, pinky swear...

stores! don't feel left out. we deal direct & we can offer you Just about everything we offer the kids at wholesale, we keep our mark-up rates low because low markups = lower prices = happy kids = more sales. Just drop us a postcard or fax to (215) 426–9662 & we'll send you our latest catalog...

last, but certainly not least. Just a quick note on *Edison Recordings, * the newest addition In the very _famil_y our first release Is the mind-blowing STARKWEATHER "Into The Wire" 12".⁄cs⁄cd. out in June 1995. they will move you. haunt you. brutalize you, make you cry. make you tear down your wallpaper & paint your room black: all at the same time, we can honestly say that you have never heard anything like It before, you'd never think something so heavy could possibly bring tears to your eyes... anyway, the 12"⁄cs is S6, .50ppd., cd is S8 ppd. within u.s.. foreign orders write first... worldwide distributors write! record labels write, too! we will trade for your releases hi large quantities & they will be distributed thru Very...

EjS. please mention where you saw tills ad. so we know whether or not Brian will squeeze more of your hard earned SS bucks out of us next time...

> _EDITOR'S NOTE:_ Please note the last line of this ad where VERY — chairman John Dudeck asks the reader to mention where you saw this ad when you write him. Apparently John doesn't fucking trust us...well,

please, do Inside Front a favor and mention when you write him that you saw this ad. thanks. He docs do a good distribution.

l want shirts: Dogtowne, Aiva, Excel. No Mercy, Uncle Siam. Visuai Discrimination, etc.–have tots to trace, or will buy, ya Mary. Opn Ssn 'Zine, PO Box 10282, Rochester, NY 14610.

Battleground Demo out now: tour songs from Ohio's most militant straight edge band. Order through Confined Rec, $3.50ppd. US S5.00 other PO Box 771 Eaton. OH 45320 Wholesale available.

Abhinanda "Senseless" CD $9, Doughnuts "Equalize" CD $5, Grade Believe split CD 56, Shield "Build..." CD $5, Turmoil CD $5.50, Green Rage 7" $3. "In Our Blood" cassette compilation $5. Two Faced Distribution, 1058 Homewood, Lakewood. OH 44107–1420.

We'll trade Inside Front or other stuff tor: anything rare by Diamonda Gaias, all vinyl by Minor Threat/Agnostic Front/Cro-Mags Age of..."/Negative Approach/Antidote 7"/yeah, . i know, wishful thinking!)/first Lash Out or Abhinanda records. Also: books Might _Makes Sight_ by R. Redbeard, _The Ego and His Own_ by Max Stirner. Write the Inside Front address.

: want: Chop Chop 7" comp. Confusion 7" (NYC), Dmize demo, vision Just Snort CD, NY/Montreal Connection LP. Social Justice- unity is Strength LP, Mental Abuse-Streets of Filth LP. Major Conflict 7". Buy/trade. poto. Don SSn 'zine. PO Box 10232. Rochester, NY 14610.

Punk Rock Video: The return of OC's Decry ☒ Power Assault, and Patient 29 "Live at the Normandy" Oceanside. CA. 2 hrs. of music video shot iive & unedited — interviews, etc. Send $16.99 cash or moneyorders to John S.) to Alternative Video Concepts, 124 Chiquits #8, San Clemente. CA 92672. Distributors needed.

Militant Vegans #2.3.4, 5, 7. Great 'zine for anybody who is into Vegansim. Direct Action, etc, Sl.OOppd $1.50 Canada $2.00 other PO Box 771 Eaton, OH 45320. Wholesale available.

[Image not archived]

Crosscheck–hardcore from the heartland. New school meets old school. Positive but not straightedge. Studio quality cassette -eiease now available. Professionally recorded and packaged. $5.00 ppd. Send check/money order/well-hidden cash to Brett Noble, 2019 15 Street, Moline, IL 61265. Quick response guaranteed.

[Image not archived]

"I only listen to hardcore when I lift weights, but I lift every day...so I guess that makes me a hardcore guy."

— Eric of _Open Season_ 'zine

"lt's not that I really want to fight Earth Crisis — I say we play football against them!"

— an anonymous member of the band KURBJAW, wearing camouflage cutoffs and a Chain Of Strength shirt.

ISSUE #8

Issue #8 of Inside Front will be out in September 1995. It will include a 7" compilation, and interviews with the bands featured on the record, as well as other interviews and the usual columns, information, reports, cruel mockery of my closest friends, etc. The bands I'm talking to right now about appearing on the compilation are O.L.C., Blood Runs Black, Kurbjaw, Halfmast, and Hatebreed. The advertising deadline for #8 is, as of right now, August 30, but call and we'll work something out. Rates:

> $15: buys 4"x5" space + 2 copies of 'zine & 7" $10: buys 4"x3" space...nothing else.

$1: buys a classified ad(30 words + address)

ISSUE #8 COSTS $4.00 USA/$6.00 WORLD. Feel free to order it any time, we'll send it to you as soon as it's back from the presses. Checks to: "Brian Dingledine."

WHOLESALE IS $2.00 EACH USA/$4.00 WORLD for 5 +

INSIDE FRONT is:

DRIVEN BY A SUPERHUMAN FORCE: Brian D

VICE PRESIDENT: Alexei Rodriguez

MINISTER OF PROPAGANDA: Mark Dixon PRODUCTION MANAGER/DRUNKARD: Shawn UNDERPAID AND OVERWORKED: Danny T SCHEMING MAJOR LABEL PUPPETEER: Josh Baker DEMO REVIEW/DISTRIBUTTON INTERN: Steve Peffer SECRETARY: Loara Cadavona

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THANKS: Columnists, scene report contributors (identified inside, except for Tony Erba, who asked us to use an alias for him), all advertisers, all who send music and reading for review, friends and family, readers.

ALL INSIDE FRONT STAFF WEAR DICKIES AND CARHARTT CLOTHING EXCLUSIVELY, DRINK IBC ROOT BEER AND CREAM SODA, AND DO EVERYTHING IN THEIR POWER TO MAKE THE MOST OF LIFE. YOU SHOULD TOO!

INSIDE FRONT (Address until 1/96) 213 East Franklin Street #34
Chapel HUI, NC 27514 USA
Death Threat Hotline 919-932-6467
after 1/96 use the regular Atlanta I.E. address

INLAND EMPIRE PRODUCTIONS

INSIDE FRONT BACK CATALOGUE

ISSUE 6:Comes with a compilation featuring music by BACKLASH, ABHINANDA, LASH OUT, BROTHER'S KEEPER, TENSION, ATLAS SHRUGGED, TIMESCAPE ZERO, OTIS REEM, & more. The 'zine includes lyrics and write-ups on all those bands, plus interviews with UNBROKEN and STARKWEATHER, columns by Dwid/lntegrity, Adel 156, and others, many pages of reviews, news, scene reports, and other useful information.

Costs $4.00 USA/$6.00 world (Wholesale: $3.00/$5.00 world)

ISSUE 5:lnterviews with STRIFE, LASH OUT, ENDLESS FIGHT rec's, CONVERGE/EARTHMAKER rec's, TIMESCAPE ZERO/FEAST OF HATE & FEAR 'zine, and TONY ERBA(ex-Face Value), plus many pages of news, reviews, and information — the usual.

Costs 1 stamp USA/2 IRC's world (24 copies for $3/$5 world)

ISSUE 4:Comes with a compilation featuring CATHARSIS, LINE DRIVE, INTEGRITY, REFUGE, EXCESSIVE FORCE, BLOODSHED, and POLYESTER COWBOYS. The 'zine Includes lyrics and write-ups on all those bands, plus interviews with MAYDAY, RINGWORM, and RICOCHET, and pages of news and reviews. Not many left...

Costs $3.00 USA/$5.00 world (Wholesale: $2.70/$4.00 world)

_INSIDE FRONT Shirts:_These shirts are a fundraiser, since I often lose money on my other projects (#5, for instance). If you like what I'm doing, and you want to help me make sure I can keep doing it, check one out. Size XL, 2-sided, 2-colors; designs from the cover of #5.

Costs $10 USA/$13 world (Wholesale: $3/$ 11 world)

_"WE WILL FIGHT IN THE STREETS" 7" compilation:_New CATHARSIS song, plus INTEGRITY, BACKLASH, and CONGRESS. Thick booklet Insert done by Inside Front, includes interviews with the bands & other material. This is one of the best records of this year, true hardcore ranging from older style to holy terror, by four of the most sincere and dedicated bands of today...a future classic?

Costs $3.00 USA/$5.00 world (Write for wholesale prices)

_ENDLESS FIGHT rec's "OVER THE EDGE 2" CD compilation:_All the best new bands of this year, on one CD: CATHARSIS, DISSOLVE, DISMAY, NEGLECT, TENSION, LASH OUT, ARISE, BACKLASH, OVERCAST, AGE OF REASON, STRENGTH 691, WITHDRAWN, JASTA 14, TIMESCAPE ZERO, CROSS SECTION, HOLD STRONG, SLIP, DIVIDED WE FALL, and THE CULPRITS. Includes lyrics.

Costs $9 USA/$11 world f Write for wholesale or ices)

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OURS'
Inland Empire H. Q.
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USA
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Issue #8 (1996)

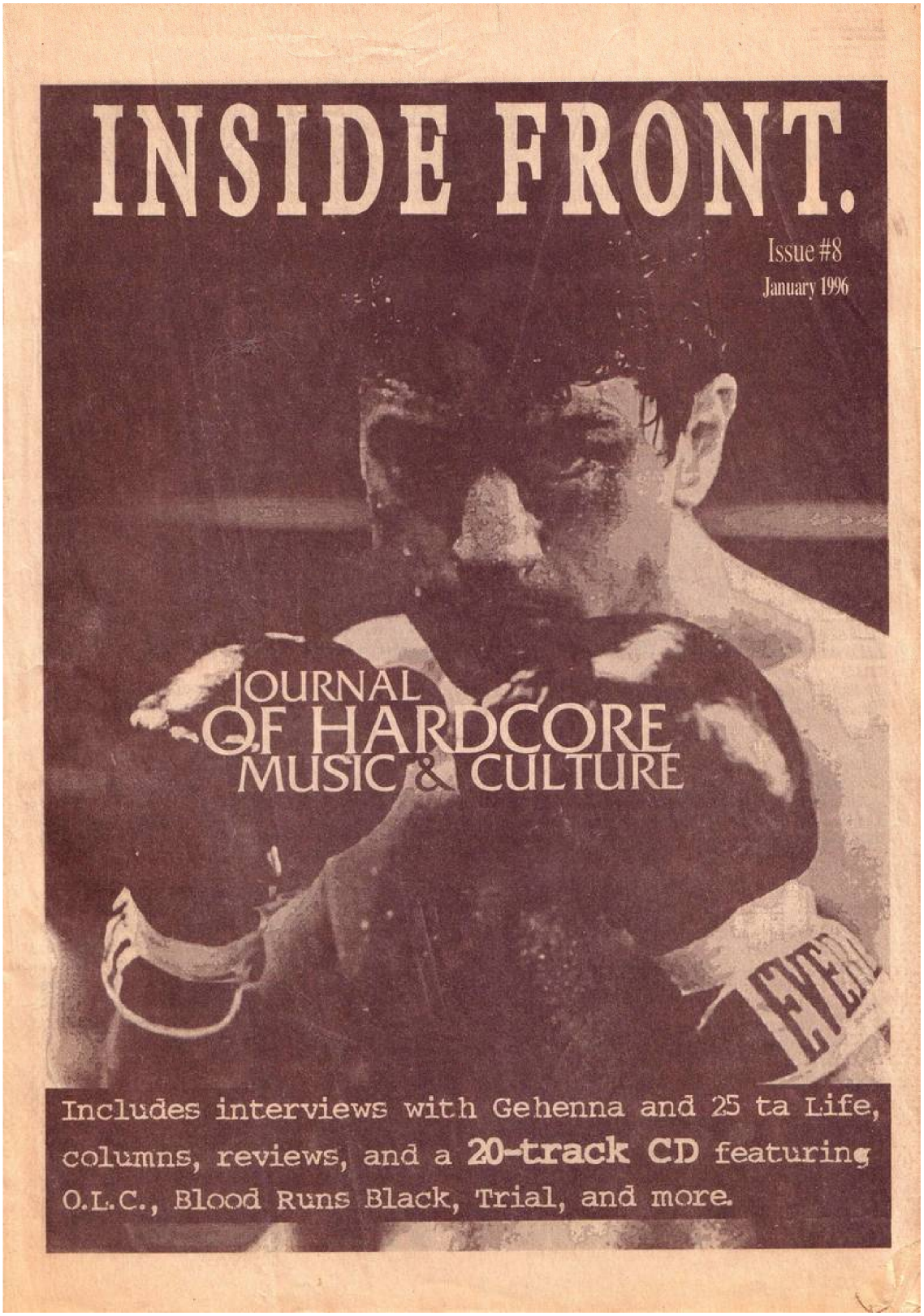
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THUE POUR PLAN

It should ba clear that all of us find the present state of affairs, both in our own lives and the world around us, to be insufferable — otherwise, why would we be reading or contributing to Inside Front? Hardcore has followed the angry negation of punk rock as a logical next step: a movement of individuals who have positive ideas about what should replace the racist, sexist, constrictive world order which we are all fighting to destroy. But there is a wide gulf between dissatisfaction and productive *action.* And while the hardcore community seems at first glance to be one of the best places lo initiate change, as a subculture it has an insidious built-in pitfall that has to this day prevented its members from presenting a real challenge to the status quo.

It is all too tempting to lose perspective and become so wrapped up in being a member of the hardcore "scene that you forget the desires that led you to it in the first place. Don't believe the nay-sayers who would have you believe that there is nothing wo can do to change the world around us. What they are saying, in effect, is that we should buy into the American tradition of adolescent rebellion: join an iconoclastic youth 'movement, " which in its internal workings and values more likely than not stih mirrors the mainstream, and get all of our unruly impulses and suspicious idealism out of our collective system... so we can return to the social and economic establishment to be "well-adjusted" adults who patiently stomach every necessary condition of the present slate of affairs, whether or not we betray ourselves in so doing. Those who believe — mistakenly, in my opinion — that they really do profit from today's prevailing governmental and cultural conditions would love for us to believe that there is nothing more meaningful we can do with ourselves than dance to loud music and follow esoteric fashion trends.

Sadly, that is the perspective encouraged by the throngs of hardcore labels and magazines today that offer little more than danceable music and regurgitated slogans without really presenting new ideas or solutions for the problems of our era. And those who have tried to venture outside of the closed circuit of the hardcore community have more often than not lost sight of their original goals and become the pawns of political or religious cull groups. But it is real revolution that we want, isn't it? However difficult


INSIDE FRONT.
Issue #8
January 1996
JOURNAL
OF HARDCORE
MUSIC & CULTURE
Includes interviews with Gehenna and 25 ta Life, columns, reviews, and a 20-track CD featuring O.L.C., Blood Runs Black, Trial, and more.

and distant that goal may seem, it is better that we work for it step by step, as patiently and persistently as we can, than that we allow ourselves to become satisfied with being members of a short-lived phenomenon of rebellious youth culture.

inside Front is at least as guilty of being overly inwardly directed as any other magazine In the hardcore community. We the staff felt that It was important that we contributed what we could to communication and solidarity within this community before we took any further steps. But now we are ready to put the second phase of our assault on the social and cultural atmosphere of our era into effect. Working with Nadia, ITIDWIT1R publishing, and others, we are starting a record label and press which will offer what we believe are art, music, J and ideas that truly challenge conventions and traditions both ' inside and outside the hardcore scene. Thus, our three step plan to destroy today's world;

I _Inside Front;_ A magazine with the express purpose of drawing the hardcore scene closer together, solhat likeminded individuals within it can work together for a greater • purpose, and I hose who find themselves at odds can at least profit from being exposed lo each other's ideas and arguments. 11 must be published frequently and affordably enough to function as a reliable news periodical- To achieve its purpose, it is crucial that Inside Front receive news and submissions from as many sources as possible.

II.

<quote> **_Crimelhlncj_A record label and book/magazine press dedicated to supporting new, challenging ideas and music/ art that push beyond the limits of the mundane and ordinary. Iha ultimate goal being to bring a greater breadth and depth of experience into our lives and thus make our individual existences more meaningful. Furthermore, this must somehow be accomplished without the ideas and artwork in question being compromised by commodification and image marketing, so that we do not replicate and preserve the status quo in the course of our efforts to fight it.**

III. **The third step is. of course, to take our case before Ihe world" and do what we can to make the world around us a place we find livable. More information on step three will be forthcoming. In the meantime, we call upon al! of you to do what you can, if you will, to help Inside Front to fulfill its goal to be a useful news reference to the hardcore community; we also encourage you to keep an eye on CrimethInc. to see if it will become the groundbreaking, uncompromising label that some of us have been hoping for. Stay tuned...**

TO DESTROY THE WORLD

icarus was right.

issue number two

number two contains an in-depth, 3000+ word interview with ian mackaye of minor threat, tugazi, etc. • a well-resOTrched article by bryan alft on the many liberty threatening laws pending in the legislative body • an interview with dr frank of mix • a guest column by the unabomber • reviews on just about everything you can think of cause we get so much free shit • an article on how evolution is destroying the human race (and rightfully so!) • an article on this whole UPG code controversy • and a wide variety of other really superb sluff and it all looks pretty goddamn nice too! all artsy and shit, like eye fuckin' candy. Read our review in this issue of Inside Front- if Brian liked the last issue, he'll *REALLY* like this one.

its a big fat one. 88 full size pages on a web offset press, there's even two colors on the cover, its two dollar bills and two stamps, sent to you via first class mail (costs us a $1.70 to mail it), you can get number one also if you add a buck.

 "Sooner murder an infant in its cradle than nurse unacted desires."

-William Blake, *Proverbs From Hell*

*po box 191175 • sd ca 92159 • icarus_was@aol.com • 619.461.0497

Welcome to your most beautiful nightmare..**

The long averted new release from Philadeiphkts STARKWEATHER. Moving, bawling, & singly brutalizing. Take a soul wrenching roller coaster ride tirou^i the dark side of human emotion. Ungodly heavy and explosive yet done In a uniquely poetic and quite disturbing manner. Unlike anything you have ever experienced; this will leave you cn your knees, crying & tearing at the wallpaper, praying for tomorrow...

***Bu9di too cimcnlhcrt took more film being Bod with thwmond thrown Mito ofmewey-STARKWEATHER is wie ci Ac most intense, ortginoi, & geweine bonds wound today. Few bonds am communiarte wdt a bond spechwn oi genuine tooling.* - INSIDE FRONT famine September 1995**

"Their mast impresslw release to date. The most elected & structured metal hardcore band fa Over boo'd. I could go *m* farww abort Ah band.' TENSION BUILDING fanzine August 1995

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0* TOUR STUFF.

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12"/m = $8.50, cd = $8.00, t-shirt = $10 tursisn orders class arts.

Canute: 82 per ir7#tM St per tred

Europe; S5 per ir.Wrt, $2 per ca cti

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WB dfetrtbutB over 100 other hardcore labels' stuff, send SI for our huge maiorder catalog.

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Philadelphia, pa
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Perk .dr« for Orient *pcoptc...*

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INSIDE FRONT

We caring individuals at Inside Front really do want to know your needs as readers so we can better entertain and inform you. Please help us to help you by taking a moment to respond to our humble survey on a separate sheet of paper, and you will receive a complementary Inside Front pencil for your time'

1. Name: —

   Address:

2. What would you like to see more of in Inside Front?

   a more interviews with popular straight edge bands
   b-more photos of popular straightedge bands holding guitars

   C-more scene reports from Finland and Bulgaria d-"emo" fits from the editor about his faltering love life e-more surveys

3. What else would you like to see more of in Inside Front? a-more advertisements from Epitaph and Earache records, etc b-more reviews of Epitaph and Earache records, etc. c-more bands talking shit about aforesaid labels d-more letters from disgruntled hardline warriors

   e-the enure catalogue of mail Catharsis has received from European metal labels threatening lawsuits if they do not change their name

4. What is your financial status?

   a-l could have afforded this issue even if it was $6!

b-1 can consume an entirely politically correct, cruelty free diet without losing weight

c-l have a car, a record player, and a couple VCRs...I'm not rich or anything d-My resume includes more than two years of work in food service e-S4 is pretty steep for a CD!

5. Do you collect records?

a-yes
b-no, continue to question #7

READER SURVEY

6. Do you have in your collection:

a-the Antidote 7*
b-the Amebix "Monolith" 12'
c-the Oi Pollen "Resist This Atomic Menace" 7"
d-the Agnostic Front "Live at CBCB's" video
e-the eponymous Diamonda Galas record

7. What other valuable possessions do you keep in your home?

a-a computer or two
b-xeroxing or printing equipment
c-lots of postage stamps

d-just a car. a record player, and a couple VCR's e-I don't trust banks

8. How effective is the police force in your town?

a-don't even try it
b-most break-ins are quickly thwarted and prosecuted
c-rome break-ins are quickly thwarted and prosecuted
d-the cops are loo fat to move
e-I live in Los Angeles

9. Do you live alone?

What shift do you work? _ _
When do you go on vacation?

10. What kind of lock do you have on your door?

What kind of security systems do you have, if any?
Do you have a dog?
How many pounds can you bench press?
Thank you very much for your time' Please notify us if you change addresses. change shifts, or change your vacation plans. *You'll be hearing from us soon!*

Inland Empire Productions

Please mail your answers to: 2695 Range wood Dr.

Atlanta GA 30345

[Image not archived]
Revolution As Marketable Product
Catharsis CD $8. Trial 7" in early '96.
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Consumerism and You

Using Your Resources Wisely
To Escape From The System
[Image not archived]

Each of us has a variety of desires: some powerful and long-lasting, others short-lived and weak. In general, if you satisfy your immediate desires at the cost of your more permanent ones, you will be unhappy and may not even know why. For this reason, it is crucial that each of us as individuals identify and prioritize our own desires, and then use our resources accordingly to achieve our principal goals.

In our culture, the most fundamental resources we have are time, in which to accomplish tilings, and money, with which to acquire or produce things. And as we struggle to use our time and money to our greatest benefit, the society we live in endeavors to take them from us so as to preserve the status quo. Everywhere you go, you see and hear constant advertisements, using every psychological trick in the book to convince you to buy this or that. These companies do not care whether or not it is in your best interest to buy their products; their fundamental goal, as corporations. is to sell you their wares at a profit so that they can maintain and expand their power and control. In competition with companies of this kind, very few more

concerned businesses have managed to survive into our age of enormous corporations and chain-store monopolies. So. almost by definition, an individual cannot trust any

of the corporations in today's marketplace to tell him the truth about whether or not he will benefit from purchasing their products. They want his or her money in their pockets-, and that is'the bottom line; and because we live in such an apathetic and materialistic society, which is so heavily dominated by.tic'mass media and thus by advertising, their objective is easy to accomplish.

IC may not seem at first that we lose much by complying with (he mass-consumer mentality of our era. but in terms of resources squandered, it really adds up. Cigarette smoking is an easy target, bill s good example: a typical smoker spends at least two or three doljtyrya day on cigarettes, which adds up to more than eight hundred dollars a year. The real shame is that smoking cigarettes really does nothing for you; at least LSD or alcohol have an effect on the brain that some may find interesting, but a smoker is really purchasing nothing more than the image that he or she has seen

advertised in magazines and movies since birth. The issue of prionties comes up again here: if an individual's greatest desire in all the world was to smoke cigarettes, then he or she would make a good decision by doing so. But most smokers, if they considered it, would conclude that a more ultimately rewarding use of that $800 a year would be to release a record by their friend's band, or to attend college courses, or to take a vacation in Alaska, or — after a few years — to purchase a decent automobile. But because of the constant barrage of propaganda, these individuals often don't stop to consider what a better use of their resources might be.

Now. smoking is an obvious example of this, but the exact same scenario takes place in the lives of millions of people who do not smoke. Every day people spend money on junk food, stylish and overpriced clothing, and other status symbols that really do nothing to make their lives fulfilling. Once again, between the influences of advertising and habit, we never stop to consider whether our purchases make sense in the long run. These companies take our money and. in many cases, use it to carry out environmentally or socially damag

ing projects that most of us, if better educated, would oppose... and in the meantime, we have less money with which to pursue the goals that are really important to us. It breaks my heart to sec so many intelligent men and wGmcn wasting money that they need for their bands, medical expenses, debts, education, etc. just so they can eat in a fancy restaurant like their favorite movie stars or buy clothes like the kids they will never meet on the television. Especially those of us in hardcore, in the so-called "counterculture, " who claim to have so many important issues we want to actively address, should be saving our money for this purpose and not spending it in frivolous ways.

That is the problem with countercultures: generally, they are not really "counter" to culture at all; rather, they are merely different versions of the mainstream culture. And "culture" is the ultimate catalyst of consumerism: as a member of a culture, the individual feels that he or she must have all the necessary equipment to partake in the culture. Thus, most households in Western civilization have television sets, because that is something that subscribers to Western culture must have to "stay in the loop"

and share common ground with their contemporaries. Little thought is given by anyone to the positive or negative effects of television; the important thing is to have a television, so that you will not be "backwards" by the cultural standards of your community. Thus, culture sells commodities more effectively than any advertising campaign ever could, and with an equal disregard for the true needs of the consumers.

And here, in hardcore, we have let our "counterculture" become, in many ways, a *culture* where certain consumption is almost necessary for indivduals to play a part. Far too many hardcore kids dress the same way, wearing clothes that are often actually expensive, overpriced, and unnecessary — that goes especially for band t-shirts. Far too many kids feel like they need lo own certain records or other products to feel a part of hardcore, and far too many others encourage this kind of thinking. Hardcore, as a phenomenon that should be truly *countercultural, * should if anything encourage individuals to dress and act according to their own personal needs alone, and not to follow trends or waste their money on any products that are not necessary for their longterm happiness. One step that I think could be made in the proper direction, away from fashion and towards individuality and real substance, would for record labels and magazines to print f ewer photos of hardcore bands dressed in some cutting edge style or another. These photos encourage younger kids who

[Image not archived]

are just getting involved in hardcore to believe that hardcore has more lo do with style of dress than with issues and ideals. Dress and live in a way that is right for you, and fight against the advertisers and trend-mongers who would lead you astray.

Money is not the only resource that we will waste if we become loo caught up in mainstream or "underground" culture, however. Time, our other crucial resource, is also at stake. The time you spend watching that television that most Western households have, so that you can get your mind off how bored you are in our incredibly alienating civilization or so that you can talk with your friends about which girl you think is cute on some inane show, is time that in all likelihood could be better spent. Just as the cigarette smoker often does not stop to consider how much happier he or she might be with a new car or college degree rather than an addiction, the television watcher generally docs not consider how he or she might ultimately benefit more from reading intelligent books or periodicals, or from exercising, or from volunteering in some socially conscious organization. This is especially true because televisions do not come with warnings from the Surgeon General. Similarly, and to an even worse degree, many of us — over 90% of U.S. ci tizens, according to some polls — must waste our lives away working at some job that we despise and find absolutely meaningless.

You can sec how system perpetuates itself: from birth, we are brainwashed to consume as great a volume as we can of products that we do not really need or desire. In order to pay for this consumption, wc must begin working at an early age for the same

corporations that create these products. Indeed many of these corporations have stake in so many different products that they can keep us running in circles forever once we enter the circuit: from junk food to diet food, from movies to the fancy

clothes the characters wear, from sports equipment to medical treatment, from alcohol to alcoholism treatment... and back again. The whole system is further complicated by credit card companies, loan companies, and of course the legal system, which defends the interests and schemes of these corporations. The work these companies give us so thai we can pay for their products is, of course, not very fulfilling. for the ultimate purpose of these companies as entities has nothing to do with giving meaning lo human life. So, bored and exhausted from our full lime jobs at the local law firm, real estate agency, or fast food restaurant, we know of no other way to try to relax than to buy more products: bigger televisions, higher-status automoblies and clothes, more Snapcase shirts or records that say "XXXStraight EdgcXXX" three times on the cover — just so you're sure that you're buying the right commodity for your own specialized consumer subculture!

The problem with this state of affairs is clear: it not only discourages individuals from identifying and pursuing their own true desires, it even prevents them from doing so Our materialistic society teaches us that having money is important so that we w ill possess the *freedom to have things.* But freedom is not *having* things, freedom

is being able to *do* the things you desire to do. Having material possessions around you cannot make your life meaningful if you must sell your freedom to experience the life you would truly enjoy in return for these amenities and status symbols... and that is exactly what we do when we uaste our precious time working for bloated, cancerous corporations in order to obtain the money we need to waste for their useless products

1. see two possible solutions to this problem First, if you can stop wasting your money on unnecessary products, and can affGrd to live cheaply, you can stop working for these corporations. With the enormous resources of time that this action frees up for you, you can involve yourself in projects that you care about, and can figure out how to earn enough money honestly on your own to survive. Second — and this is a common predicament in today's world, as large companies have a pretty firm monopoly on all the necessities of survival and do not sell them cheap — if you cannot afford to live without working at a dehumanizing job. by all means at least do not let them waste your money as well as your time. You may have to give up forty or more hours a week to them, but at least use the money you earn in ways that will still make your life more meaningful. You could save it up and eventually try to open your own business (as Chris Malinowski, owner of California's On The Edge record store, did while he worked at Zed Records), or at least use it to contribute to something in which you really believe. The choice is yours what to do with your money and time... just don't let any advertising campaign make it for you, before you even realize you have it.

AT INSIDE FRONT, WE NEED FROM YOU..

Besides the obvious scene reports and news, we also — art.wk and photography hare to make Inside Front more •_ a[1] ly entertaining If you have any exceptional photos or

your ua j ui another please submit them. Il we use them we'll give r^oto credit, and it not weHI either pass them on to other needy -' weit circulated zines or return them at your request Much — than the traditional generic band photos, however, we want : • 4 cal photos or artwork depicting other things our readers might * od interesting, documentation of police brutality in your neighborood. unusual day in the life' photos from an existence against toe grain satiric collages, anything — you make the call

Submissions are always welcome lor review At Uns point the only circumstances under which we will not review a magazine recording we receive are if it appears that the party who sent it did not realize that Inside Front is a hardcore magazine, not a gaage rock magazine or whatever We will certainly review racist, sexist or homophobic material if we receive it. to identify it as such and talk shit about it If the volume o! material we receive for review increases significantly we may change the review policy In the interest oi making inside Front as useful a hardcore periodical as possible we strongly encourage both big labels and small to provide us with their releases so we can continue to provide our readers with information about them

We're also always ready for totters, but please try to make them readable and at least seminntelligent/coherent sothat we will not make too much fun of you If you think you have a good idea for a column great, we need more ol those but please contact us first so we can discuss it a hit We hope we ll be hearing from a lot of you soon

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Give ue 8 minute to introduce you to Very. We ere, in the words ol others, The nation's very best mailorder'' (Inside Front fanzine #5). We been tilling your mailboxes with all your favorite hardcore & punk rock records since 1992. We carry over 100 different labels from ell over the world, & our catalog is over SO pages long. No shill We carry everything from labels like New Age & Victory to Gem Biandstein, Jade Tree, audition, Art Monk

Construction & nearly everything in between. We give lull reviews on everything we sell, so you don't end up buying stull that ain't your style. We carry all.formats: compact disc, vinyl, & cassette, & we also stock clothing, posters, slickers, & lots olditferent fanzines. You name it, we got it. We're not one ol those rip-off mailorders; we've been doing this for over 3 years now & have filled over 10, 000 orders. No joke. We are honest, reliable, cheap, convenient, & friendly, not to mention FAST... So get oil yer lazy ass & write to usi

[Image not archived]

**** !n the 5th grade my mother look me in for my annual physical I stepped of; the scale and welched shy of 100 pounds at 5 Jett The doctor took me pulse. Checked my breathing* Examined my throat. She scowled a Jen things on her chart and said. "Done." My mother looked at the doctor and said, '"My daughter needs to go on a diet."* J**

" Your daughter 's/uu$_t$ " the doctor said

"No. she neetb iogo on a diet. She W eighs too mucic, "* * — l.

☒' Your daughter's perfectly healthy. She just has big bones. "

Ar *dinner that night, and every night thereafter nty mother said. "Maybe you should chew your'food slowly so ypu Won t gain so much weight "*

In junior high 1 decided that my mom would like nut better fund therefore. I 'd like mystdfhetter) if 1 threw up mvfood. After a little over see months of being a closet bulimic I passed out in front of my house, woke up afew mmuteyjuter terrified, and decided that I should stop' throwing up. 1 managed to cut down throwing up to twice a week unless 1 ate something that I thought would make me gain weight overnight

In high school I read an article about the physical damages throwing up could do to my stomach, throat, and mouth so I stopped. I replaced bulimia with an everyday exercise program and diet. 1 ate a little over 1, 000calories per day and measured and calculated everything I ate. Breakfast: two slices of whole wheat bread 55 calJslice) with 1/2 a tablespoon of strawberry jam on each slice (54 cal./tbsp.j Lunch: chicken (155 cal./medium size!, peas ttrlcal/i/lcu). no rice. Dinner: slice of pizza (150 cali. Dessert (if I felt I hud lost weight;: 12 potato chips (95 cal //2 chips).

***During ninth through tenth grade. I was pale and my, hair was thin, but I weighed 105 pounds at 5'2 My mom thought 1 was beautiful and was really proud. I was too, ***

At some point in every women's life, generally during childhood, they are taught that in order to have some feeling of self-worth they must be "ihin." because "thin" means beautiful and beautiful, for women, often means love, success, and acceptance. Society — beginning in the home and the mass media — encourages and nurtures this type of thinking, causing many women, both young and old. to think that they must goto any length to be "thin".

I believe that women first begin to develop the notion that "to be beautiful one must be thin" in the home. Looking at the scenario above one has to wonder why the mother is encouraging her daughter to lose weight if her daughter's health is not at risk. Having lived out the above scenerio. I wasn't exactly sure myself. All I knew was that my mother, who is thin herself, preferred that I be thinner. It wasn't until I was older that I realized why me being thin was so important to her. Wherever she took me her friends and my family always said. "Your daughter's beautiful and so ihin " For some reason this praise my mother received made her proud and happy. She liked being able to point out to her friends that she could buy me anything to wear and it would always fit as well as look good on me. Of course being young I wanted to please my mom and instinctively 1 learned that in order to receive love from her I should do what she wanted, and that was lose weight and remain thin. Also, all the praise my mother received because of me made me happy and only encouraged me to continue what 1 was doing.

I have spoken to several women Who've had similar experiences to mine, to either a lesser or more extreme degree, while growing up. And though all of them have moved away from home and have been living on their own for quite some time their concept of themselves remains practically the same as when they lived at home. Even though they may seem comfortable with themselves and the way that they look now (none are overweight by medical standards) they still find themselves every once in a while instinctively obsessing about their bodies and their weight. One woman. Stacy, who is about 5'4" and no more than 115 pounds, works out four to five times a week for an hour and fifteen minutes. 1 would not discourage Stacy from exercising, rather I am concerned about her motivation for exercising. It's one thing to work out to stay fit and it's another to work out because you fear gaining weight. Stacy cannot eat a piece of chocolate or a scoop of ice cream or a piece of cake without feeling like she has to go to the gym io shed the pounds she put on after eating a particulai dessert. Though Stacy is considered on the thin side and wears petite sizes, she subconciously fears

Diet-Tribe by Loara Cadavona

putting on any weight. Weight deftennir.es how she feels from one day to the next, the thinner she fa mid feels the happier she is with herself Stacy seems to equate being unhappy and unsuccessful with weight gain. Stacy grew up with a domineering mother who was obsessed with weight herself and was in fact anorexic for a sbon period while Stacy w as growing up What she taught Stacy, unconsciously, was that no one will like or accept you if you arc heavy; you cannot achieve anything being heavy L'r'onu . y though Stacy recognizes that what her moiheg taught her was wrong, instinctively she has adopted her mother's obsessive nature regarding wcigri AM. "lough Stscy is not physically anorexic or bulimic her mentality is no different than the anorexic or bulimic. Just recently she excitedly told me Jxr* she lost three pounds after getting off the pili 1 wonder what s moreImportant r«. citing an unwanted pregnancy or keeping off throe pounds '

Though growing up in my case and Stacy's case fa probably not the norm; it does not always take nometn.r.. extreme to teach a girl growing up that she must strive to be thin and beaun t — How often have women heard from cither an aunt or other relative or family finer, i You have such a pretty face, you could be so much prettier if you lost a im.e weight" or ' Have you put on some weight Since the last feme I saw you. you- hp* seem to be filling out?" These remarks can only make a young girl feel inadequate and insecure about herself. She be, gins to equate the normal changes — he body while growing up with gaining Weight Rather than understanding that her hips will naturally fill out as she gets older the girl will to do anything to prevent them from filling Out.

. In a recent essay entitled "Ruminations of a Feminist Aerobics Instructor" by Alisa L. Valdes, she states nar studies show that seventy-five percent of adult women in this country think »e are too fat. though only twenty-five percent of us actually weigh mere than — c standards set forth by Metropolitan Life's weight tables." Also, "fifty r<:..- at rune-year-olds had put themselves on a diet because they thought ;●●.☒. -t »☒:_ " It(by medical standards these women arc not overweight who t ana: causes them to think dial they arc? Though. I believe, that a women's nt: ..des and ideas about herself and bet body may begin at home, often with the ironer, the mother cannot be entirely to blame because her idea, as well as het m«her s and her mother's mother and so forth, of the female body originated from vrawhereoutside the home.

All around us wrnver ire ornbarded by images of what Ilie media and advertisers dictate .s beau tint J ust looki ng at h istory it has always been the media and me fishier. , ...ustry that has decided what was in and whai wasout: untie 1920'stbe - .pies- thin flapper girl look was in. in tlx 1950's the glamorous hour-glass figure was in, in the 1960's and 1970's the gamine Twiggy look was tn. etc Nowadays. on the cover of magazines we see supertnbdcls wearing today's knew fashions. Their skirts are short; their tops arc tight and either low cut arooM the chest or high cut around the waist. They are airbrush beautiful Nob — "cs N cellulite No stretch marks. No fat. Nothing but low of skin, longlegs and cleavage. These images bombard women not only in magazines but on televuiun a d in the movies. Ironically, however, though these particular looking women dominate the covers of magazines their body type is not the norm. The average woman stands between f3" to 5'4" and weighs on the ax erage between iiK to 145 pounds. However, the average model is above 5'10 and weighs around 110 pounds Unfortunately, because of their high visibility. these women who gloss die covers of magazines falsely become the norm for women. And for git Is growing up they become their role models for what and how they should look like.

Just recently I watched a televistan segment on fashion. One clothing manu facturer said that the average model length for a skin is between 12 to 14 inches but the actual consumer is sold a skirt between the length of 16 to 20 inches A friend of mine, just recently, ordered a skirt from a Victoria Secret catalog, this skin had made a particular model's legs look extremely long. thin, and shapely, thinking her legs would look great

in that skin, too. she ordered iL However when it arrived instead of making her legs look long and ihin it made them look short and stocky, so she returned it.

In these advertisments I believe that the model is selling something other than the clothes.. The look — the thin, long leg look. Advertisers are smart; they

• — — u»r consumer does not really want the skin, they actually want to buy the ☒-5; ☒< ? long thin legs that they believe the skirt can create. However, what the nnaie consumer docs not choose to recognize is that the particular model in the k> erasement naturally has long thin legs and that the skin has nothing to do — _- .: What advertisers would like the female consunlcr to believe is that the -<ce! does not have naturally long thin legs and that she, too. has to invest in a liirt to make her look a particular way.

Advertisers hawotudied their female audience and know that appearance important to women. Advertisers understand that from very early on in their • es as Simone de Beauviot pointe out in her book *Second Sex.* women are — zht that presentation, like the idea of "having to be thin." is important Take r instance, the "little girl and her doll" scenario:

> the little girl coddles her doll and dresses her up as she dreams of being . ddled and dressed up herself: inversely, she thinks of herself as a marvel-<xw doll. By means of compliments and scoldings, dirough images and words the learns the meaning of the terms *prrtc ami homely* she soon learns that in order to be pleasing she must be "pretty as a picture", she tries to make herself look like 3 picture, she puts on fancy clothes, she studies herself in a mirror, she compares herself with princesses and fames.

H (Simone de Beauvior. *Second Sex, p. 2791*

Thus, looking nice becomes a part of a woman's role. She begins to unconsciously think of herself as a show piece and resigns herself to constantly trying to keep up with society's idea of "picture perfect". Advertisers understand this end continue to foster the idea of "dress up" as women mature.

Advertiser* know when: women's particular insecurities lie, then offer their consumer a too-gorid-to-be-true solution to "overcome" their insecurities By seeing how beautiful * particular woman looks in a particular piece of clothing -omen subconsciously think that perhaps they can look that way too if they wore that particular clothing.

The media further encourages women to strive for this look by encourag ing what I like to call the diet mentality On most magazines next to the cover girl you can read such article headlines as: "Lose weight in IQ quick and easy steps." "The surefire diet to shed those pounds for summer." Learn the diet secrets of your favorite stars." and "Get the body you've always *a* anted." What these quick and easy diets and exercise programs fail to tell the women that read them is that depending on your own individual body type you won't be turned into a supermodcl But if you ask the

majority of women who diet they say they want to look like the models on and in the magazines.

All around me I sec women buying these magazines telling each other: Look how bcauti ful this particular model is. I wish I had a body like that. If only I could look li kc het They want breast implants and tummy tucks and liposuction They starve themselves in order to get into a dress that they've outgrown. Rather than finding clothes that fit them, they try to make their bodies fit the clothes When 1 was in elementary school I knew a girl who dropped our of school In the fifth grade. When she came back she looked like a skeleton. She left again after only being back for a few months When I asked about her the school said that the hospital was trying to get her above 70 pounds. 1 see her around every once in a while and she's a beautiful woman Because she starved herself practically to death, however, she disrupted her growth hormones so now at 23 she still has the height and body of a 5^{th} grader but the face and head of a 23 year old.

What drives girls and women to do this to themselves? Well, as Naomi Wolfe has said quite often, when girls are born they are bom into a society that has already defined what is beautiful before they can construct their own ideas of beautiful. So rather than realizing and accepting the fact that every person is made differently and is beautiful in their own own right they choose to strive to look like the established ideal Women are not taught to love themselves for who they are. They instead fall in love with an imaginary potential they have to achieve society's ideal look. And many women believe that if they obtain this look and they become thin and "beautiful", perhaps miraculously their lives will change and they'll have the world al their feet.

I'm 22 now and still find myself every once in a long while looking in the mirror wishing 1 wore a little taller, or a little thinner, or had a bigger chest, or a flatter stomach. But (hen I think. What will that got me? Success? Hap piness? Respect-* 1 look around me at women whose happiness seems dependent upon their bodies: Will so-and-so think I'm fat and not like me? I have to lose weight before I start going into job interviews? I can't possibly go to the beach till I can put on a bathing suit and look good? I can't eat that, it'll make me gain weight. I think about how this type of thinking only makes one weak and dependent on a society with petty and superficial principles And then I ask myself the question again. What will being thinner get me?... Nothing but. perhaps, a smaller

size in jeans? And. I think, so what... that's fucking pathetic!

So 1 offer a solution:

I think women should not allow themselves 10 be victimized by society and the mass media. A new dialogue needs to be created concerning their bodies. Rather than talking about being thin and being beautiful the dialogue should be about being healthy and fit and accepting yourself for who you are rather than what you look like. Women need to come to an understanding that all women are different, all women have something beautiful about them that mainstream society may not choose to recognize. Women need to deconstruct society s image of the udL thin, perfect body, perfect hair and

akin woman in their mind* and recognize that she is only one type of beautiful and not *the only* type of beautiful

This new dialogue needs to eliminate the word "diet" from its vocabulary because in our society the word "diet" implies a temporary change in one's eat ing habits; a change that will allow a woman to lose the weight, but docs not teach her how to maintain her new weight and be healthy. "Diet" emphasizes weight loss but not body maintenance. Women need to educate themselves and teach themselves that "the diet" is temporary: it's a false fantasy promise from advertisers to make you beautiful in six weeks... or a week... or overnight. The emphasis should be about being heaithly and fit and staying healthy and fit. Women heed to recognize that women come in all shapes and sizes and that there is no right Tay to look. This new dialog needs to be brought into the home as well as into the rest of society so that perhaps we can cut down on cases of anorexia and bulimia

J dunk the most important thing is to destroy the stigma that has been placed on the female body in society. This is relevant to berth men and women We need 10 get rid of the idea in women's heads that having "the perfect body" will bring success, love, respect, and happiness, and that being heavy means failure and unhappiness. We need to teach women to stop viewing themselves as life size dolls and start taking themselves, who they are, and what they think more seriously. Women need <0 be told more often that self-worth is not achcived by what they look like or what they wear, that it is obtained by doing and achciving the things that are most important to them and not what society says should be important to them, Thai is success — staying true to who you are, and not what society says you should be.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Editor's postscript

If you agree with Loam that the war the media and the fashion industry' are waging on women must be stopped, there are a few easy things that you as an Inside Front reader can do:

-For obvious reasons, don't support such magazines as Cosmopolitan, and explain to vour friends why they may not want to either. What the fuck would you want to read in that magazine anyway?

-Don't let your coworkers, friends, or lovers worry or even joke about their weight to you (ax jokes often hide something greater) without making sure they know that you think they are doing just fine and should not trouble themselves foolishly. Suggest that it is ridiculous that people measure their bodies according to Unusual social norms rather than by their health.

•When you hear someone saying something moronic iike "she s so fat" or "I think Tina gained weight" or "she should not be wearing that outfit! " tell them politely but firmly how childish it is for them to buy into the values of superficial pop culture. It is in everyone s best interest that we all feel good about ourselves and strive to be. healthy rather than malnourished.

•Finally, keep an eye an your own tastes and instincts; perhaps you have subconsciously been influenced by the constant bombardment of images of unusually thin women to believe that your want, in yourself or in others, something other than what your actual desires demand. If you spend your whole life chasing after someone, rise's ideal, you may never realize why you are never satisfied; but in the meantime the fashion/diet/media industries will have lined their pockets oft of the magazines, uncomfortable clothes, gimmick videos, calenders, and other trash they have unloaded on you. Remember, they don t give a fuck about you... that doesn t "put food on the table."

[Image not archived]

Inside Front:

Lately it seems that a new trend in hardcore has arisen. Those, like you. that subscribe lo this trend are under the impression that no militant vegan band (and. of course, everyone targets Earth Crisis) should be taken seriously. or even listened to at all. Well, as most people know but seem to neglect, Earth Crisis is not the only vegan band out there. There is Abnegation. SEVIN, Birthright, Green Rage, Gatekeeper, Canon, and bunches of others who support the same things Earth Crisis does, but never gel the same amount of criticism. In iheir new album, "Call on my brothers, "[1] Ignite, in regard to whaling ships, say "we'll sink your ships, " and in regard to defending wolves, say "I'm justified in fighting to defend them all " But you never haer anyone bitching about how Ignite is a bunch of liars. Why does everyone hate Earth Crisis so much? My guess is because they're the biggest band out there who have enough balls to say what they think. But, for the sake of argument 1'11 continue to use Earth Crisis as an example.

You seem to be under the impression that just because a band supports, promotes, or condones a cause or action, that means they must actually be involved in these actions lo be sincere. What kind of rationale is that'' I suppose in your world everyone who wanted to end apartheid should have flown lo South Africa to overthrow the government, or else they wou Id have been hypocrites because they didn't take a violent part in a cause they endorsed. talked about, and were involved in. Should those who opposed communism back in the 80's have bombed Russia to show their commitment? No, of course not. But if they talked about it and supported it they would have been doing nothing wrong, nothing contradictory. Yeah, so maybe Earth Crisis hasn't killed anyone, raided any labs or done anything else they condone and justify in their lyrics. But that's all their doing, condoning and justifying. I don't ever remember Karl saying "this song is about a raid 1 did on an animal experimentation lab in June of last year." He is merely giving a scenario, and saying he supports that scenario, and if he were ever in that position he might do something drastic to save innocent life. They're not liars, a liar says he did something he didn't do. Karl has never to my knowledge denied or admitted to being involved in the actions he supports. Malcolm X supported and promoted violence but he never did anything physical, docs

that make him a hypocrite too? The way you talk, you would think that you lived up to every single word you've ever breathed, with no room for exaggeration and fantasy. Who are you to say that people can't think of things in iheir heads that they wou Id see as a viable solution to a problem, even if they don't act it out?

Your most ridiculous argument arose when you attacked Karl because of his size, and because he didn't lift weights. You have no better criticism of Karl other than his muscularity? Give me a break. Just because someone can bench 200 lbs doesn't mean they can do direct action better than a "98 pound weakling." What, do you expect him to bring a Soloflex machine on tour with him so he can work oul? And he's not in bad shape. Your idea of good shape is probably some buffed football player or track star, but if you're vegan you don't have that much mass. I weigh 125 lbs, yeah I'm skinny, but I'm not some terminally ill pile of bones that can't lift a pencil. Maybe Karl has a high metabolism, maybe he doesn't want to lift weights, who cares? Why base a mental argument on one's physical traits?

You also said Earth Crisis isn't gelling anything done. Earth Crisis is. without question, getting a great deal done. Their lyrics are written very intelligently, Karl is smart, there's no denying that. They are motivating, and they are very informative about the cruelties and injustices that are committed against animals. I would probably not be vegan if it weren't for Earth Crisis. Living the vegan lifestyle is. in itself, a very active means of lobbying for animal rights. Are you vegan? If not. don't criticize Earth Crisis, because just by being vegan they're doing more than you ever could. Earth Crisis is speaking out against animal exploitation, and they are saying that violence is the only way they see to accomplish some of their goals. They also distribute literature at their shows, a very educational and worthwhile

cause. When 1 saw them on August 1 Sth Karl was handing out "101 reasons to be vegetarian" pamphlets, and he was saying "if you don't want them take them home so your family can see them." I would definitely call this an act of substantial good. And besides, some people, like me. do find Karl's lyrics inspiring and motivating Just because you don't doesn't mean that — everyone else scoffs along with you Like 1 said. Earth Crisis has changed a lot for me, and I know for a fact that they have gotten a lot of other people involved in animal rights. More people than any other band. I'm willing to bet. What are you doing for anima, rights'[1] Not as much as Earth Crisis I'm sure. They are all very dedicated people, give them a chance and a clean slate and I'm sure they would prove that to you. Sincerely. Mike Dyer/Ex- i panse 'zine, 1500 Massachusetts Ave. N W , Apt. 727, Washington. D.C. 2005

Thanks very much tor your ^"e- s', was thoughtful, intelligent, and mature. For many months nave *solicited militant vegan after militant vegan, starting witr Ea tn C'-s>s and proceeding from there, searching for someone who would argue the other side when I addressed the topic in Inside Front Ufortunately your letter is the only response I've received. I have -ece >ed childish criticism from some, including a letter which I've nc^ tec aher this one for comic relief. Karl himself, when a friend of " ^e recently confronted him over his efforts to avoid me and his refusal to return my letters*

or phone calls, said "it doesn't matter what i sa, the zine editor's always gonna have something to say abcu ' a˜..-.a> " *which leads me to believe that he's not interested* n *a -a' :nai exchange of ideas and would rather preach only to the con ? rec This suspicion of mine was intensified when a friend of mine, wrose band recently toured with Kart's | band, said that in the course o"˜˜ tour Karl only spoke to my friend's non-SXE/ non-vegan bandmates once, while interacting frequently, enough with my vegan, SXE fˆ-o*

As for the arguments you b' ng *up against my article in issue If 7,] "Lies in Hardcore': First of a a; ee with you that it was overzeal-. ous of me to use the attach sc nommem against Karl, I regret that and feet that it only damaged my more important arguments. Second, my criticism of Earth Crss as ars" is that the lyrics of their songs do not say that they 'condone' certain actions, these lyrics actually describe the band msmc˜s :erforming these actions in the present tense, as if hardcore were some kind of role playing game. If they merely condone these actions, mey snouid use the English Ian-. guage correctly and just express ma: My point was that by singing as if they are actually doing these actions.* 4 *makes people feel like the actions have been accomplished .-.hen they have not... the "placebo" effect. This leads individuals further mto apathy rather than out of it. The best case in point is the song "Firestorm': I don't believe ANY violent resistence to real drug dealers has EVER taken place as a resutt of this song, but ktds who sing along about how they're "taking it all back" get to feel like they're part of some grand nonexistent violent youth movement to make the world a better place. That's why Tm concerned about this subject we really DO have a serious drug problem and other problems in this nation, one that the youth must be motivated to fight, and Earth Crisis is not succeeding in doing that.' You also suggest that merely by being vegan Earth Crisis is accomplishing a lot. It's true that they have introduced a number of individuals to veganism, I believe that is their only Indisputable accomplishment. But veganism on the pan of a few young people actually is not as effective as you think. In my experience, almost all vegans — especially young vegans — eat where their nonvegan peers eat: at corporations that use the money they make off these kids to carry out ail kinds of violence on the environment. Kids give these corporations their money, for vegan food or whatever, and the corporations use*

[Image not archived]

T -ˆoney to slaughter and abuse more animals and further abuse the -. -mment. The only difference being vegan could make in this case be 3 enough people were vegan that corporations were forced to -. r *more vegan food and less nonvegan food.*

3b! at present, there is no sign of this taking place in the future.

i . *Kari is not clearly intelligent. See the Back ta Basics review for — And, anyone who is truly familiar with all the multisyllabic words : jses in his lyrics knows that he uses many of them incorrectly. AH the* • ˜s. *although I believe that the points I made in the last issue still hold me 'ace of your criticism, it was great to receive a well-mannered and urgent presentation of an opposing viewpoint. That's much better than* e *received from anyone else, including this cordia! and coherent young*

[Image not archived]

: Mr Dingledick I believe y

-ary 1995. Si o No?

[Image not archived]

Anyways, I don't know who made up th/slogan "go veyan or go fuck

[Image not archived]

_ slogan. Don't just assume that a hardline^ctivist made it up. How the fuck

[Image not archived]

. cause unlike yourself, Hardline IS about improving the world and oneself. If — knew anything you would know that.

Why do you assume that Hardline is atyut

[Image not archived]

"giving insecure, immature acts an excuse to feel superior to those not'like themselves"? OH. I know

You were just describing yourself. Okay.

[Image not archived]

Public relations like that DO win adherents to

-nd DO NOT. Never realized promises of firestorms ag

— -vways, you are defiantly not vegan, nor arc you an environmenatli cu SXE! YOU BETTER WATCH YOURSELF LITTLE BOY!

And all of the "helpless children" are in fact NOT helpless. You arc the

☒clpless one Imaginary revenge? No Mr. Dingledick, it is very much reality. They do not need to feel cooler than you because they already ARE.

A few last comments. 1 am NOT SXE. vegan, nor am I a Hardline activist. I am ery much a meateater The kind that Hardline activist will destroy. And.. YOU DON'T KNOW SHIT ABOUT STRAIGHT EDGE! Have a nice day. Mary irzonc, 18627 Brookhurst St. #168, Fountain Valley, CA 92708

Dearest Mary:

*m rubber you're glue, whatever you say bounces off me and sticks to * m'* No, seriously, since you 're a non-straightedge meateater ("the kind mat hardline activists wilt destroy") and I'm obviously in the doghouse with hardliners, maybe you and I had better get together since, as you say, their revenge is about to become "very much a reality"! We can hide out together when the "storm" that the now defunct Vegan Reich described hits. Only. I don't think we 'll get along too well, because (contrary to your letter) almost everyone at Inside Front is environmentalist and straightedge, and most of us are vegan as well. And having been straight edge since 1989 I probably know a little about it. None of that would matter except that I think I'm just not of the necessary intellectual caliber to keep up with you! See you when the Vegan Nazi apocalypse hits.*

Dear Inside Front:

You just don't know what you have. You take your scene, your music, your friends, your family, your entire lifestyle all for granted. "Awww damn, I ain't gotgot enough money for this or that." Aww, poor you. Sometimes 1 think this world is so fucking shallow. So many people live in a glass house, blindfolded, holding sledgehammers. And you think your world won't crumble; well motherfucker, you're wrong. I no longer have my identity, let

alone my freedom. My name is now number 295–871. no longer do I have my spirit. I am now "property of the state of Ohio." I'm doing 3 to 15 years for selling a half a pound of pot to an undercover cop. I ain't trying to gain no motherfucking sympathy. I did my crime. I'll do my time. But now I'm thrown into a racist and completely fucked up system. I got here by my own actions. I know that. But maybe, just maybe someone out there will see that no matter what crime you do if you get caught you'll have to face the facts, not to mention seeing your parents eyes while the tears fall from their faces.

You will come to a society full of racist rednecks and a bunch of wannabe gangsters. The people you will meet will have an open mind like a keyhole. Oh. and if you don't have a paid lawyer, they won't even buy you dinner before they fuck you. So if 1 can get through to some of you to appreciate the most "unimportant" things in your life, i.e. 7" records, shows. Taco Bell at 5 in the morning, your girl/boy-friend or just the company of friends, will have succeeded...

1. have lost all of this, but not forever. In elosing, please think, use your

fucking brain, il is worth your freedom! Hardcore and locked up, Martin? 295–871, 4104 Germantown Pk,, Dayton, OH, 45417

Editor's note:

Don't be fooled, just because the only two incarcerated individuals in this issue are both called Martin doesn't mean the rest of you are safe. Value and protect your freedom, and don't risk it unless you're willing to pay such a stiff price.

The article In question. "Are Hardline and Emo Compatible with SXE?". was printed in a number of small publications in January of 1995:

The person who made up the slogan 'Go Vegan or Go Fuck Yourself gave away the truth that the 'hardline' philosophy and all of its illegitimate children are not reallyt about improving the world or oneself, but about giving immature, insecure rejects and excuse to (eel superior to those not like themselves. Public relations like that do not win any adherents to the cause, and neither do never-realized promises of firestorms against the unbelievers; instead, they give nervous, helpless children alone (or, worse, with each other) with a Une or CD the false feeling that one day they will have some kind of imaginary revenge on the people they so desperately need to feel cooler than.

> "Emo" is the opposite reaction to adversity, on the part of the same kind of people. Beaten up by those tougher than them, they choose to dlsparrage

toughness" rather than try to defend themselves; that way, although they continue to get beaten up and humiliated, they can at least tell themselves the lie that they are better than the ones victimizing them. Similarly, those children are the first ones to proclaim their weakness to the world, In hopes that someone will take pity on them, rather than try to correct their flaws and improve their lives. Writing songs about how men are evil because they are capable of rape looks like a hollow attempt to appease their own guilt, when you consider that these children don't seem to value or desire the physical fitness and strength it would take to stop a rape that was taking place in front of them.

It's a temptation to fail for Iles about your superiority to others rather than put your energy into improving yourself. It's a temptation to listen to mnusic about making a change or beating up the ones you hate, and think that this is somehow actually changing something or making you tougher. Ifs a temptation to wallow In your own misery, hoping that someone will come along who will love and value you more than you do yourself, rather than striving to solve your own problems and learning to respect and value yourself. Ifs a temptation to play sour grapes and dismiss as undesirable a quality such as strength or self control just because others have more of it than you do. rather than working to Improve yousalt so that you will be their equal. It's a temptation to subscribe to such philosophies as hardline or emo because those around you do. STRAIGHT EDGE IS ABOUT RESISTING TEMPTATION."

Inside Front:

1 am straight edge because 1 made the personal choice to be so. It allows me to have control over my intellect and body in a corporate/media controlled society that is constantly trying to seize these things away from us. I am also middle class and it is this socially priviledged position which allows me to maintain a straight edge lifestyle, and in this 1 recognize a problem with the "straight edge movement": Every day hundreds of millions of dollars worth of drugs are pumped into the American ghettos, with the full knowledge of the American government and police forces. The reason the people in these communities are addicted to these drugs is that their lives have been destroyed by a capitalist economic superstructure and these substances provide their only means of mental escape. Furthermore it is in the interest of the corporate class and government powers to allow these drugs to be supplied to America's poor, as it keeps them fighting each other in gang wars instead of targetting the real enemy — the government and the capitalist economy.

Now, when Earth Crisis and other straight edge bands put themselves on an ideological pedestal and look down on the drug users in America as a people who must either be eradicated or taught differently, they are making a major mistake: they arc offering an ideological solution for an economic problem. The position of people in

the ghettos will not be fundamentally improved by simply removing drugs from the picture, because they still won't be able to feed their children, go to the hospital or get a proper education. If drugs were removed, the people would, because of their position, still search for some kind of escape, whether it be Christianity. Islam, or any other religion, have control over their minds and bodies the poor and oppressed must seek an economic solution to the economic problem which is at the root of their drug problem. To attempt to better oneself spintually. if one's life — which is economic in nature — is overwhelmed by poverty, is to simply avoid the root of the problem, which is the economic and social system in which one lives If individuals in the straight edge community find it personally fulfilling to be straight edge, that's fine, but we must realize that! first of all. this is by no means a solution in itself to the problems of America! and the world, and second of all, we can't expect the people with the highest} rate of drug abuse tn the world — poor Americans — to conform to an ideological set of standards set by the primarily white middle class straight edge scene. Truthfully, Ezra Maidstone 138 Eberts St. ViatGria B . C . Canada

V8S 3H7

Ezra- Thanks for your letter. I agree with you that it is foolish for anyone who finds a straight edge lifestyle fulfilling to expect everyont else to imitate them, however, there are still a few points in your lettet upon which I would like to offer a different perspective.

First of all, I certainly don't want anyone to think that it is impossible to live a drug free lifestyle just because to come from an impoverished background; I actually know plenty of Inside Front readers who do choose that lifestyle despite their drthcuit lives. And while it is not a large scald solution, it certainly helps both m daily fife (cigarette money adds up to a great deal of rent food, education, or medical bill funds wasted for most smokers... not to mention the expenses of other drugs in terms of time, money, and energy) and in me po/ncaFeconomic struggle with which you are concerned. I also believe that individuals who are bom into difficult environments should never let people who, like yourself, were not sug^ gest that there is nothing they can do to improve themselves and their situation. Finally. I think the band you mention does not really represent; the views of the majority of the straight edge community: I would like to believe that most of us see the world in a little more depth than they do.l

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Your letter does bring up mportant issues, and it should be inter esting to hear the views of others on this topic, should anyone else cart to write.*

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GHOSTS OF STRAIGHT EDGE
PAST

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with information about who is doing what and how to reach them. We've been so busy putting together the other parts of Ihis Issue that the news section has unfortunately suffered this time around. I can still tell you with certainty what a few of my friends are up to, however: — Groundbreaking, experimental band Starkweather's much-deserved European tour fell through, and they are presently writing new songs for a 1996 full length record which should be on the Very distribution 'Edison' label again. I believe Edison is also trying to finagle the brutal and brilliant but lazy and disbanded Acme into recording a posthumous' release. — In Cleveland, Integrity is recording for a 107CD release on Victory records; the pieces of it I've heard sound pretty fucking heavy metal, but definitely more solid than the "Systems" recording, and they still haven't lost the intensity they had in 1989. Dwid is planning to resume Dark Empire records under a different name, and release records by such holy terror bands as Congress, Rancor, and possibly Gehenna. The new issue of his magazine Bloodbook should also be out about when (his issue of l.E hits the news stands; it includes a remixed version of the Ringworm demo (clearer production, and lots of new effects on the vocals). Dwid always prints about half as many copies of each issue as people want, so hurry if it sounds interesting. Also in Cleveland, the singer for new hardcore band State of Conviction is releasing a compilation with songs by every Cleveland band save O.L.C. — Endless Fight records has been having some difficulties after bands Jasta 14

and Overcast sold their songs to a corporate licensing company (kids: please don't try Ihis at home!) which tried to collect $14, 000 from E.F. That's what comes of working with bands who have financial aspirations. The future of the Endless Fight Catharsis 7" release is still up in the fucking air, but new Tension and Faultline releases are still on the way. — In Orange County, California, hardcore stalwart Chris Malinowski (of Point Blank/Bonesaw fame) is "on the edge" of finally opening his long-awaited record store, _"Qn the Edge._' Contact him for distribution and further information at 5771 Ludlow Avenue, Garden Grove, CA 92645–2014.

Just write Inside Front for further information about the above. In the future I expect the news section will come to rely increasingly on submissions from the readers; so if you or someone you know Is involved in something you think everyone should read about in this magazine, please take the time to send us whatever news and information you can. Scene reports are great, especially In that they help everyone who lives in the area represented: but if you do not have the time or knowledge to compile a full-scale scene report, chances are there's still something you can contribute.

On to listings: beyond the corrections listed here, to our knowledge the list of distributors we published last issue Is still pretty accurate... although you should still probably contact the distributors themselves before making any assumptions. That list should be extremely useful for anyone trying to start out working through the "D.I.Y." underground network, so I hope people actually try to use It. Here are some corrections from that list, and some new listings of distributors/etc.:

NEW DISTRIBUTORS

Shoehorn _Distribution:_ (P.O. Box 157, Sunbury, PA 17801–0157) — For a distribution that has apparently just begun, this catalogue of hardcore records, 'Unes, and shirts is pretty damn extensive.

Sill# _Records:_ (717 S. Mill Ave. #8. Tempe, AZ 85281, phone 602- 423–9761) — This guy carries less hardcore, more independent labels like Gravity and Gem Blandsten. He hasn't ever gotten back to us, so I don't know what else to tell you, if anything...

Betty Ql -1231-b East Lee, Tucson, AZ 85719) — Looks like a pretty small operation, concentrating on small-label hardcore bands. She apparently also sets up shows.

ESTABLISHED DISTRIBUTORS, NEWLY Listed HERE

Back la Basics; -86 3rd Avenue, Paterson, NJ 07514) In addition to everything else. Rick distributes a lol of demos by new NYC hardcore bands and some records by northern USA hardcore bands.

Conquer Ina nunfl _Records:_ (P.O. Box 402–2, Redford, Michigan.? 48240, phone 313 3652897) — in addition the the record label, CTW dis–, tributes records and such.

Contrast Mailorder: (P.O. Box 1545, N. Kingstown, RI -2852, phone' 401 -295-2027) — It seems this ma-ja-ine/newsletter publisher also dis-: tributes a little northern USA hardcore.

Day _After Records_ (Horska 20, 352 01 As, Czech Republic) — This label carries quite a number of different punk and hardcore records. _Doormat Distribution_ (Melissa Neufell. 65 Edwin Rd., Waltham. MA 02154) — After losing the dead wait. Melissa has taken this distribution! entirely into her own hands and renamed it. I'd like to see this mailorder: continue to grow to the great size and scope that it is headed for, because Melissa's approach to running a hardcore distribution exempli-! lies, in my opinion, exactly how it should be done. If anyone on this list! warrants support, it is this distribution.

Hardside Record? Distribution: (Olivier Ligot, Le Palis des Friches 35310 Chavagne, i-rance> — A small scale French hardcore distribution. with music ran-jes from NYC and Canadian hardcore to local French! bands like Stormcore.

Passive Fiet _Distribution_ (P.O. Box 9313, Savannah. GA 31412) — AJ solid punk rock distribution don't tell me it's not punk when they sell! patches with gas masks on mem next to records by bands with nameslike "Destroy!", "Disprove ' and /omit Punx"!

Refusal _Publications:_ P.O Box 2596. Durham. NC -7715) — This is a real find for anyone interested in ☒'adical* politics who has had a hardf time comin- upon intelligent and useful reading, it s all here, books and magazines ranging from a book about the Hungarian i-ievolution of '56? to a pamphlet discussing 'the importance of absenteeism and sabotage, in the class struggle" to the 'anti-authoritarian. neo-primitivist tabloid'S Fifth state. Consider educating yourserf about viewpoints and philosophies from which you have beer — -erto sheltered.

Spiral _Objective:_ (P.O. i30126 Oat anas Park. South Australia 5046) — I This Is, to our knowledge, the foremost hardcore and underground mu-| sic distributor in Australia They :a — , many scores of records from all over the globe, from 25 ta Life to Breach to Antioch Arrow to the Amebix to Systral.

Temperance Records: (900Tilton Road. Suite 3, Northfield, NJ 08225, phone 6-9-3838359) — This distribut on carries records by most of the big name US hardcore bands

Uprising laces _and_ Distributism -e" < Lindqvist, Rattaregatan 112, . 583 30 Linkoping, Sweden) — This mailorder concentrates mostly on distributing demos by local hardcore bands but they could possibly be convinced to take on more matena

WTN Mailorder: (Av. V. Olivier 10A/6- 1070 Brussels, Belgium) — A good European mailorder with a wide variety of hardcore releases... be warned they bill themselves as "the only Belgian distribution specializing in NYHC!

HARDCORE/PUNK RECORD STORES

Ript 101: (phone 216-631-633-1, ask for John if you can) — This store just opened in Cleveland over the summer They seemed like a decent punk rock place when I was there.

VIDEO DISTRIBUTORS _Kevin Videos_ 2-i06 W. 120th St., Leawood, KS 66209) — This kid has videos of a number of shows by bands such as Inside Oul, Bum. and

Bloodlet. peppered through with other names such as Black Flag, Noam Chomsky. All, and the Offspring.

OTHER USEFUL CONTACTS

Fast and Loud; (Apart. 13037–1019. Liboa Codex, Portugal) — Record label carrying punk from Portugal and Brazil.

HOW We ROCK (P.O Box 476, Bradford, BD1 1AA, UK, telephone 01274 392518) — A useful magazine and source of information on European hardcore.

[Image not archived]

Belgium

by Hans sobermindrecords

A number of old and new bands are planning on releasing stuff in the — . ure.this means 1995 of course.. SHORTSIGHT isn't any longer . : most members are non-active at the momnntjexepl for the drummer, who is — the brand new REGRESSION...SHORTSIGHT had allready recorded .. lenght release .with was suposed to come out on SOBERMIND.but be, , >f some personal problems with certain band members.thc planned cd/lp is — r out on GOODLIFE RECORDINGS (pobox 114 8500 — i Belgiuml.there might be some shirts too, for the desperate fans'Talking . REGRESSION, they are playing a bunch of shows in the direct future, and • maybe record a demo, they have shirts available! Bjorn. Betlehnm 58. 8930 — n Belgium) CONGRESS, the hot item over here is playing out alot lately — finished their recordings for a full-lenght cd/lp on the German > RMSTRIKE REC'S, and they also released awhile after their 7" on • OLIFE.a re-mixed version on cd of the 7", it has 2 extra songs, and you really .id check it out, the band has tons of merchandise available.shirtsjongsleevcs — oxershorts! yeslcheck the GOOD LIFE adress for band info, merchandise etc . BLINDFOLD toured just as CONGRESS across Scandinavia and Ger — _ > with success... They are in the recordingprocess for- a new lp/cd, wich will • rut before they go for a wintertour at the end of the year.the cd version will be — SOBERMIND.the vinylversion will maybe on MACHINATION RECS.it be entitled'asteroid 164'...So, check it out sow.the band has brandnew full- r design shirts and longsleevcs available, writc(SMR c/o Hans POBOX 206. '» KORTRIJK.BELGIUM JSOBERMIND has also some other not belgian bands • he label.so.be nice and send one buck for a list/catalog. MACHINATION, the -cl that has done the latest 7" by Blindfold has also tons of other stuff ulable(POBOX90 8500 Kortrijk BelgiumiScnd iS'LlAR.sort of projcctband, of NGRESS and B LIND FOLD.and ex-REGRESSlON member has grown out of ore than just a project-thing.thc band recorded for a mini CD/12" on GOODLIFE, ; has tons of good offers to play gigs.thcre might be a split 7" with Holland .is RANCOR on the new R-TWOID-TWO RECS.no adress yet SOLID, a md that is around for more than one year, but finally gets the attention now. the — and exist out of ex-SOY members and it sounds pretty metaLbut the spirit is ifenitlly hc.there were rumours about a demotape.and even a 7", write to find jt: Dompic Langemarkstraat 27 8800 Roeseiarc.Belgium INATIONS ON FIRE dead for awhile now.but there is a final release, called'dcath of the pro-lifer'it's x CTW REC'S (adress

every where Jit's available on cd/lp format [r]fhe JEDI .raised jt of the ashes of NOF. is dead after playing 4 shows.they will be remebered for ire...There aren't any zincs at the moment.exept the upcomrrung 8000 ZINE, udi will be more something to piss people off.ad's soon'Anyway, there's more i ruess, and people will complain that i did forget to mention their thing...Sorry'I'm utta here, next time better,

Japan

We have a good hardcore scene here in Japan. At first my band SWITCH STYLE (YOUxSUCK 2-10-28 Kamagaya- City. Chiba 273–01 JAPAN) had a 4- song 1st 7"EP out in August. BLIND JUSTICE (Tetsuya Fukagawa 4-40-5 Higashiyamada, Tsuzuki-Ku. Yokohama- City, Kanagawa JAPAN) is an NYHC style band, kind of like a sick- of-it- all. they have a first 7"EP & a split 7"EP with Sweden's 59 Times The Pain. HALF LIFE (Inazuma 3.5.B.44 Sakuragi, Tagajyo- City, Miyagi JAPAN) is an old band that has Unbrokenish metallic guitars. They've just released two 7"EPs & Two Split 7 "EPs. Another good band is DIVIDED WE FALL (Ohashi 3-12-20 Kamitakaido. Apt. 102, Suginami-Ku, Tokyo JAPAN) They have a first EPout.

They will also have a split 7"EP with 25 Ta Life. They also appear on the Endless Fight Rees comp. "Over The Edge 2". T.J.MAXX (Kohei Iwata 7-10-10 Habikigaoka. Habikino- City, Osaka JAPAN) is a new band . they have a really old NYHC style sound ala Breakdown. They have a first 7"EP out Some other new bands are BENCH WARMER (Kazunori Hotta 2-1-12-201 Ochiai, Tama- City, Tokyo JAPAN) & UP HOLD (Masayuki Hirano 2528–30 Shimoshizushinden, Yotsukaido- City, Chiba 284 JAPAN). They have a demo out Our START TODAY RECORDS is a new H.C. record label with its first release out soon. We also do START TODAY FANZINE, and this is the only SxE zine in Japan. And START TODAY MAILORDER distribute SxE & H.C. stuff.

Massachusetts

Central Western and some Eastern Massachusetts
by Pin Drop records

Opposition has been around for a few years. They play noisy fast screechy screamed vocal hardcore. They have a 7" out on Figure Four Records. (35 Eliab Latham Wave E. Bridge water MA 02333) They also have a split 7" with Ipecac and a split tape with Dive. Everyone I think knows about Dive by now. A lot of people were into them They broke up but play the occasional reunion show now and then. They have two 7" ouL One on Figure Fourfsee above address) and one on Evolution (368 Walnut St. Shrewsbury MA 01545). Hatchet Face sounds like old Napalm Death older style HC and punk al 1 mixed up. They used to be called Bo und. I think they changed their name just t or the fun of it. They have a7" out as Bound and a 12" as Hatchet Face. The 12" is on Figure Fourfsee above address). Holdstrong has a 7" out called Gaining Ground on Pin Drop Records (P.O. Box 238 Holden MAOI520). They also have a song on a Pin Drop comp.

Together As One... That comp, has Brother's Keeper Crosscurrent and Hatebreed on it. Endless Fight Records (P.o. Box 1083 014 Saybrook CT 06475)CDcomp. Over the Edge vol. 2 basa Holdstrong Sollg oil it. Finally they are pUuillg out a full length CD that should be out near the end of winter. Crosscurrent comes from the Boston area. They sound like Sick of It All with a nasty tuned down guitar style There on the Pin Drop comp. 1 spoke of earlier. They also have a 4 song 7" out called Life Dictates Pain on the same label. Aftershock 1 think is breaking up due to members going away to school 666XXX records (99 Reservoir Rd. Westhampton MA 01027) just pot out there 2 song 7". Heavy metallic HC. A little Madballish sounding but not limited to that. Overcast has a full length CD out on Endless Flight Records (see above address) which is rad They arc very metal with some deathmetal and hardcore thrown in. Good musicians. They also have 2 7"s out and are on a bunch of comps. Grimlock has a 7" and a tape out on Pin Drop Records. They arc the heaviest band 1 know and I don't mean weight wise. They are close to deathmetal with crazy hardcore vocals. A great live show, Check these guys out. Write 22 Autumn Dr. Northampton MA 01060.Relm and Sub-Mission are both really new bands from Worcester MA. Neither have anything out yet. Hopefully we' 11 hear more from them in the future. Cast Iron Hike is a post hardcore type band. They have that Quicksand sound but with thicker guitars. Big Wheel Records (2 Donald -St. Northboro MA 01532) just released there CD They are also putting out a 7" soon Pushbutton Warfare has a demo out. They sound tike old style Agnostic Front with a big dose of metal. They have ex members of Bloodbath for all who remember. Write 31 Pilgram Drive Westfield MA 01085 Riseagain hail from the Cape Cod area. I don't know much about that scene or this band. I saw them live there and they put on a great show Converge if you don't know about (hem you must be living under a rock. They have progressed into one of the belter hardcore bands out today. There style isn't anything I can describe easily so I won't even try. They have 2 7"s out and a 12" out. I also beard that Lost and Found is putting out all there releases on one CD. Write 20 Gerald Rd. #2 Brighton MA ()2135 to contact Converge . There are many more bands from MA but I don't know enough about them so I don't want to miss lead anyone. Here are some names of cool zines to check out. Position Release (94 Paradise St. Chicopee, MA 01020) Retrogression (104 Newport Ave. Attleboro. MA 02703) Crestfallen (65 Edwin Rd. Waltham. MA 02154) Mudslinger (P.O. Box 238 Holden. MA0I520)

Mike Cheese and Mike Rhodes both play in the heretofore-San Diego-based excellent holy terror hand Gehenna. Neither of them really live anywhere, however; they just sort of wander around the western US as vagabonds. Mike K. has lived at about five different addresses in as many states in the course of the year that I've known him. He operates Area 51 records, a label he told me is named after an underground air force base in Nevada where government scientists work side by side with aliens. Area 51 has released a number of records, including the "We will fight in the streets" 7" compilation; however, in true punk rock fashion, all his releases but the Unconquered 7" are out of print.

Mike C's label Revolu Power Tools has also released her of out of pri

[Image not archived]

other similar labels. Gehenna has also released another demo and a split 7" with Apt. 213, which are, you guessed it, out of print.

I tried first to interview Mike R., but he was a really frustrating subject: at first he wanted the interview to be anonymous, so that a cult of personality would not form around the various members of Gehenna, and then he pretended amnesia regarding all the interesting stories he's been involved in-even the one involving Bom Against and the stickup. Fortunately, I had more luck with Mike Cheese, whom I've known ever since my days as a punk rock kid in San Diego.

INSIDE FRONT: Explain the significance of the name of your label,

"Revolutionary Power Tools."

MIKF C: The name represents the bands that are on the label as causing a sort of revolution in hardcore. They are like tools, like pieces in a chess game, so to speak, that work together. Every one of the bands that I'm putting out is a band that I totally feel is a revolutionary band for the fact that they are not going to wind up being on Victory, Excursion, Incision, or any Dutch East "indie" labels, any Sony-owned labels. They are bands that are definitely hardcore bands and will stay hardcore bands.

IF: What "revolution" is it that you're pushing for?

MC: Revolution in hardcore. Maybe to snap people out of their creeper-wearing, CIV-listening MTV hardcore and snap them back into the reality of the fact that hardcore is not a way to make a million dollars and ride around the country and fuck a lot of girls.

IF: Is that your goal with Gehenna as well?

MC: To ride around the country and fuck a lot of girls?

IF: Yes.

MC: No. h is to actually be revolutionary, and to maybe set an example of what we feel hardcore should be IF: And what do you think hardcore should be?

MC: I think hardcore should be a threat, a rebellion. Il should be a chance to honestly smash down all the preconceived notions about different people, a chance to have honest communication rather than the horseshit that is

considered communication between people these days. That includes the mass media as well.

IF: In your song "The Bottom Line, " who is it in particular that you are referring to when you sing "revenge has made me lose control"? MC: It's not really a song about "straight edge revenge" or "you let me down" or "me, you, youth crew" or any of that hokey bullshit. It's more of a song about self discipline Not like the typical straight edge kid "this song is about self discipline, I'm potty-trained, and..." that's stupid. The whole song comes down lo this: I've always been considered an outsider and a loser for the fact that I didn't fit in all through high school and after, every one of my friends that I've hung out with has been the same way, because we weren't drug addicts, or partiers or .whatnot. When I say "draw back the hammer to write your name in heir

in the lyrics, that's something that you can only do lo yourself. All that stuff is just something that happens to people by their own hand...

IF: People who do this to themselves

making the decisions in their lives. MC: Right. And so "...the bottom

blood."

IF: Regarding your song "83%' — do you want to explain why chose the number 83? ("No I don't regret that 83% of this world i$ shit...")

MC 83% is the amount of territory on the planet that has been conquered by mankind, the amount of area that has been crushed, destroyed. bulldozed over by humans. It's not really a proenvironment song oran anti-environment song it s pretty much just a factual song... IF: A song about reality...

MC: Right I mean, right now I'm talking to you on the telephone, which is owned by a multinati nal corporation that has probably destroyed some foreign country so tries could mine some resource to put the telephone together so I could talk to you. And 1 don't really regret the fact, because somewhere m the country there's a guy who was like "Wow. I got paid 35 cents an h ^- to work tor them, so I can feed my family..."

IF: But I guess you're ripping off the telephone company in return, right...

MC: Yeah, that's an upside to it But the downside is, you just have to

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deal with this situation and that's basically what "83%" is about. Everywhere you go, you're going to run into it, because 83% of the world is already covered by it

IF; You were speaking about straight edge, saying that your songs are not about "I've got the discipline, I'm potty-trained..." — do you want to tell me what straight edge does mean to you then, and why it's important to you to be drug free?

MC I think straight edge means something different to each individual

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-lumber of the band, but personally, as far as my experience goes, hen I was about sixteen I decided that it was a much easier way to go out things rather than fucking myself up and ruining everything.

— A popular criticism of straight edge, that I think is often legitimate nese days, is that it's a way for upper middle class kids to fit in and x part of a pseudo-rebellious subculture without actually going against •nything their parents stand for.

mC I totally agree with that, that's exactly what it has become, and af s why Gehenna and Revolutionary fewer Tools, Catharsis, Enewetak, these bands are around

— so that we can stop and point out that riaght edge is something more important than just making sure you ear the right running shoes, and that the new — record is great, and ns and that. Straight edge is not just about following whatever comes ut on Victory records, or whatever Ray Cappo says. Straight edge is, I unk personally, something you do for yourself — it's not about going ut, hammering kids on the head for doing drugs. Those people will ust learn for themselves. It's not a "discipline" you know, it's easy to be straight edge, it's not a big deal.

IF: You've mentioned repeatedly an opposition on your part to some of the larger bands and labels who are involved in the hardcore scene. Would you like to clarify that, specifically for instance why it is that you look down upon Victory records?

MC: Victory I can say that I'm opposed to because they pose a threat to real hardcore in that they want to make hardcore an "alternative." a nice little novelty item that can show up tn every household. They want hardcore to be accessible on the television, and make it basically a bigbusiness, governmentdirected thing. I'm completely against that Honestly, I'm not soing to lie and say that I don't wn records by Victory bands or hands that are on major labels. As a matter of fact, there's been talk of Earache records and Gehenna, whatnot., , and it's just talk, I know. But like Coalesce, they're a band that is an actual threat to "alternative" hardcore, they were signed to Earache, but I still feel that they are a band who is still really true to hardcore. They went on tour in a little van, had seven songs, and [list went everywhere and played, didn't give a fuck if they got paid $ 10, or nothing, or $200. That shit didn't matter to them, they didn't have a big guarantee in their heads.

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IF: Do you know what Earache records does with the money they make off the Coalesce

record?

MC: As a matter of fact, I believe they pay Sony to keep distributing their records Earache, I'm pretty- sure, is a little prostitute of Sony So I believe they pay Sony to crush someone's skull into the dirt in some foreign country, something like that.

IF: But you don't think that compromises Coalesce?

MC: I definitely see what you're saying, that it might compromise some of their message, but none of their message is political It's not a message of revolution, but they're still a revolutionary band in that they're not doing this to make millions of dollars. They're doing this to let millions of people hear their music

IF: So you respect them because they're trying to express themselves at all costs...

MC: Right. No matter what. But they won't turn themselves into a product... it's true that they have a U.PC code on the CD, which is something I despise, but they aren't going to become a product of Victory or whatever horseshit kind of ideals... I don't know, I think I'm just totally biased against Victory because they put out some good records that I wish I put out.

IF: Can you tell me some bands you were in before Gehenna?

MC: Me and the guitarist were in this band called Leave rt to Clevo...

IF; Didn't you guys open for Born Against?

MC: Yeah, we did.

IF: Did you see their geek singer try to put me in a headlock for dancing too hard.

MC: No, as a matter of fact I didn't! But that was the same night my friend Curtis paid $5 for a record and was accused of stealing it. He handed her five dollars, and she accused him of being a scam artist, and that's where another of our bands, Scam Artist, a Born Against cover band, came about,

IF: Yeah, Mike wouldn't tell the story about him and Born Against and the gun for the interview,

MC That's too bad, it's a hilarious story.

IF: Of course, you wouldn't tell the story about Orange 9mm, or about your jaw getting broken...

If you can manage to reach Gehenna *from any address, * your best bet* is'

P.O Box 83694

San Diefto, * CA *92138–3694

Rick practically came out of nowhere a few years ago to sing for New York hardcore band 25 ta Life. Now, in addition to that, he also publishes the hardcore 'zine Back ta Basics, as well as running a large distribution. He has even started a record label on top of everything else: he has just released a 7" pressing of the original 25fL demo, and two split 7"s, one of of Krutch and Surrounded, the other of Shutdown and Indecision. Soon he will follow these records with a Cornin' Correct/Dirt Nap split and other records. This is what he has to to say about his commitment to hardcore and his feelings about it today

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INSIDE FRONT: What's new with 25 ta Life?

RICK HEALEY: Originally the band was me on vocals. Fred on the rhythm guitar. Big Frank on the bass and Harry on the drums. We went through some minor changes. Steve, the second guitarist, left, and we got a new guitar player called Beto (he used to be in Dmize), and we got a new bass player from this band called Out of Line Queens. Big Frank s wife had a couple of kids, and he couldn't afford to give up his weekends any more...

IF: What are you going to release next?

RH: The "Keeping It Real" EP came out; the easiest way to get that is from Victory, or you can write to me at my address...it's going ot be distributed all over — I guess they're going to try to get it Into the bigger stores. We leave for Europe January 17th, we ll be touring with Next Step Up and Hard Response. While we're on tour we'll be discussing doing a full length with We Bite records, basically just as a one-off deal again. We Bite was good to us so far, but there was a problem with getting the record, and we have different opinions on how to do hardcore. With them, they'd rather get these big distributors doing it. With me, I distribute records for hardcore bands the hardcore way •• going to shows, setting up tables. These guys want to get it through the bigger distributors. The whole thing is markup, I want to try to keep the prices

as low as possible. I would want to get the records myself. These guys want to market hardcore, get it into the big stores, and get it accessible — that's all good, but if they would give the records to the band, so that we could get the money and keep it in the scene, for instance I've started a label, so that we can make our scene grow, so we can get our own music out. so we won't need these bigger labels. But as it stands right now they've got the better distribution. I'm starting to get my distribution up there, so maybe we ll do a record with We Bite but who knows. We're not really happy with what's going down so far. The kids here who have been supporting us since day one have been having problems getting copies. When we started we really didn't have the money. We had to do what we had to do. But now that we have a little bit more money, things are looking a little bit better. Maybe we'll just do something ourselves next.

IF: Do you want to explain the name 25 ta Life?

RH: To us it's not like a gangster thing. I'm sure there's tons ot kids out there who think we re a gangster band. To us, we reversed it — instead of being locked down, the name means a commitment to hardcore.

IF: Right, because I know you're 25 right now...

RH: And I'm saying I'm going to be committed to this 25 ta life. That's what the name means to us. And it was also a dedication to some of our friends, who over the years got involved with some stupid shit. Hardcore has gone through so many changes, so many people have grown up. Back then it was a lot rougher, people did shit I'm sure they regret now, because to hit somebody in the head with a pipe back then wasn't a big deal, but to be locked up for 25 years, it makes the whole thing different. So it's like a shout out to our friends who got fucked up.

IF: But your magazine is called Back to Basics. Are you suggesting the hardcore has strayed from the basics?

RH: When t first started that, my plan was to go back to the roots. With all

these kids with their computers and everything trying to be so perfect, I wanted to go back and just work lor it, rather than worrying about getting signed or getting big. I wanted to just do it for the music, for the scene, to keep the scene alive and be active, just like I help to put on shows and do a distribution. I wanted to do a magazine and not worry about the thing looking beautiful, or wony about spelling correctly. This is hardcore. Just get the information out there so that kids know that the scene is alive and that things are going on. That's the whole idea behind my label,

☒ : Seme kid that's been around two weeks, who's trying to get his * " up, will be like "Yeah, I'm down with DMS." But it's all hype, it's

t , ˜: Half the DMS kids don't even go to shows. Some of them just E i^ows because of their friends from their neighbir boyorhood. These r • even into hardcore. They're just going to shows because thes r- sands. So as far as people saying "I'm scared to go to shows *f — as* DMS will beat me up, " that's bullshit. Of course if Izak sees you, r : :u dissed the kid, maybe he will have a word with you, whatever, f -ink everyone's entitled to their opinion. If you don't like the band E atever reason, that's your right.

F So you think that a lot of the shit that's been attributed to DMS *mi* seen attributed wrongly?

[1] — • s true a lot of kids did get hurt, whatever, but of course a lot of it is c -ue. What can I say?

F So how would you describe DMS to some kid reading this in Florida? [1] — would just say it's a bunch of friends, it's like Murphy's Law. Madball, ; of Thomz, it's the New York hardcore scene. A lot of bands, a lot r — who used to go Io shows, like the old Dmize, a lot of kids who n ? been around that just hang out. So they all know each other from F " ? to the shows through the years, and it's like a big family of friends r : are going to take each other's backs. That's the way it is anywhere — :o If you go into a hip hop club and there're all these kids who've a down, and you try to step to one of those kids, of course all these are going to say. "That's not gonna happen, that's my boy." It's like a I; amily, the New York hardcore family,

F You have always given all sorts of support to straight edge and r-sight edge bands in your 'zine, though I didn't think you were .'self. Do you want to speak any words on that?

— m 25 years old now, so when I was younger and I used to go see : • c Frost, I was really big on the metal scene. I started going to CBGB's r 36. That's when Youth of Today and all those bands were getting Bi y big. I've been locked up for drugs, over heroin and crack, I was — mad drugs when I was younger. I've had a lot of (rouble. So with the r ⁝ qht edge thing for me, it's such a positive thing, that these kids all r • together and support each other in being straight at a time when r.gs are so big in this country. I totally support that, I support all the :s and all those kids who are finding an alternative to drugs, who are " "mg to shows and being so into the music that they can stay away — — the drugs. It still exists, but they know that they have more in life -:– just being bored out of their minds and going and doing drugs. When I "3d nothing more in life and I only listened to the music, I used to go do B — gs and this or that, but now in the last five years since I've been so *b* ve In it. I've even stopped drinking. To me the whole straight edge r ng helps me out. When I go to a show I won't just dank a beer. I'll go B — something else. I'll set up a table to distribute. I'll try to get away from " stuff, I'll go have conversations, talk to people, and just get away r:m the shit. That's why I give respect to the straight edge kids.

F You've been referred to as the "hardest working man in hardcore." kame some hardworking women in hardcore.

— There's Laura, she does Rebel Angel Fanzine in Pennsylvania. She's Been around a long time, she does a magazine and sets up shows. She e:es her part for the Pennsylvania scene. Rory used to do all the book- 1'3. I think now she manages Shift and that kind of stuff, and does the bookings for them. There's BJ Papas, who takes all the photos for all the bards and helps all of them out, I've met so many people, we have girts rot come to every one of our shows and support us. There's a lot of people who come to shows. Without all the people, all the effort that I put — r the scene, doing a fanzine and putting up fliers, doing a label, if r^re was no one who was interested in

this, what good would it be? 1 kst went and saw Baby Gopal, they have three girls in the band and 'ey're doing their thing. It doesn't matter to me who's in a band as long as the music and the lyrics are good.

IF- I've noticed there are two attitutes towards the idea of making a

-ng off of hardcore. Old man Tim Yohannon, of Maximum Rock and Roll, says that if you try to live off of hardcore then you won't Be able to be true to it end you'll be tempted by money to try to make it more accessible. My attitude Ie that I don't want to be putt ng my effort Into somebody eIse's projects that have nothing to iK with hardcore, working to support the mess media and support

ing those people with my labor. I'd like to see us all be able to work for each other and nobody else. I know that you live off of hardcore. What is your stance on this issue?

RH: Look at someone like Tony Victory, regardless of what people say. that guy's making a living off of hardcore but he's doing it in a way that's like being in a hardcore band and not selling out. It all comes down to work. It's ail work, but if you're doing something you love and you're making money, what more could you want oul of life? A lol of bands say that you shouldn't make money off of it, but money makes the world go round. I'm part of the world, I've gol to live. I love this music, but to get to a show it costs money, to rehearse it costs money, to put out a record it costs a lot of money. I can't just walk into a place and say "make me five hundred fliers." and they'll do it for free. Everything costs money. I've got to make money to make shirts to get to the kids, so that kids will know we even exist. It's a lot of work, but I do it for the love of the music. Of course if I didn't have money, if I didn't make money from playing the shows, I've got to eat, I've got to pay a phone bill, I've got to pay rent. It's not like I'm exploiting anything. I've got to live, that's all I can say.

IF: Not everyone can play in a band or do a label. What would you say to other people who also don't want to work for anyone outside of the hardcore community?

RH: You've got to find an alternative lifestyle. Some people are tattoo artists, some people do piercing, or do their own thing in life. You've got to find a way to do your own thing. I like to look the way I want to look... you know I look a little crazy. I've got tattoos ell over. It's not going to be as easy for me to go into society and get a job looking the way I want to look, so I've found an alternative way to do what I want. I don't make a lot of money doing this, I make enough to survive, that's it. Thal's all I want out of fife is to survive and do what I want to do. That's it. Listen to the music, have the friends I want to have no matter what they look like or what they're doing in life. Just have my people and do what I'm doing and that's it. I don't bother anyone and I don't want anyone bothering me or telling me what I can or can't do.

IF: I wanted to ask you about an interview I read in Open Season. Basically, it was just you talking about shooting people and smoking blunts. Do you think that interview misrepresented you?

RH: Yeah. Here's the deal with that. To me, that kid is not into hardcore for the same reason I am. He was asking me questions about running guns. To me, guns, that's

not hardcore. I'm into this music to make a change, not to become like people I can't stand. The questions were all moronic, so what I gave him back was moronic answers. I'm not a gangster, I don't care about people who bring guns to shows, or about how people dance. Of course in New York it's a lot harder. But all my answers were stupid because he was asking me dumb questions about gangs. Obviously, that kid has a fantasy and he's not into hardcore for the same reasons I am.

IF: How did you end up going on tour with Agnostic Front?

RH: I knew Roger, the singer — what happened was, his house had burned down. At the time I was working construction, I did spackling and sheet rock, and I was helping Roger put his house back together, just helping him out as a friend. I was collecting unemployment back then, I'd been layed off, and he invited me to go on tour with him. so I went along to help them out. I took care of the merchandise. It was a good time — I did a lol. met a lot of good people. What that tour showed me was. because I had so much fun. that I had to get my shit together and do it myself. After the AF tour, I went out with Biohazard lor a bit, and 1 knew so many people, that people would always come up to me and ask me what my band was. And I didn't have a band, so when I came back and AF was breaking up. I wanted to start a band in the tradition of AF. AF was always a band that would look out for all the other bands that nobody else knew about or cared about. When we started a band, that was what we did. Back then there were no big bands, now all the bands have gotten back together and hardcore is good, but back then there was no one to headline shows, so we would do it even il only fifty kids showed up. We would just play to have a good time, but now you go to a show, and there's a million kids there. One last thing I wanted to mention — Vinnie is leaving Madball. and so they're passing the old AF Iron Cross cover "Crucified" on to 25 ta Life, so We'll be playing that from now on.

Contact Rick at 86 3rd Avenue. Paterson. NJ 07514 USA, phone 201 -278-7376.

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Working in Collectives:

Observations on an Anarchist Organization

by Mike the Mann

The purpose of this article is to relay my experiences working within an anarchist collective and to point out some of the pitfalls and difficulties associated with this type of organizing for fundamental social change. Though I am by no means an expert on this subject. I do have hands on experience and have learned real lessons from my time working with anarchist comrades and others.

I will begin with the background of my organizing experience. I was part of the Anarchist Agitation Coalition (AAC) collective for just over two years. We formed on the campus of Appalachian Slate University as a small group of anti-authoritarian students

who wished to commit ourselves to radicalism and become active politically. Throughout its history the AAC mainly focused on propaganda and education. We issued several flyers regarding different aspects of daily life in capitalism, along with other activities. The collective was organized hurriedly the night before Earth Day 1993.1 had just come in contact with similarly minded individuals and one of us proposed the publication of an anarchist critique of Earth Day and liberal environmentalism.

Soon after we put together a loose political statement. This. I have found, is one of the most difficult aspects of working as a collective. Though at the formation of the group the AAC consisted of only four members, with a few outside supporters, our politics were bound to vary widely, and they did. The key, I feci, to hammering out a political statement is not compromise of ideals, as some would maintain, but a definition of those points common to all members. In an anarchist sense, maintaining and emphasizing the revolutionary character of our critique of society and our planned work. Individual political questions must also be dealt with in a unifying way. though. Issues all involved can agree on are simple, but those which cause disagreement must be addressed in a manner which suits all in the collective. This aspect may entail compromise on select issues, but never so much that one's individual position is negated or defamed.

At the conclusion of the school year the group effectively disbanded as all the members returned to different areas of the state for the summer. When school began again in August, though, the AAC reformed and took up where it had le- off. We set out to make ourselves known on campus. Amongst the trendy, liberal "environmentalists" crowd we had a bit of a reputation as trouble makers s we laughed at their Earth Day shenanigans. Now we aimed to introduce ourselves to the rest of the campus and perhaps pick up a few more members from the student body and the community at large. We immediately set up a banner on campus, next to the ones put up by fraternities, proclaiming our existence. Then we set about organizing ourselves better to finally get things accomplished. At this time we acquired a few new members which elevated our optimism as well as our numbers.

Thal September we learned of a march to be held in town which would commemorate the death of a female student who was abducted, raped and murdered by a local man. We again resorted to banners and marched as an anarchist contingent. We critiqued not only "violence", as did the other marchers, but the ritualized violence perpetrated against women daily in this society. Our next action connsisied of antiColumbus Day flyers which we posted all over campus and which met both widespread approval and condemnation. This period was most likely the high point of the AAC's organizing efforts. It was at this time when we garnered our most support and attention on campus, and when we found out, through an inside contact, that the District Attorney had been given a copy of one of our flyers. Also, that spring we organized a speech by a radical professor on campus which attracted over 25 people to our meeting. Given the level of apathy at school, we seemed to be doing something right

Beyond this period, though, our efforts began to wane. Long periods of inactivity due to a lack of dedication among many of the members were only broken by failed actions, the worst being a planned Mayday celebration at which

only three persons attended. Well into the next school year this trend continued as the serious membership dwindled down to two. The AAC's final major project was yet to come, though. In what proved to be our finest hour, the collective organized and sponsored a talk by Lorenzo Kom'boa Ervin, a prominent anarchist and former Black Panther. The speech went over as a huge success and attracted an audience of around a hundred. This was our greatest achievement But even the resounding success that the speech was couldn't revive interest among the members long enough to sustain the collective. I quit school and left the collective after that year and have yet to hear of any more projects undertaken by the AAC. At present a planned school supported, unofficially anarchist organization at ASU has been scrapped. Presently only one original member of the collective attends Appalachian State.

Now I'd like to analyze why the AAC didn't achieve more and look at the weakness of our organ!ration. Firstly, every time I seriously look at the AAC's many faults one glanng one fixes most prominently in my mind; dedication. Throughout our history, we had a problem with members and interested persons who failed to commit themselves fully to the group or its projects. In fact, only two individuals were consistent members throughout the collective's lifetime.® This illustrates the severity of the problem. I know from experience that orga-B nizing this way is futile as those who are extremely dedicated to the group end! up performing all tasks associated with maintaining the collective; the others are! allowed to serve as numbers and bodies behind them.

This brings me to another observation. Those who did have a lack of com-1 mitment to the group tended not to partake in decision making; they almost! always agreed with the one or two "permanent" members. While this does sim-1 plify rise decision making process, it also creates artificial divisions between not! only the dedicated members and those sitting idle, hut also between a group of! specialists and those not among their number • those who have a grasp of revol lutionary theory and those new to the movement. These divisions ultimately! lead to the loss of members whose interest in the collective was minimal or] those who feel the impact of this division and feel alienated from the group.® Thus, integrating new members into the collective becomes impossible and the] group is doomed to failure

These are what I perceive to be the major organizational flaws of the AAC® Unfortunately they are not easily overcome. In building a sense of commitment!, to the organization, i feel more discussion of revolutionary theory and its rela-® tionship to daily life is needed to aid in unifying those involved and clarifying® the group's goals Also, a financial as well as physical contribution to the group® breeds a sense of commitment as those who join wish to see their money and® effort spent in a productive manner. To accomplish anything money will be needed® to finance projects With the AAC. the two hard core members usually funded® projects while others helped out at their leisure. This seemed to spread apathy® amongst the other members as they

did not directly help fund or participate ing the collective effort Ultimately, tocreate a dedicated group of individuals working® towards a common, revolutionary goal, real objectives with real results should]' be present, along with well organized and well educated collective members. 1

The key to gaining educated, active members within the collective. I feel.®] is participation. While working with the AAC I was the primary facilitator of the | group. I called meetings, phoned members concerning meet limes, etc. andoiten] , set the agenda for each meeting. This is clearly not how we should have been I organizing. This allowed most members to maintain a passive role in the coilec-1 live decision making process, which affected their willingness to carry out planned I actions or to even really dedicate themselves to the group. One possible remedy ! would have been the creation of a "facilitator" position which would have been! rotated among the membership each week or meeting This most definitely] would have helped with participation among the group: either those not willing! . to seriously participate would have leave or, those not fully integrated within the] collective would be forced to become so if they desired to stay active. Other] , methods of fostering participation within a collective may include other combi-1 (nations of responsibility delegation as well. k

The main focus of this article, beyond being a short history of the AAC. • collective, is lo illuminate some of ihe difficulties associated with working col- ,

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-.- vely towards a goal. All of these complications I have described within the context of the AAC occur in most group situations. Working in an anarchist -vnework, though, heightens the importance of even the smallest details as aearchists must pay special attention to the way they organize. We realize that egression and domination of any kind is wrong and must be done away with, specially within our own autonomous social units, these collectives, which may me day become the backbone of a free society.

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Everything You Always Wanted To Know About Prison... But Were Afraid To Ask

Installment #2
by Martin Maassen

Hello again, this is Manin with my second installment of a look from ˜< inside, at the front. Now, as I said in issue #7. this column will be dealing *ith prison — what

you need to know should you fall, why, and how it re- .ues, or doesn't relate, to being a hardcore kid.

As I write this issuels column. I'm in the hole. We call it "jail" in prison because, for many, prison is the closest thing to the street they will ever see; and jail assignment is just like getting locked up on the street. So. it makes sense then — doesn't it? I'm in jail right now for assault. 1 got in an argument nth someone that escalated to the point where 1 put my hands on him. Slu- 3d. because this guy told the cops in here all about it. So, I've been locked p until my "Adjustment Hearing" takes place. This will establish my guilt • innocence. As you'd expect, a set of rules exists here for inmates to live by — break those rules and there will be consequences. This month I'm gonna •.ilk about those rules. NOT the rules which I broke that got me thrown In .Til — but the other rules. The second set of rules which every convict must earn to survive. The convict's rules. These are rules, unwritten though they -nay be, which govern how an individual must conduct himself inside prison around other inmates. By the way. since I am a male. 1 will nearly always speak male specific. No offense to women!

Any time you enter prison, whether for the first or fifteenth time, whether as atransfer inmate from another prison or straight from the county/city jail, sou must adapt a demeanor in which you carry yourself. Now, for the lack of a better tethe "walking attitude." This walking attitude is gonna be the first thing prisoners rm. I'll call it see, and consequently the first thing they challenge when they confront you. Generally, if you keep to yourself — no one will fuck with you. However, that little jewel of knowledge doesn't always ring true, as in my current situation. I did not invite the discussion that led to an argument. In fact, I several rimes verbally dismissed the person ind the argument. But, to no avail. So, I did what I did not want to do — but nd to do in order to reestablish my respect. Does anyone remember the Youth of Today song "Understand"? Well, ask an old schooler — he'll fill you in. Anyway, this walking attitude must be the image you project to the outside — to the prisoners around you. It is a "take no shit from anyone" attitude and it must be convincing. I don't care if you're a peace punk, you don't have this attitude pal — and you're fucked. 1 mean that literally and figurativeiy. You will find out quickly that "punk" in prison ain't got nothing to do with rebellious youth counterculture centered around fast, angry music. No sir. Punk means boy, faggot, queen, somebody's possession, sex toy. 1 know you've cracked the jokes in the high school locker room — but it isn't a joke, I want everyone to understand that I am NOT trying to offend

anyone who is peace punk, or homosexual, or even effeminate I DO mean to point out though that no matter how much you enjoy yourself that way, no matter how many friends respect and like you just the way you arc, no matter how wrong it is that phobias and "ism"s exist — you MUST change or pretend you are someone other than pacifist, homosexual, etc. etc. Because in prison — you will be eaten alive otherwise! Prison is, unfortunately, a place of macho flexing and fighting and exploiting. Period.

But carrying this attitude (whether it be perfectly natural, or a facade} is not enough. You must be prepared to defend yourself physically if someone crosses you.

Inside, people will challenge you for your possessions, for your body, your food. If you don't verbally set them straight on where you're coming from — prepare to fight. Because if you allow someone to disrespect you, or lake something from you (even if you personally couldn't gtve a rat's ass!). others will beat down your cell door to get a piece of what you've got. Even fighting a losing battle sends the message that you are strong minded and will hold fast. Respect will have been earned.

So. what do you do" Keep to yourself. If the prison offers weights — lift them. It's smart to beef up the ass you're carrying — at the same time you're telling everyone around you that you are daily keeping in shape for them — should they get a notion to challenge you. Got long hair? LOSE it Nothing attracts challenges from daddies more than long hair. Unless you're willing to KILL anyone who calls you a "bitch" with long hair — cut it off. This next one the new kids will like: Baggy pants hanging off your ass? Pull them up, boy, or become somebody's boy. Baggy clothes arc fine, providing you hide your ass. 1 should add that in prison black people do NOT respect white kids who emulate black youth. I KNOW how that sounds, folks, and I hate to say it. Now, certainly any ONE person might like white folks or black folks — but in prison, an artificial bameris pretty convincingly imposed which sepa rates white convicts and black convicts and latino or asian cons. So. save yourself the grief — don't go flexing your cross-cultural fashions, or lingo, or mannerisms — YOU WON'TGAIN ANY STREETCRED FROM WHITE CONS. OR BLACK CONS, THAT WAY. Just be quiet, check out the racial atmosphere, and go with the flow. I'm NOT saying "join the Brotherhood." I'm trying very hard though to show you the FACTS It's the same for blacks, as well.

Don't accept presents from inmates. Nor "Ioans." Be EXTREMELY suspicious of anyone who says they want to "help" you. STAY AWAY from the police. 1 can't stress it enough. Drugs? Yeah, they're here. Stay the fuck away from them. I of course expect the SXE folks to adhere, but I say it to everyone alike. Drugs lead to trouble in prison, violence, debt, sentence extensions. Just turn and walk away.

Learn the walking attitude, and use it always — you will be saved so much hell. Relax, in time people will get to know you and eventually you'll find a niche to fit in with. Stay prepared, loyal, and true to yourself. If you become part of a mob or posse (which I DON'T recommend) be prepared io be prepared, loyal, and true to THEM. Even at the expense of your own welfare. As much as you don't want someone to cross you in prison — you REALLY don't want to cross someone youself. Keep in mind, a lot of your neighbors in prison will be there for their WHOLE life Because of that, you are. for the most part, a guest in their home. Your cell is yours; fine. But don't put yourself in a situation where you challenge the "rules" that have been in place for years; unless you arc prepared to handle what happens. As much as it can be detrimental, keep an "I don't care" attitude when dealing with bad situations. Don't back down! Fight! But be wise and fight only in defense of yourself, your possessions, your respect. Fuck the rest.

As always, this information pertains to anyone — black; white; boy; girl; hardcore kid; SXE kid; or even crusty punk, But since I'm a white skinhead male SXE kid. I tend to speak first hand and inadvertantly omit other angles of the discussion. I don't mean to — I want everyone to benefit from my column (if there is such a thing). Well, that's it from behind the walls. See you next issue! I welcome your correspondence: Martin Maassen #170411. P.O. Box 3500. Staunton. VA 24402

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Editor's Note: Axel found his way into our hearts through a series of extremely critical letters that began when he discovered Inside Front a number of months ago. Every time we publish a new issue, we can count on Axel to write us a lengthy, involved letter describing In detail all of the flaws and undesirable qualites of our latest effort. You see, it's not hard to get a column in Inside Front... in Axel's case in fact it was almost inevitable. So be sure to write Axel and describe to him in depth every single mistake and inconsistency in his column!

Hit-parade

by Axel Orange

I don't know whether you are critical readers of your local government praising propaganda pamphlets (aka: newspapers). I must admit that 1 grant that little joy to myself quite frequently. Here's an article I discovered in yesterday's edition. It was located just tot the right of a fake report on the dangers of Tekkno. XTC. blahblahblah. Translated for your convenience:

"They Talk Like The Pope

New York (DPA). They listen to hardcore music, but they don't drink and don't smoke." (what a contradiction, as if the one was ever related to the other). "They protest against animal testing but are themselves tattooed and pierced all over their bodies." (same "contradiction'' — I assume): "These new saints, who look like punks and talk like the pope, call themselves "Straight Edgers" More and more of the American youth confess to this radical lifestyle movement Because it's produced by animals, they don't even cat honey. And about sex- they 're waiting with it until marriage "Straight Edgers" draw crosses on the backs of their hands and wear Ant-Drug shins and baggy pants as well, " And 1 was instantly relieved to know I've never glued the sXe- label to my forehead. Of course, I'm aware that this article only reflects the distorted view of old folks on Generation X- this new trend. And keep in mind that this is from a newspaper, not real life' Thai's why I even welcome the misinterpretation of the sXe in it Only thing that clouds this impression is the fact that this curious "new trend" certainly only saw the light of the mainstream because those feeble- minded champions of justice on the radical wing managed to hype their image well. So 1 just wonder if anyone has a common definition of sXe at hand...you know Tm only in it for the music (and believe

it or not. the music isn't that interesting these days) and I just doubt that all those X-marked kids know what they do

Lucky me, 1 don't match this description of this "new , ..radical lifestyle movement" in important points. Il's odd over here if you don't smoke nor drink you're not considered 'normal". So you're like sXe, then you must be Christian as well, aren't you?"- "Sure, hail Satan'" Yes, I'm glad to say I protest against protests against animal testing, because I believe that contrary to all the "animal liberator's" propaganda, certain important results have been found through animal abuse (e.g. cancer and AIDS research and organ transplantation techniques). Note that I didn't advocate obviously pointless tests like the cosmetic industry's. And you can't ban all the testings because some "scientists" have a profound lack of scruples (what's YOUR price?). And if you are really seriously against vivisectionists, not just because it's hip, you should know, that (at least over here) ALL physicians need to disect animals during their studies and for all prescribed medicine animal tests are manditory. The next sXe accessoir according lo the article would be tattoos and piercings. To cut that one short: I don't think that for skin makes a good advertisement space for your poor identity.

Let's gel to sweeter stuff: if you really think that the honey you buy at the mall was actually produced by bees, then you shouldn't be allowed to eat it anymore anyway because of your naivity. Everyone knows that they adulterate it and add some artificial flavoring afterwards for genuineness. And by the way. which embryo could be killed if you eat an egg that hasn't

been inseminated?

Ahh, ...here we go again...youth issue no I: SEX! Granted.it's wrong to link sXe to veganism (ask Choke' i or religion (be it the Roman Catholic or some other crutch). And about what the pope deserves, ask Tesco Vee. but since the whole sex-marriage thing stems from religious beliefs, let me deliver this punch: sex needs responsibility to avoid gelling children or

infecting yourself, which are both irresponsible, Is it responsible to chain someone to your side as an excuse?

All in all, I must say, I'm amused by the article, give the kids what they're looking for; a radical outfit, rolemodels and stereotypes that allow them to get rid of all the steam those young folks have so much of without really posingarealthreat.we'll see they get a new trend next season. Until then we'll sell them shitty music without lyrics right from the pages : our glossy, full colored mer chandising catalogues Seems like this sXe is about to leave the core.

To end this, here's a couple ' stories I found interesting

E C.- One guy at their Munich show kept insulting Karl and spitting at him. Finally. because Karl didn't re

act. this guy jumped Karl and got bearer. up by the rest of the audience. Pro E C. guys told me that one called the guy a PC type. I say he's courageous. Chaos Days I; somebody who has beer n Hannover on the Chaos Days weekend in August reported that r — — -" : have been worthit if no stones were thrown. One concert be attempted

: arend was cancelled becausedrunk punks threw bottles at the stage Later r — -. evening, people dug out cobblestones and broke every window tn a m-lt^-rr. building As there were no more windows to be broken, they ret fire :. a car that was parked nearby. Suddenly a punk came running to that car trying m vain to extinguish the flames. People hauled him away because they feared trie car might explode. He cried a lol about his car.

Chaos Days 2: Another .. — c r ed about his stay at said weekend- incarcerated with 200 punks tn c C– by -. — dice they, don't call that death camp, 'cause we have a democracy As 'he weekend neared its end. names were called for those who were j ' wed to leave So all sorts of funny names like "Helmut Kohl". "Helg Schneider", etc first one's our fat chancellor's

name, second the name of a famous comedian' ire called and punks get up and I walk out. Il's clever not to take your I D. with you if you attend happenings where the pigs don't find the time to get your real name

Chaos: one or two weeks after Hannover the press hushed up the fright- I ening rumor that another Chaos Days was going to take place in Oldenburg, a I smaller city in the west of Germany The government was shocked and sent I out 1300 riot squad cops to prevent a likewise disaster as in Hannover. 70 I punks were arrested straight at the train station, the remaining 40 said they I couldn't understand what all the fuss was about beacusc they kept doing this I

small party for over ten years now and nothing ever happened that required police action See you.

Axel Orange, Stammbach* 9. *7453k Rasengarten, Rieden Germany

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Notes of a

Grumpy Old Man

by Todd Forkin/ex-Starkweather

***Brian — I 'm writing this article with an I. V. tube in my arm. so please forgive me if it's hard to read, ***

Well here goes: The second installment in my "old school hardcore" article was supposed to be about the years '82-'85. Since writing the last article, which was boring and not exactly what was on my mind. I've had a change of heart. Those years, the Salad Days of hardcore, arc far too personal and mean far too much to me to share with you. You see, part of what made that time so special was the fact that you weren't there. That's right — you phonies, fakes, and high school popularity contest winners have taken what I've held closest to my heart for the last fifteen years and made it cheap and meaningless. I hate what you've done to my music I hate everything you stand for — your rules, regulations, cheesy Les Pauls and Marshall stacks that mom and dad bought you, your thoughtless, heartless lyncs. You've poisened me.

Now. don't be so quick to say "fuck yeah, he's right." because you're probably one of the dicks I'm talking about. The bands you worship suck, they chose to be Career Musicians over being down for life. You can keep the late '80's and the '90's, when your kind crept in like a virus. You can have Youth of Today. Bold, the Gorilla Biscuits, and the pathetic West Coast flunkies Chain of Strength and Insted You can have the Victory and New Age catalogues and bullshit punks like Mouthpenis, and you can keep your pathetic, bored middle class political correctness; but you can never have what 1 had You'll never understand the heartbreaking beauty of Articles of Faith's 'In This Life, ' never know what it's like to come home after having been beaten down by a gang for being a punk and listening to the Freeze's 'Broken Bones' to heal your wounds, and you'll never have the memories I have when I hear Minor Threat play 'Look Back and Laugh.' The F.U.'s, Rites of Spnng. Antidote, Negative Approach, Conflict, the Amebix... they'll always be mine and nothing will ever change that. Hardcore in the '90's? You can't shine shit. And one last thing — if you're hardcore, then fuck you. I'm metal.

Editor's Note: Todd has recently been kicked out of starkweather for expressing the kind of controversial views printed here, so do not hold his former band responsible for his opinions.

Releasing Your Own Records

Part Two

by Josh Baker

You've finished your recording and you are ready to make the rest of the album. This column we will be discussing the artwork and talk about pressing plants.

Why is the artwork so important? The artwork is the first thing someone sees when they see your album in the store. Do you want to make good impression or a bad impression'' This could be the deciding factor between someone passing over your album to look at the new Victory album or giving it a closer look.

The first step in picking artwork is deciding what you are going for. Do you want a live band shot, a concept idea, just the band name, an abstract picture among other ideas. If you can. try to pick out some ideas while you're in the recording phase or before to give you plenty of time. Next you should pick a band logo that you will use on everything, type up the song names, thanks lists, lyrics or whatever else is going to go into your album. I recomend going to the local college and put up flyers for a graphic design student who may interested in doing your graphic design work for free and all the work costs you nothing (give them credit on the album please), try to give them a cut and paste version of the album so they know what look you are going for.

When they have finished designing the album and it's on computer discs, have them give you a laser copy of what it will look like, you'll need to give this to the printers as a reference. Call around to printers and get estimates on the covers. Some pressing plants even do covers which is usually cheaper because they mass produce covers. But if you can find a reasonable local printer it may start a friendship which may lead to discounts or even freebies in the future and you can work up close with. — rojccts. Seven inch covers should cost $200 to $400 per 1000 covers and CD booklets vary on the length and color seperations So the covers are being made and it's time to send the D.A.T and track sheet out io a pressing plant. By this time you should have called around and have rccievcd catalogs on different prices and found the best deal for your project. Most plants require 50% down and 50% upon completion of the project before you receive your records/CD's they will send you reference 7"s/ CD's on your project so you can hear it before mass production in case of any errors. CD's should take 3–4 weeks and 7"s 2–3 wks before they are finished. The catalogs from the plants are very self explanatory so there shouldn't be any questions once you get them, but the people at these plants are very helpful if you need any help.

Some commonly used plants arc:

Erica 310-904-2701 • United 615-259-9396

Fleetwood 1-800-458-TAPE • Bill Smith 310-322-6386

To Hell With The Homeless

by Adel 156

There's a 7–11 and McDonalds on every corner, all of them have signs that say. "Help wanted". So tell me then...why are there so many homeless people? In Miami, as I'm sure in your town as well, it's getting damn near impossible to take three steps out of my home without seeing one of these vagrants with their "Will work for food signs".

"Hey man. you know I'm down on my luck and if you could spare a buck." A buck!? It used to be a quarter you al) were asking for. now it's up to a buck. You're so nice to me. only because you want something from me. You're scum, a loser, complete waste of human genes, clean air and public space.

There are now 6.2 billion people on this ball of dirt, and no matter how many times I've said that 99% of humanity should be wiped out. 1 will give them enough credit to say that 99% can with the smallest bit of intelligence pass an entrance exam, get a job at Burger King, or join the army if they really tried. But what about the homeless? If that's true why are they where they're aP

I'll tell you why, because they're useless. Parasitical. Know-nothings. Constant drains on the resources of humanity and all their booty. The only thing they are good for is coming up with new slogans for their signs that say they want your green without making it obvious that they are nothing but parasites.

As much as I hate the government, don't you dare blame it on them. I hate the homeless almost as much as the government, but I put blame where

[Image not archived]

blame is due. I understand, it's convenient to blame a distant symbol. Humans hate to admit that there is no such thing as fate. That we are responsible for what happens to us. That we ourselves shape our own lives The most the government did to these people was step back and let them survive in this world on their own intelligence. They failed miserably, and now they want hand-outs. If you cannot learn how to survive in this world, something very interesting happens... you drop dead! Just as the lion, the wolf, the grasshopper, the titmouse, the homy toad, the yellow bellied sap suckers have been doing since nature had the interest to create these creatures. Natures way of letting the healthy go on, while the dirty lice-covered. coughing-in-your-face scum wilt away.

Everyone wants to blame the politicians, but do they ever ask themselves where is that wretched persons family? Don't they have any friends? Could it be that that's where it all started from in the first place. They refused to work, go to school, learn a trade instead of lounging around at home listening to Grand Master Melle Mel records till Mom came home when they could ask for a couple of bucks to go get ucos or pot. Could it be that their families and friends wised up and dumped a loser when they recognized a loser. Are they not found because this street trash has already alienated them with his (or her) infantile dependency? Maybe they had their chances and blew them all. If you feel so sorry for these people, then by all means, go pick them up and take them home. Make your one bedroom apartment that you work your ass off for into a shelter for these lazy miscreants. You feel compassion up to the point when you have to act upon it, then you back down. You want everyone to do something about the homeless, but as long as you don't have to touch them... or smell them. Well, I'll do something about the homeless. I suggest labor camps! Target practice for our armies! Hell, the possibilities are endless.

There arc two final points to make. First being that there are a small handful of homeless struggling to make a life for themselves other than shoplifting bottles of Cisco and MD 20/20. There are a couple of street walkers that due to some unfortunate disaster in their life they were forced to live out in the cold. These are the ones who ask for help, not ask for cash. Who rather fill out applications, not fill out cardboard signs. These are the people who are not lazy, just unlucky. They are survivors and if helped properly they will get back on their feet. Secondly, don't point fingers at me and scream that I'm an insensitive white boy with a cushy job and enough money to waste my time writing hateful articles. Truth be. I'm an cx-strect person myself. Six months of eating from your garbage cans, asking for food money and not a penny of it went to a 40 oz, bottle of malt liquor. I got a job, a rat hole of an apartment and worked my way back up to a spot I would be most happy with. Now I live in a house with a beautiful woman and two kids, my job is the mack, and 1 kill time by writing truthful articles. So if anything, that gives me the right to talk with experience. From

what I've seen and what I've felt, my words arc truth. Heed my words or feel the wrath the future has in store! Adel 156 PO Box 820407. South Floria FL 33082–0407

EDITOR'S NOTE. As uncomfortable as Adel's commentary may make us in the face of our instinctive compassion and charity, there is more than a little truth to his perspective... especially regarding the unwillingness most people have to help the homeless in more than superficial ways. A little pocket change, at best, maintains a homeless person in a lifestyle that they presumably do not enjoy. Even free food and lodging cannot provide a man or woman with a sense of accomplishment or seif-value, tn my experience, I've noticed that people often fare better when they are pitted alone against a difficult challenge than when they are aided by others. So. with tongue only partly in cheek, I offer this ancient anecdote by Charles Baudelaire as a supplement to Adel's column:

I had provided myself with the popular books of the day (this was sixteen or seventeen years ago), and for two weeks I had never left my room. 1 am speaking now of those books that treat of the art of making nations happy, wise and rich in twenty- four hours. I had therefore digested — swallowed. I should say — all the lucubrations of society — those who advise the poor to become slaves, and those who persuade them that they are all dethroned kings So it is not astonishing if I was in a state of mind bordering on stupidity or madness. Only it seemed to me that deep in my mind, I was conscious of an obscure germ of an idea, superior to all the old wives' formulas whose dictionary 1 had just been perusing. But it was only the idea of an idea, something infinitely vague. And 1 went out with a great thirst, for a passionate taste for bad books engenders a proportionate desire for open air and for refreshments.

As I was about to enter a tavern, a beggar held out his hat to me and gave me one of those unforgettable glances-which might overturn thrones i spirit could move matter, and if the eyes of mesmerists could ripen grapes. At the same time I heard a voice whispering in my ear. a voice I recognized: it was that of a good Angel, or of a good Demon, who is always following me about. Since Socrates had his good Demon, why should I not have my good Angel, and why should I not have the honor, like Socrates, of obtaining my certificate of folly, signed by the subtle Lelut and by the sage Baillarger. There is this difference between Socrates' Demon and mine: his did not appear except to defend, warn or hinder him. whereas mine deigns to counse suggest, or persuade. Poor Socrates had only a prohibitive Demon; mine is a great master of affirmations, mine is a Demon of action, a Demon of combat And his voice was now whispering to me: "He alone is the equal of anoth who proves it. and he alone is worthy of liberty who knows how to obtain it.

Immediately. I sprang at the beggar. With a single blow of my fist, I closed one of his eyes, which became, in a second, as big as a ball. In break ing two of his teeth I split a nail; but being of delicate constitution from birth and not used to boxing. 1 didn't feel strong enough to knock the old man senseless; so I seized the collar of his coat with one hand, grasped his throat with the other, and began vigorously to beat his head against a wall. 1 must confess that I had first glanced around carefully, and

had made certain that in this lonely suburb I should find myself, for a short while, at least, out o immediate danger from the police.

Next, having knocked down this feeble man of sixty with a kick in t back sufficiently vicious to have broken his shoulder blades. I picked up a big branch of tree which lay on the ground, and beat him with the persistent energy of a cook pounding a lough steak.

All of a sudden — O miracle! O happiness of the philosopher proving the excellence of his theory! — 1 saw this ancient carcass turn, stand up with an energy 1 should never have suspected in a machine so badly out of order, and with a glance of hatred which seemed Io me of good omen, the decrepi ruffian hurled himself upon me, blackened both my eyes, broke four of my teeth, and with the same tree-branch, beat me to a pulp Thus by an energeti treatment, I had restored to him his pride and his life

Then 1 motioned to him to make him understand that I considered t discussion ended, and getting up. I said to him, with all the satisfaction of a Sophist of the Porch: "Sir, you are my equal[1] Will you do me the honor o sharing my purse, and will you remember, if you are really philanthropic that you must apply to all the members of your profession, when they see alms from you, the theory it has been my misfortune to practice on your back?"

He swore to me that he had understood my theory, and that he would carry out my advice.

Inside Front: The Compact Disc.

1. **.O.L.C.- "On the Cuff — P.O. Box 18062, Cleveland, OH 44118**

2.O.L.C.- "Too Much Authority"

3.Blood Runs Black- "No Return"- Tom, 3564 Horseshoe Island Road, Clay, NY 13041

4.Spirit- "This Time"- James Smith III, 190 West Prospect Avenue, Keyport, NJ 07735

5.Trial- 'Turn Away"- 427 Eleventh Avenue East, Seattle, WA 98102

6.Halfmast- "Only One Way"- 21 Nancy Lane. Amherst, NY 14228

7.Aftershock- "Pulp"- 99 Reservoir Rd, Westhampton MA 01027

8.Quarantine- "Abyss"- P.O. box 19841, San Diego CA 92159–0841

9.Lash Out- "As Life Takes the Knife to its Heart"- Vegard Waske, Nordskogun 1, 6400 Molde, Norway

10.Brother's Keeper- 'The Gift (As the Colors Fade)"- P.O.Box 11363, Erie, PA 16514–1363

11.Backlash- "Self Assured"-16 Simpson Court, Bergenfield, NJ 07621

12. **.Tension- "Greed"- Ray, 9617 Riverside Drive, Apt. C6, Coral Springs. FL 33071**

13. **.Timescape Zero- "Honor Among Thieves"- P.O. Box 820407, South Florida, Fl 33082- 0407**

14, Atlas Shrugged- Tribe of a Man"- P.O. Box 36, New City, NY 10956-0036

15. **.Line Drive- "U.P.C."- Grey Kaiser, 300–35 Stone Mill Run, Athens, GA 30605**

16. **.Refuge- "Strength"- Construction Records, 12344 Pascal Avenue, Grand Terrace, CA 92313**

17Abhinanda- "Inner Qualities"- Kemigr. 16, 90731 Umea. Sweden

18. **.Abhinanda- "Dragon"**

19. **.0tls Reem- "Persistence"- 901 Kings Mill Road, Chapel Hill, NC 27514**

20. **.Dwid/Psywarfare- "Chamber of the Centipede"- P.O. Box 770213, Lakewood, OH 44107**

Tracks 9–14 and 17–19 originally appeared on the "Point Counterpoint" compilation that came with Inside Front #6. For lyncs and other band information, order that issue from Inside Front for $4 USA/ $6 World. Tracks 15–16 originally appeared on the "No Exit" compilation that came with Inside Front #4. For lyrics and other band information, order that issue from Inside Front for $3 USA/$5 world.

[Image not archived]

*** _Too Much Authorit_y**

cop **attitude** went to your head, pot luck rookie, wind up dead
Badge and gun, make you a god-lose the C g O just do your job
Too much authority-cant control me
-bullet make you see

-just let me be

~~On The Ctr~~ff =
Life is a game of survival

I'll take from you to feed me

-Motivated to do nothing
Accepting the easy way out... My easy way to exist
You don't feel my pain **-No worry about my destiny**

leading a life of deceit... Even taking from my own... blood every week check to check

No pleasures in my life gotta steal necessities

On the cuff
I gotta do what I gotta do

Trial

"Turn Away"

We are only as strong as the weakest link in this chain and I've been drained for so long by your complacency. What do I need to do to make you see that when we sit day by day we just play right into then- hands? Guilty of silence in a culture of violence, acknowledging lies by closing our eyes. Slaves to a system which makes us feel we don't belong, how can you tell me I'm wrong? Broken on the wheel, or is that just what I'm expected to feel? Victims in the game, yet the blame falls on us for not using our voice when I know we have a choice- you'll never tell me I'm wrong. I won't turn away. I will never turn away." *-There are those who refuse to believe that they can make a change. There are those who choose not to care.*

There are those who choose to mock others for making an effort. There are those who have decided that rather than thinking for themselves, that it is easier to simply be swept along by the current.-

On This Recording: Chad- drums.

Timm- guitar. Derek- bass. Greg- vocals. Brian- guitar.

[Image not archived]

Trial 7" on CrimethInc. in J 996

LIGHT IS UNLeASHeD, LeT IT BURN THe FLeSH OF THOSe WHO DiSBeLieVe HeAR THe THUNDeR ROLL, See THe MOUNTAINS FALL, WAIT FOR JUDGeMeNT TO FALL ON YOU MeRCY DiSSiPATeS, ANGeR OVeRTAKeS THe LIGHT SURROUNDS, IT SATURATeS THe DARKNeSS THAT YOU BLeeD YOU CANNOT PACIFY THe PURIFYING SAPieNT ONe i ASCeND ABOVe YOUR ReMAiNS, LIGHT UNLeASHeD YOU DeSCeND UNeARTHLY PLAINS, LiGHT UNLeASHeD SeeTHiNG ANGeR FILLS HiS VeiNS, LiGHT UNLeASHeD 1 ReVeL iN YOUR PAiN, LiGHT UNLeASHeD LiGHT iS UNLeASHeD, Let it SCORCH A PATH TO THe SPiRiTUALLY

DiViNe NOW i THReAD THe PUMeLLeD BONeS, THAT Lie DORMANT BLeACHeD BY THe LiGHT MeRCY DiSSiPATeS, ANGeR OVeRTAKeS THeY ONCe WeRe YOU, ALL YOU STOOD FOR, ALL YOU LeT YOURSeLF Be, NOW THeY FADe, i LiFT, SOVeReiGN iS THe LiGHT i ASCeND ABOVe

YOUR ReMAiNS, LiGHT UNLeASHeD SeeTHiNG ANGeR FILLS HiS VeiNS, LiGHT UNLeASHeD i ReVeL iN YOUR PAiN, LiGHT UNLeASHeD AFTeRSHOCK

ADAM-GU1TAR fc VOCALS J0N-GU1TAR MARK-BASS ERIC-DRUMS TOBiAS-VOCALS

THIS SONO OOeS OUT TO eVeRYONe WHO HAS DeGRADeD ReLiGiON, NO MATTeR ITS FROM.
ReLiGiON (OR LACK OF ReLiGiON) IS A PeRSONAL CHOICE AND RIGHT.

NO ONe PeRSON HAS THe POWeR TO JUDGe WHAT THe ONe TRUe ReLiGiON
MAY Be AND THeRePORe SHOULD NOT GO AROUND DeGRADiNG ANOTBeR
PeRSONS INDiViDUAL CHOiCE. THIS DISPLAYS ARROGANCe AND LGNORANCe.
ALTHOUGH THIS SONG IS PROM MY OWN ReLiGlOUS PeRSPeCTIVE, IT IS NOT DiReCTeD
TOWARD SOCieTY AS A WHOLe. THIS SONG IS A ReFLeCTiON ON ANGeR AND AS 1 SAID
BePORe, GOeS OUT TO ALL THOSe WHO ARe TOO CLOSe MiNDeD TO ReSPeCT ANOTHeR

[Image not archived]

PeRSONS INDiViDUAL CHOICe AND HAVe DeeMeD THeMSeLeVeS ML

What I thought meant so much Now I realize it meant nothing at all You were able to ignore it like it never happene I expected so much more from you Everything you said was nothing but lies Nothing but lies and empty promises I still can't believe the things you said and you were able to lie right to my face

Too caught up in empty promises
Everything you said seemed so sincere
I don't know what to believe anymore
Sorry 's not good enough this time

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Reviews are perhaps the most common component in today's hardcore 'zines; I get the impression that some editors view them as a *necessary* component — or should I say a necessary evil ? For there are so many review sections these days, and so few actually useful ones, that it's hard to figure out exactly what their purpose is anymore. In theory, reviews serve an important purpose: to let readers know about other magazines, records, etc., how to obtain them, and what they should expect

(based on their knowledge of the reviewer's tastes) A lot of smaller magazines tend to fail in accomplishing the first two ends by neither reviewing many releases nor giving addresses for those they do describe... and of course we've all seen a few 'zines that gave *everything* a positive review — a positively *useless* review, since most of us don't have the finances to buy everything somebody feels kind enough to endorse, especially when they don't even tell us exactly why they endorse iL

The larger magazines are no better. Apparently, overwhelmed with so much material, they are forced to unload reviewing duties on people who just don't want to do it. I offer as an example a review that appeared in Max R&R#140:

RYKER'S- "Brother Against Brother" CD

NYC style hardcore from Germany, tough guy, macho core, what else can I say?

For starters, he could have said which NYC bands the music reminded him of. what it was that made them seem "macho." whether it seemed real or fake and why. or perhaps even intelligently discussed whether or not their stance seemed valid... let alone tell us more about the actual music, recording, and packaging. But at least in this case we leam something about the release; we're not so lucky in Punk Planet #9:

"You've Got a Friend in Pennsylvania" 7" compilation

It's pretty much a rule that hardcore compilations suck shit. Really, 1 mean, other than "Rebuilding" and "Forever" what hardcore compilation 7"shave ever been any good? OK. maybe there s been one or two bur they are VERY RARE. So, that said, this compilation has tracks by Option. Deckard, Out-

since Youth of Today, so they had a lot to live up to with this EP It's still clearly the same band, but I get the impression somehow that this release was rushed. The second song is like their older work, speedy impassioned hardcore with just enough metal in it to up the intensity, and it's even tighter and more complex than before. But the first song and. in places, the third and fourth songs, are too heavy metal for this hand. The bluesy solos and Slayer-influenced guitar squeals sound out of place and weak in the context of their old-fashioned hardcore guitar sound and songwriting. Jose's (fairly high-pitched, but strong) yelling voice is still inspiring in it's pleading sincerety and conviction, and the lyrics are yet more poetic in their condemnation of superficiality and suffering. My theory is that they didn't take enough time with these songs to integrate the metal parts well enough, and that they'll continue to be a good band in the future. This record is worth it for the second song alone: it's a classic, alternating between fast parts that get my pulse up over it's healthy limit and fast dance choruses, with one of the best haunting feedback parts ever. Before I forget. I think

come, and Brother's Keeper. Yeah.

This jaded piece of shit should never have wasted our time and his with this drivel. He told us nothing about the music, why he didn't like it. what the music or packaging were like, or anything else — all he did was drop a couple names to get credibility or

something. He should be fucking publically humiliated for doing punk and hardcore such a disservice as a review like this, a review that encourages others to think that a review need be nothing more than this... not to mention he has denied the readers of Punk Planet any knowledge at all of the bands or the music. The publishers of P.P are themselves responsible for apparently believing that this was a useful review and wasting our patience and their paper with it.

So what is to be done? In the case of smaller magazines, that do not reach much of an audience outside the circulation of the bigger magazines like MRR and PP. their editors need not feel as if reviews are an essential part of a 'zine. There are plenty of other equally useful and interesting subjects that could be addressed in that space than other people's work, if the editor does not expect that his or her reviews will offer something that the larger magazines do not. In the case of the larger magazines, which we all depend on for reviews, they must first weed out the kind of shit I've given examples of. if you are going to publish reviews, publish useful reviews: reviews that describe the music in terms of specific musical approach and emotional impact, in terms of recording quality and influences... reviews that make interesting reading and leave the reader feeling more knowledgable. The same goes for 'zine reviews, for any kind of review.

This is not an obscure problem; I've heard people from many different circles complaining about it for quite a while now. I don't mean to give the impression that we feel we have the best reviews here at Inside Front; despite our hard work, nothing could be farther from the truth. But I feel that if we all work hard to actually produce useful, high quality reviews, eventually some of us will succeed, and we will all be the better for it We in hardcore should never settle for mere mediocrity: there's more than enough of that in the mainstream world.

Desperate Fight. Kemigrand 1.907 31 Umea. Sweden

ACT OF FAITH "Gain" CD

Everything from Atlanta has always been old-fashioned in the style of Seven Seconds, but with this release AOF break from the mold and take that sound in an entirely new evolutionary direction. It sounds something like what Seven Seconds might be now if they had remained a hardcore band: the music is split between melodic parts that are catchy and pretty without being too gentle, and old-fashioned 1987 style fast riffs a little like the ones on the first Gorilla Bisuits 7". The guitars and drums even stop sometimes to let the bass bring in the next part — sound familiar? The singer also sounds something like Civ from the first GB 7". very energetic and a little gruff and hoarse, only his voice doesn't break like a fucking sissy's (criticism of Civ is very much intentional!!). At places, however, he does sing pretty high, which doesn't do much for me; his voice there resembles the singer of Ignite on the new Ignite CD. The lyrics arc intelligent, and seem very real in their discussion of topics such as growing older and struggling

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with disillusion and trying to make the right choice in the midst of confusion My overall impression is: when 1 first put it in, it didn't seem loo memorable, but now I think it's a pretty solid record in it's genre, though not an instant classic. They do get credit for using a sample from The Outsiders. *Standfast. P.O. Box 97.1. Lihurn. GA 30226*

AUTUMN LEAF DANCE "Learn What Is Taught" CD

Do you like to listen to "hardcore" bands with soothing female vocals like Ashes and Standpoint, but gel frustrated when these bands start playing music that sounds more aggressive than your average alternative rock and roll? Then ALD is the band you've been waiting for: silly pretty pictures all over the packaging I fruit, wheat, fancy computer color designs, photos of the hand members reflecting on which coffee house to attend that night), gentle crooning over semi-acoustic music that has rhythm but no bite, lyrics about failed romance and being angst-ridden, and lots of pretty melodies in the songs Let it be known that your humble reviewer listens to nonhardcore music from time to time; but this record is simply out of place in a magazine whose standard of good music is somewhere between Minor Threat and Slayer When the revolution finally comes, not only will this band not be in the front lines, they will be hiding under their silk-sheeted beds., and with good reason, too. *Conquer the World. P.O. Box 40232. Redford. Ml 482-tu* BLINDFOLD "World of Fools" 7"

This record suits off with a high guitar melody, then launches into a full- on I Ws aggressive chunky hardcore assault — but wait, the singer's voice has more of a singing edge to it than a screaming edge; if he had sang just *b* tmy bit less it would have been really powerful (1 can imagine the singer H A ☒ me shneking along with this!) but because of his vocals it stops short The song goes on to include a more melodic part that only justifies my fe Jt. i hat thi', band would not cross the line into real intensity. The song on die uhet side is similar, only the music isn't quite as powerful either. The ! yrics arc fairly abstract and seem to be complaining in a predictable way about our greedy, technological society. Maybe you'd like this if you think you'd like to hear someone singing along in a rocknroll/slightly whiny voice to gritty hardcore that makes occasional use of melody, Not every — one has to shriek, but 1 just don't think it works here. Too bad. because it's on , 1 good label *Machination, Jeroen, P.O. Box 90. 8300 Kortrijk, Belgium* BURNING DEFEAT "Singling Out the Alms" 7"

Although I was misled by a fairly straightforward beginning, there's a lot fairly slow, melodic hardcore on this record that comes off a little bit gentle. Encounter and similar bands come to mind as comparisons. The lyrics d T convincingly with the subjects of seeking to achieve and the plague ot consumerism. The singer alternates speaking (with a singing edge) .ind -T 'liini: and does what he does well, which is important, but the problem with this genre of hardcore is that while it can be done well it's almost impossible to do memorably enough that it is exciting. The beginnings of both sides are exciting (because of a sudden transition from melody to P> overfill hardcore in the first case, and a powerful drum mix in the second case), hut in both cases after the slow steady-tempo melodies have gone on Inr a while, ihe momentum

fades. My suggestion to this band would be that they include some major tempo and energy changes in their music so that it would hold people's attention better. They have the potential they need to work with One thing more that I'd like to mention is how impressed I am by European bands that speak English as well as I do, considering that I can't speak any other language at all...*Green, Giulio Repetto. Via FMoppio, 33 Padova. Italy*

BY ALL MEANS "Blindside" LP

The cover is a Goya drawing, bringing to mind the "Colossus" LP by another hard-core band... The record starts with a great sample of monks chanting that created a good atmosphere for the music. The style is straightforward and in the great tradition of. well, bands like Rorschach and the one that put out the "Colossus" Ip: fast, with open and chunky parts, tempo changes, tactfully restrained and rare metallic guitar noises, and choruses

to inspire the crowd to shout along and pummel each other. The songs arc not short enough to be full-on audio attacks, but not so long as to be self- indulgent and boring. The bass guitar is mixed too loud, which is too bad, because a powerful heavy guitar sound would have really fit well with their sound. But still, they pull through, because of their singer. This huge, tough looking guy (he has a tattoo on his fucking neck, for Christ's sake) has a powerful throaty deep voice that has enough conviction in it to pull everything else together. If it weren't for the detectable sincerely, he would sound like just another dumb tough guy. in his fairly monotone delivery, but he pulls through OK. There does seem to be a weird reverb on his vocals. He sings in Italian, which sounds much better than English here (once a friend visiting from Switzerland told me that punk sounded weak sung in English, but I never understood him until now). The lyrics and liner notes are also inspiring; written in English and Italian, they not only rail against organized religion, racism, child and animal mistreatment, and other real concerns, they also say some important things with real clarity: "They can go on saying that we all have freedom of speech...but how much can our ideas be worth, compared to TV, radio, and newspapers which reach even to the farthest cottage? Our freedom is a fucking swindle., .we have learned this through so many years of injustices, during which we never received...two minutes of news. But Bettino (just one of them) only has to fart to have a front page article." "I want to teach you how to face your life, but noone teaches you how to fight the ghost of solitude and suffer for something — you've got to learn it on your own skin." "There are people who keep alive their ideals with concrete deeds; these people will live forever. There arc people who only speak of their ideals ..these people will live only for a moment. There are people who have no ideals, these people have never lived." And, the record concludes with a sample from Carmens Burans* *Gwen records, address above*

CHELSEA'S GONE UNDER "-" CD

I don't know what kind of award you get for having phonograph-style scratching sounds actually recorded at the beginning of your CD, but this band gets iL I guess it's part of the classical music sample that they inexplicably chose to begin this cd This

is the next step in the progression of "emo" away from anything punk or hardcore: a crying, apparently miserable little boy. a fairly talented pianist, a guitarist who makes more random noise than anything else on his barely-distorted instrument, and the requisite drummer and bassist have teamed up to deliver this twenty minute foray into the world of random noise and blubbering. The last few minutes are a little more aggressive, with some ugly distortion and feedback from the guitars, and the vocals, too. Even the lyrics seem abstract and entirely improvised. Experimental, to be sure, which is a good thing, and with some hard work they could turn out some work of real interest to weak and emotionally unstable adolescents, but just like Autumn Leaf Dance I have a hard time seeing what chance this music has of changing anything in our fucked up world. By the way. it's packaged in a paper bag with a scrap of paper stapled to the front for a cover.

Write the band: *609 Hawthorne. Royal Oak. Michigan. 43067 W0J342 M332* COALESCE "002" CDEP

Just what I needed after the last record: an emetic. Coalesce is an adrenaline-charged onslaught of pure distorted ugly noise, from their ugly distorted guitars and ugly distorted shrieking vocals to their mesmerizingly repetitive bass-lines and nontraditionally spastic drumming which are relentless in their assault on the listener's peace of mind. The music fails to express much of a range of emotion besides pure disgust, but it's a necessary antidote to the pretentious self-indulgence of so many other bands today. The singer's distorted shrieking functions as more of a sound effect than a means of communication, which is fine with me since although his lyrics are above average they still fall into the popular category of abstract criticism of pop culture and phenomena such as tabloids and child hunger. Maybe they are aiming for something deeper, but they have one more step

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to make before they really lake the listener (or reader, in this case, as I explained...) to the next level. Anyway, for pure cleansing power to the jaded listener's ear. this is the best release reviewed this issue. It's on a pretty big label, and that makes me uncomfortable, but not nearly so much as the fact that so many fucking small so-called hardcore labels conduct "business" as if they were twice the size of Earache. Offer a real alternative to consumer culture, somehow, or shut the fuck up about how D.I.Y you are! For what? D.I.Y. for what? *Earache. 295 Lafayette St.. Sune 915. New York. NY 10012* CONFUSION "Taste of Hate" 7"

This came out years ago. but the guy from Hardway records begged me to review this and the Disciplinary Action record before he got rid of his last copies, so here you are. It should be no secret to the readers of the first couple (horrible') issues of IF that when 1 was a younger kid 1 really liked the style of so-called "dumb toughguy" music that has been coming out of the NY urea since the early 80's, and this is a great example of that; catchy, fucking powerful beats that are twice as danceable as any hip hop, heavy metal chunky guitars, deep roaring vocals, terrible cover art (a kindergarten drawing of the members of Metallica attacking a businessman), and low-

IQ rabble-rousing lyrics. I recall fights with skinheads, steel-toed boots, bruises, and general high-school dropout mayhem when 1 listen to this Personally, 1 love to listen to it and reminisce; who knows what it will do for *JOU...Hardway. 8 Rue Bertin Poiree. 75001 Pane. France*

CONGRESS "Blackened Perslstance" LP

These days, a popular criticism of modem hardcore is that it has become nothing more than bad metal. Well, this release is good metal... really good in some places. It's certainly two steps forward from their older material. The record begins with some kind of horror-movie keyboard introduction that quickly changes to some deep, thick, fearfully powerful guitarwork, before blasting off into a full on speed blast of a metallic hardcore song. Beautiful. The hoarse, screaming vocals are not well integrated into the first song, but they work for the rest of the record. The first song is called "Lifting the Ban, " is it political? I hope so. as European politics always seem so much more genuine that USA politics, but 1'11 never know, as my copy of the record (provided by Roby of Inside Front/Belgium) came with no lyric sheet. It's a big mistake if the band didn't make a lyric sheet. The second song begins with a sample that includes fucking Diamonda Galas, for Christ's sake' The songs on the rest of the record are a mix of fast metallic hardcore parts vaguely reminiscent of "Those Who Fear..." Integrity. moshy parts that aren't quite traditional enough in their rhythms to be generic, and some experimental metal parts (odd time changes, acoustic/ electric solos, unusual guitar screams and effects) that kick it 6 ver the top to be an original record. I wouldn't say the record is solid genius, it has some really hot spots and some cooler spots, but it's good and foreshadows only greater things The back cover is great, it's a show photograph, but while everyone else in hardcore uses the same fucking photos until it's dull as shit Congress has theirs developed to look like an old World War I photo and in so doing casts the whole affair in a much more dramatic light. A few silly things about this release: the cover is an Iron .Maiden style picture of a scary wizard (it may be full color, but it's still melodramatic as shit; so don't judge this book by its cover). They have a song called "Superstench." And, at the end of the record they follow a recent trend and waste a few minutes of our time with a track of them making noise and shouting nonsense. It was cool when Agnostic Front did it on the CBGB's album, but that was a long time ago now, guys., .GcW *Life Recordings. uh ah. no addread Either I'm missing a lyric sheet or these kids really fucked up!*

CONVERGE "Unloved and Weeded Out" 7"

Maybe Coalesce. Congress, and Converge should, well, converge, or coalesce. or form a congress... or come up with band names that don't all mean the same thing' Well, I sort of figured Converge was washed up after they broke up and then decided to reform, but I sure was wrong. This is improved in every way from their full-length First of all. the recording is

much clearer and less flat, and thetr guitar sound is finally., well, clearer and less flat Second of all. their experimental tendencies have finally panned out into some great, completely original music. The record begins with fast tom drumming, and a

pretty guitar melody plays over it before they dive into a hectic mess of shrieking and off time, twisted hardcore, lake's vocals arc deeper, throatier. and much less emo than before... actually he's starting to sing a little like the singer from Overcast, with the deathmetal growling going on at some points, but there's a lot more feeling in his vocals, so it doesn't come off as flat and fake as that band sometimes does His lyrics ore also getting better and better; where some imitators write abstractly and just turn out nonsense, he creates some real poetry: "I only sec you in bad dreams., let me explain. Close enough to feel your words, far enough to read your flesh..." There is a great deal of variety in the music, as acoustic breaks and sudden changes always appear to throw the listener off balance just as he was sealing into complacency. The general emotional overtones arc of vulnerable rage and regretful angst

JJ *to Heliotrvpc/Qrionquest, 20 Gerald Road, #2. Brighton, MA 02135*
CRUNCH "Trigger Happy Trespasser" CD

Helmet-styled midtempo pounding grooves here, played with a really rough, jagged, deep guitar, that breaks into more melodic, almost major key parts every once in a while. There are also some noise pans where even the drums join in the chaos before returning to (he song proper. Towards the end of the record there are a few faster parts, a long acoustic intro, and even a guitar solo or two as well. The singer's voice is also rough, deep, and jagged, and he sings in English with a light Italian accent, although when he occasionally speaks his voice sounds sort of nasal and annoying, almost as if he had a Southern US accent... that is certainly unexpected. As I said, though, he speakes only rarely The lyrics are sometimes confusing, undeniably original in their unusual use of English ("with your blood shed out on your clear hands you could write an Urban Safety Book"), and often attack television and media culture, which is to their credit. I'm left unable to decide on a general impression of this record. *Vacation House. Via San Michele 56, 13069. Vigliano Biellese (Bi), Italy*

CULTURE "Born of You" CD

First of all the cover of this CD (Francis Bacon's screaming picture of the Pope) has been used far too much in hardcore already (on the original cover of Integrity's first full length, on the cover of a Transcend record.. or maybe it was Majority of One, which one's which?, and on the tattoo on Alexei's arm) to turn up on a third CD cover looking exactly the same. And while 1 can't pick out any particular stolen riffs, the music and everything else on this CD sort of strikes me the same way. Remember the acoustic intros from early Unbroken'' They're here. Remember the heavy metal Slayer-esque riffs from Unbroken's second full length? They're here. Remember the shouting deep vocals from Unbroken? They're here. I guess there's a bit of Strife and Earth Crisis here too, and plenty of "abstract" lyrics that express a vague discontent without really pinpointing the problem, plus some important-sounding song titles like "Born of You" and "Silence Surrounds, " from songs that include popular phrases like "pain fills my void." "empty shell of a human being, " "I wage war on myself, " and "I fill my latrine with spite." (Where did that last one come from?!) Really, it's a well-recorded CD. the songs are decently structured, there are no really weak parts, and it has some feeling in

it; but sometimes when I'm confronted with solid mediocrity I get extremely impatient with hardcore music today for treading water and running in place so fucking much *Conquer the World, address above*

DARE TO DEFY "The Weight of Disgust" CD

The cover is an (apparently computer-simulated) close shot of a bloody nose. The music is fast metal, a lot like "Reign in Blood" Slayer songs, though not quite as fast tempo-wise., you know the deal: play really fast and yell over it, then hit the slower, rhythmic dance parts, often with the fast guitars still going but the drums slower Vocalist Les sings sings like

[Image not archived]

everybody in NYC who grew up on "Age of Quarrel" Cro-Mags docs: he speaks and yells in the toughest voice he can muster, occasionally doing little growls. I actually really enjoyed their song on the East Coast Assault compilation, but I think (hat had a little more personality than this incarnation of the band. You can tell it's important to these guys to seem tough; for instance, one song ends with singer Les shouting "beeatchl", the lyrics are all about "the accumulation of my hate, " and there's one songcallcd "Brick" (preceded by a sample of a guy screaming at a woman) about how Les is apparently going to hunt down his ex-girlfriend and kill her with a brick ("you lie there a mess, released waste on your dress, so poorly unattractive, not good enough for Les"). However, if these guys really wanted to seem tough, they should scrap their song about how they have to use drugs to escape the horrible pain of their existence, and replace it with a song about what they're doing to actually be strong enough to face down their enemies. Also, they might want to reconsider the song about Les's exgirifriend. if they ever again want to get respect from any women who respect themselves. Finally. 1 don't think they should have ripped off the Catharsis cover art for their liner notes, but maybe it was an accident? *Too Damn Hype, P.O. Box 1520, Cooper Station, New York. NY 10276–1520* DECKARD "Just Plain Ordinary" 7"

What kind of band is Deckard? Just plain ordinary. Not really hardcore, either. I helped set up a show they played once, and they were really good guys. Bui when this record began, with semi-distorted major key pop guitars and a guy singing in a high and not-so-practised singing voice about the "sunshine on his face, " 1 was in Inside Front hell. It got a little better later in the song, as they backed away from the major key a bit and a guy in the background did a little yelling. At the end of that side is a funny part where they apparently went up to some kids in their neighborhood and invited them to be on a record; one of the kids sings a little ditty for us that actually gave Deckard some decent competition. The second song is better, more quiet and reflective, pretty much acoustic but for a few more distorted old Fugazi-esque breaks, with the vocals taking it a bit slower and more angst-ridden as well. The second side ends with a recording of their landlord being an asshole as he evicts them; that was sort of funny. Their lyrics are fairly decent in their reflections on fragile moments of peace and broken relationships between individuals, and they seem like a sincere band. But as I don't listen to alternative college rock, I don't really know if they do what they

do well. *37.50 to Centrifuge. 32/5 Ira Hill Road, Cuto. NY 13033* DISCIPLINARY ACTION "-" 7"

As I mentioned, this and the Confusion 7" are old old old. but Hardway guy still wants me to review them. OK — where the Confusion record had great rhythm and a lol of pure testosterone splendor to recommend it. this falls sort of short. The singer, who sounds a little influneed by Ray from Warzone in his choppy, choked up vocals, does sound genuinely hateful. There's nothing really wrong with the music, it's just so predictably straightforward tn it's take on tough NYHC that it ends up pretty damn boring There arc some unnecessary blues solos that I found more annoying than anything else, the transitions from one part to the next arc a bit abrupt, and so many other bands have done the "play-fast-shout-about-how-hard-life- is-play-slow-growl-about-how-sick-it-makes-you" thing better. Plus, the lyrics arc not only predictable but also not really well done; on one song the singer says "fuck" about 20 times in thirty lines, it seems to be because he couldn't think of anything else to say. Or maybe he's so frustrated that it just comes out that way, who knows. Perhaps back in '92 when (his came out it was something special (although 1 listened to NYHC more then than now, and thinking back 1 doubt it) but it hasn't stood (he test of time.

Hordwav. address above

EMPATHY "Uner the Lost Smile" CD

This band was definitely more ready for a full length than their labelmales Culture, even though the latter's music would have been more to my taste if only... Here we have lots of "emotional." melodic music, with the distant

metal influence that has filtered J — .. — hardcore — what that means here is that there are some rere — • ˜ re ..utar parts, long acoustic parts, and a lot of more corer, re- — res »- -: ne guitar strikes open chords and the other one play- -re :=rs - — -: ringer alternates yelling with singing, mumbling, and talk — x *' * . renerabtc edge to his voice that, combined with the melody cYfee r^- • •" • mis this record from ever being aggressive even where tea n–. This, I'm sure, is deliberate, as the childlikc/ sentimcr; — jrwerfew . ' young women talking about losing their dreams, and .- r. — . — — -ncs attest. The introduction to the CD is an at least — •..-*t˜&* Wr etier of appreciation from the band to the listener f. — pvn r Scs ; *'-'lc* I guess that while I never listen to this kind of mus . — . ^ « — inspire people to have fits of melancholy and self — .-t ?. — r =ae .: — rights or go to a decent college, this stuff is decently r ryi — s» t ˜ ' an edge, and seems sincere enough for me to restrain -.^ 'fear -˜-git off. There's a lol of weird stuff at the end, including...r- :# »-˜ — vic rock song.

Conquer the World, address above

EVERSOR "•" 7"

This 7" starts with really quiet, me.re . — . *k.* r iw — ..a fast pace, and the singer comes in singing really high re: -i4s ic re — til a lot like Ray on the "Ray and Porcell" 7" And..? ..-:e-srA«- : Mined guitar in there, for the whole record every: . -. t : st . pitched, and melodic. All the songs are love sony A: . ^ , i , • w I guess this is pop with a liny bit of hardcore inf .. — . Ya •_☒« -.- .illy well done and well played, so if

you like me . re _ac *shs* > y ve songs and want an alternative to Depeche Mode ˜ ’ “^ is your cup of tea. In fact, it’s so poppy and pk_ _ re:x — r t tc-m make, me fear that hardcore is softening up... nobody re re .- — n –: ‘ -for hardcore. The packaging is also really pretty ar c –Kt -er m — a go is actually raised off of the cover like braille < ☒• — ^^ —

FADEAWAY CD

Where others have charged them with be-c gear-:s˜re- edge hardcore. 1 have to admit io a taste for the no* < .–. .:*xs T’ : tec ord starts out with the acoustic/ melodic introd act * ‘emkeac • re mid-tempo super-chunky metallic hardcore, with the c .< c:– re “cs over it that arc probably more generic than the re R cYfee *a.i.:* I suffocate in a time of endless suffering that won’t . ‘.;- * - never question why”). But their music is by no me., ? re re — nger sounds like he means it; he has a good .scream? re : * .. — ng but at the same time harsh, as if he is really burning . set “re re.- ire fast enough to maintain momentum and interest _☒. re .. «y — — piexity to avoid using riffs that have been used to? nur — re. -re : –? metal edge is restrained just the right amount Sou * re- m • — — it different from any other music being made by al! the -re:* re re- . astream of 1990’s straight edge hardcore right now. I *a* odd : retire . re. mi mend it above the work of their peers such as Everlast or. *a* c “ re cy re too numerous to mention. The recording quality is clear and cr-c-‘rer is w ell, and their split 7” with 2 Line “we suck” Filler is included — — • *? World, address above*

FINAL EXIT “TEG” CD

The spirit of Project X lives on in Sweden arc their name is Final Exit, Fifteen songs in seventeen raging, fist-pounding minutes When I heard this record for the fust lime I was more excited than I had been in a long lime about any music: 100 mph authentic mid-80’s hardcore, with catchy choruses and breakdowns, deep-voiced throaty screaming that burns with sincerety, and song titles like ‘ Revenge. Talk Behind My Back, ” “Flame of My Conviction.” and “Respect . in the last one. the singer even talks in an lan/Minor Threat sarcastic voice at the end of the song, as (he chorus is screamed in (he background. Plenty of bands in the US have tried to imitate the “days of old”, but all have failed and come off as flat and backward-looking. Somehow Final Exit has the genuine energy to pull it off as well as the old bands did — the good Chain of Strength 7” comes quickly to

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mind Even the details arc ail perfect: rather than only singing about the “brotherhood.” they give equal lime to singing the praises of the “sisterhood;” they have a fast song called “One Weak Link, ” which only has two lines of lyrics: “have we broken the chain, or have we chained ourselves down?”; and the lyrics to a similarly short song, humorously entitled “Mutilated Scumbag.” proclaim “You crossed my path, you piece of shit, don’t ever let it happen again!” There’s a song called “Higher Form of Killing, ” with the lyrics “the Allied Ffont laid quiet for days, approaching now the 4th; the troops stood strong, morale was high, as fate would lake it’s turn.” That strikes me as poetic. Finally, the musicians have names like “Kid Stone” (that should sound familiar

to fans of P'X), and are leaping fifteen feet in the air in every picture... including the drummer. I think they did this just to entertain themselves (the liner notes read "dedicated to the ink on our construction gloves'" and "by the way, some of the lyrics are dead serious"), but the finished product blows away almost every other hardcore record this year. *Desperate Pight. address above*

FOCUSED "The Hope That Lies Within" Cassette

Some of the music on this record works, some of it doesn't. It's all at a uniformly slow tempo, with complex mixtures of acoustic and heavy guitar melodies with chunky metallic lines; sometimes these combinations come off as powerful and beautiful, but just as frequently they come off as disorganized and self-indulgent, even occasionally jagged and out of tune, as in the case of a sporadic lead pan in one segment of the second song or a pan near the end of the fourth song. As before, Focused's songs are really long, and their frequent changes and complexity would have carried them through just fine if only they hadn't made these songs quite as long as they are. Singer Tim has always had a good deal of chansma, some of which comes across during his frequent speaking parts, less of which comes across during his self-righteous screaming parts when it always sounds like his voice is about to break. The recording is pretty damn clear, although the guitar and drums don't sound quite as staggeringly heavy as they should have to make this a really memorable record. The best, most effectively moving songs are probably the first two, the second of which is convincingly impassioned in it's decrying of consumerism and its demand that we 'kill the image " — too bad that there's a catalogue packaged with this record, depicting unnaturally handsome fashion model-type youths modelling the latest trendy fashion clothes from Focused's record label!! Finally, at the end they do a Chain of Strength cover (though not off the "What Still Holds True 7 . mind you) and I feel like this band was more at home in their own style. A crucial factor about this band, that I've looked past in order to be impartial, is that Christianity is the most important thing in the world to them If you re Christian and want to listen to hardcore, but the unbelievers make you uncomfortable, this is (was. as they 've broken up) the band for you. On that note, let me personally implore any of you out there who are interested in Christianity to consider the Bible from a historian's viewpoint first and see if you find that approach convincing, before accepting it as the word of the Lord. The New Testament was written in small chunks by many separate individuals, and even the book of Mark, the oldest book in the collection, was written at least 30 years after Jesus' death by someone who didn't even speak the same language (Aramaic) as Jesus did. The New Testament was collected together from a number of different conflicting texts, all of which claimed to tell the story of Jesus and the right ways of the Christian faith, and none of which claimed God as their author. Any biblical scholar will tell you this and more. Keep an eye out so that no one will mislead you into believing anything for bad reasons! Everyone wants converts to their cause, and no one but you can know what's right for yourself. *Tooth and Nail. P.O. Boi 12698, Seattle. WA 9f<111-4698* GOVINDA HARDCORE PROJECT "II Megllo Del Due Mondi" CD As their name seems to indicate, 1 fear this band has fallen into the

same tendency as other overtly religious bands often display, of putting their religious agenda so far before their musical one that their music seems like

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further here, because everything is in Italian. Their music is almost all fast, and stylistically sits somewhere on the border between old-fashioned straightforward melodic hardcore (like a more singy latter day Seven Seconds, perhaps? The vocals are, like another band I reviewed above, reminiscent of Ray's on the "Ray and Porccll" 7") and fluff pop punk... maybe some of it is like old Farside, but I'm reaching here because I don't really listen to any of that stuff They also have a lot of really bluesy metal solos, some of which were interesting, the rest of which fit with the "silly pop punk" side of their music. The first two songs were the ones that caught my attention: there was enough speed and energy to maintain some momentum. and the singing style, while still high and melodic, seemed to draw upon the traditional Italian love ballad/opera sound, if you can imagine that: so the vocals came out sort of haunting and dramatic, especially on the second song That was interesting enough to hold my attention, but after those songs the rest of the record was far too heavy on the "pop punk" side. And. as you could have guessed, it ends with a few minutes of Indianstyle music praising Krishna Just as I expressed my concerns about Christianity. let me repeat myself about so called "Krishna Consciousness": don t let the blue god get you' Looks like a cult group, dresses like a cult group, talks like a cult group, must be a cult group. *Vacation House, address above* GRASP "-" 7"

I think the recording quality on this record isn't as good as most of the other ones in the stack this issue. For one thing, the singer's shrieking vocals are mixed too loud over everything else. His shrieking style is similar to that of many of the Ebullition band singers... you know, that shrieking thing that has become so common today, that tends to make one singer sound alot like the next singer. Maybe this guy sounds like the Fadeaway singer would if he had a much weaker voice. The band seems to have some potential here, they are certainly competent, although they need an original angle to differentiate their chunky slowish hardcore style from every other band that plays this way. There was a fast part in the third song that was such a relief from the monotony of the rest of the slow-tempo'd record that it made me think to myself... what if they had pul in a few more tempo changes'? The record includes a twelve page insert that includes the lyrics (which deal with important subjects like alcoholism and rape, although Td like to see them try harder to present clear solutions), explanations of the meanings of the songs, and a brief tirade against capitalism; I always think it's a good deal when bands try to make their intentions clear, so that was a plus i n their favor. I do think however that they need to work on improving and differentiating their music and message biLConsrrvcrran. *12344 Pascal. Grand Terrace. CA 92.113* GROUNDSTATE "Pinwheel Cement Driver" CD

The recording is clear but pretty textureless, and in general that could be also said about the straightforward '90's metallic hardcore music on this full length from an apparently new band, ft's mostly midtempo chunky stuff, but there are enough

fast parts to keep it from being montonous. The guitars indulge themselves in the occasional metal shriek, and sound fairly heavy and deep, though they sort of lack bite. The singer screams, but his voice has very little muscle, so it comes off as emotive rather than impassioned or — God Forbid — angry. Could they be Christian? The lyrics seem to deal with religious issues ("for the Father judges all" .) Their drummer occasionally makes good use of his toms, he should do that more. 1 get the impression from the music and general approach that these guys might be able to get along fine with Empathy. A few of the songs have details worth mentioning: the third one has some poppy, silly melodic parts tossed in to throw off the listener when the heavy part comes in. and that works pretty well to make them sound a bit aggressive there where they fail to in other places. The fourth song begins with a sample that another band in this genre. I believe it was Everlast, has already used. A great deal of the seventh song is acoustic. Finally, and this really substantiates my theory about Empathy, they end the CD with a cover of a cheesy rock and roll song. Unlike Empa-

HATCHET FACE "Volume II" LP

This is a band that fans of fancy, prefabricated modern day "hardcore" (don't make me name names!) would deem untalented, but how wrong they are. It takes a lot more talent to have the energy and musical sense to make music like this work than it does to buy a couple thousand dollars worth of equipment and just play "heavy shit, dude." This band reminds me of music from the 80's, not from the NYC straight edge scene, but from the early days of crossover punk/hardcore when everything was messy, straightforward, and honest. The singer has the hoarsest, most bumt out screaming voice you could imagine, but he manages to stick it out the whole record, and he sounds for real. The recording quality is pretty rough, but it actually complements the rough sound of the guitars and, well, the whole band. There's a whole lot of straight fast old hardcore/punk stuff, not over IO() mph but definitely fast enough to carry some momentum. From time to time these fast pans break down into old fashioned hardcore breakdowns, grooving choruses, pounding slow parts, or really raw '80's style solos that are rough and restrained enough to bear no metal pretension. No song is long enough to wear out its welcome; in fact they even seem a little short by today's standards, which really helps to maintain the momentum. In short, this record is absolutely relentless in its raw. rugged musical charge Even the lyrics arc straightforward, up front, and often hilarious: "All the lights have me in a trance, I stare and soak when I get the chance, switch the channel, change the colors... now I have to kill my brother!" (Those are the entire lyrics to "Prime Crime.") "Fuck the fashion. all your fashion, hardcore passion, you're just a fucking doll, dressed like n Goddamn doll, fuck your fashion, fuck my fashion, fuck the fashion!" No abstract pretensions here. I think that amounts to genius.

Figure Four, 35 Fliah Fathom Wax. E. Bridgewater, MA 02333

HEADSMAN "The Morning" LP

This record conies in sort of like it's underwater; ephemeral high melodic guitar lines, and two tracks of vocals, one mumbled and one sung in the background. This

goes on for quite a while, until I feel half-hypnotized. Don't be fooled; the second song comes in much harsher, the singer roaring in a deep voice over drawn out distorted guitar chords, as the melodic guitar parts retreat to the background. The song picks up a bit to a chunkier midtempo. and alternates different takes on the same repetitive, mesmerizing sound structure before plunging into a final fast part to charge to the end. The third song maintains the same heavy, deep mix. but has a faster, more rhythmic approach, maybe a little influence from danceable US hardcore. The singer's growling, roaring voice is pretty damn deep and powerful. without sounding too fake like deathmetal or some "tough guy" generic hardcore bands. The rest of the record basically remains with the limits of the styles of the songs I've just described, and the melodic guitar parts rarely reoccur; at some points, there's enough rhythm and speed for it to have some real strength and power, while at other points the slow, repetitive music is somewhere between being mesmerizing and being dull. So though it never lost enough of my interest to warrant criticm, I would like to sec this band introduce a little more variety and complexity in their music, in case other people have a shorter attention span that 1. The lyrics are a little clumsy in their handling of the English language, though they draw upon the work of poets Coleridge and Blake, and also from Jim Morrison (!?) and Franco Battiato (am I uneducated for not knowing who this guy is?). They generally deal abstractly and somewhat inaccessably with subjects of life, death, loss, and struggle, from what I can tell; in a better moment. they proclaim "Kill everyone and you will be God. in a kingdom of the blind, an empire of sins, a kingdom of the deaf." 1 like this record, but 1 would choose it more for listening during a long, steady late night drive, than to get my adrenaline pumping before an act of terrorism or a political science exam. *Green, address above*

IMMORAL MAJORITY

Very straightforward old-fashioned midtempo hardcore; this band probably is/was a contemporary of By All Means. Gruffly shouted Italian vocals, which sound rugged but need a little bit of extra emotional push to get them over the top (they're monotone enough to seem almost chanted), lay over rough guitars that play basic, mid-length songs, like the slower songs from the first Sick of It All material, only not as catchy or as light. The last song is more chunky and sporadic than the others. The lyrics consist of a warning not to trust politicians and statements of pride {"I'm looked al with a lot of disdain but 1 don't care"). There are some rough edges here in general that need work, but this is a really old release *Green, address above* INDECISION "-"7"

Between this band and Shutdown (the latest band by that name), straight edge hardcore is back in Brooklyn NYC; that's either a sign of the impending apocalypse, or a good thing — I don't know which yet. This record would have made a good demo, it's a little rough to be a 7"... I know that a million 7"s are coming out every day now. but it's really important to be ready, so that your record will stick out from the others. You can play traditional, simplistic hardcore with the verse/chorus song structure, breakdowns where the guitar starts and then everything else joins in, etc., and still make great, really interesting music if your details are original However, a young band

like Indecision often hasn't really settled on specific details yet, and that is apparent in some of these songs. The other songs, while also basic and straightforward, have enough pure youthful energy and drive to be memorable. The first song has some raw power to it, but the second one is the one that sticks out: it alternates a bouncy, happy-go-lucky funky bass lune with fast, angry assaults in which the singer yells things like "I'm as straight as the barrel pointed into your mouth (sound familiar? See the Final Exit review...) in conviction of your lifestyle and everything you're about, you question me and my way of life but who are you to measure[7] So polluted and so stained is your life forever..." *Released Power Prod's. Herszaft Alain, Av V Olivier IOA. Box 67, 1070 Brussels, Belgium*

INDIGESTI "Sguardo Reatta"' CD

This is pure beauty. This is the CD re-release of the music from an '82–83 Italian punk band, and it's the real thing. Imagine, if you can here in '96. this, a band that plays as hard and fast as they possibly can, <he drum sound a mess *of* broken cymbals and bangbangbang snare, the guitars playing the fastest, catchiest, most blistering 3-chord attacks you could imagine through fifty dollar dimestore amplifiers, and the singer shouting the lyrics as fast as he can in his natural, unaffected voice (high, sarcastic, shrill, exhausted, and impassioned all at once). If I remember correctly, they sound something like the Germs, or maybe the Vandals with twice as much speed and energy... they definitely could have blown away some of the old Southern California punk bands of similar styles. Some of their songs are only a glorious eighteen seconds in length, for instance, "No to the System": "no to the system, never, never, no to the system, never, never, no to the system. against the system'" And true to his words, their singer is now, 13 years later, operating an underground music label on which this CD was released. There are no pretensions here, no self-indulgence or boring bullshit: just lots of blasting, uncompromising music and message (some of the lyrics have more depth and poetry than the aforementioned ones). Even the photos included show people of all different backgrounds going fucking crazy... rather than cookie-cutter trendy kids standing around or imitating the latest dance or fashion craze. Maybe I'm romanticizing a lime gone by. but I think we could still stand to gain from looking back...

Vhcahon *house, address above*

INMATES "Government Crimes" 7"

These guys must have had a laugh doing this. It's imitation dirty, scummy, drunk, messed up. gutter British punk, and the details are all there in even more profusion than in the original: messy, fast three-chord lines, fake British accent, swearing between songs, loose and "talentless" music (even

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though this band contains members of some more well-known acts...), hilarious lyrics. Their one variation from tradition is that they down-tune so low that the individual notes are indistinguishable, but this just adds to the overall effect The record we received for review is even laced with scratches, if not soaked in vomit. They do

a Chaos UK cover ("I'm being victimized, police won't leave me alone...") just in ease anyone had missed their point up until then. If you've missed my point up until now. let me offer you some lyrics: "throwing bricks, swinging sticks, riots in the streets, anarchy and chaos, law and order will get beat" "Wanna see a riot, gonna do some crimes, wanna see a riot, have a good time.. wanna see a riot, glass on the ground ..." *Brainwashed. 2602 Pnn. don Rd.. Cleeland heights. OH 44HR* IVORY CAGE "TV Head"

The recording quality is much cleaner and clearer on this record than the older Green releases like Bi Al I Means or Immoral Majority, and the songs are better structured and more diverse The singer uses a lot of distortion on his voice, which keeps it from being very personal, but he seems to be into it as he shouts The times when he leaves it off, for instance parts of the second song, arc better tri...- the rest. The guitars mix powerful, chunky grooves with higher notes and mt enough melody to use the full spectrum of sound; they end a real texture to this record that does a lot for it. The drums sound tight and pack a lot of punch, too. I think kids who like slightly "progressive harderre like Snapcase should like this; I actually like it better than Snapcare The panging is beautiful, and the lyrics (which are in English , .- ^ e llarcuage *nh much more fluency than most of the other records tre m Europe in this issue They eloquently discuss the scourges of injustice, mas:–media anesthesia, and racism in today's world.

Green. adduce _ ; -. , <

JASTA14"-˜ 7"

Atmospheric ;- gressp.c modem hardcore, maybe post-hardcore? They play al a de.. — . q ☒:; k 'err there's a lot of melody and complex parts from the gur — "en high pitched or noisy lines, and for most of the record neither ...;.- > fulfilling the traditional hardcore role of playing deep, heavy c -r..T the other one plays the melodic stuff... with the result being that there'> n < too much force anywhere here. That doesn't seen) to be any a.; Js.tt though — 1 think this band is pretty aware of what it s doing. Their ger alternates speaking, sometimes as gruffly as he can, with screaming in that high, tom up screaming style we're all familiar with. The last song -s an i r.crumentai in the style of (he rest of the 7". Their song structure is Io ?se and c . -n out. parts come in that you didn't expect, and often the transitions are a :nic rough. I think a little brevity would help them tighten up their approach, also, it's great they are trying to shoot fora more mature, melodic complex style, but as it stands right now their music rarely manages : express any emotion and thus comes off sort of flat much of the time. The lyrics are pretty simple, the lyricist seems to be still on uncertain ground as he approx he» the task of writing: there's a song called "geek" where he claim — I hope tn rest, that "if they come near me I'll incinerate, kill, destroy, humi date don't touch me, I'll kill you too"! And. there's a lot of silly rambling in the liner notes. *Centrifuge, address above* JIHAD "God's Forsaken People"

This seems to have been done by some kids who have brains in their heads and care about what they're doing The music sounds sincere. Although the record starts out

with a breif melodic bass line it quickly turns ugly and abrasive, the singer shrieking in a convincing torn throaty voice which is similar in style to a number of other bands (say, Jasta 14), but just sounds more real. The music is midtempo, pretty simple, the recording is not perfect. and the songs are not memorable enough to be classics, but (he band included a decent amount of packaging with explanations of the songs and their intentions as members of the hardcore community, and that's worth a lot to me. It shows they are truly concerned about what they are doing and have some real goals. They didn't even misspell any words *$3 to Schema. P.O. Bos H6I, Battle Creek. MI490I6-U61*

This is great. The music is authentic, speedy late 80 s hardcore — I'm talking 110 mph, with fast breakdowns at the end, shouted choruses, the works, and none of it even sounds false or backward looking. Side By Side is the band in whose footsteps they worthily follow. Any band that puts eight solid, catchy songs on one 7" is already a cut above. Oh shit, I just noticed — the singer has "free John Joseph" written on his arm in the photo!! That does it. this is one of the best records of the year. The guitars do the super fast thing, occasionally throwing in some chunky build-ups or brief 8O's-style dive bombs (like Porcell did before he left hardcore to join the Moonies), or the occasional burst of harmonics. The drums do the Youth of Today/Straight Ahead double time bit. without ever pausing for air. There are a couple places where their music refers back to older stuff; for instance. the end of "How I Feel" is a cover of the end of Judge's "Give It Up, " and the song after that begins with the guitars playing Darth Vader's theme song from Star Wars. Everything here seems real, from the clear and direct straight edge lyrics ("Break the Cycle, " "Skin Deep Love." "Can't Bring Me Down") to the photos of the strong, healthy band members giving it their all, to the well-written essay about avoiding pitfalls of commercialism and making hardcore/punk a true alternative to the mainstream lifestyle. *Crucial Response, Kaisersfetd 98. 46047 Oberhausen, Germany* NATIONS ON FIRE "Death of the Pro-Lifer" CD

The final release from this great band, and it sets the standards this year for sincerity and content. Not only is the music 100 mph. completely catchy and adrenaline-pumping old fashioned hardcore, rough and unpretentious, but their approach is inspiring. Singer Edward sings straight from the heart, in his natural, emotionally involved yelling voice, and he seems to care more than any other singer about what he is attempting to communicate. He ought to. as well: the songs here deal with the scourge of far-right politics in our world (anti-choicers/"pro-lifcrs" and racists/homophobes included), and the "underground" struggle to be (in their words) independant rather than alternative and to avoid being sucked into particular political parties with their limited goals. Elsewhere they speak of television ("it kills my creativity, kills my time, now I realize my life must be mine, , , ") with a great deal of clarity and intelligence, and in a song about sexual abuse of children they wax frighteningly poetic: "he's got a dick, he's getting bolder, he's got a wife, she's getting older... and his daughter is a flower in the desert called their home." And just when you're afraid that the title track is a silly call to militant violence that ruins it all, you read Edward's essay in the liner notes, in

which he explains his stance on abortion legality and other human rights issues — and explains that the title is about the recent passing away of the king of Belgium, who was opposed to abortion even in cases of rape. Indeed (he liner notes arc extremely detailed and well done in general, listing a NOF discography as well as lyrics and other stuff. The CD ends with a clear live recording and a hilarious rave song they did for a laugh.

Incidentally, I think they should have named the record "death of the anti-choicer." There's not space here for a detailed discussion of the topic of abortion, but to be brief: I think "life" is much more than just a chemical reaction like a heart beating... my definition of "life" is living as a free, independant, emotionally developed individual in this world, experiencing things and, as soon as you are able, making choices. To think that life is nothing but a series of chemical reactions like heartbeats and reflexes is to be so cynical and scientific as to take all of the beauty and meaning out of the very concept. To say that a man in a permanent coma, who will never mentally or emotionally return to our world, is just as "alive" in (he human sense as a healthy, awake individual, is to leave out most of the truth. And as for the subject of "potential" life, a fertile man and woman who stand next to each other constitute a potential human being, if only they would have unprotected sex... should we lament the passing of the short-lived sperm and egg that these two "cruel, murderous"

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individuals choose not to unite into a human life? The •potential life" argument holds no water, for everything is potential to some degree, and to assign a certain level of potentiality as being "potential enough in every circumstance would have to be a completely arbitrary choice. So. what 1 conclude is that while almost all of us are "pro-life, " some of us are "anti-choice" for others and believe that noone but themselves (or their God, to whom they inevitably attribute whatever they themselves really believe) should be allowed to choose what is "potential enough , " Fight fascism — fight theanti- choice movement. *Support European hardcore*[1] *Get the vinyl from Genet, P.O. Boe 447. 9000 Gent I. Belgium or. CD from Conquer the World, address above*

NEGATIVE MALE CHILD "Little Brother" CD

This is that brand of meta) that passes for "hardcore" in some circles these days. I imagine them opening for Biohazard, or, even more likely. Rage From Within the Major Label Machine. So. 1 should talk shit about it and write it off. However, there's something here that 1 think is a good deal. Tile singer seems to genuinely care when he writes about the people he watches throwing themselves away, in songs like the title track and "Burn Out." He sings in a East Coast-style choked up, throaty, high screaming voice, and there's some heart in his vocals — sometimes, like in the chorus of "Dirty." he builds to an emotional climax. Here arc some of his lyrics: "1 remember a young boy. he looked just like you; everything there was to know, that you boy knew. Fire in his eyes, it was him against the world... that fire don't burn so bright no more, .." "I wish I could say it gets easier, but that would be a lie. it won't — as a matter of fact you'll find time scrapes by. the wounds it leaves behind don't heal over very well..."

"Do as 1 say. don't do as I do — little brother I want something better for you..." As for the music, there's lots of deep, grooving, sometimes even very bluesy guitar, backed up by a loud, funky-sounding bass. The drummer uses congas and other traditionally non-rocknroll drums, which in places arc original and really set this band apart. The recording is. of course, major-label metal quality and thickness, which I guess does what they want it to, and they are a very tight and versatile band. If it sounds like you'd like it, well, you probably would The same goes if you think you'd hate it...

Tent Damn Hype, address above

ONE FOR ONE "I Won't Lose" 7"

Although derivative, this is certainly not a bad 7" for this young band. Fast, energetic, basic hardcore, wtth a lot of danceable rhythm coming from the drums in places. When the guitars are not playing the basic fast 4-chord riffs, they add some metallic touches, which (except in the third song) are well integrated and not overdone... they rather help to give a little variety to the music The singer yells in a sometimes strained but never breaking voice, which seems solid and fairly strong, but he still seems to be struggling to figure out how to really let loose. Everything is pretty solid, and the slightly shaky song structures will probably tighten up over time. Nothing is extremely memorable or catchy about this record, but if the band keeps at it they should develope into a capable hardcore unit. There's a place on the last song where they do build to a moving climax during a guitar solo where the singer keeps shouting. *Released Power Productions, address above* ONE LIFE CREW "Reality Check" demo

Damn I hope they didn't copy all of these with the same horrible, muffled sound quality 1 got. Here we have seven compilation songs and three live songs on one tape The first four songs, from their most recent session, seem a little rushed Singer Steve still has a lol of natural heart and conviction in his vocals, as he has ever since he sang for Confront in the ' 80's; but when he says "Jeah" like MC Eiht. or "Old school, sucka." in a tough guy wanna-be hip hop voice, it really sounds out of place. I would recommend he restrain himself, unless he really enjoys doing it enough that he doesn't care what anyone else thinks. The songs still have the old fashioned style and sound to them, and although as I said the slightly shaky song structure makes them seem rushed, these four songs are less obviously derivative from '80's NYC hardcore than their older stuff; there seems to be an ele

ment of more recent Cleveland metallic hardcore mixed in. and it works. The third song has a chorus that sounds remarkably like the chorus from Integrity's "darkness" — I think that was just an accident on the guitanst's part, but drummer Chubby Fresh shouldn't have gone along with it with the double bass and all. The second song has meaningful lyrics about kids who get obsessed with causes that are meaningless in the long run. and in the first song Steve suggests that kids "put mind and body to use" and feel good about themselves... of course, in other places he's threatoning to "gut you like apig." The fourth song of the first session is slow, like the Cromags. and Steve is less comfortable vocally there. The second session includes two songs from the Inside Front *8 compilation, and a third song which is faster, tighter, and more genuinely

exciting old-fashioned hardcore than anything else this band as done None of these seven studio songs were recorded at Mars like their Victory record was, and while they still have good quality recordings. Mars did give them an extra edge. The live songs are well-recorded and pretty well played, they include Meanstreak's "Final Word" and Confront's "Our Fight " Before playing that song. Steve threatens (obviously to the members of Catharsis, who are the only ones to have done such a thing) "don't change my lyrics or 1'11 change your life — no apologies accepted." Now. I hate to bring this up again, but since they put it on the tape. 1 have to: I was the one who. in the Catharsis cover of the antiracist song "Our Fight." changed the lyncs to make it anti-sexist and antihomophobic. I went to an OLC show in Washington DC after Steve had made all those threats, and I was prepared to stand up to a guy who weighs more than twice as much as me But my life was not changed, and no apologies were offered or accepted — Steve (old me that he had no problem with me after al! and not to worry about it. and only Chubby Fresh offered any conflict... (mostly he just cned ah[u];t me singing "No One" in his face during the Integrity set). 1 get along fine »ith everyone in this band now. except the drummer; but it's important that people know how the whole conflict turned out, since this live recording captures it when it was unresolved *a whole* M *postpaid from the band. 42 2. Su: ˜.˜.tl Rd.. Cleveland, OH 44118* OPPOSITE FORCE "Near CD

Pure heavy metal/"hardcore" at it — Nest here The recording is perfectly clear and heavy, like a metal band s * . d be: the guitar lines sound like something from Slayer or possibly Metallica. in their alternation between chunks and complex, super-aggres^i ; — — ne drummer uses his double bass with ease and just enough restraint, and has more bite on his snare than I've ever fucking heard; and the singer sings with that deep, roaring voice that today's crossover bands generally use, although he sounds like he really means it sometimes as he ann unites every painful, twisted syllable. Everything sounds perfect, the -.>.:unship is tight as hell and the song structure is great with plenty of change and fast parts, and even the rare solos and acoustic parts come off smoothly and only add power. As far as this genre of music goes, this is the top of the line. All I can complain about is that their songs are a tiny btt hng. and that in the quest for pure heavy force bands like this one often lose the edge of emotional power and sound a little fiat. The lyrics are well done, clear, and socially concerned as well, fortunately, since so many bands like this have nothing to say... or, worse, stupid bullshit to say. Pul away y our Madbal) and Metallica records, listen to this. In the thanks list, the drummer thanks "Vic's Kickboxing Center." and writes "I want to say that 1 hate all those who smoke at concerts in closed spaces." One guitarist dedicates the record to a friend of his who has passed away, and writes "to love the world and life also in suffering, to accept with gratitude every ray of sunlight, and even in pain, to not forget how to smile." Hell yes. *Vacation House, address above*

OPTION (promo of upcoming release)

Option have come a long way. I didn't think they were ever going to pull it all together to be a competent, effective hardcore unit, but they have. If someone put this

in front of me and said it was new material, roughly recorded, by Strongarm. I would believe them The same mixture of metal-

[Image not archived]

thing with rather than playing music like so many other bands today in the tough hardcore genre. There are moments in the third and fourth songs where they add a bit of texture lo their music again, as one guitar plays an octave higher. The lyrics of the first song deal with violent retribution towards an individual member of a gang that has been bullying other people; that's something I wish would happen much more frequently, and if POR are actually doing it. good for them, they should open up a chapter where I live. *Mad Mob. Hagelhergerstrasse 48. /O96S Berlin. Germany*

ROOSEVELT'S INAUGURAL PARADE "-" 7"

This is really melodic, emo/alternativc rock and roll type stuff The singer sings or, occasionally, screams, in a high, broken voice, a woman with a similar but clearer and prettier voice sometimes joins him. and the guitars are barely distoned as they play their pretty melodies. Major key. pleasent stuff. The lyrics mention teardrops, sadness and regret. I'm searching for something else to say... well, the speed is midtempo, it's executed smoothly enough, the recording is Ok... but what the fuck is it doing reviewed next to a "Prophecy of Rage "7"? I *'...And AU the Hills Echoed, add ress below* SHIELD "Vampiresongs" CD

Clear, well-played, well-recorded, original hardcore from Sweden — xs I've learned to expect all Swedish hardcore to be. Shield play a complex mixture of acoustic and electric metal/hardcore, all very intricate and melodic, and often quite pretty. It rarely builds to any sort of energy, but I can see people who like smoother, more soothing "post-hardcore" really enjoying this... Their singer alternates a lot of speaking with some yelling, he pulls it off smoothly, and comes off as more vulnerable than anything else. Most of it seems pretty lighthearted, as the cover (a faux-scary picture of the band members as vampires against a dark sky) indicates. There arc places where I think the music becomes too whimsical, and 1 fucking wish they'd left off the fifth song, a completely acoustic rock and roll pop tune/singalong thing that sounds like fucking pop radio trash. I'm afraid that's where this band's musical sound may be heading... They have some socially concerned songs, including the entertainingly-titled vegetarian song "Die. dinner, die" and a disturbing song about sexual abuse of children that has a weird almost eerie major key ethereal guitar part in the middle that I could imagine hearing on a movie soundtrack. *Desperate Fight, address above*

SIX-O-ONE "•" first demo

Here we have a last-minute demo review. As with all demo reviews, the question here is not what's wrong with it (horrible production and mix. horrible drum and guitar sounds. loose song structure and delivery, etc that make it unlistenable), but what is right with it — and there are definitely some promising elements here. The drummer employs unusual, ultra-hectic. cymbal-based beats, the prominent bassist uses unusual chords and progressions, and the whole band plays in unusual time schemes... in short, there's a lot of Bloodlet influence here, without it being an imitation. That's great, if

you ask me , and if this band continues to evolve into a jazz- influcnced, experimental hardcore band, they should be quite a groundbreaking force to reckon with. Their songs spread out. like Bloodlet's or Starkweather's, into vast soundscapes filled with constant changes in texture and mood. This band will either figure out how to become like all the generic hardcore bands out there today, or they will evolve into something special... or. most likely, they will just break up like most young bands do. Pity, *the band: 3345 Quiliei Rd.. Reno. NV89511*

SKIPLINE "Incubation" cassette

For a first release, this band is pretty tight, especially the drummer, whose internal consistency is especially discernable in the double bass parts. However. the guitarist seems to occasionally hit notes slightly out of place, unless that is deliberate, and if it's not my bad hearing they tend to slow down a bit here and there. The music is Ringworm-influenced straightforward hardcore, with fast pans and slow parts and a slight metal edge, but no solos or anything. The guitarist adds in the occasional interesting sound, but still seems to be finding an identity in that respect. The drums are clear.

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although they could sound heavier, and the guitars arc mixed perfectly clear and heavy. The vocalist is the weakest link, as of now: his monotone manner of blurting out the words in the toughest-sounding voice he can muster just doesn't express any emotion, and when he really gets into it (as on the chorus of the first song) his voice starts to break, which still doesn't help much. The intro- and outro- ductions arc both really well done atmospheric pieces, mixing unusual drum and guitar noises with samples to create a sort of Eastern musical flavor, *band P.O. Box 360141. Strongsville. OH 44136*

SKURJ "Shattered Age" cassette

I walked into an empty cafe where this band was playing by accident once, and live they were fucking blistering punk rock and roll. The tape they gave me is toned down a little bit. but still good stuff, if you like punk rock and roll. It reminds me a lot of old Social Distortion, even the gravelly singing, let alone the bluesy solos and catchy country-style simple riffs. Now and then it's too toned down, and a couple songs strike me as radiofriendly in that Rancid/Green Day way, with the quiet parts and the rock out chorus. The drum production could have been better. The other two details you need to know: there are twelve full songs on this cassette. Skurj means "scourge" in Virginia punk jargon... just as one of the musicians spells his name "Skot." *band: P.O. Box 1824. Maxes. VA 23072*

THE S — TROCKETS "e#%'&®!" 7"

Bratty. fast punk. You sort of know what you're in for when you see the cover art. a Japanese animation-style drawing of a naked girl with a knife about to slab a sad looking naked tied-up guy... that is, if their name doesn't inform you first. The songs are put together in the tight, pop punk rock and roll tradition. The singing is annoying as hell, deliberately nasally and extremely obnoxious, and the lyrics are pretty silly as

well in their desenption of the band members' romantic problems with nazi skinchicks The guitar plays basic three chord blues riffs, only fast and distorted so it will be "punk, " and throws in some blues solos as well. The one part that I really liked, despite all the silliness and the immature name, was the drumming; super fast, very punchy and powerful, tight, with a lot of momentum. Their drummer should play in some old-fashioned rabble-rousing punk band that matches his ability... say. the Mormons.Oli *shu. where's their address?!.' Mavbe it's tn the ad they sent..*

STORMCORE "To the Point" CD

This music is very much influenced by old and recent NY hardcore. There are bursts of speed, like Straight Ahead once did. and lots of tough sounding backup vocals, which are not always well integrated into the songs. 1 think Biohazard was also a heavy musical and lyrical influence here, because I can hear parts of their songs from their second album (say, "Shades of Grey" for example . and don't ask me how I know their songs, please!!) in here — for instance, in the beginning of the chorus of the fourth song on here. (Another example, from the first song is their lyric "In this country, the land of the free, a trial for me? I'm considered guilty!" where the original Biohazard lyrics read "in this country, the land of the free. I'm an innocent man arrested: guilty!") Other than that, the fourth song is one of the songs I like more; it begins with a vaguely threatening bluesy guitar solo, and has more variety in texture than the other songs... lyncally, it is a rejection of organized religion, challenging. "God, 1 wanna see you now!" Elsewhere in their lyrics they discuss hating themselves, hating people who stab them in the back, and hating the cops. Probably the best song on here is the one sung in Spanish, and I feel that if more of the songs had been sung in a language they felt more comfortable with, they might have come out more smoothly. I would recommend that this band work on developing an individual style of iheir own. and on getting a clearer, thicker recording next time *Hardside Records. David Maniella. 2 2 Allee de Maurepas. 35700 Rennes. France* STRONGARM "Atonement" CD, and "Division" 7"

Today I was in a drugstore, and they were selling this in the "Rock and R & B" section. I'll try to look past that, but it's interesting to note that Christian hardcore bands seem to get a lot more financial backing than others...

Do you think that's a fair advantage? If it comes from the support of the rich Christian infrastructure of our Western society, they can hardly call themselves "counterculture." can they? More like a force from the mainstream sent in to subvert us from within, to seduce us as "rebels" into returning to the same traditional morals that have governed our people for the last two thousand fucking years. This theory of mine would be wrong if the financial power and business clout it took to get this CD into the drugstore all came from the hard work of hardcore individuals who live completely against the grain and just happen to be Christian, but how likely is that? Anyway. I'm sure that even if that is the case in the grand scheme of things. Strongarm isn't aware of it; they seem pretty sincere and for real. The music is. if you can imagine it. a mix of Tension with the new Earth Crisis full length (and I mean the latter comparison in the best possible way, if such a thing is possible at all). The record comes in with a

Snapcase- esque harmonics melody over a gong crash, which is really powerful. From there on you have a mix of melodic yet heavy guitar work with straightforward danceable chunk-chunk open-E-chord Syracuse-style metallic hardcore. The singer alternates screaming in a deep, strong voice, with speaking very seriously and convincingly. The mix and recording quality are perfect, and the songs are solid and well-put together as well, with more than enough complexity and twists to be original The lyrics are decently written and tactfully restrained in their discussion of Christian issues such as crises of faith. The packaging is also perfect, with good artwork. Three songs from this full-length also came out on a 7"; they aren t any different from the ones on the full length, and so the 7" seems like nothing more than a ploy to pull in the vinyl-only crowd... sounds like a trick Shelter would pull. The bottom line is: Strongarm is a great '90's hardcore band, hands down, but if they want to be taken seriously as a member of the hardcore community rather than only the Chri stian community. maybe they'd better get the hell off their large-scale Christians-only record label and start taking part in more than just playing similar music. Come. Strongarm: join the hardcore community — we'll welcome you with open arms, even those of us who di sagree with your religious views Whatever you do. don't give skeptics like me more reason to believe that Christian hardcore bands are nothing more than sheep in wolves clothing, sent mto our community to steal the younger kids and take them back with you to your religious cull. *Tooth and Nail, address above*

SWITCH STYLE "•" 7"

There are some really fast parts on this record, like Strife or Abhinanda do. with the drums going double time and the guitars alternating blazing open chords with chunky builds. These parts alternate with slower, more rhythmic grooving parts, sometimes interspersed with harmonics, similar to Snapcase The first and third songs have more of the second parts, the second has more of the first. One singer has a pretty strong, deep shouting voice, and a very simple, traditional approach to his lines, the other has a higher, more choked up voice, and they shout the choruses together. It's all pretty well done and recorded, and comes off without a hitch, i'll bet if this was heavily advertised in the US it would be as popular as all the other stuff in this vein is over here. The one obvious drawback is the lyricist's clear lack of familiarity with English; he should work on that, and in the meantime. I think it would be just fine if they sang in Japanese! 1 understand English is more widely understood, but they could just have a friend wnte out translations for them to pnnt in the liner notes.

***H.G. Fact. 401 Hongo-31. 2-36-2 Yayoi-Cha. Nakano. Tokyo 164. Japan* TENSION "The Sickness of Our Age" 7"**

We all know these recordings of these songs, they've been all around on a series of demos and compilation tracks for the last couple of years. They are a good band, their fast playing, high-pitched impassioned screaming, super-catchy choruses, and decorative guitar harmonic touches make them stick out from the rest as memorable and exciting. Their singer speaks clearly and seems io care, and the whole band is obviously working hard;

[Image not archived]

ingly with the mistreatment and betrayal of Native Americans, they build to a powerful emotional climax. I would strongly encourage this band to hurry up and gel some new music into the hands of the public, before we decide that they are just going to try to live off of these songs forever. It already looks like they're doing that, so time is short. Also, although the cover is a well-chosen photograph of a pair of men throwing stones at a tank, there is no explanation inside of what is taking place in the picture or why. The lyric sheet includes the slogan "One man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter, " but we don't need slogans: we need to be educated about world events, so that we can take an active role in improving our planet. Because Tension does not help us to understand what is taking place on the cover, it comes off as if they only used it for the image rather than to make a statement, *Endless Fight. P.O. Box 1083. Old Saybrook. CT06475-5083* UNSETTLED "-" 7"

Messy, often super-fast, slightly grindy punk. 1 can see these guys playing a show with Hatchetface, although Unsettled would have to open. The singer has a similarly raspy, strained voice, although his iseven more trebly. They frequently break into slow metal parts, which gives their songs the variety they need to be interesting. Some may find their messy execution off-putting, but I find it refreshing. When I've listened to too many pretentious, complex, boring heavy metal bands.! just put this on and it completely clears my system out. Some of it reminds me a of a punker version of Corrosion of Conformity from their earliest days, if anyone can remember. The recording is just barely clear enough for the listener to be able to figure out what's going on almost all the time (1 can't remember if this was recorded on a four or eight track)... but that just adds to the raspy, raw tone of the whole thing. The lyrics are simple and direct, but unlike some of the other bands in this issue's reviews, who seemed at least aware of the occasional silliness and over-simplification of their lyrics, I don't think Unsettled are really aware of how funny it is when they have a song with the sole lyrics being "Fighting to stay alive, face down in the gutter, forced into the streets by society, by society." My apologies if any of the band members arc actually lying face down in the gutter at this moment, forced there "by society." *Passive Fist. P.O. Box 9313. Savannah. GA 31412*

VEIL 7"

The beginning, with a bass line played as guitar chords are held and then paused, reminds me of the beginning of the second Chorus of D. 7". but the similarity stops there. Before you know it a drum roll has ushered the listener into a super-fast hardcore part, with the singer yelling at the top of his lungs in a convincing, youthful voice. In the details, the whole arrangement sounds more like 90's hardcore than 80's hardcore, though. There are slower more metallic parts that emphasize that. And. shit, the second song starts with the stereotypical acoustic introduction that hardcore ripped off from metal. You know, if these bands would just go straight into the song, these days it would be not only more powerful but also even unexpected. The whole song is a lot slower and more atmosphericTemotional" than the first one, with a lot of acoustic

guitar spread through it, and it just doesn't have the energy of the first one... but just when you had given it up for lost, they throw in a little burst of hyperspeed at the end to get your hopes up. They need to do more of that and less fucking around! The rest of the record is pretty much similar: good fast parts, occasional interesting midlempo metallic parts, and slower parts that get a little dull. The liner notes are interesting: there we learn that the singer is named Raoul, that he and another member arc Krishnas, that their bassist not only is wearing a "life.love.regret." Unbroken shirt in his photo but also uses his section of the insert to announce "love.trust.broken.pain.", and that their drummer is a long-haired guy who uses his section of the insert to be very defensive in case anyone criticizes the band for having him, a "non-hardcore guy." as

issue of Inside Front after I heard it from Scott of BloodleL That's hilari ous if they got it from Inside Front... Nietzsche did not say that!

Threesome, P.O. Boz 5284–6130 PG Sittard, Holland

WALLSIDE "-" 7"

This record starts out with a cute, major key, pop punk sounding melodic part, and even when it launches into the fast part of that song it's still major key and pop punk sounding, though the singer is screaming in that broken Ebullition voice about how he's "fading away." The bass is pretty loud in the mix. and sounds like funk bass, which doesn't really work. The second song is similar, and although it doesn't sound quite as cute as the beginning of the first one did the funk bass is doing its thing twice as much. There is a good part in that song where they hit the listener with a sudden burst of speed. I liked the second side more, the major key/funk bass stuff was more restrained and the hectic energy was thus more emphasized. There were some parts trhere where the singer sounded like he really meant it. The record comes with a little booklet of lyrics, quotes, and a couple sen tcnccs from the record label, describing his goals as self-reliance and independance from large scale media control, that seem sincere.

..And AH the Hills Echoed. P.O. Box 401304. Redford. Ml 48240

WITHSTAND "Into My Own" 7"

Gorgeous green vinyl. This record begins with an excellently played classical guitar part, that goes on long enough to be appreciated before the heavy guitars we all expected crash in. The mix is a bit unbalanced towards the vocals, which arc shouted very clearly, almost as if they are just being spoken loudly. The music is straightforward midlempo '90 s hardcore, and when it comes in it has some force, but it doesn't vary enough to quite maintain its momentum all the way to end. The second song has some interesting rhythms in it, the drummer actually sounds like he is playing African drum fills at some points, which I think is great (its probably just that his toms have an unusual sound, but the result is the same). 1 found myself just listening to the drummer's confident fills through the whole song (except when a misplaced and overdone heavy metal solo interupted me, but that only lasted a couple seconds), he definitely has a notable and interesting style. It's not too fancy, but as I said it's confident, and he knows the right things to do al ihe right times to make it interesting.

The second song in general has more variety and texture than the first, which makes it more interesting. This band still has a distance to travel to reach the level of skill they need, but it's their first 7", so we'll see. I would recommend that the singer work on being able to bring more variety to his vocals, and that the band work ©n tightening up song structure and delivery a bit. It doesn't sound like they're trying to play exactly in the style of any of the generic varieties of hardcore that are so prevalent today, so maybe they can go somewhere good. *Fist Held High. P.O. Box 2652. Madison. Wl 53701*

AS WE SPEAK/IGNORANCE NEVER SETTLES split 7"

The AWS song starts with a fast bass line, then a snare drum roll ushes in speedy melodic hardcore with loudly spoken/shouted vocals that carry some emotion effectively. The mix is clear and good enough that it doesn't hold the band back al all. There's a slower part in the middle, but the pace never loses its momentum. On a second listen, the two guitars are both adding lots of details and flourishes that really add texture: it's a job well done INS's singer has a more throaty screaming style, and the band is a little slower and more metallic. The recording quality and skill here are still good, though, making this a good record. Their song is about how the US government is evil for not admitting to us that they have aliens from outer space locked up, or something like that. When their singer pauses to speak in a self-righteous young voice about this injustice, I'm reminded of my worst fear — that harddbre kids will become so wrapped up in subjects that have no relevance to their own lives or anything they can affect that the

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the information and lyrics we need from each band.

***Winter, 30 McIntosh Court, London. Ontario, Canada. N6C-M7* CORNERSTONE/UN1T PRIDE split 7"**

Cornerstone needs to mix their vocals lower, so that we can hear the rest of the band better... if you've heard the Halfmast song on the Inside Front #8 CD. you'll know what I mean . In fact, the two bands sound remarkably similar: straightforward guitar lines, yelling vocals that arc certainly old fashioned, but indicate that the singers might both do well to work on feeling a little more comfortable with really letting loose, and riffs and song structures that both betray an obvious affinity for 80's hardcore., , Youth of Today sure does come to mind! Of the two bands. I'd say Cornerstone is the more developed, in that they throw in some memorable moments: a good buildup on the crash symbol in the first song and a good chorus on the second song that alternates a catchy slogan ("don't you ever say you were") with a guitar harmonics part... and get this, in the background during the harmonics part, their singer screams and really does let loose this lime (I think he may have been helped out by a little vocal distortion this time, but I'm not sure). The Unit Pride song comes in with a great throaty "Gooo'". and goes on to a more authentic sounding 80's fast hardcore song, catchy breakdown at the end included. Now. new jack that I am. 1 never listened to Unit Pride, so I honestly don't know if this is a new recording or an old one. and Lost & Found don't

tell us in the liner notes either. My overall impression from this 7" is that while this is the same thing Mainstrike is doing — playing 80's straightforward, sincere hardcore in the 90's — Mainstrike comes off as having intentions that arc at least clearer if not possibly more honest (as 1 honestly don't know what Lost and Found docs for hardcore besides taking money and committed bands like Cornerstone away from it)... and Mainstrike is also, at this point in time, a better and more skilled band.

OUTCAST/ZAO "The Tie That Binds" spilt 7"

Zao play a long, sprawling song with a shaky, uncenain instrumental part in the middle that they would have been better off without. The song comes tn alternating moments of quiet acoustics with bursts of screaming and distortion, and that is well done except for a couple moments when the band doesn't quite come in tight together. They go from there into a straight hardcore pan, the singer screaming, with words being spoken in the background more smoothly. This works well enough too. Near the end of the song the singers voice starts to really break up and crack. The song ends with a restrained guitar solo in the background, its sound and position in the mix are nontradilional and it comes out sounding a bit like a violin. The musicians in Outcast seem more confident: the song structure and execution is a litt structure and execution is a little tighter, and there are some interesting guitar flourishes here and there. Their music is also a touch more metallic than Zao. as far as the riffs themselves go. Their singers, however, are less solid: every once and a while one of them sings like he really mean it, but more frequently one or both of them is singing in an unconvincing deathmetal voice, or, in parts of the second song, singing like they're in a rock and roll band, which doesn't really fit. This is a release from a new hardcore label from a Christian perspective; the liner notes read: "My power is there for you to grab ahold of. Your generation is dying faster than any other. Your generation is going to take the world to the brink of destruction. If you don't stand and scream the truth, then the blood is on your hands." I can see where they're coming from here, even if I don't believe in God. That stuff about our generation is 100% true.

Steadfast, 1129 Middle Ave.. Elyria. OH 44035

STRAIGHTEDGE AS FUCK COMPILATION II CD

Straightedge hardcore. 1990's style, is represented at its purest by the Swedish bands, if you ask me; and here they all are on one CD. It's by no means an entirely solid CD. as there are twelve bands on it, but there is some really good material here, and you have to give the label credit for giving

all the new bands exposure here. You can see how far music in this region has come by comparing this music to the original "SXE as Fuck' compilation. which had fewer bands, lower sound quality, generally weaker song structure. Shield sounds like their latest full-length here, only much better; the same goes for Doughnuts, although they still can't shake that slightly murky sound that follows them everywhere. Now, here's an idea that I hope they hear and think about in Umea: why don't Shield, who always have the best fucking production I've heard from Sweden, produce the next Doughnuts record? Other than that, Doughnuts sounds really good: the vocals are confident and

strong, the music is tight and well-put-together, and the lyrics to this song are really fucking good too: "sometimes I hate myself with my eyes wide open, but with my eyes closed... 1 die." Abhinanda sounds rushed here, as they do on their new CD there are some great parts in the song, but overall it's lacking something. Final Exit are the real fucking heroes here: they premier an old-fashioned hardcore song, like their full-length only twice as hard and direct... it has a great alternating guitar part that sounds completely original, even in the hands of such an "old-fashioned" band. The lyrics are the real kicker: "No thought out plan, no pointed fingers, no questions asked, no answers given. No reasons why. no right or wrong — if we play that song, will you sing along? Because that's all you want, that's all you need: your comfortable identity. You think you're strong? I'll prove you wrong — sing along!" At the breakdown, the singer announces that the rest of the song contains nothing original. and that they are only pandering to tradition, and they launch into a big sing-along part! Imagine all the fucking kids singing along as the vocalist points in their faces and proves his point... this is incredible, in one minute they present everything that's wrong with hardcore, and even back it up with ironic proof. The singer is so wrong to announce the end of the song contains nothing original — it is completely original, everything hardcore was meant to be: a spitting in the face of tradition, clearly and passionately presented, with nothing held sacred as everything is held up to the highest standards, The other bands on the CD, including Refused. Purusam. and others, each play their own version of the Swedish 1990's hardcore sound, with varying success... except for a weird pop punk band with a female vocalist, that sounds like Green Day. *Desperate Fight, address above*

To sum up: my top five favorite relaases for this issue am

1. Final Exit song on the new Desperate Fight CD compilation
2. Congress LP
3. Nations on Fire CD
4. Mainstrike 7"
5. Final Exit CD

US hardcore bad better do something quick to catch up!
Calvin and Hobbes

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CUR. COMMON REFERENCES ARE EVENTS TW NEVER HAPPENED AND PEOPLE HEU. NWS. MEET' HE WON MORE >&NT CEUBRVriES AND FKTtOHAE OWUOTB THAN WE KNOW AacUT OUR NEIGHBORS

[Image not archived]

This, from one of the greatest media figures of all! You would think Calvin would be more concerned with job security.

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ARISE Were — ea: metalcore with shitty vocals. Too clammy for me. Arise show — musical skill, and I can tell they're trying to be different, which can be an awesome thing I get the feeling though, that they're trying too hard to be C;"r.-;- re. ruse the music is not very tight, and the songs just don't flow j — _ — ;t\ not bad, hell I've heard far worse than this. I'm reminded • ; . — a e bit Newer 14. But why the hell do they cover a Celtic- c Anre 26 Farrington St. Franklin. Ma. 02038 CLAY [1] : cr, : it was funny that this is on 'Boot to Head'

Records. -• . vLtnen boot in the logo. Nice packaging though. Secondly.iua- -. — r –. list. Clay is a Christian band. Immediately I'm reminded — _ -.ng Island, who I dig. The vocals remind me a

— -. the music. There are parts where this gu y speaks : >_n Stans roaring again. The music is midtempo -; whiny vocals/hell on earth vocals. They show ; _- unaffaid-to-take-musical-chance$ attitude. Not Christian lyncs. But that 's thicr problem, not mine. Dr. Anna, 11.62906

> -re 1 ve heard from this infamous Detroit band, tnc Madball song 'CTYC RIP'. which was about — Ron Anyway this is CAL without Ron and it's **-l** hardcore mixed with some Negative Approach . — ng thrown in. They sing mostly about the perils

: which I imagine they see a lot of in Detroit.

c- .ame with no lyrics, no thanks list, no lineup, rather than growling over the slow, rockish NYCHC

— ˜ phop influence He sounds a little like Life of re t a hiphop style. Kinda like Sub-Zero, but bet- — up some pretty good riffs, once in awhile. I'm b.:; m not sickened, either. 3S to po box 564266,

' • <u I guess I don't need to review this advance

: < * ☒; for me in their press 'kit' . "A dynamic fast * :• ecod vocals and rhythmic hooks." 1 call it a piece r b -• inaKamones/Smashing Pumpkins dog shit. Af- _>: inpt I encourage all the hardcore kids in Boston — — -eat the shit outta this band and steal their equip. rm Pi box 144 State House. Boston MA. 02133 .– By me numbers metally moshmetal, straight outta ˜ _• to 25taLife and many other NYC bands, with — ' -= re than I can stomach. With so many bands out — t music, you really need to strive for something : .; Their songs are pretty fuckin' long, too long for =carded, like 'Of Mice and Men' or something. These < i Fury 8 Kimberly Dr.. Asbury Park NJ. 07712 ..: — ng on this four song tape. Slower Mass, area drumming, ok vocals. Lots of back -up shouting on .- ., .atonal 2x bass. Not bad for a first effort from

>: _: _i it, they might have something. They thank ne -st because. Not Bloodbook, but the Cleveland • ˜eani Bloodbook. They also sound a little like -and. Hard Response. Not as melodic though. I've he box 602. CHeshire MA. 01225–0602

x • better than I thought it'd be. After seeing them live i bo: u doesn't. People keep telling me they sound like < -r ndp me very much, as I've never heard Ground- -c anything Anyway, this is pretty original sounding •;☒." chord progressions and different changes than -si great The vocals remind me of Chris Erba, which

•˜ and hoarse screaming. Some of this sounds kinda is - < so great I 'm also reminded of Deadguy. which -: presented in that 'I'm gonna use big words to confuse ya' style that too many bands try to pull off. Big words or not. 1 could still tell what tchy were talking about, which is the degradation of the individual by the majority, and the degradation of women, and how ashamed they feel to be me. despite this, one of them is wearing a Side By Side shirt on the cover. Mike Zebrowski. 100 Bering Ave Kenmore NY 14223

JUNK — This is a Czechoslovakian hardcore band that sings in their native tongue, the first to ever assault this pair of Yankee cars. Nice full color packaging. decent production. I'm not quite sure who they sound like, but they have mostly midtempo drumming, offbeat tempos combined with chunky riffs and quite a few leads and proficient guitar flourishes. This is better than 1 thought it'd be. The tape comes with bilingual lyrics, and a little explanation after each song. They even ahve a song about how we should be nice to retarded people. I try to be, except when they start drooling on me, .. Day After Rcords, Horska 20, 352 01 As, Czech Republic, Europe MAINSTRIKE — "Youth Crew 95" Older sounding, fast pun/slow pan straight edge hardcore from Europe. A poor recording and an overall lack of any distinctive characteristics deprive me from enjoying this 1 can't hate it too much though, what with little Calvins all over the lyric sheet. Commitment Records, Vissteeg 12, 6811 Da Arnhem

OUTLAST "Conspiracy" More European straight edge. Five songs with a murky recording that holds this back. In a Youth Of Today vein musically, with a slight effect on the vocals, kinda like the No Escape demo. Tins was recorded al two different places, and the last three songs have a much worse recording quality than the 1st couple Very fast in places with lots of bass leads where everything else drops away. This isn't bad, its just not that overwhelming Also, the lyrics are in a self-pitying. "I'm alone, weak, and crying" vein that makes me wanna beat them up and steal then equipment The music doesn't fit with the lyrics. Its weird how so many European bands seem to have such a good grasp of the English language, when so many American bands are content to sing about their subject matter in very retarded, comical ways... Uprising Tapes c/o H. Lindqvist, Rattareg. 112 583 30 Linkaping. Sweden

QUARANTINE Lousy recording on this four song demo. Anti-govt, lyrics in an original kind of way. with an anti-smoking song also. Fine by me vocally reminescent of SFA, Musically, chugga chugga stuff with occasional burst of speed and double bass drumming, all drounding in a shitty, murky mix. Quarantine, p.o. box 19841, San Diego. Ca. 92159

RESPECT Painfully bad Polish straight edge metallish hardcore. I'm gonna try to go easy on them because they're Polish and everything., this is just really slow and it fails to keep me interested. The recording isn't that bad. This sounds maybe a little like Judge with a Polish accent and no fast parts. I wonder if Europeans laugh at Americans when they try to speak French, or Polish for that matter. Ah, who cares Respect c/ o Unshaken Distro., Maciej Dziegielewski. Kiclczew I 19.62–633 Wrzaca Wlk. Poland

SACTO HOODS- Eight songs on this tape, including the Mudball version of the AF song, "Friend or Foe.. This is very, very basic hardcore with a lot of fast infest-like parts. The mosh parts on this tape are all the same. This sounds quite a bit like old Sick Of It All, except that these fucks drag iheir songs out too Jong, doing the same parts over and over. If they cut the songs down I'd like this a lot more, because they definitely have tons of raw. violent aggression. The recording is also raw. but you can get away with it when you play this kind of hardcore. 2$ to Mike 6565 Fordham Way, Sacramento. CA. 95831

SECOND TO NONE -The Bomb '95

Shit like this has no business even calling itself hardcore This is nothing more than a bargain-basement rap group with guitars and drums. Terrible musianship, This shit makes Body Count sound good. As a matter of fact these motherfuckers probably love Body Count and Biohazard, Shitty recording quality doesn't help this either. Man, I'm using to find something. *ANYTHING* good to say about this piece of shit, and I just can't. 1 hate to

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drill bands that are just starting out and could use a good review, but this sucks. Second To None c/o Joe. 112 Summit Court. Lakewood NJ. 08701 SHUTDOWN There have been at least three other bands by this name, from Canada, England, and Rochester (ahem). 1 guess these shlubs live in a fuckin' cave. Anyway, the tape starts off with a very recognizable sample from 'The Crow'. The singer sounds really young, like a young Raiphieffrom the Mob). Lots of speed with nonmoshy slow parts, I can't tell what he's singing about because the tape came without a cover. Not that bad. They could achieve great things if they keep at it. Or they could end up sounding like Into Another. Who can say. E chord riffage in parts also, with crash cymbal interaction. Shutdown c/o Mark Scondotto. 2668 E 21st St. Bklyn NY 11235 (718)934–6568

SPIREX Another geeky demo that came with a press kit. I'd swear that it says 'Inside Front-Hardcore Fanzine' or something to that effect on the front of this zine. So why (he bell are nerds like this sending us their rehashed Primus/KMFDM inspired dogshit? Actually this could sound listenable if it weren't for the fucking terrible whiny, screechy Crucifucks type vocals This is a two man band with no bass player, and if ya ask me, they need to hang it up. Or at least stop singing like that Oh yeah, their bio says 'Ps- We got the

[Image not archived]

Anthem #4: First off. it's true that if you're long out of high school and have intellectual or esoteric tastes that this probably won't appeal to you much. That said, this is a very sincere sxe-kid 'zine, well done and without the embarassing faults of most other 'zincs in the genre The kids who do this are positive and for real, and that makes all the difference in making palatable the articles and commentary about "remaining true to SXE" and such. The show reviews and reviews of the latest hardcore records also go into more depth than most Max R&R reviews, thank God. and there is a good news section as well. Also contained here are a well-reasoned debate on Christianity, and interviews with Painstake and Peaceful Nonexistence that don't offer too much. But this 'zinc is continuing to improve, and it definitely wins an award for being the only one with X's everywhere that doesn't make me embarassed of my own subculture postage S to David. 10025 Thomas Payne Circle, Charlotte, NC 2–277 (ph 70 — 846–1370) Anti #6: If you're looking to make the "best" hardcore 'zine of the 1 990's. Norm Arenas' "Anti" would be the one to beat. The layout is absolutely clear, interesting, and professional, likewise for the printing and photography. and the writing is perfect journalism. There's a whole day's worth of reading here: in-depth profiles (Rolling Stone magazine-style) of ancient hardcore band Cause for Alarm and pop band Samuel, a few good letters (James/Moo Cow writing very intelligently on how difficult it is to avoid being implicated in animal exploitation, a member of Orange 9mm complaining about moshing...wait, wasn't it their singer who jumped on Mike Cheese's girlfriend's head?) and a silly letter (Todd from pop band Gameface saying that Anti's review of his band made him cry. and Norm telling Todd that he loves him), a million ads, very detailed and interesting interviews with Chris Toliver (who tells about his rise to power as a professional photographer). Shudder to Think, Sick of it All (who. if you've seen their latest MTV video, arc busy trying to teach America's television youth how to mosh just like they do in NYC). Porcell of Shelter (who talks a little about growing up in NYC, but mostly about his experiences with drug use after Youth of Today and before he joined the Hare Krishnas), and Snapcase. The extensive reviews also go into depth, and to top it all off this issue comes with a 7"

shit goin' on.' No, they don't. Spirex c/o John Mcneece. 410 N, Bronough St., Tallahassee. Fl. 32301

STANDPOINT *Opened Doors* -Very mellow non-hardcore stuff on this 3 songs tape. Decent packaging, lyrics included. Soft as it is. 1 like this quite a bit. The female singer sounds like Diana Ross. There ' s occasional male backups on this, but 1 think Riley (the singer) sounds better by herself, as the backups kinda clash with the female crooning. Standpoint, 28 Tudor Drive. Wayside NJ. 07712

THROWBACK Pay Your Dues '

Four songs from this Albany area band, which seems to be the standard # of tracks for most of the demos I 'vc recieved for this issue. Nice packaging, although no lyncs. They've got a song called ' Rectif ied Judgement * about racism, that could be a lot better if the lyrics weren' t so rote. "We aint down with that racial bullshit ". The sentiment is in the right place, they just need to express themselves better. As with

Fury Of V and Second to None, there's that hiphop feel to this, not as cheesy as Second to None though. Heavy in spots with fast tiffing and double bass. If 1 was fishing, and I caught this demo, it [1] d probably a bullhead . Nothing rare and exotic, but def initely edible and worth keeping . Ed (518) 272–8551

with cover songs by Shades Apart (dull, second rate melodic hardcore) and Ressurection (who just can't measure up to Minor Threat, sorry'). Despite all that, this magazine still leaves something to be desired, at least in the case of sociopaths like myself: lots of the bands covered seem to be (he more pop music/accessible type, not really offering anything truly challenging (that is. truly hardcore) to our musical or cultural world, and above all Norm often comes off as melodramatic and unnervingly soft and cuddly. All that makes for a useful and friendly 'zine, and I'm sure Norm is a solid gold guy. but 1 personally still like my hardcore to come with some fucking teeth in it An amazing magazine, all the same. 1 believe Norm is taking a little while off. so we'll see where Anti goes... $3 to Anu. 151 First Avenue Suite 107, New York. NY 10003 ...fax 212-627-3206

Anxiety Closet #6: This magazine has suddenly swollen to an unruly size, compared to the last issue... the print is finally readable too, thank God. It's still filled with weird clip art and ads. brief confusing opinions and stories from kids who seem to be mentally a little disconnected, poetry that is sometimes decently political, sometimes a bit funny, and often just moronic, and other weird random bits and pieces of prose and pictures from a generally quirky vegan sxe-kid perspective. I find all that to be a little annoying in such a big dose. The reviews are the worst part, they really didn't say much useful. But there's some other stuff here: a well-researched and — presented article encouraging veganism, a couple intelligent discussions on subjects like the death penalty, and some interviews. The Cornerstone. Snapcase, and Unbroken interviews were brief and didn't say anything that better interviews with these bands hadn't said before, but in the Integrity interview (featuring an embarassing photo of Dwid with a computer-added floral back ground) the editor got him to say a lot of interesting things about the role of hardcore as a genuine alternative io mainstream society. Finally, there was the interview with Indianapolis Hardline: the interviewee comes off at first as being well spoken, if a little extreme in his views, but then spouts this shit: "...Hardline does not hate homosexuals. We oppose deviant sexual acts like homosexuality (not homosexuals) that stray from the natural order. Sex is intended for procreation... Sodomy and oral sex are non-productive." LISTEN. YOU PIECE OF SHIT. A GAY MAN OR WOMAN IS NOT "GOING AGAINST NATURE" BY BEING GAY. HE OR SHE WAS "MADE" GAY BY MOTHER NATURE WHO ELSE? YOU THINK EVERY ONE OF THE THOUSANDS AND THOUSANDS OF GAY PEOPLE IN THIS NATION DECIDED ON THEIR DESIRES THEMSELVES. DESPITE THE HEAVY STIGMA ASSOCIATED WITH HOMOSEXUALITY IN OUR SOCIETY? AND HOW IS IT YOU HATE HOMOSEXUALITY WITHOUT HATING HOMOSEXUALS.. I SUPPOSE. LIKE CHRISTIAN EXTREMISTS. YOU "LOVE" THEM ENOUGH TO WANT TO RESCUE THEM FROM THEIR VERY

NATURES. AND FORCE THEM TO LIVE A LIFESTYLE THAT IS CONTRARY TO THEIR DESIRES — TH AT WILL LEAVE THEM UNHAPPY FOR THE REST OF THEIR LIVES — IN ORDER TO MAKE THE WORLD MATCH UP WITH YOUR CLOSED — MINDED SICK NEO-NAZI DREAM OF EVERYONE LIVING ALIKE' WHY MUST WE ONLY HAVE SEX FOR PROCREATION'' WHAT DO WE OWE TO YOUR GOD OR DOGMA THAT REQUIRES US TO LIVE AGAINST OUR OWN NATURE FOR YOU'' MY GIRLFRIEND AND I WILL COMMIT AS MUCH SODOMY AND ORAL SEX AS WE WANT. AND IF IT MAKES US HAPPY AND TROUBLES NO ONE ELSE EXCEPT FOR FAsGIST EXTREMISTS LIKE YOURSELF. WHO CARES? JUST TRY TO GET IN MY FACE AND STOP ME. YOU WORTHLESS FUCK I THINK ITS HIGH TIME TH AT THE RACISTS, NEO-NAZIS. AND MORONS BECOME THE ONE WHO MUST LIVE IN FEAR. RATHER THAN RESPONSIBLE. POSITIVE. CONSTRUCTIVE INDIVIDUALS LIKE OURSELVES. CROSS MY PATH ONCE AND I'LL RUIN YOUR FUCKING LIFE. HOMOPHOBE. TRY ME. Back to the 'zine: there's a lot here even some of the silly stuff is interesting. If the editors would atm to produce a serious, compact publication, rather than just entertaining themselves. th:.. u Id be something really good. $2 to 4 Leona Terrace, Mahwah, NJ 07430–025

Back Ta Bastes *3: The two really strong points of this magazine are that it puts a grec deal .: hardcore informatior. at your fingertips (due to the millions of fliers he r prints and the news he relates), and the scores of interesting, well-repr -d — re photos of hardcore bands, most of whom arc from the NYINJ area This. issue also has interviews with Earth Crisis (in which Karl, 24 years of age -spells — apparently in his own handwriting — the words "careing. "• .. ivacefull." "stratgedy, " "to" (instead of 'too'), createing. ' "auctuah mi -. "allways." "agonizeingly, " "weding. " "committment, " "mu–.-a . — -s-. me'T three times), "liveing."‟necessitys, " convicnce, " "loveing dns cing. rember." and "couldent" in the course of his plea for people to "educate themselves"). Integrity, Excessive Force, Cold as Life, and Next Step — Everything is handwritten in Rick's NYC dialect, which gives this 'zine in entertaining, more personal feel, as does Rick s positive, supportive atotuJe t.'wards hardcore unity. The only drawback may be that the reviews ore all > positive and brief to be very useful, but like I said Rick's mam goal: -: be supportive and positive. $2 to 86 3rd Avenue. Paterson. NJ 07514 $_{r}$h — >1-278-7376

Burn Collector: This is a small — — probably for the older "more mature" audience, an entirely autobic.gr apbacal prose experience. It documents the writer's visit to Providence. Rhode Island, as an excuse for him to compare train stations to gushing "oil wells" of human crisis and emotion, to tell his stories of searching for free beer and tood. and to muse further about life and such. This all sounds like meaningless drivel, but the writing quality is superb: Al Burian's style reminds me a little of Henry Miller, it is straightforward and insightful, and ex cn passionate in a roundabout way. although certainly more self-deprtcaur.g and ultimately hopeless than Miller. If you

read much fiction in that . rm tm- is worth a try. 2 stamps to 307 Blueridge Road. Carrboro. \C 2“5 i

Change #6: When you pen the cover, you sec: page I — “Change ‘zine” in the old Corrosion of Conformity logo, page 2 — a description of one of the bands interviewed *Deadguy 1 as “the one band committed to hurting you.”

reveal the bands and ‘zines that stayed true to hardcore... and he wants to be one of these, page 6 — a columnist takir.g pot shots wildly, hitting everyone from Ben Weasel and “Rev. Norb” to certain bands who aim to h sti y all the fucking meateaters and replace them with while, middle via., vegan hardcore kids who will then purify the streets of our nation ‘s inner cities by preaching the doctrine of straight edge to all those helpless and hapless minorities.” Needless to say this magazine has all the teeth that Antimatter lacks, as well as all the quality and coverage. And there are still about 90 pages more... over the course of those, we come upon a remarkably intelligent letters section, great controversial interviews with members of Today is the Day. Farside. Craw. Fugazi. Lifetime. Deadguy. Helmet, Cornerstone, and the editor of Suburban Voice, an article on the editor’s painful experiences in the employment world, a heartbreaking story of how the editor got caught stealing copies to make the magazine and had to pay $4249 he did n t have, lots of great useful reviews, and of course basketball There’s also an article encouraging hardcore kids to make their culture a threat again by taking truly revolutionary action to stir up trouble with the stains quo. rather than merely doing a lot of talking — that endeared “Change” to me Patrick, name the project and I’m ready, let’s not just talk, right” This may be m favorite magazine of all for this issue’s reviews. S’ to 9 Birchwood Lane, Westport, CT 06830 phone 203–221 -0525

Cometbus #35: This long-running ‘zine is done by an apparently perpern- ally-travelling punk sen of guy from Berkeley. Titis issue consists of 34 fairly brief stories: most describe the author’s various experiences across (he country with a wide variety of people and in a wide variety of situations, others take slightly different approaches from the same perspective, such as the fable told about the Berkeley underground with the punk kids cast ns worms and the mainstream as birds Many of the stories involve extensile drug-use. promiscuity, and other self-destructive behavior that would mr tainly alienate all my more uptight friends. Still, despite the difference in lifestyles, I really enjoy this — it is packed with irony and interesting often tragically hilarious, stories, and this guy is genuinely living a lim?.’. that i different from that forced on us by mainstream western culture anyone m hardcore has to respect that. 52.50 to Wow Cool. 48 Shattuck .Square h .. 149. Berkeley. CA 9470*1

Dead on Arrival #1: First off. this is laved out and illustrated beautifully and professionally — Punk Planet magazine apparently just reviewed it badly on the assumption that a magazine must be a piece of shit to be punk There are short stories and a lot of poetry mixed with art here, month reflecting youth angst and religious questioning., the quality of the work is not bril liant or extremely memorable, but manages not to be laughable, un accom plishment in itself for most poetry Also here are write-ups on

some under ground comics, the Kill Rock Stars label, and a couple other tidbits, plus reviews. Neither the reviews nor the write-ups go into too much depth. Im the write-ups will be interesting if you didn't already know anbout the sub jects, and the reviews are occasionally poetic (Backlash sounds like "a speeding car running over your foot as the driver spits in your eye"). This « > a good start, and the editor has now moved on to publishing "Icarus Was Right?" 15 to P.O, Box 191175, San Diego, CA 92159 phone 619-461-0497 Directed Youth #4: Brief Christian underground music zine, brief inter view with Six Feet Deep. 25 line interview with some kid's mom. brief reviews, a brief Bible quote, brief photos. Brief. An attempt to commimn .m more than anything. If you're Christian perhaps you should take him up on it. Sl/donaiion to 4216 Garren Rd. #L-33, Durham. NC 27707–6103 Different Life #7: Big. smalt print hardcore magazine from the Czech Re public, that (being a fucking uneducated American ! I can't read. That -neks too. because it looks great: long, serious looking columns, very in dcpil interviews with Four Walls Falling. Portraits of Past. Scnseficld. and John Joseph of the Cro-Mags, lengthy scene reports, lots of long reviews, and to top it off features with Rick/Strife and Knrl/Earth Cnsis that look suspiciously similar to the ones printed in Inside Front... wait, these are the ones from inside Front! in fucking Czech! Cool. Anyway, if you can read the language, check this out. it looks like a great magazine. Roman Soumar. Topoliianska 419/10. Litomcncc 412 01. Czech Republic

Hard Side Report #1: Shit, now this one's in French. Still. I can read some of it; the first line is "Yo Wassup Muthfuckazzz!". and throughout there are references to "da scene" and "brutal haiecore " Coverage seems to be two parts NYC tough guy hardcore and one part European hardcore There is a nice long news section (which, in the unlikely event that I'm reading the French correctly, states among other things the unfounded rumour that Chain of Strength is reforming!), and medium length interviews with Crown of Thorns and 25 ta Life (both from NYC). Out For Blood (Belgium), and Golpe Justo (from Puerto Rico'). The Madball photospread centerfold is the linishing touch dint leads me to conclude that though this is a good first issue, and it's great to see hardcore coming out of France, their emphasis on NYC hardcore and culture may be a little overzealous. 22. Allee de Maurepas. 35700 Rennes. Erance

Headline Communications #2: This is the genuine article, a political journal that is actually capable of being a tool for real change. This issue contains an in-depth description of a community resource center in Seattle and what it has to offer, an article describing the present plight of the Western Shoshone and specific things that individuals can do to help, a brief interview with Seattle Food Not Bombs and a list of meal times and other information for that area, an article about the ridiculous Teen Dance Ordinance in Seattle and what can be done about it, a well-done interview with the director of a Seattle magazine that employs the homeless, and an article on rape complete with a page of addresses and phone numbers with which to take action or seek help. Tile layout, too, is perfect and very user-friendly; let me repeat that not only are important issues raised, but practical solutions are offered in each case. This is edited by Greg from Seattle band Trial, and the sincerety bleeds through every word; if

only the members of other more well-known straight edge bands published magazines like this one. If you're politically or socially concerned at all. contact Greg and work together. SI to P.O. Box 23325. Seattle. WA 98102

Icarus Was Right #1: First of all. this magazine looks like a College of An& Design student's honors thesis project in terms of beautiful layout and graphics, which is surprising in that it was actually done by hand by a high school student. Il's filled with gorgeous designs, perfect photos, all kinds of clip art. quotes from various writers, and interesting arrangements, so even as mere eye candy it rates high. The content is mostly comprised of short but fairly informative pieces, including write-ups on "underground ' comic books, the movies A _Clockwork Orange_ and _Romper_ Si_om_pcr. and books by authors such as Nietzsche. Heller, and Ayn Rand, a "top 6" 'zines countdown with descriptions, a well-researched article on the misleading presentation of information by the dominant Western media, an interview with No Knife (who?), and a Japanese animation feature. The reviews are loo short to be useful, and there's an extremely long rant about the review of Dead on Arrival #1 in Punk Planet...those are the bad points. But there's a lot here for anyone who has a brain or broad interests, and the prices (including advertising) are great. S2ppd to P.O. Box 191175, San Dieso. CA 92159 phone 619-461-0497

Interpol Times #9: The best point about this 'zine is that the author is obviously not striving to cater to anyone else's tastes or expectations. The other side of that coin is that the quality and content herein arc pretty spotty, but at least it all seems genuine. The well done features are an article about the plight of the homeless and the drugaddicted (and how ii relates specifically to people involved with hardcore and straight edge), the interview with Torn, a couple sood photos, and above all the rants and banter from the editor on such issues as veganism (con). Earth Crisis rumors and other scene viruses (con), and why so many people are named Mike. The features that are too selfindulgent to be much interest to outsiders are the painfully silly

waiting breathlessly for the sequel! D.P. Mcrklinshaus. Auf dem Stctansberg 58.53340 Meckenheim. Germany

Juggernaut #1: A brief first issue, not too bad. just short. The interviews are actually pretty well done: the Norm/Antimatter one is on ly one half page, but the Abhinanda interview turns a few good answers out of their lyricist and in the 108 interview "Vraja Kishor" (thatls not his birth name, it means something in a lansuage that neither I nor. in all likelihood. V.K. himself speak) spouts a lot of religious silliness that is al least more coherent than most other interviewee babble these days The editor gets points for asking questions like "I've started reading the Bhagavad Gita, but it seems to me that the main story is about Krishna convincing Arjuna to go out and kill people..." which reveal that however you try to interpret them to make them relevent to lodayls world, the ancient books of most of today's religions were written to deal with the questions and conditions of cultures long past which were different from our own in crucial ways. This means that when you read one of these books today you are likely to interpret it in light of your own experiences and gel out of it something

entirely different from what the writer intended. Of course this won't concent you if one of your fellow morons has convinced you that God himself wrote the book. But, there's not enough space to address the issue of religion here, so back to the zine... Besides interviews, the only other feature is a brief review section, decent enough — in one of them we discover that Rancid dress as if they were Finnish punks. $1 to Jonas Rosen, Forsg. 17.591 45 Motaia. Sweden The Mad and the Sick: The typical Inside Front reader may find this magazine just that — mad and sick. It uses the comic book approach to depict stories of sado masochism and horror, the ratio being about two to one. The artwork is definitely well-done and distinctive, and in addition to the scenes of muscular women abusing weak, unfortunate men. we also find here reprints of the art of Robert Williams, a harrowing collection of artwork created by inmates of the Auschwitz death camp. Iwo stones of infamous murderesses. and a page in honor of Dostoevsky's book _Crime_ and Punishment. There's some stuff here that mokes me uncomfortable and some that interests me, the proportions of each reaction will probably differ from individual to individual. $2 to 4449A Lookout Fwd.. Virginia Beach. VA 23455 No Scene #3 4 4: Dus is basically a few messy pages, xeroxed and stapled together at the top. with fliers and handwriting copied on them. #3 has a few very brief Izine reviews, alist of hardcore Izinc addresses, and couple paragraphs announcing that the editor neither likes nor trusts Christianity. #4 is actually shorter, but with more print and thus more content; interviews with Flick/25 ta Life (in which Rick actually says some interesting things about the developemenis in his life that led him to hardcore) and the editor of In Effect magazine. That's it. 2 stamps for each issue to 1202 1F1 apt B2I Lincoln. NE 68508

Old Maid #2: It's hard for me to decide about this one I despise silly 'zines and admire intelligent ones, but this one is, unfortunately, both The second page is a good example of this: it's a collection of those "Murphyls Law sayings, and her silly but witty versions of them The next page has an Alfred Adler quote followed by a useless interview with "skater girl Stella Dorka.' The word "dork" (originally a pseudonym for the male genitalia, I believe, but here apparently used to denote a certain unpopulaniy with mainstream youth) reappears throughout the magazine, in articles about being straight edge in your twenties, the editor! experiences Us a skateboarding woman, etc. Quotes from Soren Kierkegaard io Rorschach from Dostoevsky to Outspoken border silly clip art, bad poetry, an extremely educated discussion of the concepts of God and good and evil illustrated by references to a moronic television skit, a satiric look al "weapons for the straight edge wamer" that seems to have been drawn by a ten year old and written by an eleven year old. well-done (if possibly pretentious[9]) philosophical discussions of bliss and the human desire for freedom, and an extensive discussion ifthe possibility of extraterrestrial life visiting earth 1 don't know what to say — some of this is fucking annoying, some of it is really intelligent and interestins. If it sounds like it might be as entertaining to you as it apparently was to the author, check it out. SI to Christina, 24 Overidgc Lar.e. Wilton. CT 06897 Open Season #6: This is always a favorite of mine, for sheer entertainment value and honest individuality, and

this issue is the best yet, featuring a lengthy, involved interview with Cause for Alarm, an interview with Stigmata (which is memorable for this exchange: "Talk about your colorful, charismatic roadies." "Well, our roadies are all convicted felons, covered head to toe in tattoos, and usually weighing 300 lbs. or more." ...and the editor adds a note: "'Think he's joking?"), an interview with Cutthroat (sample question: "What's your favorite fishing lure?"), and interviews with N.O.T.A. and Catharsis (the latter is difficult to read because of the arrangement-but he does ask "Do you get bit by fire ants alot down there?" and makes fun of the singer's last name). The reviews arc the best pan, they go into depth and add humor and interest as well ("What's this 'power violence' crap? Most of the kids tn these bands are neither powerful nor violent, " "Seven bands from different parts of the US come together on this to yell and stomp and run double bass pedals." "My neighbors and coworkers are lucky to be alive after I heard this!"). This issue ends with a long rant from Tony Erba about the editors of "Anxiety Closet" in which he describes them as "stinking slabs of rancid gelfite fish." among other colorful uses of the English language. Icing on the cake: a couple good photos of Chorus of Disapproval, a photo of a neo-nazi piece of shit from his town from her days as a hippy, and the thanks list (which includes his African sabre-toothed frogs "Muddy and Drago ") S2 to RO. Box 10282, Rochester, NY 14610

Pilfer Hl This revolutionary anarchist magazine is pretty big for being free and without advertising (see the title for how they pull that off). This issue is comprised of a collection of intelligent, dare I say intellectual essays on such subjects as the need for support of prisoners as the victims of an oppressive political system, the tendencies of certain feminists and others to be against their oppression of their own "group" without being concerned about oppression of others, the futility of capitalistic environmentalism, and the history of anarchism in China: also included are a reprint from _Anti-Bolshe_vik _Communism_, information on the Anarchist Black Cross, and an "inspirational" piece on rebelling in the capitalist world. All pieces are extensively researched and footnoted, very impressively done indeed; this is no childish dabbling in politics. The only drawback for the typical Inside Front reader might be that this magazine is geared towards individuals who are already educated somewhat on these subjects, a curious outsider would have to do some research first or risk being confused. Also, there's a good deal of rhetoric here in between the logic, and of course (in true anarchist fashion, even if I'm not exactly an anarchist) I disagree with a number of the assertions in here. I'll give you an example: on the Anarchist Black Cross page is the slogan "No one is free while others are oppressed." which is patently not true if you look around you, however inciting it may sound. In fact, it may be impossible for anyone to be free *without* others being oppressed: for actual freedom of action includes the freedom to do things that may oppress others, and indeed there's not much that you can do that doesn't encroach on the lives of those around you. Donation for postage, if you want, to 135 East 57th St.. Savannah, GA 31405

QUMn of the Scene: This is a hilarious little comic strip mocking high profile figures in punk such as Tim of Max R & R and Jello Biafra of Alternative Tentacles. Pretty

harsh! postage $ and a little grovclling/begging to P.O. Box 1910. Beverly Hill. CA 90213

Rttrogrettlon #9: I don't like this issue as much as former issues. The photos are still well reproduced, and in the Sick of It All interview we finally learn what KRS I was doing on their first record, but there's not too much else here. The scene report from Italy was also mysteriously printed in Inside Front #7, and the remainder of the magazine is mostly the editor and his ex-girlfriend writing back and forth about their breakup. Maybe that's your

thing, but some of the writing is on the level of (and I quote:) "Everything I do seems like a big waste of time. Why do 1 even bother'' I guess it doesn't matter, what else would 1 do with my life? ...Life sucks." This, from a person who repeats over and over that "straight edge is about being positive." Brian, it starts at home, and 1 hope you can recover from this so your 'zine can be positive again too. The other subject addressed here is theft: Brian compares an unfortunate occasion when a dumb tough guy stole a 'zine from him at a show (and he apparently wasn't courageous enough to try to stop him) to the current hardcore trend of bootlegging postage, and asks why 32 cents seems like so much to pay. Well. I'll offer one of many possible defenses for postage theft: say you do a label or a 'zine, and you send out fifty letters or more a week in your pursuit of offering something positive to the world. That adds up. and perhaps you can't afford it all... and it's more important to you to succeed in bringing something positive and con structive into the lives of the young people around you than it is to not rip off the post office (which is going to fucking survive no matter what a handful of kids do. hands down). Well, if you have any faith in yourself and your goals, you bootleg postage — and when someone starts crying about it you can't help but feel like they're being a ridiculous busybody. Brian's other arguments against stealing are that "someone, somewhere ends up paying for it" (yes. indeed — and there are a lot of dangerous businesses in this world who would do us all a favor by paying themselves right out of existence! Besides, they have money set aside to cover theft, that might otherwise go to environmentally or socially negative ends, and petty theft doesn't have the power to put them out of business anyhow), and that "my mom taught me that stealing is wrong" (What the fuck?Talk about bowing down mindlessly to tradition and existing authority ...maybe he should tell us why she taught him that). The bottom line of my argument is: don't steal from Brian, he's a good guy. but just as importantly don't adhere to a dogmatic morality that prevents you from doing things that arc in your own best interest — such as stealing from corporations that are destroying our world, or even stealing from corporations that can afford it if you're sure that the end will justify the means. $2 to 104 Newport Avenue. Attleboro, MA 02703

Rust #2: Those Trial members sure are busy — member Derek edits this 'zine and runs a clothing company as well. Included are two Seattle scene reports (a good hardcore report and a weird metal report), a reprint of an old interview with the classic band Brotherhood, an interview with Krishna band 108, a well done look at independent vs. major labels, a brief guide to internet stuff some hardcore kids might

be interested in (entitled "gcckcore rules "...maybe these guys should link up with "Old Maid"), a vegan new* section by Greg from Headline Publications, a story about a woman's dinner with the late G.G. Allin, a feature on the Seattle swapmeets, decent show reviews, and some short record reviews. The layout is also beautiful. $2 to P.O. Box 2293, Seattle, WA 98111, 206-324-718-

Soul Doubt #7: This is a big, long, messy homemade 'zinc with split coverage between hardcore and punk bands/culture, although the punk coverage concentrates more on pseudo-punk, mainstream stuff like Bad Religion. Reading through it I find a decent discussion of a violent incident between SXE kids and skinheads in their area, a silly Mr. T. Experience interview, an article entitled *why girls suck" that says some ignorant shit (it acc uses girls of hinderins the success of their boyfriends ' bands, which leaves out the possibility that the reverse could ever happen., and in the process the author suggests that what he calls "pierced gutterpunk trash" are "not attractive." Whatever.) a long and fairly well-balanced discussion of animal testing, an interesting Chokehold interview, a Snapcase interview and a number of conversational, not very tightly assembled columns on this or that punk/hardccre topic. It's long. free, and seems pretty genuine, despite the flaws of the sexist article, general messincss. and a wandering focus, postage $ to P.O. Box 15153, Gainesville, FL32604

Sober #1: Ha ha! This is this issue's shortest and probably funniest 'zinc: the cover has "Sober" written in the Slayer logo (pentagram-of-swords around

[Image not archived]

VIDEO REVIEWS

FINAL COUNT hardcore video compilation

There are fourteen bands on here, playing pretty much one song each. First, the good ones: Bloodlet is, as they were described in our last issue, unbelievable live. This video, while not perfect, certainly captures a great deal of their musical talent and versatility. It's thrilling to watch such serious musicians live. Groundwork. though apparently jusi videotaped at a practise, blow away all the other bands in terms of energy. They make their brand of screaming noise convincing and interesting. 1 was excited lo see Chokehold, but they pretty much just stand in place for their song — I think one of them was even sitting. They're kind of too crowded to move, but I expected a band of their energy level would be willing lo start pushing and shoving to be able to move and get into their music. The Unbroken and Mouthpiece songs arc predictable performances of 1990's hardcore, with the kids singing along and such, although the whole thing seems sort of ritualized rather than inspired. Some of the other bands on this video arc Channel. Bleed, Frail. Contagen, Single File Line, and 3 Studies for a Crucifixion. A lot of these bands fall into the category of harmless-looking young kids standing around watching other harmless-looking young kids make harmless-sounding noise while one of them screams and cries. If you're a harmless

kind of kid, who likes "emo" music and thinks it sounds like fun to watch videos of this kind of stuff, this video is for you. Otherwise, you may be wondering why this stuff passes for revolutionary music at all. This video has little funny clips between each song; they're generally funny in a really silly, low level kind of way. There arc also a few special effects during some of the videos, including a great deal of overkill on the Mouthpiece song. The whole thing is decently packaged, with a little booklet containing band addresses and a bit of commentary.

3RD Person, 1239 W. Cary, Apt. 2. Richmond. VA 23220

CLASSIFIED AD VERTISEMENTS

Classified ad's cost $1 each for 30 words plus address.

Highest bids only tor Intergity test press (Victory, 1 rst 7'i) and Confront test press (Dark Empire). No joke. Bid! Nick, P.O. Box 476, Bradford, BD1 1AA. U.K. Telephone (0)1274392518 or 1274–731339.

OTIS REEM full length in the works, in the meantime we have a 7-song demo ($5) and 4 compilations with our music on them available, plus shirts($10), stickers (50 cents), and autographed band photographs ($15, suitable for framing). Write us, get on the mailing list, and weill keep you up to date. David Reem, 901 Kings Mill Rd.. Chapel Hill. NC 27514, telephone 910+334+2929. Fuck off Catharsis!

NO SCENE ZINE out now with Chris Wynne & Rick Healey. #5 out 10-1-95 with Yann (SXE newsletter) and more, c/o Bger, 1202 'F #B2, Lincoln. NE 68508.**

Available soon on RELEASED POWER PRODUCTIONS & INNER RAGE RECORDS: 'iHarderthey come... Harder they tall" comp. CD with 25 TA LIFE, ENRAGE, VISION OF DISORDER, MAXIMUM PENALTY, FURY OF V. JUDGEMENT DAY NYC, INDECISION, CONGRESS, and a couple more bands. Distributors, get in touch right now!! Still available on R.P.P.: INDECISION iiRessurectionii 7ii, ONE FOR ONE "I won't losei' 7i' ($6 each or $10 for both records). Bands, send us your demos for a possible record deal. Write now for further info: RPP, Av. V. Olivier, 10A/67, 1070 Brussels, Belgium (fax 32–2 — 5217652).

Graffiti bandits — The one stop shop for all your graffiti needs. Fat tips $6 per pack of 20, thin tips $6 per 25. Graffiti Bandits magazine featuring interviews, ad's, outlines, and pic's from around the globe — issue #1 out in early '96. Send in clear pic's of your work. Send well hidden cash or postal m.o. made out to Graffiti Bandits, P.O. Box 1641, Columbia, MD 21044. $1 for complete list of graft, mag's, videos, shirts, hats, tips, other supplies.

We'll trade Inside Front releases or other shit for the following: Agnostic Front "Live at CBGB's' video (come on, doesn't anyone know anything about this?), Oi Polloi i'Resist This Atomic Menace" 7" (even the repress) or other OLD Oi Polloi, Antidote 7" ('can't hurt to try), Cro-Mags 12ii (the

good one, you idiot). Ragnar Redbeard's book iiMi I Makes Right", any fucking artwork by Ernst Fuchs anyone can find anywhere, or bootlegs/rare recordings ot Uiamonda Galas or recent Neurosis InusiC. U!rite tile Inland Empire address. We want this stuff bad. please try to help us out!

An Apology

This issue of Inside Front was extremely late coming out, We always try to get our magazine out on time, so it will be up to date and dependable: hut we had some problems this time. First, the decision to include a CD rather than a 7" impeded us a bit; and second, we had some difficulties working with a "comrade" of ours in the hardcore community: Mike Warden of Conquer the World records. A while back he contacted me and informed me that he could press a thousand CD's for me for $750. That sounded like a good deal, and he assured me that I could trust him to get them printed on lime, so I sent him the money and the master tape As soon as he received them he stopped returnng my calls, and w hen I reached him he said that his CD plant had inexplicably halted production on all his projects, because he owed them about ten thousand dollars. They had a collection lawyer after him, and not only all that, but they had taken all the money I had sent him and would not give it back. Obviously, he knew that he owed them that much money (and that it was bound to cause him trouble) when he suggested that I work with him Perhaps he deviously planned to get the money from me to help him pay off the loan, and then to eventually get my CD's to me whenever — and if ever — his trouble with the company magically panned out ("dude, this is hardcore, nobody gets their records out on lime..."); or perhaps he just wasn't using his brain. Either way he caused us a lot of trouble. Rather than promise me ahe would take care of everything or get my money back to me. he told me that there was nothing he could do about it and that he would try to get some money from people who owed him... but he couldn't promise me anything. After harassing him for a while and going through a great deal of trouble to try to work things out with him. I began to suspect that he just didn't care about solving the problem. 1 finally called up John from Very distribution, who kindly promised to reroute $750 of his debts to Mike back to me. Mike halfheartedly agreed to this, and then, after he no longer had any of my money hostage, begged me not to tell anyone what kind of trouble he had caused us with his unbusinesslike and possibly downright malicious behavior. I didn't make any promises; it's important that we all know who can be counted upon and who can't. We went to a different CD company, and ended up spending a lot more money than we have. On top of that, wc still haven't yet received the $750 back... $750 that we needed to keep contributing our part to hardcore.

So, on behalf of Inside Front, for making a bad business decision regarding whom wc can trust, and on behalf of Mike Warden, for sabotaging the efforts of his friends in the hardcore community, I would like to apologize for the tardiness of this issue and assure you that wc will do our best to avoid this son of problem in the future. Thank you for reading and understanding * — Brian D.*

[Image not archived]

Hand Empire Productions 2695 Rangewood Drive Atlanta, GA 30345 USA

Issue #5:1 merviews with STRIFE, LASH OUT, CONVERGE. ENDLESS FIGHT rec.s, Tony Erba (H-1 OO's/ex- Face Value), and Adel 156 (Timescape Zero/ Feast of Hats and Fear), news, etc. *Only one tucking stamp USA'Si world.*

whotssata: 24 capias far only S3 USA/SS world

INSIDE FRONT SHIRTS: These extra large, double- sided shirts feature the inside From logos from Iha cover of issue #5. We printed the last batch with Dark Empire, and while the back is still blue. Ihe Iron! is now done in various swirls of Wack and green. SO each shirt Is different from the others, Thes-a are a fundraise for Inside Front, to help pay for Ihe projects I only break even on (tor instance, I seH #7 for a dollar, but it's one dollar tor postage costs atone to mail it...} so please (io help us stay in 'business." Plus they look pretty damn good.

$10 USA/S13 worid... wholesale (3 or more} .' $7 USA/ $10 world

We also carry a number of other magazines and records, feel free to inquire.

Issue #9 (1996)

Date: December 1996
Source: <archive.org>

Introduction

what we want.

I. THE PROBLEM* We all seek to have lives that are rewarding and

fulfilling to us, lives that we find meaningful. Yet, this seems to be extremely difficult for everyone al the end of the twentieth century. Many people complain about feeling alienated, meaningless, and unfulfilled ... and those who do nol complain — the working poor, the bored middle class, the rich ruling class — certainly don't seem very happy if you look closely at their lives. We re all mortal, we all only have so long to figure out how to enjoy our lives in this world. So we had belter work quickly lo figure oul whal il is that we need to do to make our lives more worthwhile.

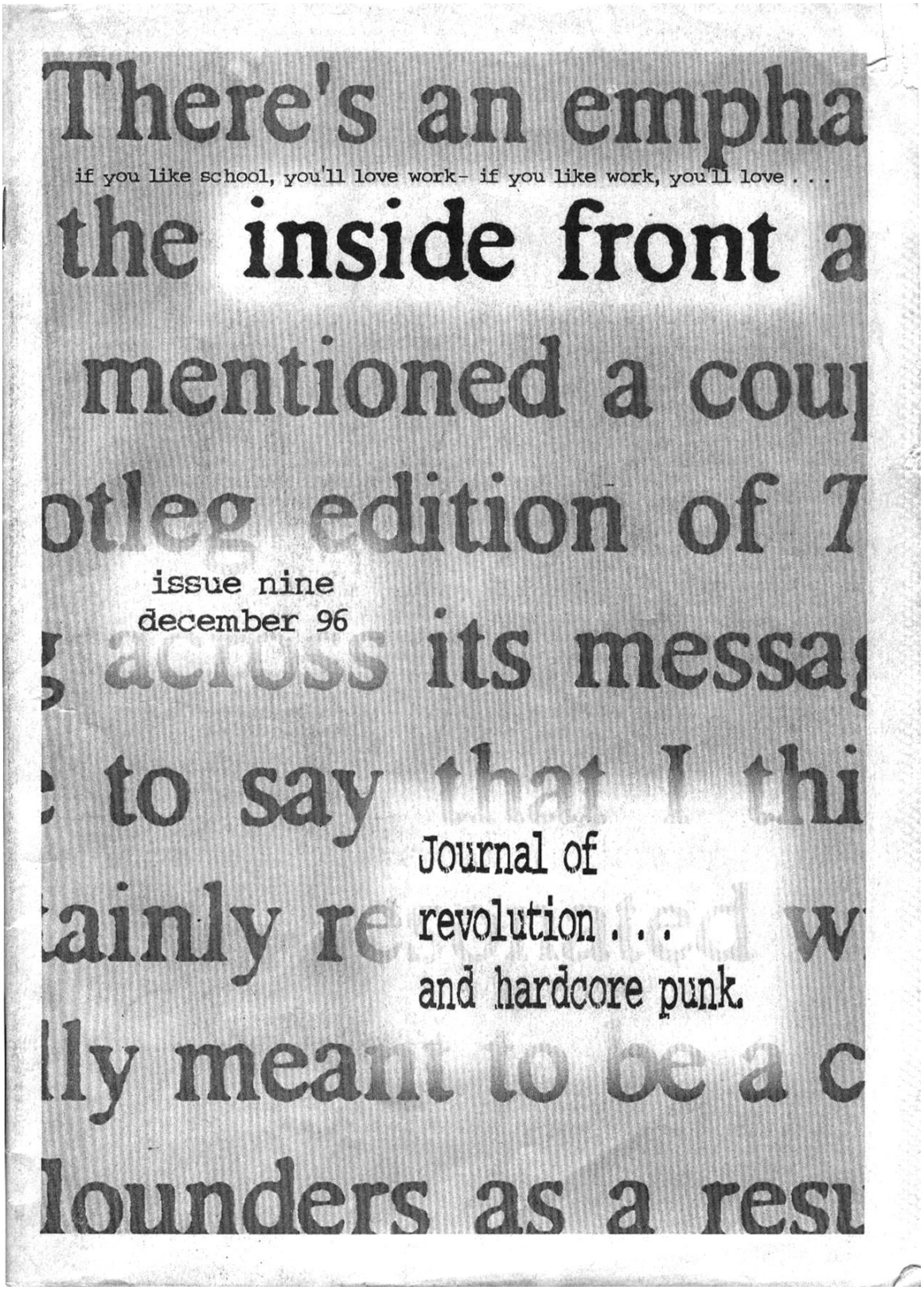
II. A DIAGNOSIS' Each of us is an individual, and as such we each have

different desires that must be fulfilled for us lo find our lives rewarding. But we all are restrained from fulfilling our desires by many different factors: 'Moral laws' of one kind or another restrain some of us. even though these rules are nol in our best interest and do not make us happy. Many of us are frustrated by the ridiculous social and legal systems that restrict our lives. Some of us have never taken the lime lo wonder whal it is we really want in the first place, and thus are held back by our own ignorance of ourselves. Plenty of us feel like the dirty cilies and overcrowded concrete wastelands we are forced to inhabit prevent us from being satisfied wilh life. And all of us have probably been led into unhappiness to some degree by the way ihe prevailing economic and cultural systems manipulate our lives and minds. If we could, as individuals, break these bonds, we would then be free to build meaningful lives for ourselves.

I he word 'revolution', as il is used in the pages of

this magazine, is nol a word for an armed uprising that is supposed lo take place in some far- off future. We use ihe word lo describe ihe crucial moment when an individual succeeds in taking a life that was boring, painful, and meaningless lo him or her and making il fulfilling and worthwhile. Il is a moment ihal could happen for any of us, at any time. Because we are mortal and will nol live forever, ralher than wailing for some promised 'day of liberalion', we must strive to be able to make life worthwhile for ourselves and each other in the present tense.

Inside Front is a magazine thal covers music and related lopics in the hardcore community; but more than ihal, il is a magazine dedicated to encouraging revolution


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in the lives of individuals by providing them wilh informalion about music and other material that might help them to break bonds in iheir lives and achieve their desires. We're not trying to make revolution into a business — ralher, our business *is* revolution.

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Up until now, Inside Front has been hampered a little by my college education. I'm now finishing my last semester, so that I can graduate with a degree in philosophy (the title of my honors dissertation is "Nietzsche: Destroyer or Preserver of Truth?"); I've been delayed a bit by some lime I spent out of school a couple of years ago. When I graduate, I will hopefully be able to put a little more lime into Inside Front, so that it can come out every two or three months... it's terrible how long it has been between issues lately, but I've been so busy that it was impossible to move any more quickly. Look forward to issue ten in January of 1997, and after that an issue every couple months.

Expect some other projects from us as well around that lime. Something I'm particularly interested in is offering and encouraging intelligent discussion within the hardcore community, rather than the usual rhetoric and sermonizing that we usually see (when we see any kind of ideas at all. that is'). If we're all as angry as we act, shouldn't we really make a point of clarifying what it is we're angry about, rather than just posturing and throwing around meaningless slogans about "being true" or how "hardcore rules, dude"? And not only should wc make sure that we know *why* we're angry, but we should also make sure that our reasons and arguments *make sense.* It is ridiculous to demand that people take your ideas seriously when you have not properly educated yourself about the topic or have not thought them out in much depth. I can't tell you how many times I've had to listen to some kid who doesn't know any more about biology than he learned in high school preach about how scientific testing on animals is medically unsound; from an educated doctor I would lake it seriously, bin a television-generation 19-year-old who only knows what he read n a pamphlet is only hurting the cause by representing it in in uninformed manner. If you want to be taken seriously, educate yourself and strive to be skilled in using logic. This sn't something that any of us can get out of easily — every Jecision you make in your life will turn out better if you nakc it intelligently, so if you want to have a decent life al ill you'd better head to the library and start to use your head.

As a *community'* (rather than just a 'scene', which would suggest that it is just another social clique), hardcore :an perhaps serve to not only encourage the individuals within it to improve themselves menially and physically. Hit also to support each other practically in our unified struggle to genuinely live our lives al odds with the status ⌋uo. Il is easy to go to see a band play and hang out one light a week, but if you really want to extract yourself from he society around you. you have to change your everyday ife — and (hat is difficult without the support of your peers. Seek out ihose with similar goals and see how you can ar- ange to help each other. Perhaps that homeless punk kid in /our neighborhood can sleep on your floor or use your ;hower every once in a while; perhaps he can help you put jp propaganda posters. Maybe the skinhead at your local

.opyshop can copy the posters for you, if you lend him some >ooks or records. Maybe one of the people you know but JonT take the lime to talk to much could recommend some ;ood books or records to you if you would go out of your way io see if you could do anything for her.

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Next time someone refers to Inside Front as a 'fanzine' — bring me his head on a stick

We al Inside Front are nobody's 'fans'. And neither are you, righl? The media is notorious for taking normal human beings like you or me and turning them into godlike entities: "stars", "poliiicians", elc. So much useless information about them is spewed al us daily thal one can'l help bui eventually pay attention... soon you know more about Madonna's new boyfriend or what kind or hair-gel that Snapcase guy uses than you know about your own fucking neighbors. Even worse, we soon know even more about fictional characters than we do about real people. Listen to people talking, and you'll hear how much time they waste talking about television shows, old movies, and comic book characters. When wc could be making better plans for our own lives or gelling to know each other better, we instead spend our lime exchanging useless information the media has pumped into our heads. And of course the more lime we spend wondering who will be Rolling Slone's "band of the year" next, the less time we have to make more of our own lives.

There's a reason that things arc this way. When television companies, movie producers, and their ilk convince us that entertaining, exciting life is not something ihal exists all around us every day but instead can only be found in movies, they gel lo sell life itself back to us. That is. when you spend your spare lime watching television rather than traveling or falling in love or playing soccer, you think that the most excitement you can have is in watching a travel show, a soap opera, or a sports game on television. And the more you watch these things on television, the more you forget thal you could actually be out doing these things yourself rather than just watching them. You'd be surprised how much more exciting it is to actually make music yourself than to watch MTV — how much more fulfilling it is to have sex yourself than to watch some strangers in a pornographic movie — how much more exhilarating it is to actually struggle against an obstacle yourself than lo just watch an adventure movie. But the less you leave the television set to actually do these things, the more empty your life is. and the more you need the television shows to make up lor the lack ot any real excitement in your life.

And that's where the media moguls come in. They're happy to provide you with a substitute life — at a price. Sure they'll sell you second-rate sex and violence, vicarious excitement and affection... but you have lo pay for it on pay-per-view or cable tel vision,

you have to pay to buy ihe lelevison seis and the movie tickets and the computer modems, you have to buy the latest fashion or music magazine. Above all you have to listen to their commercials on the radio, read them in the magazines, or watch them in between television shows. These commercials are carefully engineered to get you to spend your money on the products being advertised... and when you do spend your money on them, you'll need to work harder and longer at your job to make more money. In fact chances are that your job isn't loo rewarding to you either, and rather than making you feel so alive thal you don't need television anymore your job probably makes watching television seem thrilling by comparison.

Here's the part that would be hilarious if it wasn't so tragic: as likely than not. the job you pul all your effort into has something lo do with the media or marketing industry. Maybe you work al an advertising agency, or a television station, or for some business that makes and markets a product thal is completely useless to humanity — bul that everyone buys because it is so heavily advertised (Coca Cola is a good example). So while you're gelling burned out and missing oul on real life just so you can buy a cheap substiluie for il. you're supporting the same system that is wasting your time until you die. And make no mistake about il. you are going to die — do you want to look back on a life of watching and talking about the Cosby Show, or a life of pain and pleasure, romance and struggle, love and hate? Are you satisfied to watch other people do what you could be doing yourself, if you didn't waste so much time *watching, * didn't spend so much lime working at a job you hale to buy things you don't need?

The solution is simple, if you want it: it's easy to turn off your television set and go outside. Stop caring what Elvis' daughter is doing, and starl caring whal your friends or enemies are doing, what your lover or stepmother is doing. Walk out of your office cell-block into the sunshine and learn to do without those fancy clothes or brand new stereo so thal you will be free to live a life of challenge and

Caution: Television is A

Slippery Enemy

Some people will say that you can use television and the mass media to spread useful information and maybe solve problems. I would object to this claim, because whatever small problems you can use the television to solve, you are only increasing one of our biggest problems of all — that is, that people are *still watching television.* As long as people are used to *watching, * nothing fundamental is going to change, because* watching only leads to more watching. *The major record labels and media conglomerates know this — that's why they're not afraid to put a so-called revolutionary band like Rage Against the Machine (or, now, Earth Crisis) on television or radio, because no matter what these bands say the viewer will still just stare at them, glassy-eyed, and then change the channel to watch something else when they finish calling for revolution. Television companies will even try to suck in their enemies by broadcasting show's called "Destroy Television" and promoting bands or individuals with anti-media messages — in this way even the anti-television people will end up...* watching television!

There are no shortcuts. We must set up our own systems to distribute information, free from the problems of the mass media. Independent publications which involve the readers actively in (he actual writing of the material (such as Inside Front and other punk/ hardcore magazines) are a step away from the many dangers ihe mass media poses to human happiness. So when hardcore bands or other countercultural groups appear on television, they are selling themselves out, and selling out our larger cause of seeking to make life something that belongs to individuals again rather than something we must buy from corporations. Above all it's particularly embarassing to see supposedly 'hardcore' record labels advertising upcoming band appearances on television... that makes it seem as if hardcore bands haven't spent the last fifteen years avoiding television because they despised it, but only because they weren't good enough to be on it! And now we're "proud" to be accepted as part of mainstream culture, we're finally "just as good" as Madonna and Pink Floyd'Whatever!

So don't fight television with television, or there will only be more television (and if that doesn't sound like a bad thing, go back and read this article again... or just turn on a television and think about what you see; then, think about what it's like to be *watching* rather than *doing* anything!). Instead fight it by helping others to create independent mediums of human exchange: independent news/ music/political magazines, underground record labels, etc. In the long run the most important war we have to wage is the war for freedom lo live our own lives without being manipulated, and permanently turning off our televisions would be a major victory in this struggle.

excitement, a life of new experiences — a life where you are ihe master of your own faie rather than jusl a victim of a dull job and a few sharp advertising campaigns. Surely if you used all ihal energy that you throw away washing dishes or programming computers for 'the system', you could find a rewarding way io earn enough money yourself to more than survive. Acl now or forever hold your peace: don't talk about how bored you are, or how much you hate your job. or how amazingly meaningless your life seems (when and if you ever actually stop to think clearly aboul il) if you're not willing io iry to set yourself free.

So Inside From is NOT a fanzine; we re not trying to glorify any Henry Rollins-slyle heroes or spread any household names. We're jusl trying to spread information about ihe music and ideas ihal other people jusl like you and me are creating.

How Ethical is the Work 'Ethic'?

Did you ever wonder why your parents act so disoriented when it comes to 'leisure' activities? Why they start one little hobby, and either fail to follow through with it or become pathologically obsessed with it... even though it doesn't seem to have anything to do with their lives? Maybe they seek to lose themselves in gardening or following the exploits of some basketball team. Maybe your father buys all sorts of fancy tools (the kind of tools many men his age have), but only uses them for a few days before setting them aside — and then buys a lot of skiing equipment the next month. Or perhaps they just spend their time trying figure out how to pay off the debt they owe for that wide screen television they spend the rest of their time watching.

And — have they ever been honest with you about their jobs? Do they enjoy them? Is their work the most fulfilling thing they could be doing, are they able to achieve every goal they always wanted to? Do they feel heroic or proud every day as they return home — or are they exhausted? Do they turn that wide screen television on as soon as they come in the door? Do they have the energy to do anything else?

Did you ever wonder if there might be a better way for them, for you?

What is 'Work' Like?

Because of 'division of labor', most jobs today consist of doing very specific tasks, over and over, with very little variety. If you are a dishwasher, you wash dishes: you don't get to interact with people or solve complicated problems very often, and you never get to leave the dishroom to run around in the sunlight. If you are a real estate agent, you never use your hands to make anything, and you spend most of your time thinking about market value and selling points. Even jobs that include a certain amount of variety can only remain interesting and challenging up to a point: for we work forty hours a week on average, and at least five out of the seven days. That's a lot of our lives to spend working. Work is the first thing we do on most of the days of our lives, and we don't get to do anything else until we've been at work for quite a while. When we spend most of our time and energy working on one task, or even ten different tasks, eventually we will feel bored and desperate for variety... even if we are conditioned not to realize this.

On top of this, because of the spread of large businesses and the consequent decrease in self-employment and small businesses, most of us do not have much voice in what our responsibilities at work will be. It is hard to start your own business or even find a

friend or neighbor to work for. We often must get a job to survive in which we follow the instructions of a manager who probably doesn't have much more control over his job than we have over ours. Since we don't get to decide what we are doing, chances are that we will feel alienated from our work, disinterested in the quality of our labor; we may even feel that the projects we are working upon are unimportant.

Indeed it is easy to feel that most of the jobs available today are unimportant — for in a certain sense, many of them are. In a purely capitalist economy, the jobs that are available will be determined by which products are in the most demand; and often the products that are in demand (military technology, fast food, Pepsi, fashionable clothes) are not products that really make people happy. It's easy to feel like all your labor is wasted when the products you work so hard to sell just to survive seem to do nothing for the people you sell them to. How many people really are cheered up by the soggy french fries at McDonalds? Would they perhaps be happier eating a meal prepared by a friend of theirs or a chef they knew who owned his own cafe?

In short, "work" as we know it tends to make us unhappy because we do so much of it, because it is so repetitive, because we don't get to choose what we do, and because what we are doing is often not in the best interest of our fellow human beings.

What is Leisure Time Like?

We come home from these jobs exhausted from having invested all our time and energy in a project we may not have even been free to choose, and what we need most is to recover. We are emotionally and physically worn out, and nothing seems more natural than to sit down quietly for a while and watch television or read the daily paper, while we try to gather our strength for the next day's labor. Perhaps we try to leave behind our exhaustion and frustration by concentrating on some hobby or another; but as we are not very used to directing ourselves in the workplace during the day, we often don't know what we really want to do when we are free at home. Certainly some company or another will have some suggestions for us, whether we receive them from advertising or watching our neighbors; but chances are that this company has their profits in mind at least as much as our satisfaction, and we may discover that playing miniature golf is strangely unfulfilling.

Similarly, of course, we don't have much time or energy left over from work to consider our situation or participate in any rewarding activity which requires much time and energy. We don't like to think too much about whether we enjoy our jobs or our lives — besides, that might be depressing, and what can we do if we don't enjoy them, anyway? We don't have the energy left to enjoy art or music or books that are really challenging; we need our music to be soothing, our art nonthreatening, our books merely entertaining.

In fact, we come to associate having to expend effort and do things with our work, and associate relaxing and not doing anything with leisure time. So, because many of

us don't like our jobs, we tend to associate having to do things with being unhappy, while happiness, as far as we ever know it, means... not doing anything. We never act for ourselves, because we spend our whole days acting for other people, and we think that acting and working hard always leads to unhappiness; our idea of happiness is not having to act, being on permanent vacation.

And this is ultimately why so many of us are so unhappy: because happiness is not doing nothing, happiness is acting creatively, doing things, working hard on things you care about. Happiness is becoming an excellent long-distance runner, falling in love, cooking an original recipe for people you care about, building a bookshelf, writing a song. There is no happiness to be found in merely lying on a couch — happiness is something that we must pursue. We are not unhappy because we have to do things, we are unhappy because all the things we do are things we don't care about. And because our jobs exhaust us and mislead us about what we want, they are the source of much of our unhappiness.

What is the Solution?

You don't have to work at those jobs, you know. It is possible to get by without all the Pepsi, all the expensive clothes, the wide screen television and the expensive interior decorating that all those paychecks go to pay for. You can try to start your own business doing something you care about (although this still involves the danger of having too little variety in your work), or you can try to find a job in today's marketplace (good luck!) that you actually enjoy... and that leaves you enough time and energy to do other things in your life that you also enjoy. The most important thing is to arrange your life so that you are doing things because you want to do them, not because they are profitable — otherwise, no matter how much money you make, you will be selling your happiness for money. Remember that the less money you spend, the less you will have to worry about getting money in the first place... and the less you will have to work at those dehumanizing jobs. Learn to use all your 'free' time, not to vegetate or spend money on entertainment, but to create things and accomplish things — things that no one would pay you to make or do, but that make your life (and perhaps the lives of others) better anyway.

Some will argue that the system we live within would break down if we all were to walk away from our jobs — so much the better. Haven't we built enough automobiles, enough shopping malls, enough televisions and golf clubs, enough fucking nuclear weapons already? Wouldn't we all be better off if there was a shortage of fast food and a surplus of unique home-cooked meals? If playing music is more rewarding than working in an assembly line, why do we have so few good bands and so many transistor radios? Of course a 'work-free' world is a dream we will probably never see come true; but as always, the challenge is to make this dream a part of your world, as much as you

can — to liberate yourself from the chains of mindless consumerism and mind-melting employment and live a more meaningful life.

Dear Mr. Dingledick:

*Inside Front's Letter * ^-.Section*

Dear Inside Front-

First, is the O.L.C. song "Too Much Authority" on your compilation CD not representing the exact same mentality you are always criticizing Earth Crisis for?

Also, I've noticed you often equate spelling ability with intelligence. This is a shallow and stupid way to judge people. Anyone who has ever read "Anxiety Closet" knows I'm lucky to spell my name right. I don't think that means I'm a moron. Why myself and others aren't spelling bee champs I don't know, natural ability, schooling, not caring...? But I can tell you it's not a lack of intelligence. I consider myself a fairly intelligent person, even though I did just have to look up "intelligent" to see if it had one or two L's. (EDITOR'S NOTE: AND DESPITE LOOKING IT UP, DARI ACTUALLY SPELLING IT "INTELLEGENT" THROUGH HIS ENTIRE FUCKING LETTER. We've corrected his errors where we could.) I don't mean to brag, but it does kind of make my point — last time I was tested, my I.Q. was 142. That's considered "genious" whether I can spell it or not. I also manage to maintain a 3.5 G.P.A. at one of the top schools in the country, despite a general lack of effort and having 1 000 other things going on in my life. Maybe you should consider judging people on what they say and not how well they spell it.

In regard to your review of the "Final Count" video compilation — how can you possibly judge a band and their "revolutionary-ness" on their physica appearance and/or style of music? Aside from Struggle and Chokehold, Frail is the most revolutionary-minded band I know. Yet, you call them harmless kids. What kind of revolution is a bunch of high school jocks knocking each other's teeth out? Why does hardcore have to look like football to be revolutionary? How fucking shallow.

Finally, Ground Zero distribution will not be carrying Inside Front #8 due to One Life Crew being on the CD. We refuse to, in any way, support this or any racist, ciassist, homophobic, nationalist, and violent band. Our apologies on this unfortunate situation. Peace, Dari Fullmer/Anxiety Closet FANzine/Ground Zero Records — 4 Leona Terr., Mahwah, NJ 074303025

*Dea res! Dari — *

/. I'm not going to try to defend O.L.C. against your criticism of Too Much Authority'., especially not after id! the shit that has happened betw een me and them.

2. *Correct spelling does not indicate intelligence so much as common sense. We in the hardcore community want to present ourselves and our ideas in the most coherent manner possible so thal we will be taken seriously by others from all walks of life. Frequent spelling errors indicate that you are either stupid OR do not care enough about your writing to make it look polished and serious. When you publish a 'zine filled with spelling errors, or Karl from Earth Crisis fails to spell twenty two words correctly (words such as 'awesome' and 'finally.' no less!) in an interview, the members of the hardcore community in general look stupid or lazy to the rest of the*

world... because 'zines and interview s are permanent high-visibility records of what goes on in hardcore. All you need is to consult a dictionary or computer spell-check to stop fucking the rest of us over; Dari. Pass the message on to Karl/Erth Kris ice.

3. *So, you. Ebullition, and a couple other distributors will not carry Inside Front US because O.L.C. appeared on the included CD compilation. I will explain why you are betraying the hardcore community by doing this... but first. Fd like to mention that the CD's that came with I. F. HR were already pressed before I had read the vaguely racist anti-immigrant lyrics on the O.L.C. full-length, and long before the violent incident at the Cleveland festival. The songs they had sent me for the I.E CD were neither racist nor exceptionally violent. So by the lime il became clear what was going on with O.L.C., I already had 1/00 CD's on my hands with O.L.C. songs on them. Should I have destroyed all those CD's. considering that there w ere SEVENTEEN other bands on the CD 's who all needed and deserved exposure?*

And that is why your decision not to distribute I F. #8 simply because of the O.L.C. tracks is ridiculous and short-sighted. In that issue other Inside Front, there w ere songs by seventeen other bands, almost all of w hom had really intelligent, important things to say, and all of whom really deserved a chance to have their music heard, on top of those bands, there w ere scene reports describing all the projects and hard work of plenty of labels, bands, 'zines, etc. across the world. There were in-depth reviews of hundreds of records by hard-working, sincere bands w ho at least deserved to let the public hear about their music through a widely-read hardcore magazine. There were columns by a variety of people, all of whom had worked hard to offer wellthought-out ideas that could improve the lives of readers... for instance. I believe Loara's column about the fashion industry's war on women could really have helped girls who grew up bulimic as she did.

Ry refusing to distribute I.F. #8. you are not just fucking over every band on the CD, every band who sent a record for review, every columnist, and every kid in every country who sent in a scene report. You are fucking over every kid who might have had a belter life if he had gotten the 'zine from you and read Loara's article or heard

Trial's song. You are fucking over every kid who might have read the review of the Nations on Fire CD. sought it out, and had his or her life changed for the belter because of it. You 're fucking over every kid in rhe hardcore communities of Belgium or Massachusetts who would have liked others to read aboul their scene in the scene reports. In short, you're not boycotting an O.L.C. CD: you are, rather, boycotting two of the least harmful songs O.L.C. ever released, at the expense of the efforts and possible happiness of literally hundreds of kids. Hardcore is not just some silly hobby to most of us — it is a community from which we draw our life's blood, and I'm sure some people (whether readers or contributors) depend partially upon Inside Front to be connected to that community. Tm not trying to sing the praises of Inside Front here — I'm saying that whether it was Inside Front or Profane Existence or Hardware you were boycotting for a reason like this, you would be betraying the whole hardcore communits'. Please, consider rhe pro's versus the con's of issue #8 of Inside Front, and think about il.

4. *Finally, aboul my review' of that video, in which I comment that the kids at the shows look so passive and harmless that I find it really hard lo believe any of them truly want revolutionary change: Let me give you some background on my perspective. When I started really getting into punk/hardcore, I was a furiously angry, fruslrated teenager. Everything in my world looked unjust and unfair to me: my girlfriend was getting into drugs heavily as the result of the pressures*

[Image not archived]

of having to live on welfare in a two-room apartment with her terminally ill, bedridden mother and grandmother: my friends (and sometimes I. as well) were constantly attacked and beaten for looking "punk rock" (which was a lot more dangerous then): authority figures such as cops and teachers would assume this was our fault, and discriminate against us similarly (to the point that it was hard to stay in school or get a job): it drove me crazy to always see this same bullshit happening to a much worse degree to members of ethnic minorities and people of non-heterosexual orientation: and above all. I lived every day in a society I could not fucking relate to or feel comfortable in.

I would go to punk shows and the other kids there felt like I did. We were all fucking angry as hell, so angry' we could barely even begin to articulate it: as we waited for the bands play you could feel the tension and rage we had built up in the air. When a band we loved broke into a song, screaming about their frustration, we too would express our pent up frustration by screaming and rioting. We were so angry, so outraged at rhe world around us. so impatient to see things change, that we couldn't hold still, we couldn t keep (turselves calm. If you have a shred of life left in you. you can't stay calm when your mother is dying, when your friends are becoming addicted to drugs, when you watch your world destroyed by industry' and dirty politics. It eats you up inside when you can't so much as blink without some bullshit commercial trying to sell you something you don "t need or some brainwashed moron trying to make you sell your soul to some irrational doctrine.

I am as angry now as I was then, but I have worked hard to think about things and educate myself so I now have some idea of why things are so fucked up and what I can do with my energy to try to change things. That, I think, is the essence of 'hardcore' — to take your frustration and do something constructive with it. But if I wasn 't so worked up about things. I wouldn 't care enough to be trying to do something about them. When I watched that video, the kids I saw in the bands and the audience looked so bored, so passive and disinterested, that it was really hard for me to believe that they really are angry about anything or impatient for any kind of change al all. The motions they all were going through looked so ritualized and meaningless to them that it was clear that there was nothing revolutionary going on — you can buy boredom and ritual at your local fucking mall. I might be wrong, but as a reviewer I have to call it as I see it. and what I saw didn't make me think that these kids has their hearts in what they were doing. Not to say that they never could or never will work towards a better world, but what I saw didn t look like a group of kids who felt Ijke they had anything at slake in the struggle for the improvement of our world and our lives. This doesn 't have anything to do with "jocks knocking each others' teeth out" or any other stupid bullshit displays of macho insecurity: this has to do with whether or not people have their hearts in what they're doing. Anyway, Dari, thanks for writing, and lake care of yourself.

Sincerely, Editor "D."

Anyone else who wants to get crucified in our letters section is welcome to write us.
[Image not archived]

1. SXE vege kid looking for SXE kids in the Detroit scene. 16 years old. Plays guitar. Recently moved from Scotland. Listens to Release, Unbroken, Ignite, G.B., Strife, etc. Starting 'zine. Alex Awn, 29200 Lori Kay, West Brook Manor, Farmington Hills, MI 48334

2. Wanted:

   Alone in a Crowd 7"

   Clevo HC 'Final Word' -cass.

   Integrity 'Grace Of Unholy'- cass.

   Together 7" comp.

   ☒other ltd. stuff. Offers, letters etc.

   * to: O.P. Vaissi, Tuohilammcntic 68, Finland. Al B. and Becky R. you owe me ...

3. Wanted! Will buy or trade for _Axegrindcr_ "Rise of the Serpent Men" LP, copies of the _Trial_ 12" on Hipster ["rip off'] records, live recordings/vidco

footage/photos/interviews of the _Amebix_. rare/live recordings of of Diamonda Galas, artwork by Ernst Fuchs, Situationist propaganda, a copy of Werner Herzig's Nosfcratu (1979), or rarc/obscure varieties of root beer or cream soda (for instance, _Iron Horse_ root beer). Contact us at the Inside Front/Crimethinc. address.

Attention: In future issues of Inside Front, starting with #10, classified ads will be free. Only one per person.

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If you build it, they will come ... maybe

Hello, my name is Chris and 1 opened a store with a friend of mine named David in southern California called On the Edge Records, while we carry a little bit of everything (obviously, no racist shit), we specialize in SXE because that's what we're into and no store out here takes SXE seriously. We wanted to open a store where kids could go to shop without fear of persecution. SXE has taken some serious blows to its credibility over the years after too many "role models" and "icons" of the scene have fallen and proven to everyone that often times it isn't true 'til death but rather true 'til 21. We are here for the kids who are SXE now and who will be SXE 10 years from now. I'm going to give all of you free thinking kids out there who don't want to have bosses for the rest of your life a lesson and show you how we did it and what we went through so maybe you can do it in your community too.

First: Don't give up your day job. You will make no money at first so if you are going to do it to cash in and rip everybody off for your own profit, go work for a major label or better yet, join an organized religion.

Second: If you or your family aren't rich and you can't borrow money to get started you'll have to do what we did ... credit cards. Gel as many credit card applications as you can find and when you fill them out put student in the area where it asks for your occupation. The plastic will roll in and you should be able to amass a lot of credit. Be careful though because you still will have to make the monthly payments and if you don't you should start checking the train schedules to see which one will get you out of town fastest. Credit cards arc the hardest way to get cash because of the interest rates which rape you, but if you have no other means of getting money, it will be the only way to get your business started.

Third: After you've secured your financial backing, it's time to look for a place to put your store. In this case, the old cliche of "location, location, location" really is true. We opened across the street from a high school so even on the days when the SXE kids can't borrow the keys to their parents' cars we still get business from the mindless fucks across the street who can't live without the latest buzz clip on MTV, like Civ.

Try to find a place that has cheap rent and make sure the landlord is trustworthy by having somebody professional look over the lease before you sign your life away.

Fourth: Surround yourself with people you can trust who will look out for the store when you can't be there, we have a great group of friends here who volunteer their time and it makes it easier on everybody by keeping the stress to a minimum.

Five: Most importantly, make sure your scene

We opened across the street trom a high school so even on the days when the SXE kids can't borrow the keys to their parents' cars we still get bosiness from the miodless tocks across the street who can't live without the latest buzz clip on MTV, like Civ.

will support what you're doing. If your scene sucks shit, your store will fail because apathy w ill drive you out of business. Go to shows and sell records so you can hook up with people, pass out flyers and business cards, run specials and sales to get people interested. Do whatever you have to do to get your store's name out. People have to know that you exist before they can shop there. Above all, be patient. One day, maybe, you'll be able to support yourself by only working at the store, but until that day comes, get a job and work for the man so that one day the man will have to work for you!

if you want to visit us, get in touch with us, or mail order merchandise (sorry. w^{r}c don't have a catalog.) Contact the store at::

On the Edge Records •
c/o Chris
10533 Los Alamitos Bl.
Los Alamitos, CA 90720
Or call/fax:
310. 430–6975
311. 430–7846 (fax)
[Image not archived]

Sooner or later, if you're in a punk/hardcore band, you will have to lour. Touring is the best way lo spread your music and message; because out of all the people who go to shows, only some of them buy records... out of all the people who buy records, only some of them read 'zines... and out of all the people who read 'zines, only some of them mail order music. So before you worry too hard about gelling interviews and records out. you should concentrate most of all on playing shows far and wide. I'm assuming, of course, that your band is artistically ready to present itself at its best — and psychologically ready to suffer through ihe grisly ordeal of touring. If you think you're ready for it, you're probably not... but you might be after reading this advice column on the subject.

BOOKING You should be able to get the phone numbers of people who book hardcore shows from the informal network that exists within our community. Ask other bands for their booking numbers, call those numbers and ask them for more numbers, and go from there. There really aren't any shortcuts to this method — lists

of booking numbers lend to go oul of date fast (since hardcore kids seem to come and go so _J_ embarassingly fast) and books like "Book Your Own Fucking Life" not only suffer from this problem but also tend to list such a broad variety of individuals without differentiating them that you don't know if you're going to play a hippy commune or a redneck wedding. If anyone finds getting numbers to be that tough, just call the Inside Front hotline, and we can give you advice and help.

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Once you have the numbers, start out at least a month in advance, and in the beginning try lo book iwo or more shows for each night. Believe me, you'll have two or three shows cancelled for each night before you get one that is solid (if you ever get a good show...). You'll probably have so much trouble keeping shows booked that you'll end up booking many of the nights from the road. For this reason, you should have a friend at home to try to keep on lop of your show dales while you're on the road, to help out by keeping in touch with promoters and rebooking cancelled shows. When you do get a show booked, make sure far in advance that you have an information number on the show, directions to the show, and know exactly when you must be there. It will be too late to get this information later — and. you'll find, booking agents arc hard to reach when you need (hem.

PACKING Don't bring anything you can do without! It'll just get in the way, and you'll, probably lose it or something. That is to say, leave behind that extra nice shirt, or ironing board, or collection of letters from your girlfriend. But do bring everything you could possibly need: general repair tools, duct tape, toilet paper, weapons (that will *not* be recognized as such by cops when they search your vehicle!), credit cards, postage, a cellular phone for emergencies (if you can steal or borrow one!), rope, bungee cords, etc. Bring one or maybe two roadies (but no more, as they will get in the way, slow the band down, and perhaps distract you from your focus: making music) in charge of packing and unpacking the vehicle, watching over equipment, selling merchandise, and keeping track of everything in general. Make sure you pick your roadies above all on the basis of how responsible, dependable, and skilled they are; there is nothing worse than dead weight on a tour, and nothing better than an individual who can contribute to the group in a variety of ways.

TRANSPORTATION Renting a vehicle is pretty damn expensive, but you may have to. so make sure you know exactly how much it will cost in the worst case scenario. Whether you rent, borrow, or use your own vehicle, it is crucial that the vehicle be in good enough condition to be expected to make it safely through the tour. Van explosions, fires, crashes, and disasters have destroyed more tours (and occasionally bands) than any other problem. Someone on the tour should be skilled with automobile maintenance and repair, and should check on the condition of the vehicle every day. even when it seems to be doing fine. Make sure your vehicle (and your drivers) are well prepared for whatever weather you may be travelling in — bad snow or even rain

can lead to accidents. Whenever at all possible, someone should sleep in the vehicle each night, to protect the band from theft.

You'll want to split up driving as fairly as possible, unless you're lucky enough to have a really good long distance driver in the group. Even then someone should slay up with him and her on late night drives. Plan a route ahead of time, and bring a couple different road Atlases with you — plus closeup maps of cities you're playing in. While you're driving, make sure to always watch for landmarks; otherwise a small mistake can go undiscovered until hours later, when you realize you are three hundred miles from the show. Figure not only gas costs but also lolls (which can be very expensive in the northeast U.S.) into your budget. Some days you may have to pay up to $15 in tolls.

HOUSINGHave a few friends' houses (relatives should suffice, if you have no friends) lined up along the way as places where the band can recuperate and gather new supplies. Of course you should arrange this far in advance so you can depend on them. In towns in which you know nobody, you can expect decent help from strangers (often the person who books the show can put you up or offer advice), but you should expect the worst — especially if you have more than five people in your band. If you absolutely have to rent a room, make sure you do ii early enough at night that you have a decent

selection of motels from which to choose. Bring your own sleeping bags (and. if you're sissies, pillows), but no extra bedding, as it will just get in the way. Camping out often works for bands, but bad weather can make it a nightmere and it's not a good idea in winter anyway.

FOOD Bring as much nonperishable food as you can without overpacking. DO NOT eat at gas stations, even though that is the only easy way to eat on tour: the food there is all far overpriced and extremely unhealthy. Whenever you stay with someone, ask them lo direct you to a grocery store so that you can buy lots of healthy food cheap. Eating healthy on tour is crucial; you probably won't be eating much, so make sure you eat righl or else you will get sick or be loo exhausted to play well.

COMMUNICATIONS

You'll be at kids' houses, useless payphones, clubs without phones, in the van, etc. and it will be very hard to stay in touch with anyone, either at home or about the lour. Bring a calling card of some kind so you can at least make long distance calls from payphones and kids' houses. You should have a voice mail/answering machine at home, as well, for people who need to contact you (a pager might be a good idea). As I said earlier, it really helps to have someone dependable at a steady number who can lake care of business for you while you're on ihe road.

MERCHANDISE

It sucks, but if you ever make any money at all, it

will be from band merchandise who, like me, find the selling things to be in- ently counterrevolutionary will find this really distasteful... but I'm just telling it how it is). Have a table up as early as possible at each show, before the kids spend their money at other tables, and try to get a

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location where kids will at least notice you. Try to have a variety of stuff available, but don't have too much other material distracting from your records or clothing or whatever; or else people may pass over your sluff entirely. Have a roady in charge of organizing and presenting everything, and make sure careful records are kept of everything as it sells (or is given away for promotion) so there is no doubt in anyone's mind as to what is going on at the merchandise table.

MONEY Keep careful records of everything (merchandise expenses and profits, band debls and loans, band income and expenses, etc.) so no one will be treated unfairly and so the band will not suddenly find itself completely broke. Try to be prepared for hidden costs: vehicle maintenance and repair (changing the oil and tires, etc.), buying food, buying or repairing equipment, paying tolls, medical expenses (cold medicine, broken bones, etc.), etc. etc. etc. Try to arrange how much

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you can expect to be paid at shows tar beforehand; and when you are being paid, keep in mind that almost no one will treat you fairly unless you insist on it. Given the option most club owners or promoters would rather have a little extra money to buy a hamburger and Coke rather than make sure that you can afford gas to your next show. Be fair but very firm.

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Guitarists should lake two guitars, both of which they should keep in lune so ihey can change in the middle of a set if necessary. Of course they should have enough extra cords, batteries, strings, and picks to supply an army. A tuner might help, for loud, crowded, and crazy situations. Drummers should have extra slicks, extra drum heads, extra snares for the snare drum, extra drum keys, extra screws and other parts, extra pedal springs, and a wrench and screwdriver. Road cases are a real asset to a serious touring band, because they protect your equipment from otherwise inevitable transport and unloading damage... however, they do take up a lot more space, as well as being expensive. The band should have a checklist of equipment which they consult frequently, especially during loading and unloading, to prevent theft or loss of costly and crucial equipment.

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First consult the article "Singing with Dwid" in Inside Front #7. It is of utmost importance that you take care of your throat, or else you won't be able to adequately play your part in the band. Take throat lozenges and plenty of anything else thal helps your throat. I've found that something that helps far more than anything else is to simply not speak al all for the rest of the night after 'each show. This way your voice can heal for the next night. Of course this is the lime when you're meeting people and discussing things, so it's hard to remain mute, but lei the other band members do the talking. Warm up before shows by loosening up your ihoat and making a little noise. I've been told that drinking hot lea in the morning (and not speaking for an hour afterwards) also helps your throat to heal More than any other band member, you must avoid illness at anv cost.

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automobile trouble, illness ruins more tours than any other problem. As members of a touring group, your health will be completely interdependent: because you all cal, sleep, and breathe together every moment of the day, any illness that one of you gets will spread to the others instantly. Touring is difficult enough; with strep ihroal or fevers, it becomes near impossible. And remember, you're on the road to give your very best performances for people who haven't seen you before. So the members of the

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band and the roadies owe it lo each olher lo gel as much sleep and healthy food as they possibly can. Be in great physical condition before tour, because on it you won't get any food, sleep, or exercise. You will be stuck in a little box breathing freeway smog half of the lime, and ihe olher half of the time you will be breathing dirt and cigarette smoke in the worst clubs and houses you can imagine in every ghetto in the nation. Bring as many vitamin supplements (vit. C expecially), protein supplements, and varieties of medicine if you can. It's templing lo stay up all

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night every night when you meet new people and w see new places, and to some of you it might be templing io use all (he drugs tha(may be around you, but I would recommend against both, because they really wear you out and set you up for sickness. Also — expect to get very dirty, as public bathrooms in the U.S. are pretty fucking horrible (as will be most of (he houses you s(ay a() and showers will be pre((y hard (o come by. I recommend listening to bands with the letters "dis-" and "anti-" in their names... somehow that

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MENTAL HEALTH

If you love your bandmates and roadies when you leave for tour, you will hale them when you return. If you already have trouble getting along with them before you leave, expect the band to break up (and possibly kill each other) during the lour. If you have an easy life al home, touring will be the hardest thing you ever experience... if you don't really have a home and your everyday life consists of stealing food and slouching on lonely streelcornerS, louring won't be so bad — in fact the occasional free food and housing will be exciting. Try to keep a positive attitude so you can get along with your tourmates; the less complaining and the more bighearted everyone is, (he better it will be for everybody (it's just like real life or more so). Don't let bad shows gel you down on tour: you'll have a million of them, and the best things a new band can do are to learn how to play a great show to three kids, and to gel over playing badly fast enough to play well at the next show. On your first couple tours you'll be learning, above all; learning lo do ihose things, and making new friends and contacts that will help you in the future. After a few really lough and unrewarding tours, you'll have enough knowledge and experience to start putting together decent ones.

ONE MORE NOTE

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This amazed me, but there are still some teenaged girls out there who think there is something intrinsically exciling about guys in bands. These young women are probably not actually attracted to you, but only to what they think you represent: a little rebellion, a little MTV-style rock and roll glamour, maybe a lillle attention from a new guy from out of town. Going to great lengths to sleep with these girls (so they can

tell everybody how they slept with the bassist of so-and-so band) is probably a bad idea, because it is likely lo gel in the way of general band needs and will thus cause tension and possibly hurl your tour in general. Nol io mention that you're probably just helping them to make more of a mess of their lives (and perhaps your own), as the usual concerns relevent to sex with strangers also come up here. Please don't mistake me for a puritan, but my advice is to ignore how lonely you are on the road and treat these girls as the young, misguided human beings that they are, not as party favors. I'm sure this situation will happen to you at least as often if you are a woman in a band, so my advice is relcvani to both sexes.

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telling you it will be
easy to gel there.
Occasionally they don't
check a vehicle, but
usually the border
cops will go through
your sluff. If they
think you're crossing
to their country
without a work
permit, lo make a

million bucks playing shows (even if you're more likely to lose money), they won't let you in. If they see equipment, let alone shirts and records, they'll be really suspicious. The best thing to try is to have a fake contract to record at a studio in Canada (hide the shirts and records well!) so they think you're going to bring money into their country. You could also try to say that you're taking a shortcut from one part of the U.S. to another, if that is geographically feasible. These cops will confiscate mace, weapons, fireworks, etc. (basically anything you're nol allowed to have in junior high school), so be warned. You may think I'm joking about how difficult crossing the border is... but when Dan and I tried to cross on our tour last June, the cops tried to plant marijuana on us and bully us into admitting it was ours so they could incarcerate us. It took a few hours before they finally had to give up and let us go — and by then our show was over.

**TOSUMUP^, ^, **

difficult when you organize and execute it on your own without the help of some big fucking company. I've seen many hands set out with real dreams and meaningful goals, who after many months of gruelling and unreward' ing work couldn't remember what

they wanted except maybe to get paid their guarantee and get a nice hotel room to sleep in. Touring is so exhausting that it can force

sake your something you band, so do not the belter of lose sight of

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and your long Fight!

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***Change is possible, it has to be won** by Kryan Al fl*

'You can not affect real change in the world' Look at the '60s... all thal remains of the age of free love and peace is rich yuppies and tie-dyed wannabees. For all their protests and sit-ins all hippies created was an increased interest in pot and LSD and all they left us with is endless Grateful Dead concerts...* This is what they want you to believe. But. as much as I dislike the lie-dyed surface of the '60s. it would be foolish to deny thal it did a lot for us.

The majority of punks- including myself- never saw the world before the 1960s. but it's influence is prevalent in our world today. Many movements, including those for racial and sexual equality, nuclear disarmament, and the protection of the environment resulted or were expanded because of discourse and attitudes during the hippie era.

Those in power want you to believe that this period in our history produced nothing. They want you to believe that for all the screaming and rebellion of '60s youth culture nothing was really changed. We are easier to control if we believe this. If we are jaded, overly cynical, and don't truly believe in the possibility of our success in trying to improve our world then we won't get in the way. We make it that much easier for the power-hungry politicians and the money-hungry corporations to create the world they envision. And, chances are. it won't be one that the average citizen would wish for.

To study the effects of the '60s would be to fink out that, while the powers thal be were not brought to iheir knees, these powers were forced to listen. And. in some cases, were forced io act on behalf of the peoples' demands. There is evidence of ihis in the existence of various environmental protection laws produced in the early 70s. As a result of these laws pollution levels have been brought down (Although recent legislaiion may erase such efforts). There is also evidence of this in an increased dialogue about equal rights for women and other minorities. Affirmative Action laws, and an increased status of these individuals in the work place. (I am hesitant to get too excited aboul ihis. for while it is improved from the pre- '60s era. il certainly has a long way to go. But. then again, so does the environment.) And, most obviously, there is evidence that change was affected with the government eventually forced to pull out of Vietnam.

Sure, these laws may not have ever occurred without the action of the youth of the '60s, but their dialogue produced something greater. It changed our conscientiousness as a w hole aboul the world around us. It enabled us to further realize the problems of inequality in our society and. to further realize that we need to protect our environment. It may be hard to imagine for the posi-'60s generations, but do you really think people thought aboul the environment al all in the 1950s or before? I don't believe they ever

did in any significant number. Of course, that is not to say that enough people really think about the environment, let alone act to improve it in 1996.

50. how the hell docs this effect punk and hard core culture? Well... I would go out on a limb to say that few' youth movements in the U.S. today effects the lifestyles, habits, and personal beliefs of it's participants as much as punk and h.c. (except unfortunately, maybe Christian groups) Those individuals who become involved in punk/ h.c. very often question and change the foundations of their education. religious up-bringing, perceptions of societal value, etc. They often change their diets (vegelarianism/veganism) and many refuse to consume alcohol or other drugs. These individuals also become pan of their own system of consumption and communication (D.I.Y.. nonprofit or low-profit, trading, networking for our own shows, production of our own products, distribution, etc.).

But how the hell does this effect punk and h.c. culture?! Well, whai I was trying to illustrate is thal we are a youth culture. We do make a difference in peoples' lives every day. But. the fact is that the influence of our culture is very limited to those few people who care

enough to explore it and change themselves (and many of these people give up on it before long anyway.) J don't know exactly how to expand our influence and make a more significant change in our world. Maybe we can't. But it seems we allow ourselves the luxury of being so overly jaded aboul the possibility of affecting change thal we hardly really try. I am just as guilty of this as anyone else in ihe scene. And, 1 must admit. 1 don't have any brilliant answers.

It seems the solution is not to be so insular, not to isolate ourselves so much. There is no reason a group of punks can't be organized enough to go oul and protest somewhere. There is no reason we can't make a posit*e difference in our communilies. And. there is no reason we can't grow and influence the people within our world just as a movement in the 60s elevated the environment lo a level w here it is simply an expecled part of the governments agenda.

Of course. I may be loo idealistic and want to believe in the culture I am part of too much. I would just hope we would all al least think aboul the possibility that a culture that can do so much to create its own. relatively safe, environment could focus energy toward bigger issues as well. Issues other than any of ihe trivial ones we seem so intent on driving into the ground.

Presently, punk rock has become a fad. just as the hippie culture became. As a result an entire culture is mimicked to the point that it becomes completely devoid of any meaning and. once its commercial viability is gone, il is dumped. Hopefully some of the people attracted to the fad will learn of ihe true punk/h.c. culture and join us. And. hopefully we will learn to make ourselves something more of a movement than a fad so easily mimicked every ten or twenty years.

"The official view of the sixties is it's a bunch of crazies running around burning down universities and making noise because they were hysterics or afraid lo go lo Vietnam

or something...Thai's what people hear. They may know in their lives and experience thal that's not what happened, hut they don't hear anybody say it. unless they're in activist groups. Thal change is possible, that it has been won, is not the message that the system is pouring into you through television and radio and newspapers and books and histories. It's son of beating into your head another story. The other story is you failed, because you were a bunch of crazier The mainstream media conveys that if there have been changes, it's because we. the elites, are so great that we carried through the changes." -Noam Chomsky *Conirascienсc Zine/ p.o. box 8344/ Minneapolis.MN 554080344. 45 for $2ppd. N.America.*

Happy birthday,
you sadist!

by Adel 156

Happy Birthday You Sadist!

The birthday of one of the world's greatest philosophers just passed recently, so I thought I'd celebrate it by writing an article in his honor. The wonderful Marquis Donaiien-Alphonse-Francois de Sade, better known as The Marquis de Sade, would be 256 years of age today.

The Marquis remains to ihis day one of the most notoriously known, yet rarely understood philosophers. As James Brown is the godfather of soul, de Sade is the godfather of S&M (the name Sade is where we get the word "sadist"), and this usually provides the reason why most people know him. but haven't read an inkling of his

wor k s- The real de Sade is a philosopher of (he highest kind, one w∗th a P assion f°r life and a P ass'on 10 destroy. Many could find this out easily, but are either J put off or become too involved in the melodrama of his sado-masochistic storyline.

The Marquis wrote stories, dialogues, letters and £ P*a > s wcre h e discusses the stupidity of religion, the = l°ws °f capitalism, where women fit into this world and practically invents Fascism before the word even existed. Everything de Sade wrote is not necessarily known. There are some lost texts due to the French Revolution, a dozen or so stories, his thirteen year prison diary, a few novels...lost forever, seized by the P°^ce» destroyed by his unsympathetic family

J M members and only half of his writings have been i £ lrans l a(c d into English. Yet, he is lucky to even escape E the Revolution, let alone his writings.

Sade's books and stories each contain a devilish mixture of satire with straightforward social commen- r»^l t ar y- Most who do wind up reading anything by him, wind up asking. "Is this guy serious?" For instance, is he really recommending torture as an aphrodisiac and ana' ^^ as a way °^ P romol'n§ economic equality? If l h e y are P asl ^is. then they usually wonder, "If he is serious, where is he serious?" Is de Sade truthful in his moral stories and dialogues or in his anonymous

> **;; I** novels of torturous eroticism? One must keep in mind **I** that de Sade is always a serious writer al play. He

writes to enlighten. He writes to entertain. He writes to horrify. He writes lo show you that a pessimistic insight **w** ull° h^uman relationships and the conflicts between **w** unconstrained desires and constrained social order.

> The very heart of de Sade's philosophy is natural egoism. Since nature is a name for existence and everything therein, anything that can exist is

I natural...including any human desire, despite what a > **I** "moralist" might say otherwise. According lo de Sade.

> **I** humans are like any other animal, each one born with a particular taste, impulse, craving, need and so forth. $ur ac, 'ons ani* our thoughts follow nature's prompting and any internalized restraint such as morality, virtue, remorse and religion is an anti-natural interference. Morality is a quite cunning ploy made entirely up by priests for their own benefits and to line

I their pockets, which is proper for them, due to the fact that they are egoisis in their own right. Since morality is nothing more that an old wives' tale, any and all _™**R1**_ judgments of right and wrong are illusory. Life is truly **V I** neither unjust nor fair. He is being quite Nietzscheian ab°ut the whole thing, going beyond good and evil. Not necessarily saying all you do is fine and dandy. He is just saying thal whdt you do. is...what you do! No ^ Aether it is saving a life or taking a life is moral or 'mmorak >t's jusi human nature. Now de Sade is no nihilist, he doesn't want to destroy all values. He is mere^ stating that there is no altruism. If you go out of your way to do something good, it is simply a way to make YOURSELF feel better. Example: when one gives money to a panhandler, they gain a feeling of generosity and feel good about themselves or avoiding a fe^Hg °f guilt by shooing them away. The Marquis says each Pcrson's an eg°isL an^ he or she thinks and acts in there own best interest and looks out for themselves. Now. one might say, but 1 love my wife/ husband/ lover and would protect them even if I were in any danger. The truth is that this is no different, you are S1'H looking out for #1 ...yourself! If your wife/ husband were to say die because you didn'l save them, that would cause you great pain and you would be

> I miserable, in turn, you are doing it in your own best interest so as not to be miserable. And if you let them

die, then you really didn't love them, so il wouldn't hurt you either, now would it? It's all quite simple really. If any of this sounds objectionable, that objection is simply out of self-interest. You don't want lo face realily, so you transpose your personal concerns into universal principles and you try to get everyone else to respond in the same manner as yourself so you may feel just a bit more secure in your relationships to other people. Likewise, if you told yourself that it is immoral to abuse your spouse or lover, (hat is your self-interest underneath those grand ethics. If you were lo hurt

your partner they might leave you or hurl you back and you will either feel pain or guilt. To avoid this outcome you stand guard over yourself and call it maturity and/or sensitivity. Covering up the fact that your actually looking out for yourself by labeling things as ethical or unethical, moral or immoral, trying to make it a worldly view other than what it really is...your own view! After all, don'l we make everything up as we go along? As a product of your culture, you draw these lines of conception between right and wrong. What's ihe difference belwcen a love bite and a brutal hurting? The difference belwcen abortion and infanticide? Pornography and eroticism? There arc differences, but ask a thousand people and you'll gel a thousand answers. We make up what is right and what is wrong and each person sees it differently. All assumptions, beliefs, ethics and philosophies are. by there very nature, made-up explanations.

The Marquis never engages in any fundamental investigations like other philosophers do. Never asking. "What is reality? What is, Nature? Man? Individual?" The Marquis knows and he believes! He extols the goal of philosophy as, "...10 teach truth and destroy prejudices, " and docs so by slaying in a strict ideology of mechanical materialism and natural determinism. To him, only matter and physical force exist, governed by natural principles...and he's pretty much on the money! What did the Marquis de Sade want? Was he trying to convince us of unsettling implications into libido, nature and reality? Was he trying to pass along certain ideas? What he wasn't out to do, for sure, for his readers or even humanity, were favors. His misanthropic creations wcre his one weapon of revenge against a world that frustrated him so, forcing him to marry a woman he did not care for, locking him up for 13 years for his violent . sexuality, and (hen almost executing him for not being a cruel enough judge during revolutionary limes. Sade went beyond merely writing lewd and nightmarish scenes, he set out to subvert people's usual way of evaluating moral judgments. He maintains thal only our nature, through physical sensations and basic drives, is authentic; all abstractions such as ideals, ethics and religions are "prejudices" humanity has invented to shield itself from the truth of existence. His pen was his sword and he shoved il straight up mankind's asshole into his heart! *PO Box 820407. Miami FL. 33082*

***Howl learned to stop worrying and love The Computer** How I Fought the Cold War by Gregory- Jansen*

These days people are finding (hemselves more a part of (he online community each year and subjected to its customary practices. Once belonging to only a highly exclusive group, the online world is now within the reach of anyone in the middle class. Everyone on a college campus has felt (he constant push lo join in this *computer revolution.* However, before becoming a respected member of the *information class* the initiate should understand ihat our flashy new Internet initiation ritual customarily involves more ihan technological protocols. In order to know just what to expect from *cyberspace* we must explore the roots of the computer culture. I refer to the American computer users of the early eighties. Specifically, however. 1 mean those people who communicated through the first computer networks. This connection enabled the computer users to organize as a segregated community, they had an ability

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game is played successfully only within ihis frame of reason.

Let's further examine the prototypical computer- connected person of the early eighties. We arc stepping here into some very broad generalizations, bul analysis is about reduction. Please take a minute and think back to those cold war years. Do you remember that huge defense industry that protected us from the Russians? That industry was the birthplace of this new fetish object, the computer.

The first computer devices were designed to target enemy aircraft from the decks of battleships. Fighter pilots and tanks' crews have been training in computer simulations for decades. The Stealth fighter cannot fly without sophisticated computer systems. All of the first research in virtual reality was done with backing from the department of defense. Military spending has driven the high-tech industry for many years, and especially in the early days of computers.

Given this, it should come as no surprise that computer games are traditionally so graphically violent and military. Computers themselves emerged from a military culture. The very first computer games were computer simulations of warfare situations.

The military-industrial complex was where many of the technical elites found themselves working. The people who initially started tinkering with home computers had been building little models of fighier aircraft ten years before. Our rocket scientist fathers had an undying faith in the wisdom of technological.dominance. Lurking behind all of it is the absolute and fundamental symbol of the atomic bomb. If anything, this bomb has been the organizing force in the American psyche for the last fifty years. A testament to technology itself, it showed Americans how to maintain order in a world of chaos. Growing up in a cold war computer home was the equivalent of having gone through military flight school. I have previously said that this computer subculture carries customary practices of its own. I would like to push this hypothesis even further by stating that this computer world had a ritual function in American society. That function would be a male initiation.

The father buys a computer for the son and justifies ihe purchase as an investmeni in ihe child's education. In doing so ihc father has also brought the son into a larger rile of passage. The son is now subjected to new influences through the online culture. Grandfather Society also has big plans for the young man. The computer is an exquisite training device. Il punishes and rewards the ego through winning and losing. The father cannot know exactly what he has done lo his son. He has nothing more than a dogmatic faith in technology. This is the part of the modern outlook that is Big Science. However, the computer brings with it much more than a scientific understanding.

. Human ideological programming is implicit in the computer program. When the programmers write software, they program more than just the machines. They program ourselves. As we have found, the culture of computers is sexist, militarist, capitalist and imperialist. It is a total package thai inducts the young user into the patriarchy of the modern world.

It resurrects the specter of the A-bomb in the psyche of yet another generation. Boys learn that life is conflict, that dominance is survival. They learn lo lusl for women's bodies and the blood of enemies. From such an early age they begin to see people as objects and numbers on balance sheets. They are taught greed and at the same lime paranoia. Maybe a decade later we can iry to be more skeptical of the computer nursery.

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Is slamdancing dead?

by Richard Allen

I he discrepancies between punk rock's stated code of ethics and the actual practices of its adherents are legion. Even in this time of commercial overkill, however, it must be said that punk rock does an admirable job of bucking the tide of the mainstream. Rather than flinging wide the doors of its culture in hopes of broader popularity and a greater influx of other peoples' disposable income, as most subcultures do eventually, punk has done a relatively successful job ofclosing ranks against the Rollinses and the Rancids of this world, kicking them out of the punk scene and into the mainstream, rather than standing by as they usher the mainstream in. The ruthlessness and bitterness with which this "scene eviction" is accomplished is an additional deterrent, as the obsessive cliquishness it implies does well in keeping the squares at home.

However, wholesale negation of anything that catches the eye of the mainstream, be it bands, fashions, customs, or what have you. has an inevitable downside — the scene is prone to outdoing itself and letting the mainstream run roughshod over things it itself invented. The proximity of pop culture makes us. the supporters of the scene, shy away from our own culture rather than moving us to take steps to protect il. One notorious instance of this is the reactionary attitude towards slamdancing (or simply "dancing" as it was more often called before anybody needed it explained to them how people were going to dance at a punk or hardcore show) that is so commonplace today.

These days, unless you're at a show where the word is out that the band is somehow "acceptable" to dance to. you will get glared at and comments will circulate if you undertake any dance step more physical than lapping your toe. You will be called a "macho asshole" or a "frustrated jock." The people who say as much don't understand the history or significance of dancing at shows. What they do understand, however, is that you can see slamdancing's dimbulb cousin, moshing, on television all the time, . and you almost can't blame them for pulling two and iwo together and concluding that this is where you learned it from.

The truth is that many of these people haven't been a part of the scene all that long (most punk/ hardcore fans, being teenagers, arrived on ihe scene long after the explosion of "aliernaiive" music made moshing as much a pari of stadium-rock ritual as $25 t-shirts or seas of flickering lighters), so they don't know the former significance of ihe pit at shows, lei alone the difference between moshing and slamdancing, which is significant. Eor (he record, moshing is running around in a circle shoving people.

There's no rhythm to it. since ihe mosh participant obviously doesn't consciously connect the movement to the music: moshing ensues no matter who's playing or what form of music is being played. To wit. I. allended a show Iasi spring where a raging pit of fifteen-year-old wannabes moshed to the sounds of (he Make*Up. who. despite their former incarnation as the Nation of Ulysses, are essentially a lounge-funk band, and whose music, separated from the punk milieu, would never inspire one human being to collide with

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(wo scenarios (hat show how dancing — physically involved dancing, not overly self-aware head-bobbing, which is an easy rut to fall into — can emerge even in today's timid climate. Straightedgers, for one, have a whole slew of more stationary dance moves (hat are obviously an outlet for aggressive energy, but don't involve quite as much of an accident risk or bystander annoyance factor as charging around in a circle. And occasionally the audience is mature enough lo police itself in a way suits the interests of everybody. For example, a few months ago I went to see Avail, one of the few bands that the public s(ill seems to feel is okay to dance to. I'd never seen them in North Carolina before, so I was afraid that the show would either be a stand- and-stare kind of event or an unregulated shoving match. As it turned out, (he audience divided itself neatly into three different sections: the pit, then a wholly separate section of people who were simply lumping up and down, and behind them the non-dancers. The pit itself was fairly friendly, there were lots of people, male and female, involved, and the hall was big enough that anybody who had a problem wilh ihe dancing could withdraw and slill see ihe stage. People were free to enjoy themselves any way ihey fell was appropriate. And really, that is what I ask of you. the audience member — don't shy away from expressing yourself physically, whether it's by pogoing or kickboxing or however you feel like moving. By taking responsibility for yourself, you relieve olher people of the need lo dictate your actions and pull yourself free of the fear and ihe weight of supposedly "enlightened" social conventions ihat plague so many others.

If anyone's interested in more rambling of (his sort, issue #5 of my zine. Things Fall Apart, is available for $2.50 postpaid from Richard Allen. 2609 John Milton Dr.. Herndon, VA 22071. It's 4 8 pages and features interviews with Action Patrol and (you guessed il) Catharsis, plus other fun stuff. Please write with any comments or criticisms.

Axel Orange.

by a guy in Gei money

Earlier (his year. I've been talking to Marc of M.A.D. (Musical Defence Service). They are one of the bigger tour promoters in HC here in Germany and because of the proverbial integrity of da scene they have to deal with a lot of knifes in their backs . Envy, disappointed bands and gossip arc some of Ihe reasons. Of course. I'm not innocent. 1 like gossip. It makes it all worthwhile and helps you develop all the prejudices-or to give i(a heller sounding namethinking patterns.which guide your actions. The problem about gossip is just ihal people are too obsessed with negative

gossip. Therefore, one shouldn't rely (hat much on gossip.because it's mainly bad news that spread around. And too much of (hat taken too seriously might leave you ignorant. Granted, there are more ways of developing a decisive process, but who believes everything that's written down in a book or newspaper or is spoken by the persons themselves? Anyway, to cut it short. Marc called me on my prejudices about him and refuted my criticism. More than once during the conversation he had me cornered-my jaw dropping (o (he floor, giving no reply. I'm nol used lo talking to people who prove to be superior in the handling of words and who challenge my theories of how things work (e.g. "gossip"-see paragraph above) in such a defeating fashion.

One more example? Before ihe call. I was almost sure that most of the political views expressed by ihe hardcore movement- through lyrics and fanzines-are of little practical value and are first and foremost self- serving. You know; "change yourself before you change the world." (I'm not taking fiction into account here, the vegan reich. once more, isn't recognized). While all the grassroot social work just seemed to serve as a valve for the malcontent that would otherwise turn against the roots of injustice, the system itself. Il just soothes the effects my money-making has on those off whom the money is being made. (No. I don't want to close the soup kitchens or pul down volunteers' work I just keep wondering how bad it has slill goi to gel. before people really warn change and what makes them accept the misery). Marc provided indifferent opinion by

voicing a strong political stance and he seemed pretty competent about how he backed it up. unlike me.

I'd slill say I don't look al things the same way Marcdocs. A hardcore crowd won l ever change anything worthwhile concerning politics. Hell. I'd love to tell you that I believe in anarchism, communism, veganism, liberty or justice, hut that would be a lie. Just like you. I'm only in it for the music. But I really respect Marc for what he believes in. Did anyone so far think about me having to shut up if I lack ihe main point in HC anyway? You're probably right, but I'm beyond right or wrong, so I'll just continue. I don't believe in society systems. I'm too selfcentered and never content with what others decide for me. Just take capitalism: ihcrc are far too many doomsday scenarios as a direct by product of capitalism than one could probably claim its working. Il almost seems like iheir number grows daily. Be it ecological.economical.fear of w ar or major label infiliraiion.seems like we're doomed. Hell, we all die in the end (jusl read a Jello Biafra ly nc); al least we earned ii.

So capitalism and thus our current way of living is wrong, what am I going to do about il? Going on demonstrations, protesting, maybe a litlle vandalism feels like a touristic approach. "I watch as the world slowly becomes a revolt..."-this is not standard english, but it sounded like this io me. (HERESY wrote it originally as " ..becomes unravelled.." a litlle disappointing for my purposes. A comprehension error of freudian dimension). Well, (tick the apolitical, apathetic losers. We definitely need change. What about a revolution right now? It can only improve things, right? I'll complain about ihe new order in due time. About what's going on here: I'm looking forward to seeing

Avail. Los Crudos. Toe io foe and Catharsis soon. Lets see if they are a match lor ihe fantastic NWoSHM (New Wave of British Hardcore Metal) that sweeps Europe these days. Prime examples for me are Stalingrad and Rito. You should have metal tolerance.b ut readers of the front should have plenty thereof, so check them out if you think HC '96 lacks originality and the good old days arc more than romanticized past. Underclass is a swell band as well in the Rorschach meets Drop Dead vein, ihey have a split 7" out with Hard to Swallow, the Power Violence-tag comes to mind here. Voorhees-if you haven't heard their "Infesl-meelsBoston HC-with-harsh-lyrics" sound yet you miss out big time — a band I slill need lo see live someday. They're a little more popular, hut expect no metal influences here, which also holds true for Underclass and Hard lo Swallow; Check Armed with Anger or Days of Fury concerning inquiries about their releases.

Germoney: recommendations go out io ULLC who formed out of the ashes of Ego Trip. Their new 7" has a distinct emo touch, but slill enough anger to provide a healthy balance. Oops. Sorry for mentioning the 'e'- word. I guess. I just rang your repel I-re flex. Emo vs Metal core is childish. I don't know if I mentioned this already...Amen 81, which is dis-core with attitude recently played a set.covering (he wholenthe Crewnand they think about covering Slayer's "Reign in Blood." one of the best records- musically of all lime! I heir singer/drummer (we call him Disruptor) does cool lasmanian devil impersonations and pulled a slum extraordinaire a few weeks back: he applied for a Job as police officer lo get the application talks taped. Afterwards he stole several hundred propaganda flyers of how cool policemen are. They told him to cut off his mohawK and dreadlocks. Amen 81 has a 7" out that comes with a stupid prospectus which advertises ihe police.

Burned Out created the slogan "Hardcore heisst wieder kampfen" (Hardcore means lo fight again).Crudc mid-80's stuff with german lyrics-if you liked Inferno, you

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can't fail here. Didn't see them live yet, but chances are low they don't live up to their slogan live. And now for something completely different, loony department: have you heard of that bizarre legal quarrel between the owners of the moon? A german claims being the rightful owner of the moon because Friedrich the Great (some german monarch) gave it to his family in 1756 for a present. He wants his "rights" getting settled because american Dennis Hope(?) claimed ownership of the moon 16 years ago at the San Francisco district authority and since sold 2000 properties of Ihe moon.(After an article in the local newspaper last week).Sounds like a story for that Kohut guy. Maybe they should sue Armstrong for trespass back in'69? See you next lime. Greetings go out to Fidel Castro, best wishes for your 70th birthday yesterday. You're punk! Axel Orange 8/14/1996

***Everything you always wanted to know about prison, but were afraid to ask pt.3** by Marfin Maassen*

Greetings from behind the walls with another look at the Inside Front. This month I want to discuss the mental and emotional hardship of prison, and how it affects the day-to-day survival for an incarcerated person.

As it goes without saying that prison is a physically demanding ordeal, it should also be obvious how difficult prison is to endure mentally, emotionally. Since a sentence to prison usually implies that a number of _years_ must be given up by the inmate to the state (often unwillingly), a tremendous toll is taken from the spirit of the person behind bars. The prison experience has often been compared to combat duly during war. The 24 hours a day, 7 days a week vigilance that a convict must exercise for his own welfare is extremely demanding and taxing. When you consider that a _lack_ of vigilance is often the reason most people are caught and go to prison, it is for some a totally new experience having io watch their back; guard their possessions; watch iheir words; and monitor their physical appearance. For even ihe prison vet it is an emotional drain. It should not be surprising that a good deal of the most secure and successful .survivors of prison arc in fact military veterans! The constant pressure and stress that permeates the prison population makes for a hostile, edgy living environment. Of course this stress isn't forever, and after you've adapted to the reality of your new home you can begin to settle down and establish your routine. But what about those people who can't, or don't adapt? Because, in _most_ prisons, there exists ihe constant threat of violence, fear is something that m_ust be overcome_. Now don't get me wrong, fear is good — to the extent that you remain aware of possible dangers and learn to avoid them. But. fear as a driving emotion or force is deadly. If you do not learn to

fake a deep breath and find a comfortable seat, this next column is a Ion}' one ...

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driver over the price. There is always arguing over prices to be done in India, and people are coming up lo you al every possible turn, either with something which they are trying to sell you (rides, tours, hashish, prostituies) or to beg for money for their starving child or as alms for their handicap (leprosy is rampant in India). Given thal the average Indian makes about 9000 Indian rupees per year (when I was there, there were about 37 rupees to one US dollar) westerners arent just perceived as wealthy, we ARE wealthy by their standards. Accordingly, ihe Indians will try as hard as they can to squeeze extra rupees oul of you. It isnt dishonesty as much as it often is desperation, and over lime, you start to condition yourself lo the fact thal if something doesnt have a price already on it. thal the price youre told is over what it should be. Oftentimes, the difference amounts to pennies, bul there are a lot of people who get hung up on the principle of paying more than they should for goods and services. To see travelers arguing for ten minutes that their bag of oranges should be ten rupees instead of twenty (a different of aboul 25 cents) is enough to drive one to madness. I often chose to fork over the extra cash in order to not have to deal with arguments. Anyway, the thirty minute cab ride from the airport in Calcutta to the guest house where we were slaying was enough experience in itself to be worth the trips cost in itself. I honestly could have turned around, gone straight back to the airport, flown home, and it all would have

been worth it. Nothing in the Slates compares...imagine cars, trucks, cows, pedestrians all Fighting at once for space on the road, w ith no rules whatsoever except for one: whichever vehicle is largest gets the right of way...imagine buildings lying in heaps of rubble, (he mortar which held their bricks together having been made of cheap

sand...imagine hundreds of mats laid out alongside the road with colorful fruits and vegetables for sale all over the place...imagine pollution like you have never seen before as all of the cars and auto-rickshaws (essentially a motorcycle with a covered bench seat attached in back with room for two or three passengers) run on either diesel fuel or a combination of oil and gas and the exhaust is thick and black. The most frequently asked question aboul my trip is Where did you stay while you were over there? The answer is guest houses. There are youth hostel like guest houses all over India where you can rem rooms for around 30–80 rupees a day. Rooms are basic, bin it isnt hard io find places that are generally clean, or at least clean enough. The Red Shield Guest House on Sutter Street is a good place if you ever gel over there, and it is staffed with people who work under Mother Theresa herself, so they are very friendly. The second most popular question people ask me. just to cover it in case anyone is wondering, is. Did you have a hard lime eating while you were over there? The answer is no, bul I did have some concerns. I am a very strict vegan, and I made the decision before I left on my trip thal there would be no compromise of my beliefs while I was there. What thal meant to me was thal I had to do the same thing as when I am home in the Slates: ask about the ingredients in everything. Whether or not people were honest with me I will never know, but I can say that to the best of my knowledge, with only one exception when 1 fucked up and ate a little piece of cheese in something by accident, having thought that it was tofu (this was when I first got there) that I was vegan 99.9% of the lime. Many places will cook withoui buller there, using oil instead if you ask for il. and most of the country is loo poor io afford meal anyway, so all restaurants offer vegetable dishes.

Food is cheap loo. A good meal of Indian cuisine in a good, clean restaurant will cost around a dollar, and that includes rice, and an entree or two, some bread, and a bottle of water. I chose to spend a little more on food and

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be comfortable (hat I was getting clean food that wouldnt kill me. The different in price is negligible by American standards, and its totally worth it. Vegans, do not fear...you will survive in India without a problem.

Back to the Calcutta story. Calcutta was supposed to just be a landing spot for me. but my backpack had been mislabeled by the airlines and we had to wait for two days while (hey tracked it and recovered it for me. Those few days in Calcutta were insane. We saw poverty like 1 never before imagined could exist. Any innocence I had to the limits of human suffering were wiped out within my first 48 hours in Calcutta. City of Joy had discussed the lives of rickshaw pullers who slaved throughout the day in

Calcutta, the last stand for human powered rickshaws in the world. To see these men though, thousands of them, thin like cornstalks, with sunken eyes, bare feet and

tight bands of wiry muscle...and to know that (hey pulled other people around for 16–20 hours a day only to have (heir profits commandeered by the owners of the rickshaws (the pullers have to rent their machines from the owners each day for a huge percentage of their income) was overwhelming. Most rickshaw wallahs live only to be about 25 or 30 before dying of complete physical exhaustion, or the host of communicable diseases in the city which plague them easily because of their defeated immune systems. Hannah and I were walking along the banks of the Hooghly River one day. looking at mile after mile of homes built three feet high consisting of plastic bags stretched between slicks

for roofs and walls...I thought of City of Joy mentioning the rickshaw wallahs living in slums near the Hooghly River, and couldnt believe that I was really (here. Even more shocking was when I got back to the guest house where we were staying later and mentioned to the proprietor that we had been on the east bank of the Hooghly near the slums. He shook his head sadly, and told is that we had been on the good side of the river, and that the slums were far worse, and were across the Howrah Bridge on the west side of the river. I found myself trying to imagine what could be worse than living under plastic bags in a gutter filled with human waste. India has 900 million people. We were trying to keep our grip on reality intact and were having a difficult time doing so in the madness of Calcutta, so we decided lo take a break one day and go to the National Museum to check out some statues and some art. It cost the equivalent of two cents to gel into the museum, which we thought was a pretty good deal, and we spent an hour strolling around, checking oui siatues of different gods and deities and just being generally stoked that there were thick walls separating us from the harsh realities of the city. We were unprepared for what we saw next. We had made our way through a number of different rooms housing older exhibits — you need to know that this was not like a typical museum which you'd see in the States, in which every exhibit is clean, dusted, polished and labeled. In this museum, one of the most prestigious in eastern India, many of the exhibits were without labels, some broken, and all were dusty and dirty, increasingly so as we got into more of the depths of

exhibits. Neither Hannah or I moved for what seemed to be hours. I dont know who spoke first, but one of us finally said. Is that ? and the other replied. Yes...dead babies. We left the museum and went straight back to the guest house where I really don't remember us saying or doing much of anything for the rest of the afternoon. Every once in a while, one or the other of us would say dead babies and the other would reply uh huh as if to affirm that we really had seen that on the museum shelves. Insane.

The next day, we were able to retrieve my backpack, and after buying some bottled waler (you shouIdnl EVER drink the tap water over there — I knew one guy who came down wilh an intestinal virus just from swallowing a mouthful of water after opening his mouth in the shower...) we looked into getting out of Calcutta, because after the dead babies, we had seen enough. We wanted to head towards a village in northeastern India called Bodhgaya (bode-GUY-ah) which is where Sakyamuni,

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from the Hindi (the common language of India) means something close to I bow at your feet but which is used commonly as a greeting and expression of general goodwill. The instant he heard Namaste he lit up like a Christmas (rec. Suddenly with a big smile, it was as if he was a jukebox which someone had just dropped a quarter in...he started talking directly at me, in Hindi, at like 200 miles per hour! He talked nonstop for like three minutes while I just stared at him openmouthed in amazement. Suddenly he stopped, waiting for a response. I hadnt understood a word of it, but I dont think he knew that, because I had spoken to him in his language first. I smiled, took a breath, and for lack of anything else said. Really? Hey (hats pretty cool. You know, my brothers name is Darryl...theres no air conditioner in my 1988 Dodge Aries K...um, Youth of Today...Seattle Washington ... uh ... straight edge...(he NCAA basketball championship...how are you doing? The man started laughing out loud, as if he had understood every word of my nonsense, though I'm sure he had had no clue whatsoever. The train began to slow down and he stood, still laughing and saying to me over and over again. Namaste...namaste. He walked off the train when it stopped, obviously very satisfied with our conversation. I was completely dismayed.

At Gaya (GUY-ah). we got off the train and took a bicycle rickshaw (essentially a huge tricycle with a bench seat for two over the rear wheels...the driver pedals from a seat in front) to Bodhgaya. The trip was about six miles, and our driver was a sixty year old man, who struggled to keep up a decent pace. We weren't demanding, but it seemed as if he was trying to let us know that he would be getting us to Bodhgaya quickly, regardless of his age. We were impressed by his efforts and paid him like three times what he was supposed to get. By this time in (he trip. I was recognizing the deep spiritual history attached to India: it was the birthplace of Buddhism, the birthplace of Krishna, the center of Hinduism, etc. I thought that I might try to explore as many of the holy sites as I could over the next few weeks. We started wilh the Bodhi tree at Bodhgaya. It was pretty incredible to see: an old tree with a hundred and fifty foot high monument called a stupa (STOO-puh) built next to it lo commemorate the life of the Buddha, and all around that, hundreds of Buddhists from all over the world, and of all ages from young lo old. praying devoutly toward the tree. Il was very powerful, as I knew thal I was slanding in a location which many Buddhists hope their whole lives to be able to see. The story of the foundation of Buddhism goes like this: Sakyamuni, (he Buddha, was an Indian prince who grew weary of his life of riches and longed io search for something more tangible, something more real, beyond the walls of his luxurious palace. He left his palace, and along with a few disciples, began to travel the countryside, having shunned all his worldly possessions, and fasting on one grain of rice per day until one was able to see his spine through his stomach. One day. after a long period in fasting, the Prince was silting at a riverside very close to (he site of the Bodhi tree, when he was approached by a young girl who had some sweets with her. Having fasted himself away to nothingness without achieving the spiritual awakening he had been hoping for. the prince decided to indulge in a few sweeis. His disciples, upon seeing this, abandoned him. thinking him to be without a strong will. They walked on.

away from Bodhgaya to a place called Sarnath about twenty miles away to recollect their thoughts. The prince sat down to think under the Bodhi tree about what had happened...it is said that he had a revelation (here which were so complete in its scope, so enlightening, thal he had evelopcd ihe basic tenets of Buddhism from that moment. There is a small hill near (he Bodhi tree called The Place of Unblinking Gazing because it is said thal (he new Buddha, upon being so overwhelmed by his revelations under ihe Bodhi tree, climbed this hill, and sat for two weeks, staring al the Bodhi tree for two weeks without even once blinking because of his total amazement. From here, the Buddha walked to Sarnath, to catch up with his crew, and to let them know thal they had missed out on some important sluff, thal he was now enlightened, and that he was now the Buddha. I dont know about you, but I would have been bummed out to have been one of those disciples and to have missed all that. Anyway, Hannah and I were able to sit under the tree too. and while I cant say that anything happened which will change the course of the religions of humankind.

something crazy did happen which 1'11 tell you about. I was standing under (he Bodhi (rec, looking up al it, and thinking about all the limes in my life when I have wondered more aboul Buddhism and what il truly stood for. All around me there was an underlying buzz, a hum. of (he pilgrims and monks nearby praying quietly. Suddenly (he back of my neck was burning and itchy..I mean really burning and itchy. Hannah ran over and told me that some teenage boys had run by and had thrown something on the back of my neck. I stripped my shirt off. and found that what they had thrown was a hand full of what looked like cither nellies or fiberglass shards! It hurt so much, and I think thal part of ihe pain was the fear that (here was nowhere for a few thousand miles where 1 could receive adequate medical attention if my neck were to swell up like a balloon or something. Hannah washed my neck off with our bottled water, and in a few minutes all was good again. I stood up, and looked around, trying to find the one or two guilty faces in the crowd. I was thinking blissfully of a thousand different ways to torture the little fuckers if I caught them, but after twenty minutes of searching, I could nt find anyone. Afterwards. I realized that this was probably the first time in 2500 years that anyone had had thoughts of violence and murder under (he holy Bodhi tree: the symbol of peace for Buddhists everywhere. Il struck me funny to try and think of the international uproar which would have ensued if I had lorn some teenage Indian kids arm off under that tree. Maybe its best for us all that I didnt find them. Anyway, after checking out all of (he Buddhist sites at Bodhgaya. we ventured on to Sarnath w'here the Buddha had reunited with all of his disciples after his enlightenment. We actually stood on the very spot of the Buddhas first sermon to his followers. Like I said, even though I'm not a Buddhist, it was still pretty cool to be there and to know that a world religion started on the spot underneath our feet. We walked around Sarnath for a few' hours and then went back to Gaya lo begin to make plans for our next long train ride and next destination: the city of Varanasi, the center of the Hindu faith.

This leg of (he journey on (he (rain was about fifteen or so hours, and the ride isn't what kills you as much as the waiting for and transferring between trains. You see. nothing runs on time in India, nothing is clearly marked (either in English or in Hindi), and everyone seems to have a different idea as to which direction you should be going, where the ticket office is located, or even what city you are in. Rest assured, if you ask ten different people for advice or directions, you w ill get ten completely different answers. It look us a long time lo find the right trains, but when we finally did, il felt really good lo sit back in the piss smelling boxcar, packed with people carrying with (hem every worldly possession they owned, and jus(watch the countryside roll by for hours while listening io Iron Maidens Seventh Son of a Seventh Son LP on my Walkman. Hannah gave me some shit for that, because she was trying to distance herself from Western culture too. but eventually she too broke down over the long stressful (rain ride, and borrowed it lo listen to a Rush album or two which 1 had with me (write me all (he hale mail you want, but its true thal Rush is my favorite band of al) time).

Once there, we found an area with afoot wide pathways...an entire network of them. Each side of one of these gullies has little shops carved out of the walls which dont amount to much more than cubbyholes, but which provide all of the basic necessities you might require, such as AA batteries for twelve cents each, various medicines — all of which cost no more than one twentieth what they do in the slates and are all the same brands, and toilet paper — the only thing in India lo compare price wise lo the Slates. In India, the right hand is used for ealing and the left is

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used for cleaning yourself after taking a shit. No lie. Well, there are some Western travelers who arent down at all with the idea of shit covered hands (I'm one of those) and we choose to buy our toilet paper regardless of how strangely it is perceived. The idea in India being: why use paper if you dont need too? For the same reason. Kleenex are nowhere to be found there as most people just hold one nostril and blow the other onto the ground. Natives of India find cloth handkerchiefs especially bizarre, especially in rural areas, because they cant at all comprehend why you would blow you nose into a piece ofclean cloth, and then save it in your pocket. Well, back to toilet paper...the

price is jacked up, because the merchants know that people will go to any extent to get it. so it costs about a dollar a roll! Crazy. Anyway, we spent hours strolling through the gullies, and also walking up and down the banks of the Ganges River, which runs alongside the city. On the Western bank of the Ganges, for the entire length of the city, there are hundred of staircases leading from the gullies down to the waler. These are called ghats (gots) and arc used by Hindus to descend into the waters of the river each morning in order to bathe in its holy waters. There are two ghats which are called burning ghats al either end of the river bank. These ghats are used for the ritual cremation of Hindu dead. This is done 24 hours a day. seven days a week, and is totally out in public. It hammered home the fact that in India, unlike America, death is very

much a part of everyday life. The rituals surrounding it are often centered around processional and ceremony, rather than as secret

preparations behind the while pillared walls of mysterious funeral homes. We were able to watch a number of these cremations, and nothing I have ever seen has connected me with the realities of death. Bodies are brought from all over (he world to Varanasi in order to be cremated at the Ghats. The cost for this process is extraordinary, and the caste responsible for the burning has a monopoly on it. They are highly respected, but at the same time remain somewhat untouchable because of the nature of their work. Once the bodies arrive in Varanasi, they are wrapped in cloth and carried down to the River, where they are submerged momentarily in the waters before burning. This is a high honor for the deceased and the Hindus regard this event very solemnly, yet as a celebration. Piles of timber are built for each body (about six burn at a time on individual piles) and the bodies are placed on top. We watched the bodies burning in various stages and it was both incredibly terrifying and fascinating al the same lime. Every so often, youd find yourself gelling used to what you w'ere seeing and your mind would start to wander. Then suddenly a Hie would shift and youd get a glimpse of a bare burning leg or a skeleton with a face frozen in a death scream among the flames, and the shock back to reality would be immediate. Until the time of Gandhi, there was a custom called suttee (SUH-tee) in India in which the widow of an Indian man would "cast herself' into the funeral pyre of her husband out of devotion. I put this in quotes because this is the tradition as it appears on paper. In practice, and the reason that Gandhi fought

chief because she was not feeling very well as it was, and didnt think the smoke of burning bodies would help that much). He told us all about the buntings, explaining that for various reasons, that some people are not cremated (young children, pregnant women, holy men. snake bite and small pox victims, leprosy . victims). The children are not cremated because their souls are not yet developed. The same holds true for pregnant women because of the children they are carrying. There were religious reasons based in Hindu tradition behind many of the others.

There were men who asked you if you would like to go out for an hour in a rented boat for a tour. There are hundreds of boats providing this service, each paddled by locals who earn about a dollar an hour for the tour. Well, after seeing the burning ghats, and thinking about all those bodies benealh the surface, there was no way that I was going into that water, boat or no boat (well, especially not with no boat'). A friend of mine whom I met much later in the trip told me that he had been on one of these boats along with a half a dozen other travelers when a bloated male body had

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paying attention. He was very patient and took the time lo show me how to get the thing in the air. it was really cool, because neither of us spoke the others language, and we had to communicate largely with gestures and facial expressions. All of the kids on the neighboring rooftops had a blast watching me try my best lo gel the h^ng of flying that thing and instead crashing it repeatedly into the sides of buildings; dogs,

old women, and whale ver else happened to be in the way. Il was a great day. I ended up giving ihe kid who helped me the kite when we left the guest house the next day on our way to New Delhi, after slaying there in Varanasi for about a week.

New Delhi. Bizarre. Its a big city, but seemed to be striving desperately for its own identity. It was like being put into a time warp back to the early eighties in the United States. I mean, all the guys either had hair parted down the middle and feathered on ihe sides, or they had the most evil of haircuts: the mullet/Short Front Long Back (SFLB)/hockey cut — you know the one. But these versions were much worse than the norm, because unlike the typical SFLB which has a short crew cut top, these were feathered back on the top and sides and long and wavy down the back. Fuck. I wanted to shave al) of their heads.

I honestly expected to see someone in a pair of parachute pants walk by at any point, but I never did see them, or any Michael Jackson zipper jackets either. I did see an Izod shirt store in the center of the city selling alligator pocket shirts. The place was packed. Im sure thal in fifteen years, righi on schedule, that iheyll all be doing the Macarena, and with Doc Martens on. The strange thing about New Delhi was the mix of old school and new school traditions, and I dont mean circle pits -vs- kickboxing. While the center of the city was cosmopolitan circa 1982, in the back alleys there were still the same run down slums, similar io those in Calcutta.

While Hannah was resting from the high fever she was having, I passed the time by going out and buying three different translations of the Bhagavad Gila and reading ihem all throughout the day, comparing one lo the other and analyzing ihe word choices in each lo see how these choices affected the contexl of certain passages. It was good to finally do, because after the rise of Krishna consciousness in the hardcore scene in the late eighties and early nineties, I know that I, like many others I would presume, was quick to judge Krishna consciousness without an educated basis for my arguments. I think thal this situation is often true in hardcore these days: (hat people decide one thing or another about outspoken people without knowing them, the whole story behind why they do. or what they do at all for that matter. Sometimes its hard though. Ray Cappo and the Shelter crew must get judged in different groundless ways a-thousand times a day based on the spiritual nature of what they sing about. And I know that Karl and Earth Crisis get judged in similar ways, as a result of the undercover nature of what they do. I remember reading an article like this about Earth Crisis in an earlier issue of Inside Front. I guess its kind of dumb to disagree with the guy who put out your band's record while writing a column in the pages of his magazine in his apartment and on his computer, but Brian always says that he likes a good argument. Anyway. I think that it is both too easy and unfair to slam Shelter for mixing religion with hardcore (a sentiment I've heard in the past) without knowing anything about Krishna consciousness, like I had done. Likewise, I think that it is too easy and unfair to slam Earth Crisis for singing about things which they'll never really do (not a direct quote, but this was one of the points from the Inside Front article as I remember it) without knowing what they really do. 1 doubt that Karl or any of the Earth Crisis

kids would publicly advertise (heir vegan actions, that is (for any FBI agents reading this) if such illegal actions actually were to take place. Ils crilical lo do

extensive research before reaching conclusions, because I know that I learned a great deal about (he nature of Krishna while in New Delhi over those three days, and while I have lo say that 1 dont agree with it 100%. 1 do have a new understanding and appreciation as to what it is all about.

Al this point in the Irip, I had actually still hoped to travel with Hannah down to visit Vrindaban (vrin-DAH- bin) which was the birthplace of Lord Krishna, but over the next 24 hours. Hannah got very sick, and my plans had to change. We went to a very good hospital in the diplomatic/ wealthy area of New Delhi, and the conditions there were still really bad. When Hannah went in for testing, the two on-duty nurses were in the lab, toasting a slice of bread between a pair of forceps over a bunsen burner! I lannah was diagnosed with amoebic dysentary (a bad thing) and they wanted to hospitalize her immediately. This would have meant intravenous work, and being as that Hannah is HIV negative and wanted to stay that way. she decided that the dirty hospital conditions and potential for dirty needles in India was a bit too much to handle and she decided to fly back lo the United Stales instead to get treatment there.

Al this point I had to make a choice...either go home to the Stales as well, or continue the trip without Hannah, who up until now had been my lifeline through India. She was the one who had a grasp on the language, she was the one who could lell the difference between a safe and healthy place to eat and a place which was potentially dangerous, she was the one who had been acting as my guide. Fuck, she was someone to talk to. I had no idea what to do. Il would have been easy to just fly home. Even after only two and a half weeks, 1 was tired, and I had seen a lot more than I had ever dreamed I would have. Still. I felt thal there was something more in India which I needed to see and experience. After Hannah left the next afternoon, I sat on my bed in the guest house, listening to the sounds of New Delhi all around me. I was 14000 miles from home and completely alone. It is hard to describe that feeling. Sure, you can be alone in your apartment, in your room, out in your yard...you can be the last one at a venue cleaning up after a show...you can be in your car late al night on ihe highway with no other cars around...but to be in another country, with little idea on where to go and without a good grasp on the language, now that fell alone.

I realized that maybe this particular set of circumstances might just be the best thing for me. I was locked inio painful memories of others. I had been placing my healing in the hands of others, I had been guided through India by others. I started to think ihat maybe 1 had become more reliant on ihose around me than Id realized, (hat maybe, lo break free from that destructive cycle of dependence, thal what I needed most was to go on by myself. As it turns out, this was the most important decision I ever made. Having heard that the Dalai Lama lived in a small hilllop village called Dharmasala (darm- SAH-lah) in northern India, and having been told that the scenery there was beautiful, and having few other options before me, I decided that this would

be my next destination. I went to the bus station and bought a ticket for (he next bus north.

It was at this point (hat my India trip began. Next time: Meeting the Dalai Lama, hiking the Himalayas, and a discussion of a new morality for the 90s...slay tuned.

Write me anytime with questions or comments al this address: Greg Bennick 427 Eleventh Avenue East Seattle. WA 98102 (206) 860–1510

[Image not archived]

J: Ed does the best job ihe scene has ever had: he reports the upcoming local bands by printing shirts, releasing 7"s, CDs, whatever. It's about time the whole world knows that there are lots of talented bands over here. It doesn't surprise me that Good Life is becoming one of the biggest European labels because he works day and night to do his orders, records, ads...He's one of the most motivated, true HC kids I know.

U.J.: Good Life is a label that gave us a chance when we started. Il's slowly becoming one of Europe's biggest labels. He's doing a good job (maybe a bil more promoting wouldn't hurt); it's also important to him if the bands sell well on his label. He's helping out a lol of new (good) bands.

IF: Speaking of labels in Europe, we at Inside Front were very surprised to discover that Lost & Found records was selling our magazine, since we find their label unpleasant and we never sent them any copies. What do you think of Lost & Found? Why do you think that?

J: L&F ihink they are the rulers of euro-HC; they think they're able lo do anything they want, as long as their pockets get sluffed with cash. Inside Front is a very well-selling zine, so they carry it, of course. Our records are also on their sell-list; funny, our first press of the 7" had slickers with "H.C. R.I.P. 1994: killed by L&F." They'll probably never know: as long as their customers buy their products, they're happy. Most L&F kids are MTV-watchers who just jumped on the HC bandwagon and L&F is the perfect label to fulfill their needs: full-color catalogue. CD-only releases, full-page ads in every metal/punk/HC magazine, even TV commercials. The true spirit of the D.I.Y. underground scene gets destroyed by those losers.

UJ: Lost and Found is simply destroying everything that "underground HC" stands for. He's only in it for the bucks. He brings out crap recordings (mostly live, such as Ringwonn, Confront, Youth of Today). Some bands agree to bring out an album or CD, but then L&F brings out a 7"

far more obscure than him...)

IF: Speaking of your scene, I hear violence at shows is making a comeback in your part of Europe (as it recently did at the Cleveland fest here in the US'). Is this true? What do you think of that? Is violence always bad, or only when it's used to the wrong ends?

J: It depends on what your definition of violence is. If violence means slamdancing, feetfirsts. and other craziness. I'm behind il 100%! But when violence means gang fighis, no matter if a band is playing or not. you know, just beating up because of pure

hatred toward each other, then it's stupid. Over here, violence means a huge slampit, lots of consideration and respect for each other; that's what it's all about!

UJ: Violence is in a way good, a sort of outlet for aggression, because we live in a fucked up society (too many people in loo little space is one of the biggest factors). As for shows. I find it sometimes loo violent, because certain people have to prove that they're the hardest or toughest. If it's loo violent for me. I stand aside to watch the show.

IF: You band plays a very metallic style of hardcore. Some people say that if you use too much metal in your music, it's no longer hardcore. What do you think?

J: Metal is a way for improvement and progress for someone who plays music. If HC music would just stick to fast, old, and tedious riffs. I wouldn't be a part of il anymore. Il's about lime all ihe old-school bands start to realize that metal has saved the HC scene as it is today. HC is about ideas, lifestyle, and respect, no matter the musical influences you pul into il. Still. I get blamed for "destroying the HC spirit" because I often wear metal shirts (ask Mainslrike). I just can't understand why these bands preach unity and respect and then leave when the "metal bands" arc on stage.

UJ: I always thought that HC has something to do with ideals and a way of life, not the kind of music you play. Il's more challenging to play metal

than your average HC.

IF: Speaking of the metallic style of hardcore hands like Congress play, / think it is amusing to note that these bands are often referred to as "evil " a- especially considering that most of these bands are singing about being good and wholesome in every way! What do you think about calling bands like Congress "evil"? .

J: Life is a struggle between good and evil. Every human being is good and evil al (he same time. So is Congress. Hard, evil, and heavy musically, and a positive message lyrically, make a perfect combination. 1 have no problem with the term "evil" whatsoever. The sheer anger I release when performing on stage is the best feeling I can ever experience *in this rotten world* UJ: Evil exists in every person. Il's just a matter of not letting "evil" control you. Maybe (people who describe Congress as evil are speaking] of the kind of dark and sometimes evil music we play. Some-sort of image, influences from "evil" metal bands.

[Image not archived]

IF: While we 're on the subject of evil, your bassist UJ. is obviously really into black metal. Most of what I've seen of black metal hands seems pretty silly. Sure, they dress up in funny clothes and kill each other, but I find it hard to believe they could actually pose a threat to anyone else. I'm particularly bothered by the misinterpretation of Nietzsche's thinking that many of these bands are guilty of Where does UJ. disagree with me, and wh\ ?

UJ: To me, that kind of music has the same power and aggression (hat HC used to have. It also has some weird images, and yes, some of them are plain stupid. I was once told by a friend that it doesn't matter what people say about a band, if there are

a lol of rumors spread about them, then people will check them out if it's true or nol. Mosi of the black metal bands just want to shock people.

IF: From where did the inspiration for the intro on your full length ("AK Modan ") come?

J: It comes from the computer game Castlevania IV on SNES. Congress were always interested in vampires and video games, so these tunes were the perfect representation of what we're into. We didn't rip off the entire song as it is: we played it with our own instruments, so we've put our own character into it.

IF: Your song on the "We Shall Fight in the Streets" 7" compilation was highly critical of religion. What has the response to your stance on this issue been ? I know that every time I get off stage after speaking out against organized religion, I get surrounded by a crowd of angry Krishnas or Mormons.

J: The response was more than good. Some of the few local Krishnas gave up their beliefs in fairy tales and started believing in themselves. Over here, the whole religion thing is highly reduced to a small number of sincere people who don't bother anyone with it.

IF: Tell a story from your life that relates to some of your lyrics.

J: "Grief' deals with unpleasant situations I was confronted with: the death of some close relatives, and the end of promising relationships. "Stompbox" is about the inner conflict I had after doing stupid things I still regret. "Lifting the Ban" (one of my favorite lyrics) tells about the resurrection of a dead HC scene and the victory we accomplished with Congress.

IF: As a citizen of (he US. I often find myself listening to European hardcore, reading European books, and watching European movies, and thinking to myself that Europe must be a much more artistic and intelligent social environment. Am I right or wrong? How does Europe compare to the USA ?

J: Europe is heavily influenced by American culture. It's cool to be as American as can be, when it comes to clothes, music, and food. Maybe in the States people see Europe as more interesting, but over here il's vice versa.

(editor's note: sorry Josh, but if you think there's too much "USA" in Europe try actually fucking living here...} L'J: America was "made" mostly by Europeans.

IF: Do you think bands from the USA abuse the European hardcore scene by touring there too much with too little quality? What can he done about this, if you think it is a problem ?

J: US bands should see touring Europe as a challenge once in a lifetime, not as some journey to make big bucks with. Fewer tours and more motivation would be a good altitude.

UJ: Yes, for any American band it's possible to lour Europe, bul il's very hard for a European band lo tour America, unless they're on an American label. Some bands are here two times a year, because over here they can cash in; when the same band would tour the States, it would be something different. A couple of years ago, people only went to a show if an American played. Nowadays European bands can have the

same (and sometimes larger) crowd thal an American band gets. For example, we had lo play a show with Sense Field and Four Walls Falling and some local bands. As usual, the American bands were headlining (which is in a way natural), but when we were done playing, most of the crowd went home (not to catch the last train or anything). I'm glad to see that European bands are getting the support they should get, because there are a lot of great European bands.

IF: Is Congress interested in becoming well-known in the US? How do you plan on achieving this, if you are interested in it?

UJ: Yes, if we can keep it under control (this means by not having to go on a major label that tells you what you can and can't do). First is finding a label that wants to put out our records in America, because from what I've heard ihey're too expensive. So that would be a great help. Otherwise 1 wouldn't know how; we'll see it when it happens.

J: If we ever want to tour ihe States, we have to get some fame over there. Dwid (Holy Terror) promised to put out our 7" ("Euridium"), and people like you who push us are the best help we can get. and we appreciate that a lol. Of course, it would be easy to get well-known if we got on a US label for all our releases, but I prefer to slick to good friends next door who I can talk with and see every day, rather than lei someone on the other side of the globe do the job.

IF: What are some of your favorite bands from outside of Belgium in Europe?

J: Germany: Shaft, Veil, Spawn, Upright

UK: Unborn, Lifer

France: Stormcore, Kickback

Sweden: End in Sight, Abhinanda

Norway: Lash Out, Contention

UJ: HC bands: Rancor, Mainstrike (HOL); Shaft (GER); Comrades (ITA); Final Exit, Abhinanda (SWE);

Contention (NOR); Unborn. Statement (UK)

Metal bands: Dimmi Borgir, Satyricon, Isengard, Storm (NOR); Necrophobic, Katatonia (R.I.P.), Opthalamia, Unanimaled, Crown of Thorns, Amon Amarth (SWE); Nightfall, Necromantia, Rolling Christ (GRE); Occult, Deadhead, Altar (HOL); Blood, Desaster. Night in Gales (GER)

IF: Please, say something about the cover of "Blackened Persistance" and where you got it/why you used il.

J: When looking for a cover, you're trying to find something that represents and fits with the music. Our sleeve is dark and evil, and so is the music; there's also a mystic touch in it.

IF: Future plans?

UJ: Bringing out a new CD, a tour in Europe with Liar and Blindfold. Play a lot of great shows. Just having a great lime.

J: Tour the Slates someday, spreading the H8000 fury. Discography:

Dec. ’93: demo

July ’94: CD EP “Euridium”

Dec. ’94: 7” “Euridium”

Nov. ’95: LP/CD “Blackened Persistance”

Josh. Poelkapellestraat 20. 8920 Langemark, Belgium

[Image not archived]

although we have progressed and have a broader perspective. 1 think

Timebomb is definitely an anti-capitalist band.
IF: What inspired your song “When the Flood Calls”?

D: 1 was looking at an old photograph album about the resistance movement in Italy when I saw a photo of some partisans relaxing before attacking a Nazi/fascisl position. Some of them .were very young, and maybe they’re still alive today. So I tried to imagine a young man who has been strong enough to risk his life fighting for the freedom of his country, and what his feelings might be upon seeing the same ideologies that he once fought coming back again, and nobody taking a stand against it! In reality, our generation is corrupted by the capitalist dream, and so ideologies fade as the desire for money, power, and acceptance take their place. No one is strong enough to risk his own life for an ideal anymore and this is sad.

IF: London was ravaged by a horrible plague in the year 1665. and nothing could put an end to this plague until in 1666 a catastrophic fire burned 8(1% of the city to ashes. After the fire, the plague was gone and the survivors at least were able to live free from fear and sickness.

Some of us consider today’s mass-media-homogenized, consumer culture to be a more insidious kind of social/mental plague that is reducing humanity to enslaved mediocrity…So what do think is a more appropriate way to solve this problem, by carrying signs and protesting?…or by blowing up buildings?

D: First of all I want to say that I’m not a pacifist and Timebomb is not a pacifist band. We believe that violence is necessary and useful sometimes; denying that means living in a utopian world that doesn’t exist! The capitalist system is the main cause of our problems ;e human/animal exploitation. Third World hunger, starvation, etc. a* and we must try in every way to destroy it. History leaches us. however.

that violent actions without the approval of a large part of the population come lo nothing, but only justify the state’s repression of the individual’s political freedom (as

happened to the B.R. here in Italy). So blowing up buildings could be a solution, but it's not the first step; before we go that far we have to talk to people, to communicate ae and when a great number of them will stand by our side we ll be able to make a change.

IF: Honestly, do you think any of us will live to see today's major problems solved? Do you think any of us will live to see a better, more liberated, more peaceful world? If not. do we still have a responsibility to fight for this goal? Is it intelligent to spend your whole life pursuing a goal you will never reach ? •

D: Honestly. I don't. I don't think either you or I or any of the Inside Front readers will live long enough to see a better world, but honestly. I don't care. I don't fight for me. for my personal gain: I do it for humanity, for the earth, for the animals, and these things will always exist even after our death. We must talk to the new generations, we must give them the example, and they will do the same and so on until freedom. It's a long way that humanity has to walk, step by step, generation after generation, walking a path of little conquests that leads to liberation. You ask if we have a responsibility to fight: I say yes, we have one, it's up to us today to build the first mile of a thousand mile road that humanity will walk.

IF: In your CD liner notes, you mention the often cited fact that the land now used for raising cattle could be used to raise enough crops to more than end world hunger. However, here in America, our government already pays farmers lots of money to not grow crops a it has been doing this since the Great Depression, to keep food prices up and stabilize the economy. So if seems to me that world hunger today is not

the result of cattle farming, but of a lack of distribution systems and concern with getting food to those who need it. Respond to this argument, if you will.

D: Yeah, you're right. This is exactly what it's all about. The cause is again our First World-centered capitalist system, in which everything is a product, whether animals or working class, everything must be exploited in order to attain a higher standard of living for an elite group of people. But now capitalism begins to show its ugly face; what our society has done in the Third World cannot be hidden; we are responsible for their starvation because we never thought of Third World populations as humans who needed our help to learn how to strengthen their own economy and society. We always thought of them as slaves lo exploit in order to gain more: no respect for their lands, no respect for (heir children, they're not humans! So you're right when you say that world hunger is due to a lack of concent from our governments; how could it be anything else? Current governments (American. Italian, or Swedish) are all manifestations of the only ideology shared worldwide: capitalism!

IF: So many smaller companies these days are owned by larger companies (Pepsi Co., etc.) that are involved in various forms of exploitation, oppression, and environmental destruction, that it is hard to find places to work or buy food without supporting these companies. It seems almost that if you want to avoid contributing to the destruction of the human race and the earth, you must be an unemployed thief (like most of the staff

of Inside Front). How do the members of Timebomb solve this problem? Where do you work, and where do you buy food and other supplies?

I): All the members of Timebomb are vegan (except our drummer, who is vegetarian), and follow ing a vegan way of life for us doesn't mean only not consuming animal products, but also boycotting these companies and trying lo avoid their products. I know it's not easy at all; in Italy, fonunaiely. we still have little stores where you can buy food without supporting any big company. As for the work, we are all students except our singer, who now works for an association helping handicapped kids. For the rest, I try to consume as little as I can: I don't buy a new' pair of shoes until ihe old ones explode and so on. I'm nol inio fashion so I don't care. We all live inside a consumer society, [1] and as a part of it it is inevitable that w'e support it; the solution is to ' support it as little as you can!

IF: It is very difficult to be an anti^onsumerist/capitalist band in hardcore these days, for every band must still sell products to consumers: records, shirts, etc., in order to make any progress at all in the scene. How does limebomb deal with this conflict? How do you think hardcore could change to be less consumer oriented? Can you sleep well at night, knowing you must advertise your products like any "corporation " would?

D: I'd like to think of the H.C. community as something really alternative to the outside society. I know that when 1 buy a shirt or a record by that band the money will somehow return to "the scene." and that's the answer to your question. This is also w'hy I don't like major labels to be in the H.C. community: they take your money, but they don't use it in the scene, they just care about selling a product that I don't like. So the solution is keeping it all independent x distros. labels, bands ® that's the only way to sleep at night!

IF: What is the worst thing in the Italion scene today?

D: For me the worst thing in the Italian H.C. scene is the lack of fun. Many people see a contradiction between our being a political band and our live attitude in which we try to involve people with a lot of stage dives, mosh dancing, etc. I don't rind it contradictory because, after all. a hardcore show is definitely a cathartic momeni in which you enjoy (he spirit of the show with your friends. This is why I don't like this new call-it-emo trend, where people, instead of getting together and singing along, are almost crying in a self-pitying way. Fuck that, that shit is for goth, not hardcore!

IF: What is the political climate like in Italy today ?

D: Italy is slowly going toward an American political system wilh only two great parlies that are almost the same. The left-wing party won the last election, so things seem to be working a little better, but it's little more than an illusion.

IF: What is the Italian hardcore scene like right now?

D: After a period of coma, it seems that that the Italian H.C. scene is coming back stronger than ever: lots of new bands, new- labels, new kids, and this is great to me. I hope the Italian scene will progress to become a wider one like in Belgium or Sweden.

IF: What is the sample from the beginning of your record from? How about the recording at the end?

D: O.K., they're kind of jokes. The sample of the exorcism at the beginning is from *X-Files* (our drummer is a fan'), and the recording al ihe end-is from a TV show in which our friends Opposite Force were called to talk about modem music vs. classical music ic it's all very funny but unfortunately is in Italian, so nobody will understand it! *IF: Suggest some reading material, books or magazines, that has inspired limebomb.*

D: I personally don't believe in elite culture and for this reason I like popular reading. I found inspiration in books like *Fontamara.* by Ignazio Silone. and *Metello, * by Vasco Pratolini. I really like classics like Fromm. Sartre, and my favorite writer, Stefano Benni. Bui (his is whal I like, nol what Timebomb like. Wc arc all different people wilh different tastes.

IF: Recommend some good Italian and Furopean bands.

D: There are many really good bands in Italy right now. so I'll limit my list, according to my personal tastes, to the besi bands around. Starting first with the bands in which some members of Timebomb also play: Colonna Infame, a very rude Oi band sung in Italian (I'm really into Oi music'); Reinforced, an old school SxE band playing old school SxE music with old school SxE lyrics; Opposite Force are a really good band playing macho-core very much in ihe vein of NY's hardest bands. Other bands to check out are Dehumanize. Redemption. Obtnide. By All Means, Erode. Society of Jesus. Burning Defeat. Concrete, and I could go on for hours' Looking at Europe. I really like European metalcore bands like Congress and Liar; also. Final Exit, Oi Polloi, Voorhees. Nations on Fire (back together!), and all the Norwegian black metal bands!

IF: Anything to add?

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D: Timebomb releases up to now are: ihe *Fury 1"* released in '93 and now sold out, and ihe *Hymns fora Decaying Empire* LP/CD. Both records are on S.O.A. Rec. Then we also have some songs on various comps. Thank you Brian for this space in your zine. Lay down your soul to the gods of rock n' roll! For contacts, records, or information, our address is: Daniele Marini Via R. Baltistini 32 00151 a? ROMA ;e ITALY

[Image not archived]

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> Well, not really — but this is the section where I try to keep everyone informed about the various distributors, record stores, etc. that exist to serve the hardcore scene. This section appeared in issues #7 and #8 as well, so the listings here are just updates and new additions... but using all three issues, you should have all the information you need to distribute or hunt down any music you need.

_U.S.A._

Checkmate Mailorder: (c/o Derek, P.O. Box 2293, Seattle, WA 98111) Trial guitarist and distributor guy Tim has moved recently, but if anyone can get you in touch with him it's his bandmate Derek ('R> / editor).

Earth House; (P.O. Box 1332, Redding, CT 06875) This isn't a distribution; Earth H. is a politically/socially active organization. They have a newsletter, etc. available — get in touch with them if you feel you might be like-minded (anti-capitalist, outraged about oppression, etc.)

Edge: (2052 North 940 West, Provo, UT 84604–125 5) I'd never heard of this distribution before, but there arc already a few- different new school hardcore records and 'zines in the catalogue.

Homeless Records: (3917A Castleman, St. Louis, MO 63110) This catalogue has a variety of intelligent punk/hardcore records, and more importantly, also includes a broad selection of social/political reading material, etc. [They have owed me SI5 for two years, though... mention that when you write them!] _Moo Cow:_ (P.O. Box 616, Madison, WI 53701) Moo Cow is notorious for trading 7"s with labels, and thus they distribute. _North Star:_ (103 North Grove Avenue #2, National Park, NJ 08063) Sec their ad in this issue.

On the Edge: (10533 Los Alamitos Bl., Los Alamitos, CA 90720, phone 310.430.6975) This is, of course, the legendary hardcore record store owned by Chris Malinowski.

Rhetoric: (P.O. Box 82, Madison, WI 53 701, 608-259-0403) Lots and lots of silly punk, plus some dirty punk and hardcore in this thick catalogue.

Slu_g and Lettuce:_ (Christine Boarts, P.O. Box 492, West Chester, PA 19381) This is not a distribution. This is one of Ihe best resources available to you as a hardcore/punk kid! It's free, packed with information, and... if you want classifieds in it, they're free too! Use this to communicate with thousands of people involved in the same struggle or lifestyle as yourself. _Shoehorn:_ (2522 Salmon St., Philadelphia, PA 19125–4011... after November 10, supposedly it's 802 South 8th Street, Allentown, PA 18103) Lots of hardcore here; note the address change.

Sound Pollution: (P.O. Box 17742, Covington, KY 41017) You can't beat a dirty punk/grind distributor that has an Amebix bootleg CD and video in the catalogue.

Steadfast: (1129 Middle Avenue, Elyria, OH 4403 5) Steadfast carries a few hardcore records and a couple other records, with the common theme of many of them being Christianity.

Three Gun Video: (1819 Pleasantdale Road #11, Cleveland. OII 44109) All the videos you could want.

EUROPE •

Bored Teenagers: (Dario Adamic. C.P. 15319, 00142 Roma Laurentino, Italy) The editor of the great "Zips & Chains"* punk 'zinc is involved in doing this large punk distribution.

Hardsidc: (Le Palis Des Friches, 35310 Chavagnc, France) An equal mix of European and USA 'tough guy'-esque hardcore records.

Good Life Recordings: (Edward Verhaeghe, Burg 12, 8820 Torhout, Belgium) Good Life distributes a variety of hardcore from Europe and the USA.

Green: (Giulio Repetto, Via Failoppio, 38 padova, Italy) This record storc/dislribution docs good work in my experience. _Kiki;_ (Chrisitan Unsinn, Mozartstr. 10, D-78464 Konstanz, Germany) This is another mid-size hardcore distribution. Mostly records.

No Barcodes Necessary; (Mel Hughes, 83 Glebe Park, Chanterhill, Enniskillen, BT74 4DB Northern Ireland) Lots of 'zines, lots of videos, a few records, and two CD's in this catalogue. The guy who does this comes across as being very intelligent and dedicated to supporting our community. _Offer Resistance:_ (Karl-Fricdricbslr. 9, 77728 Oppenau, Germany) Offer R' is a great 'zinc distribution, probably a good place for people in Europe to gel American 'zines like Inside Front al reasonable prices.

Our World: (Mathias Ruoff, Muhlwcg 9, 73269 Hochdorf, Gennany) Note the address change for this sincere hardcore distribution.

Persistent Vision: (Jim Hart, Box 30, 82 Colston St., Bristol, BSI 5BB, U.K.) This distribution seems to specialize in mix tapes and some stuff that I don't recognize (must be less-known British punk/hardcore).

The Smith and Nephew Company: (Bahnhofstr. 17, 39345 Uthmodcn, Gennany) This is a small distribution with an unusual catalogue of 7"s in the hardcore vein.

istrikc: (Kollmarsreutcrstr. 12, 79312 Emmendingen, Gennany) A fair selection of metal/hardcorc here, al least half of it from the USA.

Undertone: Thorsten, Am Muehlenbach 14, 48308 Scndcn, Gennany) This fellow is apparenllystarting a small distribulion. _World Eaters:_ (Andre Hoppe, Donncrsbergstege 69, 46569 Hunxe, Germany) Although this smallish, mostly European hardcore distribution is supposed lo change hands soon, il's presently done by a great guy. I'm sure it will continue to be a reliable resource.

WORLD

Crossblood: (Reypeace Bravo, No. 123 Sibulo Subdivision, San Pedro, Laguna, 4023 Philippines) This distribution carries lots of hardcorc/punk/etc. from the Philippines — a great resource, as far as that goes.

Good: (Yean, Tampincs Central P.O. Box 401, s(915214) Singapore) This is a similar distribution in Singapore.

Olf asked to put one Of these togetherJast year or even this past summered havaaMless t^ Jp Until how, Boston-area hardcore was going through a major depression. Shows and people that cared about them were few and far between and there just wasn't much to talk about. As recent as the turn of the year, good hardcore shows began to become more commonplace. Much of this has been due to the recent influx of new bands, motivated promoters, labels, and Brian McTernin's Salad Days recording studio (Brian#617-562-1456). I don't know exactly how much of this will prove to be successful in the long run but, for now, this summer looks pretty good as far as good shows and new records goes. Keep your eyes and ears open for everyone and everything on this list:

Bands: Arise (Matt#508-528-1517), who play a unique style of hectic and seemingly drug-induced hardcore are still around after about five years playing shows when asked

but basically remaining low-key. Long-time guitarist Jerry has been replaced by Pete from Overcast and they continue to rock on. Cast Iron Hike (Pete#508-842-1906) play their own interpretation of the style of hardcore that's been popularized by such bands as Orange 9MM and Quicksand. They have a CD available from Big Wheel Records and play as many shows as possible in Boston and beyond (Big Wheel Recreation 325 Huntington Ave.

[Image not archived]

#24 Boston, Ma. 02115). Converge | (Jake#617-783 8122) seems to be one of the biggest drawing bands in the area, playing their own concoction of metal and

mosh-oriented hardcore with touches of emo. They have a new 7" available on Ferret Records (72 Windsor Drive Eatontown, N.J 07724) that will be followed up with a CD version that includes a few more songs (Converge 20 Gerald Road #2 Brighton, Ma.). 454 Big Block (Kevin#508-553-3287) are an "all-star" band of sorts featuring members of Wrecking Crew, Kingpin, and Eye For An Eye; sounding mostly like Wrecking Crew and Eye For An Eye. They have a new 7" available from Big Wheel Records. Possibly one of Boston's most talented bands that had the most potential is Only Living Witness. They have since broken up and released a 2nd full length entitled Innocents that was recorded while they were still together. For the new release or any older material, contact Century Media Records (1453-A 14th St., #324, Santa Monica, Ca. 90404). Opposition (Greg#617-666-3593) are a band that, quite possibly, deserves the most improved award for Boston bands that came out in the last five years. Their music combines influences of Burn and Born Against and adds an occasional Police reference. Look for them soon as they will be touring much of the eastern half of the U.S. in support of their new 12" e.p. on Push-Pull Records (Dave#617-625-8003) (Opposition 16 — basement — Winter Street Somerville, Ma. 02144). Overcast (Mike#508-881-4804) come from a hardcore background but pretty much stick to a combination of straight forward thrash and death metal to be filed next to Starkweather, etc. They have a full length out on Endless Fight Records (P.O. Box 1083 Old Saybrook, CT 06475–5083) and play out as often as possible. Six Going On Seven (Josh#617-666-3593) lie somewhere between Fugazi and Jawbreaker and pull it off quite nicely. I've seen them several times in the past few months and each time have left thinking of the big things that seem to be in store for these three gentleman. They will have a self-released 7" available very soon and will be on tour with Opposition in early June (Will 57 Magazine Street #1 Cambridge, a/ Ma. 02139). The '88 straight edge sound has resurfaced in Boston under the name of Ten Yard Fight (Anthony#617-734-5151). If you are familiar with any of the

bands from that genre, you know what they sound like; not generic or cheesy either, just pure H-core. They have a demo out now and will have a 7" on Big Wheel in early June (Ten Yard Fight 38 Calumet Street #3 Boston, Ma. 02120).

Some other Boston-area hardcore bands to keep your eyes open for are: Bane [Burn meets Backbone] (Aaron#508-842-1648). • Cave In [like Threadbare with some Sunny Day Real Estate] (4 Wilson Street Methuen, Ma. 01844). • Entropy [thrash,

grind, screamed vocals] (Figure Four Records 35 Eliab Latham Way East Bridgewater, Ma. 02333).* Fedaykin [crust punk] (John#617-731 -5202). • Gambit [death mosh. Growled vocals] (#508-777-0517) • Hatchetface [fast, screaming] (Figure Four Records) (Matt#508-534-4541). Holdstrong [mid- tempo, shouting] (Pin Drop Records P.O. Box 238 Holden, Ma. 01520). • Piebald [noisy emo-core] (#13 Pasho Street Andover, Ma. 01810) (#508-475-2170). • Rise Again [death, nosh, scratchy 02345) (508-224-6587). • Roswell [Kingpin meets older Earth Crisis] (77 Pleasant Street Raynham, Ma. 02767) (#508-828-6766). • Unionsuit [chaotic, noisy] (133 Peterborough Street #8 Boston, Ma. 02115).

Contacts For Shows etc: Greg Letarte (617-666-3593), Brian Logan (508224–6587), Matt Firestone/Aaron Turner (617-267-6804), Sky High En- tertainment/Jon Regan (617–7875733), John Woodbox (617–7315202), Justin Kollar (617-782-8056).

Zines: This is a listing of those publications that have put issues out recently, they cover a wide range of material and are all interesting in their own way; please get in touch with these individuals for copies, ad rates, etc.: Crestfallen (Mike Poorman 133 Peterborough Street #8a Boston, Ma. 02115). • Extent (John Lacroix 38 Calumet Street #3 Boston, Ma. 02120) (6175660385). • Openly Hostile (Ray Lemoine 706 Foster Street North Andover, Ma. 01844) (508-975-3346). • Playdoh (Brian Logan P.O. Box 3 Manomet, Ma. 02345) (508-224-6587). • Market (Nick Branigan 95 Standish Avenue Plymouth, Ma. 02360) (508–7471098). • Retrogression/Warning: May Provoke Thought split fanzine (Brian Hull 104 Newport Avenue Attleboro, Ma. 02703) (508-761-9799). • •Suburban Voice* (Al Quint P.O. Box 2746 Lynn, Ma. 01903).

Labels: There aren't many good all-hardcore labels in the Boston area but, of those that do exist, they are each very productive (most addresses and numbers are listed above): Big Wheel Recreation, Figure Four Records, Heliotrope Records (20 Gerald Road #2 Brighton, Ma. 02135), Hydra Head Records/Distribution (907 Boylston Street Apartment 42 Boston, Ma. 02115), Pin Drop Records, IX PushPull Records.

Most of the all ages hardcore shows in Boston are held at The Rat, The Middle East, The Mama Kin Music Hall, The Axis, The Harvest Co-op, and are sometimes snuck into some of the other clubs. There are many churches, garages, halls, and basements in and around Boston that also hold shows. just call one of the individuals listed above and they'll give you the whole nine yards. Gone are the days of Slapshot, Wrecking Crew. Kingpin, Eye For An Eye, and the shows at the Channel, but the spirit that was pushed aside just after that period is beginning to resurface. Who knows if Boston will have another SSD or DYS; only time will tell.

Update

A lot has been happening through the summer, things are just looking better and better around here — so here's a list: Up and coming Boston label/dislro, Hydra Head Rees., are putting out the New Age of Reason 7" (who are actually from Boston and Connecticut),

the Union Suit demo, and the Corrin 7" (death core from R.I.). Bane have a new 7" out on Life Records. Hydra Head have also put out a new Piebald 7*. The new

Ten Yard Fight 7" is out on Big Wheel Recreation. Edison has put out "Begging For Indifference, " Overcast's new CD/7"/cass. Overcast also has a split with Boston's Arise on Moo Cow Records. The New Opposition 12" is out on PushPull Records. Be on the lookout for Miltown, which is a new band that features Only Living Witness vocalist Jonah Jenkins on vocals and Brian from Battery, etc. on guitar. Also look out for Get High which has members of Dive and Opposition — sounds like Statue, Inside Out and Minor Threat all mixed up — good stuff.-BrianPlaydough

Although a part of NYC collectively, Brooklyn has a scene of its own, which includes bands that don't get to play in "the city" as often as they would like to for reasons unknown. I hope those reading this will check those bands out:

INDECISION: Have just completed an east coast two week plus tour with SxE pals Shutdown. Some of the finer shows were with Earth Crisis. Lifetime. Dystopia, Grief, and Florida's Brethren. Indecision currently have out two 7"s (one on Too Damn Hype, the other on Belgium's Released Power) as well as a 7" that should be out by the time you read this on Pennsylvania's Positive Face records. Look for them on East Coast Assault 2 as well. Whal do they sound

[Image not archived]

like? Inside Out meets Snapcase? Trust me they *kill.* Contact them at 9747 Shore Road, Brooklyn, NY 11209.

SHUTDOWN: The other half of

Brooklyn's SxE duo have a CD coming out on NYC'S Striving For Togetherness records in late September. Their split 7" with Indecision has gone into its second or third pressing, and look for a new 7" on positive

face records as well. Also, they have a 7" on Lost & Found called "Signs of Change, " with older material. Shutdown play fast, old- school-styled hardcore with lots of late-80's CT sounds going on as well. Up Front meets Bold perhaps. Write them at 2668 East 21 Street, Brooklyn. NY 11235.

INHUMAN are a fairly new (June '95) outfit that some say mix old Leeway and Cro Mags with DYS. Negative Approach, and SOIA. They have a demo out for $4 ppd. which is out on vinyl (Back Ta Basics records) as well. Look for Inhuman on East Coast Assault 2 and a 7" on NJ's Nevermore records as well. A band to keep an eye on for 96/97. Contact at Shutdown address above.

STEP ASIDE are a raw. heavy as fuck hardcore band that brings to mind early Sheer Terror and Breakdown if they tuned down to C. Step A. have finished up on their second demo which includes cuts for East Coast Assault 2. Fast and intense shit here kiddies. Contact 218 82 Street, Brooklyn. NY 11209.

MUDDLEHEAD are another new band with a demo available. Their sound reminds me of Outburst and Uppercut a la late 80's NY style. 1240 81 Street. Brooklyn. NY 11228.

More upstarts on the scene include Enemy Within — new Napalm Death meets old Helmet, demo in the works; and Disgrace, a female-fronted death/grind who are also. Both bands are heavy as fuck and worth attention.

Shows: there are not as many as we would like in Brooklyn, but there are at least two per month at two clubs/bars that totally hate the music and the scene... but they book us anyway to make money. These clubs aren't that crazy about dancing, moshing or whatever you want to call it either, but we do what we have to do. Next time I'll have more information about 'zines, distribution, and whatnot. Later & stay true — by Mike Scondotto/lnhuman

Most of you have probably never been to or heard of Troy; all the more^reason to do this report. Troy is about ten minutes away from Albany, and about three hours from NYC. Troy has a longstanding , violent hardcore scene that started with the onset of 'crossover' in the mid-eighties, bands like Final Terror and Cranial Abuse planted the seed of metallish, hateful hardcore. This legacy of violence still haunts Troy today. There's no place for Troy bands to play, due to crazy fuckers showing up and beating the fuck out of kids. Troy bands have to play clubs in Albany or Cohoes, except Stigmata. Stigmata manages to play out of town regularly.

The longest standing and probably best known band in Troy would be Stigmata. They've got three cd's out so far. and have three more coming out in the next six months; Too Damn Hype is re-releasing the 'Hymns For An Unknown God' cd, that should be out by the time you read this. It was produced by the naughty Harley Flanigan, and recorded in '94 at Normandy. If you've never heard Stigmata, I'd describe their sound as very heavy technical metalcore with vocals something like a cross between John Brannon and James Hetfield. Most of their lyrics deal with personal struggles and religious topics.The other releases they have coming out are a Cranial Abuse discography on Grand Theft Audio, as Members of Stigmata were in Cranial. In the winter, 'The Heart Grows Harder' cd will be re-released on Thank The Knife Rees. Stigmata appeared on the Psycho Civilized

comp, cd recently, and they also have a split 7" out with Merauder. They're going to be on the East Coast Assault Two comp, cd, and are due to appear on a couple other comps. I can't re

member the name of. A lot of bands that play metallic NYHC are dicks as people, but I can honestly say that the guys in Stigmata are cool as hell and down to earth. They can be reached at P.O. Box 16. Troy NY 12182.

War-Time Manner are a decent South Troy band that play thrashy NYHC with humorous lyrics. They've got an 8 song demo out. that kicks ass. Members of WTM are also in Politics of Contraband and Warcrime, which is another Stig- mata side project. (518) 274–4545 or (518)270–9487. P.O. Box 11, Troy NY 12181.

Dying Breed are from Troy and formed out of the ashes of Flat Broke, Dead End, and Harbinger. They've got some pretty impressive riffs and drumming, and blow away most other bands in the lough guy metalcore style. See the demo review in this issue for more info.

Burning Human is a death metal side project of Stigmata, and they are pretty brutal. See their review in this issue for more info. Execution Style are a Troy band

I don't know much about except that they're named after a Stigmata song and they have a demo out. Oh, and they've got a singer named Tufts.

Politics of Contraband have the singer from Flat Broke and Mike Stack from Dying Breed. They have an ass-bealing sound that combines No Mercy and Madball, and just cannot be stopped. Mike Stack, 232 3rd St. Troy NY 12180 (518)273–9261 They've got two demos out I think.

There's more to Troy than just tough guy music, but not much more. Troy is a dirty, miserable town that emo, pop-punk, anarchopunk, vegan straight edge, etc. have no chance to take root in. And that's fine with me. I've hung out in Troy many times, and the bands there are cool people and down to earth, and don't give a fuck about silly shit like scene politics, hardcore fashion, etc. Most of the hardcore kids in Troy are actually working-class, or poor motherfuckers, and

this comes through in their music.

Albany promoter Ted Etoll is releasing a cd comp, with all the demos for War-Time Manner, Dying Breed, Burning Human, Politics of Contraband, and maybe one other band, all on one cd for a decent price. It should be out by the time you read this. If you'd like to order one send 10S to Mike Stack at the address above. Stigmata also has a new 3 song demo out for 4$ ppd to Bob's p.o. box address, also listed above. Stigmata/Merauder split 7"s are also available from Bob, send him 4 or 5 bucks, so he can spend the money on new ink and Italian food.

Other bands not from Troy but from the same general area include Withstand, One King Down, Throwback, Threshhold, and Cutthroat. -ESD

M.I.J. and Chaste. In a nutshell, that's Wisconsin.

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Down in Chicago there is MK Ultra, who 7" has been the hot emo record lately. There is Hinkley (exEverlast) who reminded me of Crossed Out style crustcore if anything, when I saw them, have a 7" out which I haven't heard yet. There is Stifle, who are like a rapcore band. I saw 'em and can say they are a lot better than the Onyx/ Biohazard/Anthrax /P.E. spin you might be imagining. Their demo, somewhat primitive sounding, is very good and deserves a listen. First Born, Vegan/ SXE like Ressurection with Syracuse influences. They have a demo out as well, which is a tad sloppy, but they are very new and very young (I don't think one band member is out of high school), so give 'em a chance 'cause their live show isn't bad. There is also Extinction, who is Jim of Stormtrooper fanzine fame,

band. I haven't heard them yet. There is also another new

'^ ^Thisscene report should have been done a long tinie agd; But^ I'rt) glad ?l;Waited When I first started writing this in early winter there wasn't much to say, I stand corrected. The midwest is not notorious for having a great hardcore scene, and what started with a few bands, ends with an actual report. O.K.

Madison and Milwaukee are almost the same scene. We're only an hour away T I from each other, so bands from either | city are almost considered local. Here I in

Madison, there is Portion of Truth, J who are like progressive hardcore, in ®iSj®M| the vein of Nomeansno. They usually .

play rretal bars, so I haven't seen 'em in a year. The P is for Punk kids are still do- mg shows for the PC inclined and have their band going, who's name I forgot, but used to W he called Ezra Pound. I would go to more of their shows, but they book bad alt rock/emo. They do have

the independant ethic and do stuff for the scene, so I have

to credit them for that. Call Kyle at (608)2598985, if interested. There are a few garage attempts at hardcore, but until something more develops I can't really say. Otherwise, Madison is home to noise rock bands like Pachinko, Killdozer, Power Wagon, and others. Labelwise: The Despair/New Day Rising is out on MooCow and is carried by many distributors, also check out the Atlas Shrugged/ New Day Rising split 7" and Scout "Tomato" 7", also on Moo Cow. Jim's label has been very active and he expects more in the very near future. Rhetoric has out the Spazz/Brutal Truth split 7", which smokes ass. The new Ice 9 7", entitled "Psycology and Extreme Violence" which the music lives up to it's title. Also the Noneleftstanding "Stingray Candy 100" Lp/cd has been out as well. My first 7", Withstand "Into My Own" is still available from me at 3/4/5/ us/can/mex, as well as swell distros like Very, Victory, Stormstrike and others. My label, Fistheldhigh Records, will be releasing the Beta Minus Mechanic/ Holden split in May along side the Disbeleif/Outcome split 7" split release with MooCow. The summer sees Disembodied recording a 12" for me.

Milwaukee, there are basically three bands here worth mentioning. Method, who've been around for awhile, have sort of new school sound, but don't do very much, in terms of playing shows, etc. For all I know they might have broken up. There is Evel, who are recording for a 7" on Foresight in the summer. They have a very groove heavy post-harcore feel, not unlike Orange 9mm. Finally, there is Promise Ring. If you haven't gotten their Jade Tree single yet, watch out. If you figured that it's ex Noneleftstanding and ex Celishrine, you can also figure that it's more of that progressive emo. They have a split with Texas is The Reason coming soon. Excellent live band. Otherwise, Endure from Oshkosh, who really needed some practice the only time I saw them have been M.I.A., as have been

> hardcore band who didn't have a name when I saw them. There is also a new emo band called Cloy, t Down in the Quad Cities, there is CrossCheck, 7" out on Ignition. Newer son9s are more complex, so I can't wait r , 0 see how lh, s y°un9 band matures
>
> L They also have a side project called • Hated Youth, i'm told it's influence by I early 80's stuff like Minor Threat or I Negative Approach.
>
> E Minneapolis, Minnesota. Get your F tissues ready, Threadbare are dead and gone if you haven't heard already (qod I rca iy loved that band) Disembodied are back' They have been play shows and MooCow will be re-

leasin</sup>9 [a 7" real soon]- They will also be recording for a 12" on my label, this summer.

[v] Until then, if you haven't experienced their brand of sxe death metal, their cd "Existance In Suicide"

is available through most big distros. Impetus Inter recorded

for an Ip recently. Man Afraid, a sort of Born Againstish band, have a 7" out on Half Mast records. Lackluster, a newer emo band play out and, I think, are recording for a new demo. I haven't heard from in a while.

Indiana, a state I don't know a hell of a lot about, has bands like Endive, Birthright, and Ice 9. I know their scene is getting more active, but I lack enough info to give an accurate account as to what goes on there. I don't really hear much about St. Louis at all. There are kids in Iowa, no bands. Nebraska is pretty much the same, but Colorado has Painstake and a few other bands. But that's the central U.S., almost another scene report. Again, without accurate information, I can't really say much. I ask anyone, please, please write to me. What i'm trying to do is start up somekind of a network and get some kind of organization to the scenes here in the midwest. I moved out here from Albany, NY and the one thing I notice is that scenes here are more disorganized. As a result, .! hear people bitching about how nothing ever happens here. But in the last few months there are more new bands, more shows and more people. Let's keep the

momentum going. I'm trying to do shows here in Madison, or if you're interested in Fistheldhigh Records call me (Ian) at (608)2498919 or write me at P.O. Box 2652 Madison, Wi. 53701

Rhetoric Rhecords PO Box 82 Madison, WI 53701 MooCow Records PO Box 616 Madison, WI 53701 Stifle 6151 N. Windrop #501, Chicago, II. 60660–2617 Firstborn 900 Forest Wilmette. II. 60091. Blue Harvest Distro./Extinction 947 N. York Rd. Elmhurst, II. 60126 Evel 4850 s. 69th st. #2 Milwaukee, Wi. 53220 Foresight Records PO Box 27152, Milwaukee, Wi. 53227 Disembodied c/o Joel Johnson 5512 Irving N. Minneapolis, Mn. 55430

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$ Located J0. ih£ eastern of Germany, 2 younger labels, specialized on sxe hc;were brought to life. One of them is life records, which released cds from germany's pole' and ballroom, the other one is march through which released various bands from other countries, just as germany's new school band surface.switching over to berlin.one of germany's cheapest and most reliable mailorders called waldorf & statler has to be mentioned.more than music fanzine

has 4 issues out till now, covering mostly sxe stuff, just as some personal thoughts mixed with emowritings (which is not too cheesy in this case).mtm is written in german, so beware you english speaking folks.another fanzine, which is much larger and already well known

is over the edge.it features a fat news section, just as many band

interviews, reviews and political writings which are a bit pointless from

times to times.germany's biggest and most controversal booking agency m.a.d. is also located in berlin.they mostly do tours with american bands, some bands complained about the places being to big for a he show and too high door prices.they also do a record label called mad mob which released bands as murdered art, feeding the fire, deadstoolpigeon and germany's political old school band mioz‰n.other bands from this area which i haven't listened to yet are:breaking free, disrespect and proof.another berlin record label is heart first which released records from strain, brand new unit and lots more.this label offers you cheap prices and seems to be reliable.per koro is a label which is located in the northern part of germany.they already released a lot of records containing bands like queerfish who already toured the us as far as i know, and carol, the follow up band to acme (rip).per koro also does a megahuge second hand mailorderlhorizons fanzine is coming from that area, too. till now 3 issues are out, but just as more than music, this one is written in german mostly.the editor, whose nickname is gonzo (sven chojnicki) also does a distro which is cheap and reliable.people from germany who didn't know him yet, should get in touch with him, he carries a lot of interisting stuff.one of germany's better sxe bands called veil released two 7is on a dutch label and is going to put out a full-length release on frontline records very soon.they already supported 108 on their last european tour and i think that they are supposed to put out a split 7i with a us band on moo cow records soon.tatooine fanzine put out 1 issue till now, concentrating on sxe writings and bands this fanzine did a good job with ist first issue.i am sure you all know the infamous lost and found, so i do not want to give you any information on that.off records is a diy'distro featuring various kinds of he bands, get in touch for a list of cheap stuff.this mailorder seems to be reliable, too since i never had any problems with them.trustkill europe- no further explainations necessary.refuge mailorder focuses on distributing bands from ebullition, gravity and stuff, you know the game.again a reliable and cheap mailorder, so if you are interested in that kind of music, get in touch with refuge.summersault is a fanzine and book distro, mostly political and vegan stuff is distributed b them.crucial response records is long established and popular all over the world, so there's no need to ckstr. 65, 64293 darmstadtnavigator booking agency:heinrich geissler str. 12, 97877 wertheim, fax:+49 9342 5440new direction: see revolution inside records'nyari/alveran records:nordring 50, 44787 bochum, fax:+49 234 91 60682, e-mail: al veranrec@aol.comoff-platten:f Io rian r'ther, b'dcherstr. 1, 38820 halberstedtour world distro + zine:matze ruoff, m, hl weg 9, 73269 hochdorfover the edge zine: marc.hagelbergerstr. 48, 10965 berlin, fax:+49 30 789 134l9per koro

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> chorus@chemie.fu-berlin.deck, that’s it.i am sure i have forgotten a lot of people, a big sorry goes out to the neglected ... ANDRE, 10965 berlin, fax:+49 30 78913419, fone:+49 30 78913417

Padova, and this year’s edition was crowded as never before. I’ll start this report from the top of the Italian boot. From the city of Como, on the border with Switzerland, comes a five piece band called _OUTRIGHT_ (Marco Deplano, C.P. CRICCIA, 22100 COMO), they play modern HC with a hint of emo softness thrown here and there, members play also in Burning defeat and Mudhead, and they have tracks on various compilations. B_URN_!NG_JD_EJEEAT (Andrea Ferraris, Via Galimberti 1/a, 15100 ALESSANDRIA) from Alessandria have a 7” and a new 12” out now on Green res, the music is really slowed down emotional post-HC, you would not expect the singer of such a band to wear a Wretched t-shirt, but so it is! Give them a try and you’ll be surprised at how good they are. From Torino comes a new band called _ABSE_NCE (Gabriele Biligiati, Via Saint Bon 68. 10152 TORINO), they have a demo out, intense USA- core style HC in the vein of Earth Crisis and Soulstice, they’re strong on the animal rights side and that’s good!

PERMANENT SCAR are no more but they released a farewell 12” on Green res, a real progress from their early stuff, they now have a more mature and modern sound.

Since their 12” on SOA res came out around 3 years ago MUDHEAD (Alex Azzali, Via Lecco 12, 22030 Eupilio [CO]) have only contributed to compilations, and they haven’t changed a bit, fast and angry HC, the Cro-mags is the best comparison. From the city of Milano we have SQTTOPRE_SSLONE_ (Federico Oddone, Via Martinengo 26, 20139 MILANO), who have a 7” out on Mele marce res and a new 12” out now. They play the old style Italian HC, with speed and melody, lyrics are sung in Italian, so this time you can’t complain about the mispelling of English words, they’re good and highly recommended. Milano is also the only city in Italy to host 2 Krsna HC bands, this time I’ll pass the Hare-losers shit-talking and I’ll go on talking about the bands.

GOVINDA HC PROJECT (Alex Oiso, GHCP C.SO LODI 59/F, 20139 MILANO) is the old one, a CD entitled "II meglio dei due mondi" is out on Vacation house res. Their sound is similar to Shelter and the singing is really melodic and neat. The other Crsna band is SHAA (Silvano Sbarra, V. Carrobbio 21, 22059 ROBBIATE [CO]), they're more melodic and poppish, their 7" is out on Blu bus res. Other bands active in Milano are; _REALITY_ (Corrado Schiavoni, V. Moro 1/a, 20097 S. Donato [Ml]), their 7" "Loser?" is pretty basic old style HC ala No For An Answer, DE CREW (SVR c/o C.P. 167, 20036 MEDA [Ml]) a self-produced skate-core 7" and a split with KINA on Blu bus res, _IMPL_OSION (Massimo Bignardi, via Madonna Pell. 64/ A3, 20010 Bareggio [Ml]), noisy metallic HC, a mini CD out soon for You're not Alone res, _POINT BREAK_, _LESS THAN ZERO_. IbESIDE. On the west coast, in the city of Genova there is a band called _HEARTSIDE_ (Diego Allegretti, Via Bartolomeo del fossato 95/12, 16149 Genova), ebullition-style with screaming vocals, they have a split 7" with the now defunct band Right in Sight on Shove res. _POINT OF VIEW_ play poppish HC, 3 7"s out for them. _EVERSOR_ (Marco Morosini, Via F. Cervi 19, 61011 Gabicce [PS]) are the best melodic band active here in Italy, they come from Pesano and have a lot of records out, so check out some of their latest stuff and enjoy

AGEING (Gianluca Tricarico, Viale

[Image not archived]

Giorgione 46, 36100 Vicenza) is a band formed by people living all over the north of Italy. They have just released a 10" on Twilight res, and I think there are still copies

available of the split tape they did with Mindless collision. The sound is adult-oriented HC with the shrill and melodic, similar to the one of the New Age upfront 7". About Mindless collision, there are rumors they have broken up. when I saw them live circa 2 yers ago they were a SXE band, but their commitment didn't last too long since I know they're all into booze and stuff now. Same goes for Headsman, but who cares? As long as HC has existed threnders have come and gone, it's a matter of fact. _IVORY CAGE_ (Andrea Bassi, Via Stendhal 5, 40128 Bologna) from Bologna, by the time you're reading this, should have their 10" out on Green res, same label of the previous 7". Tight metallic HC, big guitars and slow parts. A good example of modern SXE HC.

Around that area we find _BY ALL MEANS_ (Massimo Meloni. Via Vittoria 2, 46026 Quistello [MN]), one of the best known Italian bands, they have a 12" and two 7"s out, one of which is a split. With time they have evolved their music to a more heavy sound, lyrics in Italian dealing with the right issues. A new 7" is planned for this summer.

MOURN (Andrea Ghiacci, Via Roncaglio Inferiore 1, 42016 Guastalla [RE]), the name says it all, have been around for a couple of years and now have a 7" out on Insociale res, which is a concept about a concentration camp, I find it to be quite firghtening at times and a bit depressing, but I'm sure it will fit very well in the play-lists of the thrift-shop, beard and glasses crowd.

STATEMENT (Massa Alesandro. Via Acquaviva 2/b, 47100 FORLI) is another new band, they come from the Romagna region, ith a slow new school metallic HC. They have a demo out and a piece on a comp. 7" to be released by Buckett of Blood res.

CHEMICAL POSSE (Pinto Maurizio, Via Jesi 274, 60027 Osimo [AN]) from Ancona have now switched their style to a very metallish Sepultural/Neglect one, really brutal. They have a 7" and a 12" out on Mele marce res.

From Novara we have _CONSCIOUSNESS_ (Luca Fontanello, Via Muratori 95/b. 28060 Lumellogno [NO]), a new band who plays new

school HC, a demo out for them.

PRODUCT (Stefano Bertelli, Via Togliatti 31.46029 Suzzara [MN]) is another new band whose debut 7" is planned on Green res someday in the future. Some names to drop are: CRAVE, probably a 7" in autumn out on Twilight res, EVENFORI from Torino, FLAT MIND, a CD out soon on You're no alone res. ENDLE_SS HA_TE a 10' that should have been released a while ago, CLONM_ACNQ_ISE from the Sardegna island, who have a very NYHC oriented demo out. (Giampietro Guttuso, Via Pitzolo 3, CAGLIARI 09100). From Napoli, south-ltaly, there are two active SXE bands, ONFALL and UPRISING.

_ONFAL_L play post-HC and have a demo out. About the other band. _UPRISIN_G. I know only the name, so I can only guess about them.

I'll now go on to talk about the scene of my city, ROMA.

Due to our geographical location we Romans are somewhat cut out of the European HC scene, so not many bands have the opportunity to go out of town to play and it is even harder to have the "big" bands playing here, but that has not been a problem for the development of the local HC scene.

After a period of ups and downs finally we have shows set up on a regular basis, this thanks to the proud few who still give a fuck and move their butts instead of complaining and doing nothing.

The scene is a mixof different attitudes,

no "Little HC Kid club" here, and that's good. The straight edge remains a soled creed in the scene, just as respect for animals. vegans and vegetarians are present in

a very high percentage here.

New energies and motivations have kept things moving, actually there are a lot of bands active in the city. GRO_WING CON_CERN (Gianni Pantaloni, Via C. Ferrata 23. 00165 ROMA) are still alive and active after the next line-up change. After their last work "Season of war" which brought their sound in the realms of Heavy metal (Pontera, Biohazard) it seems that they're now returning to the old style. A probable new 12" is in the works.

OPPOSITE FORCE (Simone Tripodi, Via Salaria 1388. 00138 ROMA) still haven't received the attention they deserve. Their CD "Near" on Vacation house res. in sone of the best examples of NY influenced metallic HC to ever come out of Europe, tight and powerful. And the quest to be hooked up by a "big" HC label continues, Keep

you eyes open. We're all waiting for XGQDFATHERX to do their one-shot show! This is a mysterious project which will last for only a show, the lucky ones who will be present should expect many kicks!

The DEHUMANIZE (XSURROUNDEDX res address) debut 7" is in the works, so don't get annoying asking when it will be finally out. really thick and heavy as hell doom metal HC at it's finest, the venom of the 90's, scheduled on XSurroundedX res for October *96. so stay tuned.

TI_MEBOMB_ (Giorgio Fois, Via L. Rolando 20, 00168 ROMA) full length 12" has totally blown away their debut 7". the style is now definitely metal, more than that of many metal bands. The recording is swell and clean, the music a voyage to the realms of hell, and they didn't give up the serious lyrics for the now "oh! so hip!" religious and demonic ones. The 12" is a joint venture SOA rcs/MANZO productions. Buy it or you'll regret it for the rest of your life!

_COLONNA I_N_FAME SKINHE_AD (Paolo Petralia, C.P. 15338, 00143 ROMA LAURENTINO) is the Roma pride. The demo is out now. Probably the best OH outfit to ever come out of the city, bringing back the good ol' shouted and gruffy punky-OH, the Nabat style we

[Image not archived]

all love so much. The lyrics are pretty streetwise and good to listen to and to sing-along to. They're the only OH band in the whole world lo have 3 out of 4 members that happen to be vegan and SXE (!!!'). STRENGTH APPROACH is a new fresh band coming out of the darkness to play old fashioned Gorilla biscuils-influenced HC, fast music with a cool attitude. This autumn they'll record for a split tape with the other Roma old-school band XReinforcedX, all programmed as XSurroundedX #1.5.

On the tattooed front we have XR_EDEM_PTIONX (XSURROUNDEDX res address) who, after winning the prize for the most trouble-making band around are also planning to record for their debut 7" to be out on XSurroundedX res. Tattooed furious Integrity-ish HC for the masses, don't miss it' They're sponsored by the infamous xRKBCx (ROMA KICK BOXING CREW for those of you who don't know).

PURIFICATION (Maurizio Ricci, Via Amico Bignami 12. 00152 ROMA) will probably record, around the end of the year, for their debut 7". on which label is still unkown, since none of the labels they offered to be with accepted them because of their lyrics. Musicwise they're halfway between RAID and Sepultura. The lyrics deal with veganism, deep ecology, animal liberation. Luddism and SXE. VER SACRUM look like your average Merel-bogus band, but don't be mistaken. they're an outspoken SXE band. Struggle is the key word here. Another band to keep an eye on are _UNHEEDED_ which moves on the same wave-length of Ver Sacrum.

_XREINFO_R_CEDX_ (Maurizio Ricci, Via Amico

Bignami 12. 00152 ROMA) is the "Core de Roma" band, they play the over played and over generalized 80's SXE HC. The music is a wild blend of Uniform choice, seven seconds. Youth of today, Bold and Chain of strength. You know what to expect from their live shows, a lot of dives, sing alongs and fingerpoints, which are the basis for

every successful HC show. It's good to see older people who didn't give up their hooded sweatshirts for the now so trendy Stussy-Major forces sassy MTV-alternative wanna be's wear' A split tape with strength approach is on its way. TH_IS SID_E _UP_ (Dario Adamic. C.P. 15319, 00142 ROMA LAURENTINO) play melodic and poppish cali-HC ala Bad religion, they have various things out.

TEAR ME. DOWN (Applequince res. Via di mezzo 15. 01100 VITERBO) is Italian wild old school HC, the "More dead nerks" 7" out now.

MUDDLE (Luca Lombardi. Via puccini 9. 01100 VITERBO) is another band plaing punky-HC stuff, a demo out. Most acclaimed Roma band _CON_CRETE (Cristiano D'Innocenti. Via Marostica 25. 00191 ROMA) have released a 10" on SOA res and going around a lot playing shows, this one is highly suitable for fans of Ebullition-Old glory artsy stuff. A new 7" is in the works. For fans of non-HC calmer stuff there are STUDEN_T ZO_MBIE (Conti Dragotta, Via F. Cherubini, 12 d. 00135 ROMA) who have a 7" out (Ashes + Blur) and BRUMA (Andrea Marra, Via Alerno 12. 00198 ROMA), whose 7" will be out very soon on Green Records.

On the projects side there's a band called HAR_DCORE POLICE_ DEPT, which claims to bring to justice all those who betrayed the HC scene, so Pat Dubars and Brian Bakers better start to watch their backs' Early Boston brutal Negative FX music without mercy for the sell-outs, it's payback time!

Another project I heard of is a band called _PREDATOR_ but I don't know if they will ever be for real or will remain in the plethora of

uncompleted stuff.

The grind-core band C_OMR_ADES (Paola Petralia, C.P. 15338, 00143 ROMA LAURENTINO) from Roma decided to break up, their first and last 7" is out soon on SOA res. OBTRUDE (comrades address) take where they left off and have a split 7" with the other Roma grind band NAGANT to be out on SOA res.

_SOCIETY QF JES_US consists of all the By all means members playing grind core, they have a really good split 7" with Substance out on Insociale res.

Labels -_BRE_AK EV_EN PO_INT (Via Vallebona 28. 00168 ROMA) Lifetime 12". Slap of reality 7", Down by law 7", Two line filler CD, Grin 7", etc. -_BUCKETT OF BLOOD_ (Cossettini Alain, Via A. de

Gasperi, 13. 33081 AVIANO [PN]) A comp. 7" with Statement, Onfall,

Mistrust and Springdown. -GREEN (Giulio Repetto, Via

Falloppio 38. 35100 PADOVA) By all means 12".

Ivory cage 7". Burning defeat 7". Eversor 7",

Bruma 7", etc. -_INSOCIALE_ (Mario Luppi, Via

D;Avia Nord 54, 41100 MODENA) Soci- * ety of Jesus/Subsance 7", Mourn 7". —

MELE MARCE (Giorgio Senesi, Via A. L Carrante 7. 70124 BARI) Chemical | posse 7" + 12". Sotto pressione 7",

Point of view 7", etc. -_SHQVE_ (Manuel Piacenza. Via Don Minzoni 3, 15100 ALESSANDRIA) Right in sight/Hearts de 7". -SOA (Paolo Petralia. C.P. 15338, 00143 ROMA LAURENTINO) Timebomb 12". Ten Yards fight 7", Concrete 10", Comrades

' 7", Obtrude/Nagant 7". Mudhead 12", Open Season 7", Growing concern 7* + :Z", he runs also a big distro, cheap prices,

try it! -_XSURROUNDEDX_ (Maurizio Ricci. Via Amico Bignami 12. 00152 ROMA) Dehumanize 7".

Redemption 7", XReinforcedX/Strength approach, tape,

ALF benefit 7". "Roma straight edge- The new season' comp 7' w/Dehu- manize. Reinforced, Redemption and Strength approach. _TWILIGHT_ (Marco

Voltani, Via Calzolari, 3, 40128 BOLOGNA) Ageing 10" _-VACATION_ HO_US_E (Rudy Medea. Via S. Michele 56, 13069 Vigiliano Biellese |VC]) Opposite force MCD, Indigesti CD. GHCP MC. Sottopressione 12". etc. -Y_OU'RE NOT ALO_NE (Massimo Bignardi. Via Madonna Pell. 64/A3, 20010 Bareggio [Ml]) "Not enought" comp. 7" w/ GHCP. Sottopresione. Less that zero. Mudhead, In-side.

Zines: Zines written in Italian: Screams of anger, Unbusinesslike. Blumergaster, I think so I am. Sona!. Standpoint, Zips & chains. Integrity, Solo odio, Aiuta la tua scena.

Zines written in English: WAR HYMN newsletter (XSURROUNDEDX res address). XA PROPHECY OF RAGEX (XSURROUNDEDX res address). TOUGH GUYS DON'T DANCE (Massimo Moscarelli, Via Licino Stolone 62, 00175 ROMA), GENOCIDE (Andrea Delbello, Via Forlanini 55, 35139 TRIESTE). OUTLET (Luca Fontaneto, Via Muratori 95/b, 28060 LUMELLOGNO [NO]).

Well, finally I've finished, I hope to have been able to give an almost complete look at the Italian HC situation, sorry if someone has been left out. Anyone out there who needs info or whatever about the Roma straight edge HC scene just drop me a line, my address is at the bottom of this scene report.

So remember lo always keep da faith (and lookout for the warzone women!), and watch your back, the storm is coming! As usual, mortacci vostra cornutoni, go vegan, ciao.

MAURIZIO RICCI
VIA AMICO BIGNAMI, 12
00152 ROMA
ITALIA

P.S. I'm looking for a RELEASE t-shirt, can anyone help me?

[Image not archived]

We hayegjod Hard Core scene here in Japan. At first my band SWITCH STYLE (2-10-28 Kamagaya, kamagaya-city, Chiba 27301) have a 4songs 1st 7"ep out. And We'll record 4songs 7'ep for Life Sentence Rees (P.O.Box 52462 Irvine, CA 926192562) in

U.S.A..it'll be available in April or Nay '96. Some People has been calling us Japanese Strife or Refused. HALF LIFE (3-5-B-44 Sakuragi, Tagajyo-city, Miyagi) is a old band that has a Unbroken- ish metallic guitars. They've just released two 7"eps & two split Peps. They have very original sound. Another good band is DIVIDED WE FALL(3-12-20-102 Kamitakaido , Suginami-ku, Tokyo). They have a

1st 7"ep out, and they'll also have split jeep with 25ta Life in spring '96. They also appeared on Endless Fight Rees comp."Over The Edge 2 — If you dig metallic stuff, you II probably like them. BLIND JUSTICE (4-40-5 Higashiyamada, Tsuzukiku, Yokohama-city,

Kanagawa) broke up, and they change their name to ENVY. They'll record mini-CD in the near feuture. They've just released a 7"ep & a split rep as Blind Justice. T.J.Maxx (7–1010 Habikigaoka Habikino-city, Osaka) is new band, they have really old NYHC style sound ala — Breakdown. They have a 1st rep out. JBBME Well, I want to mention some bands J who has demo out. BENCH MARKER a (2–1 -12-201 Ochiai, Tama-city, Tokyo) has really heavy stomp wing sound. [1]

Shimoshizushinden. Yotsukaido. Chiba 284) plays mixed sound of New school and Old school. TAKE THE LEAD (2-7- W 23–303 Imaike, Chikusa-ku, Nagoya-city, a Aichi) has old school sound with 9O's feel. " STATE CRAFT (2AR_91 T7I1 mi RI1ainsmi->ll Takva) hxR New school sound with 2 vocalists. Thats all for now about the bands.

I'm also doing START TODAY MAILORDER AND

FANZINE (2-10-28 Kamagaya, Kamagaya-city, Chiba 273–01 / Fax:+81-0747-44-9918). So, labels and bands and others, get in touch. By youXsuck

Q Let's.begin with a generic start... Hello everyone! I'm Miljan and'LH try to give you an idea of what is going on in Slovenia, a tiny state with only 2 million inhabitants. Well, hardcore isn't really popular here. All those bands from early 80's are gone and with the separation from Yugoslavia we just got more tiny. At least when we were in a federal state the scene was bigger. Now, as you can see by the number of the people living here, you can't expect big scene or many active people. In fact, we can't speak about straight edge scene, as my friend said "people in SLO like to eat sausages and drink beer." Youth of today played here (who knows how many scene reporters said that?...). So, in SLO is mainly punk scene and maybe we can say hardcore (if they let us.), yet, I guess we can say also that. I really don't know everything about it, although I should if you notice the number of creatures living here, so I apologize to all bands and other people that I won't mention. Then let's start with the list of people you'll probably never meet and bands you will never hear... I guess the most known are WASSERDICHT, they play raw he with ska and reggae elements. At the moment they're considered best band and they have a split LP with SCUFFY DOGS by whose name you can dig they play melodic punk rock. They're getting more popular as big grass consumers, which is shit if you ask me. IN4S (it's not for sale) are around for a while. Music is kinda melodic post hardcore and they're a standout in a way. They

have 7" & LP out. V OKOVIH (in chains) are in the vein of nofx and that kind of punk. Their cd is out. PRIDIGARJI (preachers) is the fusion between jazz,

rock and punk. Can't say much about them, because I really don't like their style, they have two cd's out. FIRST CAUSE is the only straight edge band and that is a big standout here and I don't say that because I play there. Anyway, I won't talk much or I'll be accused for self-promotion. We don't have a precise music style, I could say it's hardcore, rock ... BLOODSUCKERS is that kind of band that people like, because they like to get drunk and to play punk/hc. I guess I said everything with that. EAST 16 are the twin brothers of east 17 with a small difference, they play noisy punk with talented lyrics like "fuck you, " "shit, " 'luck off"... and all other possibilities. DTW and STROBODEATH are much similar, only for grind and noise fans. I don't know if I should mention SKYTOWER who are the most promising funk/hc/metal band as I heard, but can't say much about it, because I never heard them. MISTRESH

are their own world. They're not known in the coun

> try, just in my area they do nice music to get bald with or to cut your ears off. NABISKA are death kids and if you like that style maybe you'll like them. DOUBLE PENETRATION is a project of frustrated guys [who play] pomocore (by their own words). I guess that's all about the

* bands. 13.BRAT is my favorite zine, i It's done by the people I love and besides music it has nice things to read. Three issues are already out, the lat- ⊠⊠ est has Strife and Four Walls Falling In, but it's in Slovene, so you'll prob- V ably never be able to share my opinion. B JAY-WALK is another great zine, sometimes written in Slovene, sometimes in English. issue two has anarcrust, durort. kent mcClard ... they're also a label (wasserdicht and scuffy dogs LP) and a distribution. ROCK VIBE

is a famous magazine which is selling also in stores, so

maybe I shouldn't mention it (I hope diehard hardcorers will forgive me). Anyway, it's done pretty well and it varies from metal to hardcore. They also brought sick of it all, snapcase and shelter over here. PUNKTUR is a "book" that can be judged by its covers' about punk

and about saying fuck off to straight edge. ACTIVE PHASE is he/ crust zine and has anarcrust, violent, headache, tromatism init. They run also small distribution and do a compilation tapes. INFERNAL is a bit tiny zine which needs some more work. The guy who is making it has also a band NOT WHY YES which I forgot to mention. DICKHEAD is a zine that I can't discuss on, because I've never seen it. Ignite, slapshot, new bomb lurks ... and some more stuff. FRONT ROCK is a label and has put out several compilations No Border Jam with SLO and austrian bands, also pridigarji are on it. IMPALED PROD, is more death/black/doom/grind oriented, it has also some hardcore stuff. Il's a label and a distribution. SUNRISE TAPES is a kid who's making live tapes or compilations, he's also co-maker in 13.brat. SLOWGREEN is a very good distro, they have lots of stuff, -the only bad aspect is that they're a bit

slow. PREPOROD (rebirth) is an anarchist newsletter done by the guy from slowgreen and K.N.D., which is anti-authoritarian organisation. V.E.T.O. is a nonmusic oriented distribution. It tends to promote and spread ideas of veganism, animal liberation, drug-free lifestyle, ecology ... There's also an anonymous hardline rap project called Codex.

I guess that's all that I know, but for sure I'll remember something when it will be already late. Well, maybe it's interesting to say that in our area we organised non-smoking show, so what's the deal? It was the first in SLO ever and that makes us proud ...uh. Maybe this report isn't really fantastic, but I guess it will do for the general information. If you like to write letters then contact me! This is just the beginning of our communication, let's not stop here. Anyway, I

have strange feelings that somebody will reply ... anyway, thanx for your time, true love ...miljan

Addresses:

WASSERDICHT- dejan pozegar, smetanova 82, 62000 maribor • SCUFFY DOGS- write at jay walk • IN4S- write at front rock • V OKOVIH- vorohova 36. 62341 limbus • PRIDIGARJI- write at front rock • FIRST CAUSE- pluzarev miljan, trubarjeva 33, 66330 piran • BLOODSUCKERS- Iuka basic, stara ul. I. 66000 koper • EAST 16-

write at bloodsuckers • SKYTOWER- write to impaled prod. • MISTRESH- srite to first cause • NABISKA- write to first cause •

DTW- borut jakin, cankarjeva 48, 65000 nova gorica • JAY-WALK- write to wassedricht • ROCK VIBE- p.p.lo, 65000 nova gorica • PUNKTUR- Iuka stravs, lubejeva I. 61117 I jubljana • INFERNAL-

doesnt matter what you've got between your legs when it comes to hardcore music. After releasing their first cds "Equalize Nature", just for fun, for DFR, they got signed by American Victory Records were their latest record "The age of the circle" is released. And for those who have missed these girls, I can say that they have a really heavy sound with lots of metal guitars. They toured all over America a few month ago together with "Snapoase", and they did very good. So, if you have missed them before, make chore you know about them in

the future...

Sweden and DFR also have bands who play a lithe softer music. One of these band are Shield. Their first release was the song "Outside", for the DFR compilation "SXE as Fuck", but at that moment they called themselves "Solitude". But after noticing that there

sasa dolgov, razagova 12, 69000 m. sobota • NOT WHY YES-

already were a Solitude-band they decided to change name

write to ingernal • DICKHEAD- sebastjan iskra, rozmanova 4a, 66250 ilirska bistrica • ACTIVE PHASE- tomaz horvat, jurciceva 14, 69420 Ijutomer • FRONT ROCK- p.p. 48, 62000 maribor • IMPALED PROD.- dejan. ormoska 67. 62250 ptuj • SUNRISE TAPES- valter cijan, gradnikove b. 49. 65000 nova gorica • SLOWGREEN- marko rusjan, pot na breg 8, 65250 solkan • K.N.D.- pavlin brane, oresje 20/b,

68259 bizeljsko • V.E.T.O.- jan urbane, knedrova 10. 66000 koper • DOUBLE PENETRATION- write to sunrise tapes • PREPOROD- write to slowgreen • *Don't forget to add Slovenia/ Europe*

^ I guess that most people who are into hardcore and straightedge and stuff, have sometimes heard about Sweden, and then probably Umea, and some of the bands from there.

I've been asked to write a Swedish scenereport and as you can see — I've done it. The only problem is that the biggest scene is in Umea, in north of Sweden, and I live in the south, about 5000 km from Umea, and here were I live I'm the only one into SXE and HC. But anyway...I know most of the bands so I'll just do my best, ok..

Umea also have Swedens biggest hardcore, straightedge record label: Desperate Fight Records, founded and driven mostly by Jose from "Abhinanda" and Dennis from "Refused", Swedens two biggest sxe bands. The labels first release was a cds by the great Abbinanda; "Darkness of Ignorance". That release is now out of press and also out of stock so it's quite hard to get that one, but they have also made a full length "Senseless" and another cds "Neverending well of bliss". The play a fast and very emotional type of hardcore and they do it great! ! ! They have also toured with bands like "108" and "Strife".

Then over to the other already mentioned band Refused. They're not on DFR since their first cds "This is the new deal" was released on "Burning Heart Records" and then they got signed by "Start Records" each have released all of their following material: "Pump the brakes" cds, full length "This just might be the truth" and another cds "Everlasting". Their full length have also been released on vinyl wich is very rare in Sweden becuase here's almost noone making vinyl's. Their hardcore is heavy with lots of sing- along's. I guess they were Swedens first straightedge-band and they have done very much for the Swedish scene. They toured Europe with "Snapoase" this summer and they have also toured with "108". It shall also be mentioned that there will be a new full length out soon (feb — march I think) and you don't wanna miss that one...trust me.

Another big Swedish band is Doughnuts. They're all females wich is (as you know) also very rare. But these girls proves that it

> to "Shield". Their new stuff is alot different than the first song, wich is a liffle bit harder than their new more melidic, singing type. Now they have made a cds: "Build me up...melt me down", and a full length called "Vampiresongs". Very recently they were on a little tour in Europe with the great "Norwegans" in "Lash Out".
>
> Another little bit softer band is Purusam. I find it hard to express this band's music but they really sound different than every other band I've heard. Thier vocals are really different since it's not screaming and not singing and not... It IS just very good and very emotional. They also have some beautiful female vocals made by their bassplayer. I used to be alot

> into aggressive hardcore but after bying this record I played it over and over and over again. So warning! ! ! This is good music and it doesnt matter what you listened to

before. It's just a great band. (13y the way their cds release on DFR are called "Outbound").

BUT! ! ' If you're not into soft music at all... Then you don't wanna miss Final Exit. This is Swedens only old school, pissed, aggressive and very angry SXE-hardcore band. Their message are like straightedge, SXE, SE and XX (and something more maybee???). At this moment they have only made one release, a 15-song cd called 'Teg", at DFR, but I guess there will be another one out soon. This band is so very pissed offthat you don't dare to miss them...

DFR have released two compilations, "SXE as Fuck" and "SXE as fuck". The first one is a cds and the second one are a full length cd. Except the bands I've already mentioned there are also some s)ther b?alds on these ones, but because there are only one song by each band and bacause these other bands hasent released anything else, I don't have much to say about them So I'll just mention them so you'll know about them in the future: Drift Apart, Beyond Hate, Situation 187, Seperations, Aim, Said I was and Reason for anger. These bands also sound really good so you'll better watch out so you don't miss anything...

Sweden's second biggest straightedge-scene is in Vanersborg in the mid/soulh (sort of). This city also have swedens second biggest record-label: No Looking Back Records. NLB is (just like DFR in Umea) founded and driven by members from the first and biggest bands in the scene, in this case "Ultimate Concern".

Ultimate Concern plays very fast, emotional and quite heavy HC. It's still a young but already great band so you have really missed something if you havent heard them.Their first release was a cds "Stop" wich also was NLB's first release, but their full length "Shield between" sounds alot different and more developed. There are re

ally speedy songs and good vocals.I guess there will be another release from them soon and I look forward to that...

Start Today is a even faster, more heavyer and more emotional band then the first one. This band has two (2) vocalists and that is really great! ! ! Their first release was a cassette "Nature" but the sad thing is that it's a lithe not so good sound quality on that one, but it does not matter very much — although the music is so great. They have also made one song for the NLB compilation "Brotherhood", wich is with the right soundQ, and then it's even better. But, this band are going to split up and thats very sad because this really is a very good band. But before that they're gonna record a split-7 together with another great (also splitting) VBG band "Watergate."

The second biggest VBG band, after "Ultimate Concern" are Outstand, with their alot softer and more melodic rock n roll sound. Maybee this is not really a hardcore band anymore, but since their first cassette "The eternal pose" (wich is very unlike the other meterials) was alot harder and more aggressiv and they're all straightedge

and stuff, then they are like a hardcore band anyway (although they don't call the band HC). Now they've also made another cassette "Five songs of life" wich is like a promotion for their yet to come cd. on "Dolores Records". Il sounds alot different than the first cassette. just as their song at the "Brotherhood"-compilation. The comp- cd's booklet also tells that that song is their last aggressive, so I look forward to hear their full length. This is a really good rock n roll band so you better check em out!

The compilation also contains songs by New Direction, Innerself. Content and Watergate. The first three band have only released that one song for the compilation so I can't write very much about them, but "Watergate" has also made a cassette "Thirdviewofthesculpture". This band is als<}very haevy and emotional and all that stuff, but as I told you before, they're also splitting up and thats sad because they're also very good.

The next release on NLB (probably out by the time you read this) will be a cds by the great band Nine. I havent heard any recording by this band but I know that they have done some cassettes. But I have seen them live ones in their hometown Linkoping and I just tell you., .that was one of the best concerts I have ever been to. They have a pretty heavy and sing-along sound (I don't remember x-actly) and I really look forward to hear their cd and I hope to see them live again soon. If you don't check this band out then you really miss something...

This was some lines about the best known Swedish bands, and there are more. I hope this got you a little interested in checking out the Swedish scene. If you haveany problems these records, then write the Inside Front address and they help you get in touch

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[Image not archived]

print reviews: Richard Allen (" Things Fall Apart " magazine, Inside Front debate team captain)

record reviews: Enrique Abierto Sazon ("Open Season " weightlifting journal. Inside Front machine shop foreman)

all other reviews by the editor, especially if they are marked with a "b " So please, if you 're so petty that you want to fight one of us over a review (rather than doing something fucking constructive, right) make sure you've got the right guy.

Of course, as Maximum Rock and Roll never tires of saying, every independent effort deserves respect for being what it is: an attempt to take life back into our own hands, so that we will no longer only sit back and watch the world but instead take an active part in it as individuals. But our job at Inside Front is not to pat people on the back. Obviously our readers can only check out some of the material we review, so if we recommended everything we would not help them at all. So we try to describe everything we receive to our readers in as much depth as possible, and at the same time to give any constructive criticism we can to the musicians or writers who have submitted their material — if we can do this successfully, we will have helped out both the 'zines/bands and the listeners/ readers. What more could you ask of us?

There sure are a lot of reviews in here. Please try to read through them all anyway, we've done our best to make them interesting reading. 1 can think of a million better things for us to do with this space, but I feel like the task of concentrating on reviews has sort of fallen to us by lot in the hardcore scene, because so many other big 'zines do such a fucking horrible

cians — make music inspired by real things in your life, things that touch you, so that your music will touch others. Look for new ideas to freshen up your work... otherwise you will only help to make hardcore stale and boring. The same goes for magazine writers. Good luck to everybody on your work (surely you'll be able to at least do better than we have here!), we'll be looking forward to seeing it when wc write the reviews for l.F. #10.

PABEMALABYMY

I guess I have to do a little mediating here, because it's better to get it over with now than have to deal with it later. One of our reviewers occasionally uses some language that could be construed as homophobic. None of us here at Inside Front arc homophobic, we're all grown up men and women who respect whatever desires our fellow human beings may have, and expect the same in return (hardline kids take note..!) I personally never use and don't like to see language that can be construed as homophobic, because I think the United States is an environment that is already too hostile to people who happen to be attracted to members of the same sex. However, there is a reason that this reviewer of ours uses this language: he has spent a fair amount of time in a violent offender prsion. If you have ever been in prison or know anyone who

has been, you know that terms that usually carry homophobic connotations in the free world refer to a completely different subject inside... So, in the interest of being open minded and learning to understand the languages that people who arc different than you speak, please do not jump to conclusions but try to understand this reviewer's language in context. For Christ's sake, we're trying to create a world where we can all understand and coexist with each

[Image not archived]

Editor B. Diabtodein-

l-lcarus Was Right #3* 2-Gchenna side of 7'* split V-Systra! 10"

4-lntcgrity "Humanity" 10'Y 5-Bum Collector 'zine 6-Timcboinb CD

7-new Lash Out CD

8-Jcsuit demo

9-Trial 7"

10-Hardwarc #8/Deadguy live **of course it goes without toying that the new Amebix CD bootleg "Beginning of the End " would be in first place here if it was not a re-release...*

*-J^twanJ^*

1-Catharsis CD : . '

2-Gehcnna live

3-Gcorgc Orwell. 1984

4-Thoreau, Civil Disobedience

5-Dahlia Seed new 12"

6-new Unbroken 7"

7-C.R. 7"

8-Quaranlinc live

9-Bob Dylan *fy*

10-Equus

*_-Moshpit Demon Richard Allen'_* 1-Speed Metal Symphony CD *2~\hznom-Everything ; * g '

3-Dream Theatre-Live CD glV 4-Earth;iCricis-£^^ Egr '

5-The Spandex. Experiment CD 6-D.RI *-Everything 7-Snapcasc-Stcps CD 3-Voivod-Everything 9-Stjyper-Everything \'* 10-TT Quick-*Everything*

job of it. The last "Punk Planet" I saw had about seven one- or two- word record reviews in it. Of course a one word review doesn't tell the reader shit about the record — those fucking reviewers don't care about doing their jobs well, they just want free records! Fuck them, they should 'retire' from reviewing before they make punk rock any fucking worse than it is... apparently they don't care about their readers, the bands, their magazine, or punk itself as much as they care about satisfying their own fucking greed without even working for it. One-word reviewers, two-sentence reviewers, all lazy reviewers and your uncaring editors, give it up — life sucks enough already without you wasting our time. I said all this already last issue... how many more times will I have to say it?

Of course, the other problem with reviewing records and magazines is that there are so many mediocre ones out there. I think most of the flaws in the material I come across stem from the creators just being afraid to be original. Obviously if you just go through the same motions as those who came before you. hoping to be as popular as they were, chances are that your work will not be as inspired or timely. Darc to do your own thing, not to try to engineer your music or writing so that it will be pushed to success by the latest trend. If your work is good, which it eventually will be if you work hard and try to draw upon what is original in your ideas and experience, eventually people will catch on regardless of trends. Musi-

other. not a world in which we all speak, look, act, and think the same... aren't we?

— ATTENTION: SPECIAL CONTEST FOR BORED INSIDE FRONT READERS —

Simply correctly identify which band recorded each of the records listed below from one of our staff member's all-time favorite list, and we will send you an Inside Front pencil of your very own! Good luck kids!

LP's:

1 — "Those Who Fear Tomorrow "

2. "Monolith"

3. "Rock For Light"

4. "Troops of Tomorrow"

5. "Live at CBGB's" .

7"s:

1. Self-titled (big hint: singer's brother is asleep at a show on the cover)

2. "Demolition War"

3. "Resist This Atomic Menace"

4. Self-titled (there's a kid in a sw ing on the cover of this one)

5. "The Underdark"

[Image not archived]

AGNOSTIC FRONT "Raw Unleashed" CD

My friends all hate (his, because (hey don't have the stomach to appreciate messy bands with shit recordings, but I love it. I always liked Agnostic Front's earliest songs

best (1 liked their later, more skilled execution better, though... that's why "Live at CBGB's" was so good: you had the old songs with the modern quality), and you get fucking 62 tracks of early A.E here... pretty much everything they did before 'Victim in Pain', and early versions of those songs too. By the way, for you Madball fans, most of the early Madball songs ('Smell the Bacon/What's With You'jo name one of many) were actually just old A.F. songs (that even includes the Animals cover) — so hear the originals here. On this CD are two different mixes of their 'United Blood' 7". plus extra songs, an earlier recording session, a practise tape, and two songs (by far the best sounding, because they are from just before the Cause For Alarm days) from a long lost compilation record. I'm just thrilled I got to hear "Friend or Foe" four limes on here! If you're not familiar with old Agnostic Front, what you get is shit recording quality, catchy as fuck songs played fast and crazy, nothing fake, nothing forced, just yelling and bashing hardcore that takes no prisoners... everything good in hardcore today owes A.F. a debt. The packaging is extensive. with fliers, the old Schism interview, old photos, plenty of ranting from the Grand Theft head executive, and some old A.F. lyrics I thought I'd never track down. Some of them are admittedly incoherent, such as "Fight": "Push around and stab each other, fight around and kill each other — fight fight riot riot — beat him hard, beat him dead, break their legs, we're gonna break their legs, let's go!" -b

Grand Theft Audio, address below All Out War- Destined To Burn 7"

This record has been out for awhile, but we here at Inside Front arc still required by hardcore law to review it. Two of the three songs on this 7" appear on the Philly Dust Crew comp. cd. All Out War are a metalcore band from downstatc (NY), that combine screechy vocals with lots of chugging riffs and double bass. One of their guitarists is fucking gigantic. They throw in atmospheric deathmetal leads once in awhile, and mostly sing about the evil of mankind and organized religion. To me. they sound similar to Mcrauder. maybe because they have lots of shouted back-ups. Nice packaging, with a glossy hardslock cover and lyric sheet.

Hard wav Records. 8. Rue Bertin Poiree. France

AMBER INN 7" '

1 think this is emo music. The vocalist is ovcrdramatic in his enunciation of such lyrics as "tranquillity throughout steadiness statics into me." Every once in a while there is some distortion on the voice. The music is midtempo. gentle, almost acoustic. I know some people who tell me that this sort of thing is extremely moving for them, but I just can't gel anything out of this emotionally; it just seems bland. Il might be soothing if there were no vocal tracks, but it's a little loo upbeal for thal either. The band seems to have personally splashed paint across the cover of this record, and 1 appreciate them going to all that trouble for me. -b

Sunney Sindicut. 915 I. St.. tic-166. Sacramento. CA 95814 ASCENSION "The Years of Fire" CD

Who knows what the tide refers to. This is modern, chunky, very metal, hardcore-influenced sluff., mostly midpaced, with plenty of changes and transitions. and lots

of fucking energy. Lots of chunky guiiar work, some double picking, hecticly lalcnied drumming, growling hissing screaming vocals, and a generally irresistablc rhythm. The guitarist and drummer are both skilled enough to add the necessary finishing touches and subtle details to make this interesting listening, and to create occasional moments of metal beauty. The

lyrics use generally scary words and images, it's a little hard to tell what message they're trying to convey. The recording is great, not extremely heavy but really clear so you can appreciate all the fancy guitar and drum work. If they dircci their song structure a tiny bit so that their songs really carry the listener from point a to point b effectively, this band will have every necessary ingredient for musical greatness, -b

Toybox. 116 NW 13th Street. #118. Gainesville, FL, 32601

Bad Posture- G.D.M.F.S.O.B. cd

Raw as fuck old, old hardcore with songs like 'Time For Smack' and 'Kill The Peace'. They remind me a lot of Nihilistics and the Fuck-ups, so you know I like (his shit' Tons of piciurcs. lyrics, and flyers are included in the booklet, and I can't help but wish hardcore was still this much fun in '96. But who says it can't be?! To give you a better idea of what this sounds like, picture Void crossed with maybe the Circle Jerks, just beating the fuck out of their instruments. This shit was before hardcore got pretentious and elitist. Also included are live tracks from a show on 8/15/82, and their 12" ep from '83. No metal, no hip-hop. no artsy horseshit. 28 songs total. "Any lime is ihe righl lime for Smack'" which is actually an anti-drug song... Bad Posture was a Ca. punk/hardcore band in the early 80's that never got as big as Suicidal or Circle Jerks, but were slill trail-blazing and offensive. And unlike a lot of music from thal era. Bad Posture's stuff holds up preliy well. Even ihe live and demo tracks still sound powerful. '

GTA, 501 West Glenoaks Boulevard. Suite 313. Glendale. CA.9I202

BLOODLET "Entheogen" CD

This is a real masterpiece, but it's a record that I think musicians will appreciate more than other listeners, because Bloodlct uses their technical prowess to concentrate more on breaking new ground in musical artisanship rather than trying to write really moving, accessible songs. Thal's a good ihing, not a bad thing, but something to take into accounl about this record. The thick, forceful production complements their music perfectly, and the grainy guitars, deep smooth bass, and punchy drums all work together with exacting grace. Every musician in this band is fucking amazing, and they use their skills well to create entirely original, perfect song structures, gut-twisting unorthodox rhythms, and unbelievable musical arrangements and instrumentation. At literally every turn they break new ground in music composition, bringing out a brand new idea for every single transition, and magically knowing exactly how far to proceed with each one. Al some points later in the record they seem to go into extended improvisations, an undertaking for which they are entirely prepared and which they

handle gracefully. Not only do they show the way to new musical ideas on this record, but they also come up with a number of new ways to use their instruments, especially in the field of guiiar noises. Allhough he's by far the nicest and most approachable guy in the band and I hate to say ihis. I ihink ihe singer's work is ihe one sort of weak spot on this record. His vocals are gruff and crazy sounding. but they have a real monotone enunciation that translates to an emotional monotone. Sometimes he speaks in a fragile-sounding voice, which I think is a good variation in his style, but other than ihat I think his older recordings had more feeling and were more interesting. The same goes for his lyrics here, I think; on the first couple 7"s (hey were some of (he best poetry I have ever read, but here his way with words is a little less emotionally compelling, his imagery a little less gripping, and they remind me a little of the sort of lyrics the many bands that imitate Bloodlet might write. Il hurts to say that, though. And partly because of the vocals, as I said at the beginning, this record is more interesting technically (han emotionally. My guess is that Bloodlct just has to become a little more comfortable in the new territory they have explored and they will be able to create a record that is a materpiece of emotion as well as

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artisanship (sort of like Neurosis, whose 'Souls at Zero' broke lots of ground but was a little flat emotionally... but when they followed it with the soultwisting. heart-gripping 'Enemy of the Sun', it all fell into place), -b Victory

BOTCH "The John Birch Conspiracy Theory" 7"

Bouncy, excited midtempo screaming hardcore. Not chunky generic dance stuff, they have loo much nervous energy for that: instead they shake out some epileptic, impatient noise. The drumming is thick and complex, never letting the listener rest. The bass guitar has a fairly prominent place next to the scratchy guitars in the mix. adding to the raucous energy of the whole thing. Of course the singer has that hoarse screaming voice, but he docs sound like he means it. Their music only breaks a litlle ground in the noisy/crazy genre, but they have the fucking guts to cover the famous classical piece from Carmena Burana. 'O Fortuna', complete with latin lyrics, a gong, and plenty of drama to spare . I've dreamed of covering that myself, and they outdid even my expectations. For this alone this record is a litlle piece of hardcore history. Good packaging, including a lyric booklet (vague, discontented lyrics) and a liltlc essay in which they attack conservative republican politics in hardcore (Hardline, for instance). Good work, -b

Phyte. P.O. Pox 14228, Santa Barbara. CA 93! 07 Bound 7"

This is the lalcst band by this name, out of New Jersey. Preity simple midtempo new school hardcore here, wilh dislinctively weird nasal screaming vocals. The singer occasionally throws in some talking or singing, and the music has some chunky guitar parts and a couple metallic moments. One song about rape, one about striving for self-improvement, and one abou being straight edge (Complete with a couple cliched lyrics). There is enough packaging/ liner notes, which unfortunately include a few embarrassing spelling/grammarerrors, -b

Spiritfall. 215 Hancock Ave.. Bridgewater, NJ 08807

Breach- Friction cd

A big. BIG .surprise from this Swedish straight edge band. I figured this lo be another deeply introspective emo-wuss band, but instead I hear totally original metallic music with unusual tempos and changes, atypical riffs and a vocal sound and guitar sound that honestly reminds me of newer Entombed. The lyrics are in English which helps this Ugly American understand them bctier. and they re simple, to the point, and without cliches. There's so many awesome changes and hooks on this cd. I hear something new every time 1 pul it on. I do so solemnly swear that from this day forth. I will take European hardcore seriously! Everything about ihis. the packaging, the recording quality, the material, is lop-notch. I'm speechless.

Burning Heart, Box 138. 73 7 2! Fagersfa. Sweden. Fax +46 223 145 42

BROTHER S KEEPER "The Continuum" CD

The production and guitar sound on this record is so fucking polished it sounds like Metallica arranged it for them. The overall mix is weighty and powerful, and the guitars incorporate a Hanger sound or slide guitar sound here and there lo add variety. The music is mid-paced, sori of rock and roll, danceable like their older material, but a little more involved and varied, a little less straight ncwschool hardcore and a little more rock and roll. Mike Ski's yelling vocals have gotten more high-pitched and rock and roll. too. On the one hand it's definitely a good thing that he has found his own style and gone with ii rather than trying to sing like anyone else, and it is clear that he feels comfortable wilh the style he has developed. On the other hand, his vocals are definitely an aquired taste, because of the high pitch of his yelling. The packaging is glossy

and professional in appearance, although it docsn l include anything besides show photos, a thanks list, and lyrics (which have a Snapcase-esque imprecision). My advice to Brother's Keeper at this point in their career, when they really have their musical style down and their quality control in place, would be this: be sure lo articulate your message clearly and challenge your listeners, rather than just rocking out. Make sure that the newer kids know that hardcore is about more than just dancing and dressing well, -b *Trustkill, address below .*

Bulldoze- Remember Who's Strong 7"

This is another Hardway release that we've recievcd for review, that has been out for a long time. I believe this first was released two years ago. and already it's showing signs of age. Nice packaging, glossy lyric sheet, etc. Music-wise, this is slow NYHC like Outburst or Icemen. There's a few more hooks on this than on their demo, but lyrically...In light of the singer's current imprisonment, its obvious that Bulldoze had no problem living up to the violent as fuck lyrics on this record. Out of four songs they say "DMS" in three, and there's several parts where Kev-One will say shit like "You gotta step up ta keep yo' rep up. Punk!" or "Da Beats. Kid!" that I could live without. I like that most of the songs are about violence and beating the fuck out of people, but as Kev could tell you from his prison cell, violence is not without consequences.

This is worth having even if you don't like this type of NYHC, because it's a genuine document of true violent he that keeps its word. And how many bands do that?

Hardway Records. 8. Rue Bertin Poiree. 75001 Paris- France

BUREAU OF THE GLORIOUS CD: Often acoustic, not very energetic (emo?) music, with the usual bass/drums/guilar thing going on. 'Ilie vocalist sings in a high, gentle voice; she doesn't really sound so much soothing, though, as she sounds like a rock and roll singer on the radio doing that post-blues kind of singing. The songwriting is a little too abstract and wandering to make for marketable radio music, however... although it really doesn't make me any more excited than the radio docs. Al the end of the record they break out for a few seconds with a little more intensity, bui after twelve of ihe same song, it's just too laic. 1 kept wailing for them to at least give me a moment of heartbreaking fragile beauty, but they just plodded along at that damn slow, emotionally monotone pace. At least the packaging is fancy and original; it unfolds in ususual ways to reveal the CD. and looks very slick and 50's style. If anything 1 said about this sounded good lo you. go steal the first Cowboy Junkies record — it's like this, only it's good.-b

Sunney Sindicur. address below

BY THE GRACE OF GOD "For the Love of Indie Rock" CD

I think it's fair to mention that the guy from Enkindel sounds like e fucking rich kid preppies from my old high school when he introduces this record, and in so doing really annoys the shit out of me. Bui of course that 's got nothing to do wilh ihe music. This band is a sort of new incarnation of Endpoint, I guess. This is faster hardcore stuff, sort of old-fashioned but you can definitely tell it was made in 1996 by some kids in Louisville, whether by the extra dose of melody that shows up or by Rob's high yelling vocals. The beginning of the fourth song sounds like old Face Value, and every once in a while I actually find myself reminded of the 'Life Cycle' (Even Score) song on the first 'Only the Strong'. Other times it's definitely melodic punk, with singing and everything. As far as the songs go. they're well played, but (as often seems the case with project bands or recently formed bands of experienced musicians) I feel like if more time had been taken in writing them they would have come out a bit more original, a bit more memorable, a bit more earth-shaking. This is an

[Image not archived]

energetic, decent record, but maybe if they take the band seriously and keep at it they will turn out some really good music... -b *Victory*

Cast Iron Hike 7"

Terrible alternative rock/groovcmctal, with glam rock vocals. I know it might seem like I'm going out of my way to tear up these bands, but Tm not. 1 think Brian went outta his way to send all the garbage to me. 1 just call it like 1 hear 'cm. Tm reminded of Only Living Witness, but this is even more annoying than them. 454 Big Block also comes to mind music-wise. There are some hard moments, some good hooks, but I've gotta sort through so much horseshit to find 'em!

Actually the vocals arc the worst aspect of this 7", musically its not all bad.

93 Fann Edge Lane. Tinsdale. NJ. 07724 Crosscheck- Persist 7"

Sec Shankbuzz's review. Oh. alright, I'll review this. Average mid-tempo newer styled hardcore that just doesn't have the heart to push things over the edge. Their lyrics arc more positive than Shank Buzz, and they try to utilize some harmonic leads in the 2nd song. The packaging is just kinda lackluster. The lyrics to "Hope" arc good in a positive way. and for that I will hold back from drilling the lieII outta this. "Small time small town, you pul me down. We are all the same. One life, one goal. My town, your town, we'll all stand tall." Il's a nice thought anyway. Crosscheck shows poien-lial.

Ignition Records. P.O. Eox 220. Vercennes. VT 05491

DESPAIR "One Thousand Cries" CD I was sort of expecting the sound quality on this CD to be belter. Il's a liule rough, noi really clear or balanced enough to work with the music. I think. The drums tend to overload the mix a little, just like on the Faultlinc and Turmoil CD's. Here we have very modern hardcore (you could almost say that Despair is the textbook modern hardcore band), with alternating guitarchunk mid-paccd dance parts and faster, slightly older-fashioned speedy parts. Here and there the lead guitar fancies the music up with a little metal. The vocals arc that throaty screaming that defines modern hardcore. The insen has §how photos of Despair recking out, and the lyrics and ihanks list... very similar to the Broiher's Keeper insert, in fact. The lyrics aren't too abstract, and address personal Mruggles/suffcrings. betrayal by friends (they don't say 'slabbed in the back', bul ihey do say 'I believed in you... lumcoal... now I'll never be ihe same'), and. belter than the other songs, religious leaders who brainwash people and lead them astray. Al the end of the CD is a decently recorded live set. which is similar to the studio material, although the vocals are a little loud, -b *Trust kill, address below*

Digression- Controlled 7"

Straight edge hardcore band from Erie. They sound like exactly who you'd expect them to sound like, Strife and Earth Crisis. The cover has a huge demon intimidating a small (presumably straight edge) child in a dark forest. Songs about betrayal and resisting social pressures. Sull, they seem to play the newer style of hardcore with passion and some amount of heart.

Sa Mob Productions, PO. Pox I93L Erie. PA. 16507–0931

DISCIPLE "Lantern" CD:

Modern, "evil" sounding hardcore metal. Il has a pretty fast midtempo speed, with lots of chunky danceable parts, metal shrieks and riffs on the guitars, black metal growling/hissing vocals, and a generally dark atmosphere lo the whole thing. The mix isn't perfect but is good enough to work with the music

well (if you don't mind hearing a little more bass drum than usual). There arc a number of other bands in this general genre ihese days, and this band doesn't quite have the memorable songwriting skills to sei themselves apart yet. but they do what they do well. There's a song with a monotone speaking part that slicks out as not really

working in the context of the other music here. The lyric sheet is copied so badly that you can barely read it. bul I can make out some lyrics praising Jesus Christ, and one vehemently anti-choice song regarding abortion. Now that, I think, is some truly "evil" sluff: believing not for rational reasons, but because of faith in church doctrine alone, that (here is *no difference* between an organism composed of a few cells that can only function as a part of a woman's body, and a learning, breathing. thinking human being. Not to say that the band explicitly pronounces themselves lo be anli-choice on the basis of church doctrine. because they don't... bul the combination of anli-choice rhetoric and obvious Christian beliefs sure makes me ihink about that, -b

Disciple. P.O. Eox 7042. Erie. PA 16510 District 5- Leap Year cd

I didn't like the cover of this cd, but I got a surprise when the cd got going with a powerful. well- produced groove. Il went downhill from there, as the jackass singer just kept rapping and sounding fake as fuck. Halfway through the 2nd song I was ready to brake this cd loo. I don't know who told these idiots that Rage Of The Corporate Whores was the band lo be like. This cd's good points are ruined by the vocal style and corny songwriting. There's definitely potential, and the recording quality is good, but ihe repetitive song structures and horrible vocals kill (his cd. because he anunciates everything he says and repeals everything like he's a fuckin' coffee shop poet or something. And then in every song the guitar drops away and ihe bass and drums arc left, and the fetching singer says some 'deep' heal poel crap. Fuck this shii. And if that isn't gay enough, they thank Suck Mojo, the weakest band in Atlanta. Oh. and I was right about the coffee house vibe these fruits have. They also thank Strongsville Arabica' HA'?! *Uprise Rees. p.o. box 360141. Strongsville. OH. 44136*

DOUGHNUTS "Feel Me Bleed" CD Because Victory signed them so early. Doughnuts was given a tough job — to grow up musically in front of the whole hardcore world. That sounds like a recipe for disaster, bul on this record they actually rise admirably to the challenge, believe it or not. Their best attribute and saving grace is their singer, whose voice is always filled with drama and emotion. Her singing, deeply melodic bul with an edge of real pride and challenge, makes interesting the songs on here that might otherwise be forgettable. The rest of the band has a liule ways to go yet... sometimes they arc on lop of their job. bul I feel like (hey could do better in terms of actual musical structuring. The song structures. while a little long, work fine, bul the actual riffs and parts sound like they could be taken a bit further: for instance, the guitars often sound like they're going to dive into a full-on Unbroken metal/hardcorc explosion, bul always pull back into weaker, more discordant territory, as if they're not sure of themselves. 1 think that kind of Unbroken sound would suit this band perfectly, if they would go all (he way and do it. (And. the beginning of the 5th song sounds suspiciously like the beginning of the Earth Crisis LP.) Also, the

guitar production makes them always sound a little out of tunc. One the other hand, (here arc some good moments on this CD where everything comes together, like the fourth song ("The Demon and the Desert." a new version of (heir compilation (rack) which is perfect from beginning lo end (a real classic), and various parts of other

songs on (he record. Really it might have been better for Doughnuts and everyone if *this* had been the record (hat got them signed to a big label, so that their next record (which judging from this should be excellent) would make them widely known as one of today's best bands. Becoming well known too early usually can only hurt a band. Before I forget — the packaging is great, a very original booklet of paintings by the singer, -b

Victory

The Eat "Scattered Wahoo Action" 10"

Nice, nice packaging and vinyl quality, though no lyric sheet. I want to like this, because the Eat are one of those fabled punk record collector bands (this is some unreleased sluff they did in 81–82). and because my friend Edwin released it. Also, Mike Cheese says Mike Rhodes (both of Gehenna) likes the Eat. and Rhodes is always telling me that the bands I like (Amebix) are rock but he listens to 'real punk' music — so I expected this to be 'real punk'. Well, it sounds like bad '70's rock to me. like Jethro Tull or something: fast simple rock music, over- dramatic melodic vocals with really fucking pointless lyrics (if this is ironic, their delivery is really deadpan), pop-punk guitar leads, silly choruses, even a saxophone in one song. So. unforlunatcly, I can't recommend this record — if you still want to get something Edwin released, track down the Seein' Red 7". -b

Wicked Witch. P.O. Box 3835. 1001 AP

A ms terdam, Netherlands

Enkindel- Some Assembly Required cd

I don't know how Initial could go from putting out decent hardcore like This World Rejected to this fuckin' garbage. I don't know what to compare this to musically so I'll comment on the packaging first. Very professional full color layout with lots of toys from my childhood like viewmasters and various Fisher-Price sluff. There's even a speak and spell on the back cover with all the song titles on the cd. Yep. it's all very clever and cute. The music sounds like a cross between Pearl Jam and Fugazi. with all the anger and aggression of a fucking butterfly! Occasionally there's a decent catchy part, but this just is not my thing. Oddly enough the recording is a bit muddled, you would Ihink if d be crystal clear and professional, the-way the cd looks. This is horrible. Enough...

Initial. PO Box 251145. W. Bloomfield. Ml. 48325

Erase Today- A big yes and a little no 7"

A three piece Oil band (hat reminds me a lot of Cocksparrer (vocal-wise) and The Business-Out In (he Cold era. Very poppy and sing-songy. and I'm just nol into i(. No

band pictures and not much in the way of lyrical substance, with a very trebly mix. Three songs. Next.

JSNTGM. 64 Sedburgh Ave.. Blackpool, Lancanshire. England FY4 4DQ

EYELID "Days Infected" 7"

The first song strikes me as being fairly by-the-numbers modern straightedge kid hardcore: metal-influenced guitar lines (chunky parts, metal melodies), midtempo danceable drumming (with some tom work for flavor), deep thumpy bass, and deep roaring vocals (vague, imprecise lyrics about despair)... difficult to differentiate from any other bands in this genre. With the second song it gets a little better, with more complexity in the guitar lines suggesting a bit of a Mean Season (7" era) influence on the string section. A little squeaky noise al the beginning and a little e climactic octave melody al ihe end serve lo make it more interesting. More of those two songs is what you gel for the rest of the

record, although it ends well with a distorted scream. It's well crafted modern hardcore music, but on their next release they need to distinguish themselves by either playing with a lol of heart or breaking some new musical ground, -b *Ammunition, P.O. Box 4 61. Bellflower. CA 90707*

FAULTLINE "Roots of the Rape Culture" CD

This is definitely what I like to sec in punk rock and hardcore. The music is a little rough, but really impassioned, and the band is well-spoken, obviously concerned about the issues they address, and unafraid to do new things on their record. We hear compellingly eloquent and well-researched spoken word parts about why and how our Western civilization is a "rape culture" and drumcircle improvisations in between the music. The music itself is roughly recorded midpaced modern hardcore, occasionally danceable but focused more on simple texturing and rhythm, with some beautiful/ moving guitar lead melodies here and there. The vocalist alternates between speaking his outrage clearly and screaming the specific and 100% political lyrics. In some songs, like '100% Natural', the lyrics arc as uplifting as those on the new Refused CD. This isn't the only legitimate approach lo making punk/hardcore music, but it certainly is one of them, and it's executed perfectly. My only advice would be that the band continue to smooth out the songwriting, and get a much better, smoother, more balanced recording next time, -b

Earth House. P.O. Box 1332. Redding, CT 06875

59 Times The Pain- More Out Of Today cd

I was amazed at how sincere and powerful (his cd is. 59 have a fuckin' great thing going. So does this Burning Heart label! Professional, full-color booklet with lyrics, band photos, etc. and top-notch production values. And musically this totally kicks ass. Raging, positive hardcore that comes off real and non-dcrivalive of American bands. The clean recording helps. 59 plays a lot of fast parts, but they have a good balanced attack overall. Lyrics are mostly about challenging yourself and those around you to strive for more and fucking gel more oul of today!! To me that's what hardcore and life (!) is all about! 1 mean, all bullshit aside, that is IT! And 59 Times The Pain put

their message oul that doesn't mimic the positive bands that came before them. There are some heavier songs on this cd also, like 'One After Another' thal are maybe in the vein of Judge, but still aren't derivative. This cd just has well-written, catchy hardcore that actually makes me feel better when I listen to it.

Burning Heart Records, Box 138 737 21 FagerMa. Sweden

THE GET UP KIDS 7"

Both sides start oul real quiet and acoustic, gentle and pretty, than leap into fast rock and roll pop punk sluff in a major key. There seems lo be some youthful enthusiasm here in the slightly nasal singing and upbeat riffs. In both songs they do an interesting thing where (hey quid it down a bit, keep singing in the foreground, and have offbeat shouiing in the far background. These kids seem like they're having fun and not trying to pose or become extremely popular. It's nol quite silly enough lobe catchy, which is probably good. OK, I admit thal since this is poppy, happy sluff I'll never listen lo again, but if you like thal stuff you probably would, -b

Huey Proud hone, 4308 Oak Apt. S, Kansas City, MO 64111

HARVEST "Incision" 7"

The first song is slow and sort of monotone, but it actually works out lo be

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hypnotic rather than dull. The snare drum has a really nice ringing sound, and the mix is good... and though there are flat moments, the cumulative effect of the grooving guitar chunk riffs (occasionally touched with slightly more melodic parts) is. as I said, almost hypnotic. The second song has a more e chord chunk thing going on. and when you add the singer s deep vocals that arc very reminiscent of Earth Crisis' vocals in their rhythm, sounds less original than the first song. It still has a dark atmosphere, and a deep, deep thick production going on. and these qualities certainly make the second song more interesting than most other modern hardcore songs. Overall, listening to this 7" makes me feel like I'm deep underwater, sinking slowly through ocean depths. The packaging is originally laid out and generally classy. Not a bad release... my advice is that Harvest add some variety to their music, and dare to go further in the direction that they arc aimed towards, and they may become an excellent band, -b *Trustkill. 23 Farm Edge Lane. Tin ton Falls.*

NJ 07724

Indecision- Believe 7"

Vegan straight edge from Brooklyn, of all places. I'm not getting a sclf-congralulal-ing feel from this record, which is a big relief. Then again, I doubt that people in the city would put up with some of the ridiculous whining that goes on upstate, in the name of veganism. None of the lyrics directly deal with straight edge/veganism. The music is choppy, heavy moshcorc with few fast parts. The recording is a little thin w hich hinders the real mosh pleasure. No big surprises here. From what 1 understand, this is a younger band, and based on w hat I heard they could develop into something ass-kicking in the future.

PO Box 1520 Cooper St. NY. NY 102761520

INTENSE NOISE CORE ROT "19881991" CD

The name of the band pretty much says it all — hyperspeed ugly as shit punk, the mix dirty and ugly, the guitars and drums so ugly and messy that they arc indistinguishable, the yelling, raw. nasal vocals ugly as fuck, the whole thing ugly. ugly. ugly. Perhaps Extreme Noise terror would be a good comparison for the music, only this is more messy, ugly, and incoherent; the vocals are the sort of disgusting punk gibberish that you might expect. As music it's unlistenable, but as an emetic to clear out your system after listening to Pennywise or Shelter it's perfect. The cover depicts violent sexual bondage scenes... -b

Discommon ication, 734 Kobe to. Annaka Gunma. 379–01 Japan KICKBACK "Cornered" CD

Here we have some convincing tough NYC-stylc hardcore from France. As with most music in this style, nothing really brand new is accomplished here musically, but they do what they do well, and if you like this kind of music this makes for good listening. Their singer's chokcd-up voice sounds genuinely angry as he yells in that style passed down from bands like Warzone and John- Joseph era Cro-Mags to singers like Rick Healey today. The music is well- polished stylistically, with no real weak points, and a flattering clean recording. You can definitely hear later Agnostic Front in the chunky guitar parts, song arrangements, frequent danceable breaks, rare metal guitar squeals, and occasional backing vocals. In that respect as well as the vocals, they have a lol in common with 25 ta Life. Not to say that they have that mythical, unforgettable genius that Agnostic Front had. by any means — but if you like 25 ta Life, you'll probably like this Kickback CD just as much. From the packaging. 1 can tell they have some friends who are skilled graffiti artists, -b *Hostile/labels. II Place des Vosges. 75004 Paris. France*

LASH OUT "What Absence Yields" CD

Lash Out has crafted an album of rare beauty here. Using lots of c-chord chunk,

haunting acoustic parts with a really dramatic medieval atmosphere, unorthodox rhythm structures, and extremely intricate music composition (in fact, they sound a lot like the band Intricate...) they fly the listener out into vast nordic soundscapes and leave him hanging in the clouds. This record isn't so much hard and powerful as it is hauntingly beautiful; it has powerful moments. but the abstract, wandering song structure lends itself much more to hypnosis than it does to violence. The singer has a distinctive strained, slurred yelling voice, and occasionally he sings mclodically... and unlike almost any other band in related genres (Lash Out is really in a genre of thier own. except for Intricate), it actually works better when he sings... although the combination of both is perfect and leaves little to be desired. The record ends with a brief cover song off the first Exploited record... that's one of the best things on here, certainly the most tough-sounding. To sum up: a great record to listen to when the fog rolls in. -b

Stormstrike. Kollmarsreuterstr 12. 79312 Emmendingen. Germany

LASH OUT "Under Every Depth" 7" Heartbreakingly beautiful marble vinyl. The original song on this 7" is from the same session as the songs on their new LP. and is pretty much the same as all of the LP songs in terms of quality, style, etc. They do Breakdown's song "Sick People" on the b side, at about the same pace of the original. with a little more complexity/ melody in the guitars; ihe singer sounds a little uncomfortable here, like his voice won't go quite as far as it needs to. In general. I feel like they're more comfortable in their own musical territory than doing this cover... and as Lash Out is a band that plays in its own original style, that is no surprise. The back cover reads "Under every depth... a lower depth opens." Those of us who have been low know about that... -b *Stormstrike, address above*

Lesser of Two "Man... kind" 7"

This comes in fast, rough, ugly shouting and screaming jarring and jerking punk music. Every once and a while it pulls back to a dirty, rough acoustic part lo add texture before blasting off again. The drums are complicated and chaotic, the guitar is rough and grimy, and the mix is thick and unclear enough lo complement what they're doing perfectly. Sometimes they hil a really soulful groove, loo. This is genuinely unmarketable, revolutionary music that makes you feel what it's like to live outside of mainstream culture. The lyrics are very intelligent in their criticism of the current economic/polideal/ social climate, except the last song, which is pretty enigmatic (the entire lyrics are: "We re living our lives trapped inside inside of flesh cages".) -b

P.O. Pox 687. Shalimar. FL 32579

LIAR "Falls of Torment" CD

This new Belgian crossover reminds me a lol of Ringworm, but also of older 80's crossover... like D.R.L! Lois of double bass, occasional guitar shrieks, some double-lime grindcore bursts, lots of metal chunky parts, lots of metal double-picking guitar parts, shit, lots of metal in general. The singer sounds a little like James from Ringworm, loo. with his choked up throaty screaming. The recording isgood enough to be flattering, and the speed maintains enough momentum to hold my interest... it's all quite well-executed. All there is to be desired is a little more calchincss and original parts, but I'm sure they'll have that by their next record. The packaging is hilarious, really overdramalic pictures of medieval fantasy warriors in armor fighting off skeletons and wolfskinclad barbarians... they're painted beautifully, al leasi — and someone actually outdid the ridiculous Congress LP cover, which is a sort of achievement 1 guess. A lot of Ihe lyrics seem to attack Chrisilanily... "slapped me in the face.

[Image not archived]

(hen asked for my other cheek..." It is a legitimate assertion that Christianity has been used to deliberately weaken people in order to take advantage of them: remember, (he men and women who were brought over from Africa to be enslaved by Christians in the Americas were converted to a white man's Christianity that commanded that

they accept the lot (hey were given and turn the other check rather than fight for their freedom. Fuck that!

-b

Good Life Records

Lockweld "Corner Radius Theory " 7" Side one is a woman speaking, bul she's incomprehensible because of industrial rumblings in the background .The b-side is more industrial noise; the production makes everything sound overloaded. This definitely is less interesting to me than the other noise projects on this label, -b *Holy Terror, P.O. Box 770213. iMkewood.*

OH 44107

Malefaction- Smothered cd

Interesting and unusual metalcore from this Canadian political hardcore band. I like this quite a bit. Malefaction throw some weird twists into their mix of powerful. Prong inspired. sometimes moshy, sometimes blasting. pounding, crazy shit. The packaging is sparse, but they do include lyrics. Malefaction uses what sounds like a drum machine in places, and they use interesting keys at limes and riffs I found refreshingly different. They're from Canada bul they sound like NYHC at limes, especially ihe vocals. Sometimes Malefaction uses luneful singing to get ihc point across, and that works alright. Plenty of grinding fast parts, that come off well also. Eleven songs, with not much filler. 'Perpetuate The Myth' pounds, reminding me of East Coast bands like Hatebreed with some wacky keyboard sounding shit thrown in. I'm impressed.

Out Of Enslavement, 484 River Rd. St. Andrews MB. RIA 3C2 Canada Maximum Penalty- East Side Story 7" I was surprised to learn that this band was still around, more surprising is that this record actually isn't bad!

Some people have a hard time dealing with Jimmy's voice, to me he sounds like Hr most of the time. This is actual NYCHC with more fast parts than you'd expect, considering most of Maximum Penalty's peers are playing soulless, gutless alternativc/ pop-punk al this point in (heir shallow hardcore lives. Il has that Don Fury recording sound to ihe guitars and drums, even (hough he had no part in (his record. Interestingly enough. Bill Wilson and Mike Rep the cop do back-up vocals on this. I think they also do a Lament song onhere (i'll Save You), and members of MP wcrc/arc in Lament . There's baby pictures on the inside cover, just like the Breakdown 7". Most of this record is fast, melodic hardcore wilh mosh parts and some rock thrown in here and there. More rock in tempo, than guitar sound. It's not bad for a band (hat's been out of ihc loop for several years. And one of them is wearing an Ultraviolence shirt. If you don't know who Tony and Ultraviolcncc was. you belter ask somebody.

Maximum Penalty. 356-A 14th St., Brooklyn. NY 11215 Moment Of Truth- Premonition cd

I reviewed this awhile back in my own zine, and I tried io go easy on it. Since then this band has broken up. I ioncslly, this is horrible shit, and a waste of good money that could've been used to put out some vegan straight edge or emo-homo-core or whatever, anything hut this mess. I say this is a mess because it was recorded like shit, and style-

wise they throw screechy, weak vocals in with boring, chugging riffs and equally boring generic beats. There's no hooks, no power, no heart, nothing. Sometimes a fast part will drop in and raise this cd up to mediocrity, bul the feeling I get is thai ihis band should've practiced more before they recorded, and they should've gotten a different singer. Hie packaging sucks also, but Il's nol as dissapointing as ihe lousy music. Like 1 said there's parts that almost work, bul something manages to fuck it up. Also, it says 'all music by M.O.T. from the years 1991 -1995'. I'd like to say that for the record Ihis band didn't start until 1992. Oh. and while I'm on the subject that Diehard demo didn't come out until 1988. not '87 like it says on that Integrity cd. Back to this cd. If they had better vocals and a belter recording, this would've been a decent cd. Decent, but nothing great.

Image, c/o Don Rehak, 8! Bradwood Rd., Buffalo NY 14224

MORNING AGAIN 7"

Tire cover illustration from Gustave Dore's illustrations for Dante's Inferno, and those haven't been quite overused yet. The musicians probably listen to a fair amount of Slayer-type metal, as similarities to Mean Season suggest (metallic, sometimes complex guitar melodies, high and low note riffs, pretty solos, etc.) The drumming is generally midpace, although there are some tempo changes; and the music is nol really as much chunky dance hardcore as you might expect. The recording is good enough for the music. The vocals arc clearly pronounced, not really screaming enough to be screaming but not really speaking enough to be speaking either. Honestly the most memorable part of this record is the first few seconds of shrieking when it begins, after that although it is excellently played I find myself wishing for a little more careless emotional intensity. One song attacks Catholicism and the pope without going into much detail or mentioning the pope's responsibility for horrible suffering and overpopulation in third world nations (the pope claims God won't permit us to use birth control, and many people in these troubled nations follow his edicts somewhat blindly, leading to...). I would have liked to have seen either more depth in their explanation of this song, or a more wholesale attack on Christianity and all religions that ask you to bow before a higher being and consider yourself sinful and unworthy, -b *Intention, 1345 Plato Ct., Vero Beach, FL 32963*

Morning Again- The Cleanest War cdep

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vocals and the midpaced melodic, energetic, sometimes powerful music. There is a brief acoustic break, much faster guitar-strumming sluff than most acoustic breaks are; it's a little unconventional, but I don't think it really works as well as the rest of this. Of course it's always good to throw some variety in your music. I've seen slicker packaging... and I usually don't prefer it to the sort of D.I.Y. packaging here. Overall a good modern hardcore record from a genuine band, -b

Option, 6/2 Deacon St. Apt. I, Scranton, PA 18509

OUTCOME 7"

The members of his midtempo, danceable modern hardcore outfit probably

listen to Starkweather and Slayer. I know, who doesn't? But these guys actu

ally start their record with a little high heavy metal singing. It's not bad; in fact it is the only attribute that really sets this record apart from others in its genre. After the beginning, the vocals alternate between a hardcore yell and a deathmetal growl; the lyrics arc, like many modern hardcore bands, vague... and include phrases like "my soul is bleeding, " "shadows cry out my name, " and "mind scarred wilh retroversion." (Retroversion isn't in my dictionary...) I get a general idea that the lyrics are talking about being unhappy and hurting people. The guitars have a nice deep, ugly production, and there's some double bass drum action here and there. The cover has a picture of a priest kneeling before a man crucified on an upside down cross, but that theme doesn't seem to be further explored on this record, — b *SA Mob. P.O. Box 193/. Erie. PA /6507 — 0931*

OUTLAST "Friendship" CD

Speedy, late 80's hardcore, in the vein of Chain of Strength. Unlike most USA would-be "old school" outfits, a couple of their songs are catchy enough to be as good as the real thing. It has the kind of mix of a lot of 80's bands of this style: not too heavy, a little rough, and that works well for ihcm. Their singer's yelling voice isn't very strong, but he sounds like he's into what he's doing. The music has all the best parts from those older-fashioned bands: breaks where the trebly bass brings in the next part, 100 mph verses, fast drum rolls and intro's, shouted catchy choruses, occasional slower moments with some guitar melody, backing vocals, the works. The lyrics arc a little less positive, a little more downcast than you'd expect. If you're looking for this kind of music. I'd recommending bypassing most US bands on the way to this CD. -b

Wounded, Box 193, 6/2 24 Finspang, Sweden

OVERCAST "Begging for Indifference" CD

This record starts out wilh a Slayer impersonation (two guitars playing some twisted, Satanic melody together) so close to the original that the listener who doesn't have enough

Slayer in his collection already will be thrilled — however, this doesn't really qualify Overcast as doing anything new ihat needs to be done. They go back closer to their old style (growling/singing vocals, complicated guitar chunks all over the place, midpaced drums, intricate musical arrangements) after that, although they have improved: their song-structure is no longer wandering and irrational, and they sound a little more polished. The transitions are (as former members of Starkweather have pointed out) sort of shaky, with the band pausing to let the guitars bring in the next part... and the feedback parts (which were by far the best parts of the last record) are gone. Still, as carefully con

structcd, complex metal, this makes for good entertaining (if low-protein) listening. The packaging is pretty, once again a little low-content, and the lyrics are 'scary, evil' sluff that doens'l make loo much sense or carry loo much emotional weight. For instance:

"a toxificd embrace holds me up as my suicide increases..." 'Toxified' is not a real word, and saying that your 'suicide increases' is confusing — since suicide is, I thought, all or nothing, -b *Edison, P.O. Box 42586, Philadelphia, PA 19/0/-2586 PAINSTAKE "Consecrate" CD*

The vocals are very similar to the Bloodier vocals, only sometimes they are a bit more impassioned and interesting than Scott's are on the new Bloodlet

between being boring, slow-to-midpaced modern straightedge meial and being melodically beautiful enough to qualify as haunting, frightening original stuff... and because of a superb performance by their lead guitarist, who knows just how much lead guitar flourish lo add, it comes down on the latter side. Not thal there aren't moments when I wished they would just hurry past the slow, plodding generic metal part, or the already overdone acoustic part, but they reached a compelling level of emotional force often enough to keep me interested. The facl thal ihey are walking thal line, however, suggests thal this might have been a little better (more compressed energy and quality) as a 10" release ralher than a full-length (45 minutes of music by almost any band, even a more experienced one, is a fucking lot. and it gets hard to sit through/pay attention to after a while). Anyway, on to the details: the singer does this whispering/deep growling thing that isn't as good as his screaming voice except in the last song, the drummer throws in a lot of double bass and some tom-work for decoration, and in general there's a lot more low-end on this record than there is high-end. The song structure could be tighter, it wanders a little. The lyrics are quite well-balanced and involved; though they are often a little too abstract for my taste, they certainly are less superficial than almost any other band in this particular genre ('vegan/vegetarian-issue straightedge mosh-metal'). The writers are not afraid to express personal doubt, struggle, and suffering in their discussion of the greater problems of the world around them, and this really adds a quality of convincing empathy to the lyrics at the same time as it saves them from seeming didactic — so, great work there. One more detail: their label is run by the former singer of Vegan Reich, if that makes any of you uncomfortable. I know ihat 1 feel uncomfortable when anyone refers to the idea of world domination by a particular ideology as being desirable... the last famous champion of thal idea was Adolf Hitler. After his 'third reigh' slaughtered millions of people,

do we really need to try a 'fourth reich*. vegan or not? -b

Uprising, P.O. Box 490, Laguna Beach CA 92652

POPE SMASHERS "This is a Test" 7"

Damn, all these emo-type records have these drawn-out moany over-dramatic vocals. Ai least the music on this one is more interesting, sort of abstract with random guitar noises and plenty of chaos in the background. When this band gets going, though, they sort of lose those virtues, and do a faster, more straightforward. noisy, nasally thing that is sort of jarring without really being moving or exciting. They're al their best when they pare it down and give us the slower.

[Image not archived]

more spare parts with whispers and tension in the air. '['here is definitely an eclectic mix of musical approaches on this disc (there's even an interesting moment when it sounds like they're going into a reggae dub), although like I said it all sort of blurs and gels lost when they speed up and get excited. The record ends with a more improvisational mess part, which is certainly listenable... mostly because those whiny vocals are gone! The packaging is messy but extensive enough, and the lyrics aren't so lost in bad. meaningless poetry as to be pointless (sometimes they're great: "I'm allergic to the cops just like you. I break out in handcuffs just like you") — but those vocals fucking drive me crazy. Ugh. -b

Sunney Sindicut, address above

Psywarfare "Process of Elimination" 7"

Incredible packaging, plenty of nice stuff in here including religious propaganda (from the 'Holy Terror church of final judgment') and mint green vinyl (beautiful'). Side one is a noise sampler, a series of locking grooves; most of them arc electronic noise, one of them sounds a little like rave music, and one of them is a guy screaming through distortion. The second side is a symphony of the kind of 'distorted noise wash' that Dwid has been perfecting in his latest Psywarfare outings. There's definitely some interesting stuff on this record, probably much more interesting than the other psywarfare releases... some of the Japanese noise stuff I've heard still beats this, but this shows improvement. The undertaking itself is original and praiseworthy for that, -b

Holy Terror, address above

Rebel Truth- Everybody Hates Everybody, Nobody Loves Anybody cd

I never got to hear this band when they were around and judging by this cd. I wouldn't have been into them anyway. I like some old punk, and I've liked some old punk rock when I was younger, but this band doesn't really do it for me. Slightly melodic punk with sung vocals. An almost acoustic guitar sound, with very political lyrics. The lyrics are naive in today's context, what can I say. When I was 15 I was naive too, you know? Lots of pictures, flyers and lyrics round out this cd. If you like melodic political punk and you wanna front like you were there from (he beginning, then pick this up. As for myself. I'll-stick to U.S. Chaos.

Grand Theft Audio. 501 W. Glenoaks Boulevard. Suite #313. Glendale. CA. 91202
Red Scare- As Promised cd This cd is interesting to me for a couple reasons. First of all they have a female singer, secondly, she died awhile back. Red Scare reminds me of female-fronted bands like the Avengers or the Go- Gos. (Bianca thought they sounded like Pat Benetar) but with a gothic feel also. It's not what I'm into, bur Red Scare is/was still good for this style of gothic punk. Intelligent, political/dark lyrics and lots of funny pictures of the deceased singer in 80's punk rock clothes.

GTA. 50/ W *Glenoaks Blvd.. Suite 313. Glendale. CA. 91202*

Republic of Freedom Fighters 12"

I'm sorry, this did very little for me. although people with more 'emo' tastes might like it. lots of acouslicy parts, jangly almost acoustic guitar, stuff that sounds sort of

like less commercial alternative rock to me in places. The vocals stand out as being uncertain and unsure, and the singer's voice breaks frequently. Also, I'm not sure if there is enough variety here for a full-length. There arc the predictable quiet parts with speaking, etc. but not done well

Mountain. P.O. Box 1172. Huntington. NY I/ 7-13- 0656

RF7- All You Can Eat cd

This cd has nothing to do with the joke band of the same namesake (AYCE). and if anything (his band sounds like an English Oi! band to me. even (hough they're from California, and unlike many of (he bands on this label, (hey still exist. T hey remind me of The Gonads or maybe a tamer Blitz. Pretty fast in most places, with the low-fi punk production common to the early 80's. Less melodic than most bands from their area, and I'm glad for that. I fuckin' hale melody. They've got a sense of humor, with songs like 'Len Bias Disease' and 'Revolutionary' Worker'. Hmm. actually the lyrics to (hose songs aren't so funny. Ok. 'Vampire Lady' is pret(y funny. For as long as they've been around. RF7 kick ass on their peers. There's some songs on here from as late as '87. and they still have balls and aggression. Fuck, Youth Brigade. Circle Jerks, Wasted Youth. TSOL. etc. all went commercial/checsy rock-metal by then. So do a little research on your punk rock roots and check this out. because there's more out there than the metallic hardcore of today.

GTA. 501 West Oaks Blvd., State 313. Glendale. CA. 91202

Rejuvenate- To The Extreme cd Rejuvenate's 7" was a breath of fresh air with its blasting old style assault. Now its four years and two cd's later. So let's sec what we have. This 13 song cd has six studio songs and seven live tracks that were recorded al Jimmy Gestapo's birthday party @ Coney Island High. Two covers. Bad Brains and AF. that have been done by many other bands, but arc done justice by these wackos. The four new songs are slower and cleaner than their older stuff, and 1 wish they stuck to the fast, energetic older style of hardcore. But the vocals arc slill awesome. Tommy's got one of the best voices for hardcore in all of NYC. Imagine roaring, barking vocals crossed wilh Jabberjaw, ihe cartoon shark. Instead of the CFA/Trip 6 sound their 7" had. there's more of a Killing Time/slow Sheer Terror sound on this, and the fast parts have that GBH pace to 'em. It's not bad. just not as good as the awesome 7" and comp, track on Squat Or Rot #3. The live tracks contain most of their old songs and apart from the sketchy recoding, they kick ass. So even though I like their older shit better. I would slill recommend this cd. fuck Lost And Found. Free

Spirit is Tommy Rat's label, previous releases include the Trip 6 7" (which Tommy also sang for) and (he Rejuvenate 7".

Free Spirit, p.o. box 1252. Madison Sq. Sra., NY. NY. 10/59-1252

SCOUT "Economics" 7"

Not *hardcore, * but interesting music none the less: Seoul's songs unfold sort of like extended improvisations by talented but unpolished musicians, the loose song structure allowing them to wander through a variety of noisy, abstract soundscapes. Don't get me wrong, they actually have a lol of energy, but (heir music has a sort of spaced out

quality that makes il impossible to pul your finger down on what is taking place. This works well for them, giving them the freedom lo occasionally come across moments of fragile beauty in ihcir angsty, uncomfortable, restless explorations' The lyrics and even lyrical explanations are wandering and unfocused, which 1 guess fils wilh the music. Scout apparently has the courage to act unaware of present trends and expccla-

[Image not archived]

bother...

SEVIN 7"

One of the biggest problems encountered by bands that form in the name of some narrow ideological purpose is that, because they have a specific job that must be accomplished other than that of making good artwork/music, they often do not have the freedom they need to become good artists. They cannot take lyrical risks because the subject matter they must cover is already laid out before them, and they cannot take big musical risks cither, because their responsibility as a band is to make music that people will get excited about so that people will hear the message (and people usually are just scared off by risktaking. unusually original music). And yet you cannot break new ground and become a great artist/musician unless you take risks in your lyrics and music. Thal's why so many Krishna-consdousness bands, so many hardline bands, so many Christian bands, so many communist bands, etc. just plain suck from an artistic perspective. For this reason. I'm truly thrilled to see a vocally vegan/earth liberation band like Sevin dare to make a record with songs about subjects besides their war on the unbelievers. The lyrics here deal with the deceptive religious assertion that God is merciful and forgiving when the world around us demonstrates this to be false, and similar subjects — they're a little vague in their poetic approach, but all the same it 's a breakthrough for a band in this genre to have the courage to address a variety of subjects. May others follow. The music is less original, basic midpaced modern mci al I ic hardcore with chunky parts and screaming vocals; listening to a lol of Earth Crisis is obviously responsible for their style The mix is OK. Just imagine a less skilled, less polished, less complex Earth Crisis and that's what they sound like (the vocals are a little less forced, but that's not hard...) h • *Militant. P.O. Hot 271. Bloomfield. IN 4742–1*

Shank Buzz- Mr. Public 7"

Average mid tempo East Coast sounding hardcore from Mei's hometown of Philly. Chunky, uneven drumming with barked vocals and heavy but not blatantly metal guitar sound. Lyrics about frustration and anger. It just sounds very average to me. I here's some surprises here and there, but not many. "Mr Public" is about idiots who crave attention and always have to be the funny guy.

PO. Box 1520. Cooper Station. NY.NY 10276–1520

Stampin' Ground- Starved 7"

Surprisingly Good English hardcore band that blazes with unusual riffs and

Splinter- Scathed 7"

Matt liked this more than I did. Glossy, full color cover with brick-colored vinyl, ii sounds too slow and repetitive for my tastes. Splinter is definitely covering new territory though. This honestly doesn't bring any other bands io mind, except maybe Starkweather, and that doesn't mean shit, because most of the time STARKWEATHER doesn't even sound like Starkweather! Musically, its slow technical metal with unusual riffs and structure. The 7" comes with a useful history of Splinter, who apparently are still together. Who knows, this record may grow on me. *Stormstrike. Kollmarsrueterstr. 12. 79312 Emmendingen. Germany*

Sub-Zero- Happiness Without Peace cd

I like Sub-Zero a lol, and I'm glad to see they finally have a full-length out after seven years of existence. Many of their old songs from Iheir demos and 7" appear herein, with a better production. I was told this cd was recorded awhile ago, but it doesn't say when in the liner notes. Sometimes the vocals sound almost exactly like John Joseph, and other times the Lou sings in a weird, kinda glammy voice that I don't like. The lyrics range from support of Gulf War Veterans, to 'the pit' (when was the last time you heard a song about THAT?'?), to sell-outs, and all kindsa shit. Some of the newer songs have way too much melody and rock-ish tendencies, and while it's good to see Subzero trying new things, they don't work so well. Subzero's good points arc the vocals (at times) and catchy, hard songwriting with decent drumming. The older, good songs are mid-tempo, double bass metallic NYHC that sounds pretty original, at least when the songs first came out. And the album title is pretty cool. To be honest Subzero tries all kinds of different styles and sounds on this cd. more than I can analyze right now. I don't know, give it a shot.

TOH. p.o. box 1520, Cooper Station. NY. NY. 102 76–1520

Terveet Kadet- Hardcore Brutality cd Boy, this is a tough one to review. Finnish punk rock discography with lyrics mostly in Finnish. 53 songs of wacky Discharge meets the Ramones styled raw beyond belief early 80's punk. When I say raw... this shit is virtually unlislenablc. Terveet inspired bands like H-100's, Dropdead, hell even C.O.C. have listed these guys as inspirations. If you enjoy melodic, emotional punk like Dag Nasty. h2o. etc. then stay the fuck away from this cd. This shit is just nuts' Il's not as fasi as grindcore. Terveel has more of a old Dead Kennedy's pace. The packaging comes with tons of information, which I'm beginning to realize is standard for this label. Sure, these guys pul out a record or two on the infamously naughty label Rock O Rama, but they have abso-

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known for.

GTA. 50! West Glenoaks Blvd.. Suite 313. Glendale. CA. 91202 Thenceforward-Winner 7"

Above average mid-paced Southern hardcore from Atlanta, that has impressive bursts of speed and occasional melodic leads and breaks. They come across unpretentious, with a rare (for hardcore) sense of humor. They list their influences, which include No For An Answer, Disrupt. Asbestos Death, and Cowboy Killers. They also list their names as Meir Mcgill, Justin Caballero, Clay Hawk. etc. If I remember correctly. Thenceforward has former members of Quadiliacha. The vocals and lyrics fit their sound well. Its too bad that bands like this often gel passed by in the rush towards vegan straight edge, emo. and all-yo'd-outcore.

Phyte, P.O. Box 14228. Santa Barbara, Ca. 92107

TURMOIL "From Bleeding Hands" CD

There's alot of fucking Deadguy in here, plenty of crazy bursts of speed and noise with lorn (distorted, in this case) screaming over them. The mix on the Deadguy CD worked a little better, though, because here the bass drum overpowers the other instruments in some places. I'd say the second song was an actual Dcadguy cover if I didn't know better. Elsewhere their music has a little more variety. maybe even a pinch of Overcast here and there, some harmonics, some sudden pauses, some (still Deadguy-csque) groove parts. The mix is definitely grainy, thick, ugly, even a little distorted, which (besides the bass drum problem I mentioned) is courageous on their part and certainly distances them from the hordes of generic new- school hardcore bands. The risk here, ihough. is that they are too similar to the other noisy new-slyle hardcore bands in the Dcadguy/Jesuit genre. Their songwriting is polished, and tight enough, and their playing is for the most part flawless. They just need to use their ability to set out in a direction not already explored by other bands. The lyrics of the title track describe the plight of a man who has constructed his conceplion of himself around his economic function, only to lose his career. They are convincing — not *too* abstract, either — and pretty much representative of all the lyrics on here, although better than many of the other songs. The artwork in the packaging is. of course, breathtaking; they are on a

big consumer-culture label, ihough. If you don't want to buy from Century Media, you can get two of these songs on a 7" from "Treadwater" records, P.O. Box 654. Buffalo. NY 14207–0654. -b

VOORHEES "Smiling At Death CD

As I listened to this. I was pinching myself, convinced it was Negative Approach. They even do NA covers. Pure raw. ugly, no polish, jagged edges that could fuck you up, don'l-give-a-/wd: hardcore, not old-fashioned like Gorilla Biscuits (or any other "one day I'll make a million bucks off this" band) but old-fashioned like those older bands that were so gritty and obviously fucking pissed that there was no question as to whether or not they were real. This is the kind of music you gel when you give instruments to a bunch of doublc-y- chromosome criminally insane motherfuckers who don't give a shit if they sound fashionable or macho or in style, who just want to

destroy everything in their path. And musically, they do. With plenty of changes and transitions, they sometimes reach speeds of over 120 miles an hour, and never stop assaulting the listener's cars for a second. Their singer is the best part: not only docs he have that requisite deep grainy yelling voice, but his lyrics are *hilarious:* "What's all the fuss? The more junkies who die the belter it is for us! Heroin is fun'" "I don't like him. he doesn't like me — what better reason to Tight can there be?" etc. etc. — suffice to say there's a lot about haling everybody and fighling people and instilulions. and it sounds real as shit. Everything Voorhees has released so far (70 minutes of music) is on here, with typical excellent packaging by Grand Theft, -b

Warzone- Lower East Side cdep

This is a re-recorded version of Warzone's first record... I don 't see why it was really necessary. Other bands have done the same thing (Youth Of Today and Suicidal come to mind) and lemmc tell ya. it's never the same. You can't recreate that spontaneous hardcore energy. The recording quality is belter this lime around, especially the guitar sound. There's plenty (too many) samples now. The music is still good, solid, catchy NYHC with singalong choruses and lots of fast parts, and positive lyrics. I thought it was hinny that Ray quoted Last Resort in the liner notes, and it's also interesting to sec Warzone once again sporting the skinhead image. In (he past three years, they've put out a live cd, a split ep. and this re-recorded shit. Now as a long-time Warzone fan. I wanna see a fuckin' full-length, goddamn it!!! OF NEW SONGS!!! Enough of this horseshit!! WRITE SOME NEW FUCKING SONGS. ALREADY!!' Now that I've got that off my chest, on with the review: Gone are the American flags from the lyric sheet, replaced with a collage of pictures, many from Warzone's lour of ihe Far East. I think 1 spoiled Jimmy Gestapo in there too. I guess I can't blame Warzone for not writing new shit. I'm glad to sec ih.it Ray still gives a fuck about hardcore. God only knows why he still docs. *Victory*

ABNEGATION/CHAPTER split 7"

Abnegation has admirably broken out of the generic, metallic, slow, plodding, generic danceable shit most militant vegan bands are doing these days; instead, (hey play full-on speedy Carcass-style death metal. They do have slower parts, but these parts are still energetic and original, being either unusually timed or well layered with complex musical structures. Other times we get double lime drumming. Slayer metal guitar riffs, double bass attacks, the works. Their singer also sounds less forced than most of the singers in Ihe genre from which Abnegation appeared out of — his high, torn screeching sounds a little unnatural, but not cliched. Occasionally there arc deeper, slurred backing vocals, or spoken parts, that don't complement the music as well. The mix is a little unorthodox, a little heavy on the vocals and snare, with (he guitars (which have an excellent metal crunch sound) and the rest of the drums loo quiet. The lyrics are predictable, faux-poetic descriptions of (he Hames of justice engulfing the evil ones... hey. ^*actually* kill somebody ("as the razor graces your throat.' they threaten), sec how it feels, and then write lyrics like this, OK? Because writing about things you've never experienced is bound to come off a little flat (for

the same reason, I wouldn't write about being a starving child in Somalia... having never experienced it, I could not offer any valuable artwork on the subject). Chapter have their abstract, experimental song structure and music in full effect here, with better results than before. There are a couple great transitions, one from a quiet jazz part to shrieking madness that made me want to go into the street and hit the first person I saw. Their general approach is to go on for a while with midpaced metallic parts; in one case they then pull back into a practically silent part with speaking, throw in a little tom drumming, and suddenly fucking explode. Their singer sounds like a fucking throat cancer patient on the operating table. Their mix is also a little rough, featuring a repeating sample in the second song that is pretty damn loud but still almost incomprehensible. Their lyrics are even more abstract than those of Ancgation. hut they seem a little more poetic, a little less empty threats, and a little more outraged at the western world. To sum up: this 7" is a perfect representation of up-to-the- minute modern hardcore... noisy, metallic, shrieking, and occasionally daring to try new things, -b *+/• records, address above*

Armitron/As Good As Dead split 7"

Armitron is a two piece drums/bass/"vocals" band, that is thankfully broken up. They come across like total fucking idiots, and they sound like shit. Their 'music' has no structure, nothing. Il's just two spoiled brats screaming and

[Image not archived]

beating on the instruments their parents bought them. And what the luck is 'Midget Child' supposed to be about? Actually its about beating and killing a midget, and I don't Tmd that shit funny at all. If you're so politically correct (as (hey preach in (his record's insert) then why the fuck did you write a song like that? As Good As Dead are nameless, faceless, and hookless, grind. No heart, and a shitty recording. I like some of this grindcore crap, but these guys suck. At least Armitron has the excuse of being a two piece. *Uncontainer. PO Pox 80342. Lincoln. NE. 68501–0342*

ATLAS SHRUGGED/NEW DAY RISING split 7"

Atlas Shrugged sounds like they did last time here, only a little more polished? talented musicianship, fairly complex melodies that alternate between harder and more gentle, occasionally almost acoustic parts, a good mix and production, abstract lyrics that have more poetry in them than your average vague hardcore mumbo-jumbo, and those trademark yelling almost nasal vocals (that were annoying before but are a bit easier to swallow here). New Day Rising is a little better here in every respect than they were on their split 7". The quiet, atmospheric parts are more haunting and less weak, the harder parts sound more impassioned and harsher, the production sounds clearer, and the songwriting itself is more interesting, with good transitions and variety. Their singer still does that melodic singing in a fragile voice thing when he's not doing that emo scream, but I guess that's his thing. The lyrics strike me as really conscientious. they've printed two different versions so you can get a clear perspective of what they're trying to accomplish with them. The subject matter has to do with the bullshit of the mass media and the generally bad political situation we're in. If you often bypass the

extremely ugly, abrasive kind of punk for the more pretty, textured stuff, but still want to be listening to bands that care about what they're up to. you'd probably like this record, -b

Moo Cow. PO. Pox 616. Madison, W! 53701

CHALKLINE/FIGUREHEAD split 7" Chalkine has a really thick, powerful guitar sound, which complements their more me- lodieally contoured modern hardcore well. The songs are midtempo. have a fairly energetic if not danceable beat, a couple chunky stop-and-go parts, and occasionally add a little harmonic guitar texture to become actually catchy. The singer has a nice lorn screaming voice, although at one point there are some sung vocals that could have cither been done better or done differently in a style that worked belter. They also use a really silly sample from some comedy movie — it would have been easier to take them seriously if they 'd left it off. Their lyric sheet is nice enough, with photos of band members and song explanations (lyrics about staying true to what you believe, and vegetarianism). Figurehead is one of those poppy, punky sort of bands, with plenty of obnoxious bounce in their music, nasal obnoxious vocals that generally sing but scream incoherently from time to time, an obnoxious raspy guitar sound, and good enough song structure. And they use samples — Announcement: kids of the world, samples are PLAYED OUT! It's been done already, and done belter! Slop doing it! Do something new! I thought you were all nonconformists, doing your own thing... so why do you ALL continue to use samples as if there's a law requiring it? Most of the time they just take away from the music. OK. I'm off my soapbox now: as a last note, the Figurehead's insert is such a silly.

ridiculous mess that it's really difficult for me to believe they care about then; music anything at all. I guess that's obnoxious, though... -b *Shandie, 7950 Mentor Ave. #G8. Mentor OH 44060*

Coleman/Three Studies fora Crucifixion split 12"

Coleman has a very bass-drum-heavy, very trebly mix. and a generally bad recording, which doesn't complement their music much — sure, a little roughness would be perfect here, bul this is loo unbalanced. I like the epileptic fits of speed from the jerking drums and the insane torn screaming which sounds more like sound effects than vocals; I'm a little less crazy about the guitars, which aren't very weighty and sound a little out of tune. Overall there's a real feeling of discord here, except during the abstract emo/ acouslic breaks during which the screamer — you guessed it — speaks. Despite the flaws there's definitely some heart here; and their singer gave one of the few interesting interviews I've ever seen in HearlaltaCk magazine. Three Studies' isimilarly speedy and epileptic, jarring, lots of noise, with vocals that are almost as crazy. The drum mix is belter and the production more listenable. The guitar adds some high, noisy lines for spice. They come off as a smoother, more polished Coleman in regards to songwriting, recording, and execution. Plenty of writing. etc. in the extensive packaging.

Mountain, address above

GAMBH7CAVE IN split 7"

Gambit has those grindcore vocals that alternate between deep deathmctal grunting (which has always sounded a bit forced to me) and throat-ragged screaming (which sounds more impassioned here). There's even a moment when their singer talks, which was a bit unexpected. Their music is also grindcore-influcnced. with bursts of double-time speed and more pounding slower parts, as well as some guitar noise for texture. If the production was clearer it would be more flattering to their music (it would make it more powerful and more interesting). The lyrics are delightfully disinterested. nothing forced or fake there — at one point in the lyric sheet it reads "burned all ihc bridges behind me. burned fucking everything (including one fat ass spliff, the white house, the Vatican, your rat faced granny and your little dog toto too)" and at another point rather than lyrics they prim "(a bunch of generic harcorc lyrics... no revelations here) constant — collapsing — inferior — blah blah blah (whine cry and whine some more)" — al least they're more honest than most bands today. And thir lyrics, where printed, do have some moments of poetry and moving pow er ("all the madmen came and gave us security — they stole it back and laughed out loud, at the way we crawled from grace into insanity — the saints came marching in on lop of you"). Finally, they gel points for giving us four whole songs. Cave In gives us one long song: their vocalist alternates between that lorn screaming we're familiar with, and a sort of speaking/ singing thing. Their guitars occasionally pause lo be acoustic, bul are usually doing a noisy grooving midpaced thing, with an occasional interesting melodic line. The bass is mixed loo loud. I think. They have some good moments in their songwriting, but they also have a couple wrinkles to iron out. I guess. I'd like to end by mentioning that I think entirely D.I.Y., scrappy small scale releases like this are what punk is all about. Keep your glossy, "Fashion Records release #45"

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name. Shit Happens blast out some raging, kick-ass hardcore with a lot of heart bast as luck with great vocals and the raw recording quality necessary lor straight hardcore to sound mint! Deep, tough vocals, that til well with the music. From their lyrics and thanks list I gel the impression they are a Krishna hand. When your music is good, you can be whatever the fuck you want! Pitfall was less memorable, but still pretty fuckin' good for a European band. They're a bn slower than Shit Happens, and it takes them longer to get going, as the vocals don't mesh well with the music at first. But then they settle in to a decent stomping, mid-tempo style with standard changes. Not bad either.

Holy Furx Records. 4. Rue Du Seigle. 50120- Equeurdreville- France

ALL FOR ONE... ONE FOR ALL compilation CD

This is a G.T.A. benefit for Roger Miret of A.F.. who apparently got hurl al a Madball show. I hate to repeal someone else's review, but I think it was Hardware that summed this CD up by describing it as what you would gel if you had a It lend w ho had an incredible collection of rare punk from the last twenty years (especially '79 to *85) and he/she made you a 48-song, one-hour-plus compilation of the 'greatest hits of obscure and ancient punk rock'. Most Inside front readers will not have heard most of

these bands, lei alone songs, before, and it would be a great place to discover some music you've never heard and broaden your horizons. I'll drop some band names: America's Hardcore. Slalag 13. White Cross. Heart Attack. Lost Generation. Proletariat. Anti. Caustic Cause. Trip 6. B.G.K.. Red Scare. China White. Crucifix, ihe Accused. Tcrveel Kadet. Psycho, lots and lots more... Absolutely indispensable arc the detailed notes placing each band and song in context for the listener. -b

Grand I heft Audio, address above

AN AMERICAN TRAGEDY compilation 7"

Benefit 7" with songs by Dead Silence. Three Studies for a Crucifixion. Still I ilc. and Watercolour, for a good cause: an Earth First activist who was crippled by a car bomb (apparently planted by (he FBI. who were there in seconds to arrest *her* for "having a bomb." a charge that was quickly dropped) and is now taking the FBI to court. It comes with alot of reading material about the case and the bands on the record as well. So the cause and delivery are admirable. Dead Silence covers a song by Dissent, and it sounds alright: they sound like one of the weaker fast punk bands from the mid-80's. with excited speaking vocals and weakly distorted guitars. TSI AC (named after one of my favorite painting triptychs) deliver a short, fast noisy screaming song — not powerful or aggressive, but impassioned. Still Life's singer sounds as self-pitying and whiny as ever in the midst of their messy, flaccid melodic emo music, which ends in a long drawn out acoustic session. Watercolour is fast but not distorted. their vocalist sings in a sort of weak voice, -b

Diffusion. P.O. Box 1X81. Bloomington. IN 47402

And The Scene Goes On comp, cd

This is a DC area compilation of grindcorv/death bands. Oddly enough it was mastered al Inner Ear. site of some classic hardcore recordings... Well some of this is pretty good, but I wouldn't say any of ii is classic. Very little packaging came with this cd. no lyrics, band pictures, and the first band. Enemy Soil, doesn't even list their members. They sound like Crossed Out with a drum machine, and loo many samples. At limes ihe vocals remind me ofCarcass. The guilars are tuned low. and there's plenty of distonion on ihe bass. The next band. Biovorc, didn't do much for me. with there attempt al technical ja/z-thrash with laughable vocals. And songs like The Prototype' and Digital Odyssey'. The music isn't that bad. but the shitty vocals ruin their sound. The vocals suck because the singer has no power to his voice and just sounds Hat. Amerced are next and they use keyboards, as some death bands are known to do. Only two songs from them, but they're quite long. Excellent drumming is the first aspect I noticed, standard guitar work, still having good hooks though. Cookie monster vocals that give me a chuckle, and it fils the music well. I he recording isn't as clear as the two bands previous, but the musical skill they display more than makes up for that. Nice leads. Next is Bereaved who sound kinda like Deicide and that's fine with me. Their vocals are more understandable than Amerced, and Bereaved have belter songwriting also. Excellent guitar and drum work, with countless tempo changes and hooks. Bereaved are jusl a whirlwind of burning deathmetal aggression! Even the

solos are good, showing skill without becoming excessive. Lyrics about preying upon mankind, and suffering, etc. Next is Disinterment who take awhile to get going. an<l sound ok 1 guess, they don't quite have the hooks to make this

ity. Last band is Scab, and they must have had some pretty evil parents, to name them 'The Evil One'. 'The Iron One', and 'The Vile One'. This has gotta be a Crucial Youth type joke band, with songs like 'Bloodgasm'. Actually Scab isn't ihat bad. with quirky riffs and double bass all over the place. They sound kinda like old Immolation. I guess.

With Your Teeth Records. 5955 N. 10th St.. Arlington. VA. 22205 A DOCUMENT OF NOTHING compilation CD

Enkindd starts this out with some energetic Southern-rock-linged hardcore, with melodic singing that gets soft in some places. The Harvest song is similar to their work on their Trustkill 7". coming in with a long acoustic part before going into the screaming midpaced modern hardcore sluff. Cycle with their happy silly quiet acoustic music and bad singing were extremely difficult for me to listen to. Sledding is sort of melodic post-punk/rock sluff, with melodic posl-punk/rock vocals too. Two Line Filler has some energetic, fast chunky parts in their music, but then the HORRIBLE whiny singing and poppy guitar parts come in and I want to fucking throw up (don't get me wrong. 1 don't mind the Bouncing Souls, but this is just fucking awful). Despair sounds similar to their Trustkill CD here, although I think the production sounds better, inexplicably. Walleye could be described by the same words I used for Sledding, and is about (he same level of quality (I would say: mediocre). Combination Grey is also similar to that, only their singer is female. As far as this alternative rock sluff goes, it doesn't make me bob my head like I'm listening to the radio (which is probably whai it's good for. if anything... and. if you think that's 'good'), and it sure doesn't inspire me with any strong emotion, so I can't really find any use for it. Autumn also sounds pretty rocked out here; although Endeavor is more new school hardcore than the other bands near them. Rain Still Falls sounds like an "Emocore" band from a few years ago would have, with a lot of melody in the guitars and melodic singing as well. Converge is the real standout on this CD. their maniacal screaming, unusual musical ar- rangements/song structure, and general craziness/innovations will set them apart in a ny company. Surface. Jejune, and Mainspring close the CD with alternations of noisy rockish hardcore with melodic quiet rockish stuff like the earlier songs on this CD. For fans of the alternative rock/'hardcore' style common on (his compilation. I would recommend it as being less difficult listening than the "The World is Yours" CD would be for fans of modern metallic hardcore. Still, you'd have to really like mellow rock and roll music to enjoy a lot of this CD. I think, -b

Second Nature, P.O. Box 11543. Kansas City. MO 64138

Respect Due comp. 7"

Glossy cover with a weird little graffiti scene on the from of a bum wailing for the Hus. Unfortunately, there's very litlle else in the way of packaging. Lyrics are included for the four bands (ITI, Time's Expired. Lockdown, and Temperance) but no other

band information. Intent To Injure do justice to a popular Black Flag song. I didn't know they were still around. Time's Expired start off w ith heavy, pounding promise that evaporated when I heard the Leeway/hiphop type vocals. The music is good, but the vocals fail. Lockdown is slow and painful, reminding me of Crowbar. Temperance is melodic and melally, in a bic-fiickin' rock ballad way. and I didn't like it. After listening lo this I wasn't sure why I should give these bands or this label "respect". It's not a bad little comp., but its far from necessary.

Brick Records. P.O. Box 364. Flagstaff. Az. 86002–0364

THE WORLD IS YOURS compilation CD

O.L.C. starts this off. sounding 2 parts Meanstrcak/Confront and I part Madball. as usual. Zao is decent, more modern metallic hardcore. The Spudmonsters sound a lol like Brother's Keeper. Skipline has an overdone computer intro, before launching into a pretty well done (if terminally generic) heavy modern Cleveland-style metal/hardcore song with ihe posi-Inicgrily screaming vocals and ever} thing. Brother's Keeper is similar to ihcir Trustkill CD here. L.I.G.H.T. is awful melodic 'hardcore' w ith some shiny rap parts and singing parts thrown in to make it worse. Ascension sticks out. playing my favorite song from their CD. with a horror-movie backwards whisper part at the beginning. Envy (who. amazingly are not from anywhere particularly close to Cleveland) play decent (if dated) late-80's straight edge hardcore a la Chain of Strength or Youth of Today... they certainly don't hold a candle to bahds like Final Exit and Mainstrike, though, who make this stuff sound as vital today as it was ten years ago. Apartment 213 recycle a song off their 7" that came out years ago. Phore, Pushbutton Warfare, and Slate of Conviction offer their somewhat un-

[Image not archived]

and Six Feci Deep do the same without sounding quite as bad... Choice, Eleventh Hour, and Cell 42 all sort of fil inlo the same category of modern hardcore that is loo generic to really stick out. although Cell 42 isn't bad at all for NYC- style hardcore. District 5 is horrible hip hop. and Slrongarm (though they haven't submitted one of their better songs) stick out head and shoulders above the bands around them with their more polished and skillful approach to this music. At ihe end we get a wash of distorted noise from Psywarfare io sec us on our way. In general whal we have here is loo many long, dull intros, too much forced, unnecessary screaming, and loo many recycled hardcore musical con- venlions that jusi don't work anymore. There are a couple good songs on here, but the plethora of bad ones makes the CD itself a painful listen. Finally — why do the liner notes (which don't include lyrics, by the way) list so many of these little bands as appearing "courtesy of..." some little label? I mean, did Zao really have to beg Steadfast to let them appear, and were it not for the courtesy of Dog Collar, would Slate of Conviction really not be on this CD? AND — if that is the case — that's pretty fucked up. isn't it? Proclaiming that your band is under the control of some label is a humiliating thing... especially if il's not really true! Kids, contracted slavery is not something to brag about, let alone make up. -b

Uprise, P.O. Pox 360141, Strongsville, OH 33136

YOUTH FOR JUSTICE compilation CD

The kind of praiseworthy, very D.l.Y. CD compilation I like to see. First up is Faultline, they play modern, midtempo hardcore, with a lol of energy and passion and song-struciures that are very surpsising and original — an unbalanced recording is the only drawback to their politically conscious screaming anger. The second band is annoying and jangly. with acoustic guitars and some guy shouting, the third band. In Vain, has some intense parts with abrasive music

[Image not archived]

loose they go mellow and gently melodic... al least they end with a crazy shriek Then. Faceless brings us some really interesting punk, alternating between quiet haunting parts and heavy, throbbing parts, with a mixture of woman's singing vocals and man's growling vocals that makes it stand out (although their songs are much too long)... again, the recording could have been a little better. Really, every recording on here could be improved. Next up. Ego Filter plays some raw. messy, unpolished yelling punk for us; it's not really catchy enough to be anything special. Three more bands finish out the CD. Em her.see nt (screeching, noisy punk with some melodic breaks). Quadiliacha (major key. pretty, positive, old-fashioned hardcore, with those 8O's sort of "spoken voclas), and Element 33 (fragile-sounding female talking, cra/y-sounding male screaming, fast and slow modern hardcore, some acoustic breaks) After the music we have eleven tracks of spoken word performances by a variety of men and women. There's nothing belter than an attempt like this one to broaden (he horizons of the hardcore community by bringing in new mediums of art and communication like spoken word. We as a community need to bring in a wider variety of projects, like this CD does, to avoid doing the same shit over and over. As far as the actual spoken tracks go. the quality is spotty, a lot of the speakers sound pretty nervous and uncomfortable with what they are doing, or al leasl a liltle forced. That's to be expected when people enter a medium tor the first time, however, and hopefully if others follow their lead we" 11 hear some good spoken work won. The packaging is exactly whal I want to see. filled to bursting with extensive discussions of the ill effects of capitalism, consumerism, and large corporations upon our world, and our alternatives to them. I wish I could open up any record and see this much food for thought it's a crying fucking shame that I can't, especially in punk and hardcore, b *Earth House. P.O. Pox 1332, Redding, CT06875*

[Image not archived]

Pocket size, lop quality 'zine to read on your 15 minute break at work, for maximum education value and variety of material, h reminds me of Richard's

Things Fall Apart." actually. First we have a briefing on the miserable human rights situation in Burma and which corporations are perpetuating this (Pepsi, lor one. who also own Taco Bell... that's why buying vegan food there is no better than buying beef tacos, and that's why your tucking "Taco Bell Straight Edge" lashion shirts demonstrate that you arc uneducated or disinterested in your world). Then we have four excellent, in depth book reviews, on books concerning anarchism. Noam Chomsky's political/social

criticism, the Zapatista struggle in Mexico, and Anton LaVay's satanism. Next we have a little entertaining anti-cop/corporalion artwork, followed by a decent interview with Rennie of Starkweather, in which he comes off as the generally antisocial and cynical maniac that he is. The 'zine is fleshed out with nice clip art . -b *stamps? to Milkboy, 12039 UNCG, Greensboro NC 2 7954*

ALL THAT #9

Obviously 'All That' has come farther in nine issues than Inside Front: the entire thing is now glossy like Time magazine, with 88 pages of fancy biglabel ad's (for Chrissakes, Sony conglomerate even bought an ad in here for the soundtrack to million-grossing movie "the Cable Guy"), record reviews of a variety of big punk/hardcore/metal/industrial/pop bands, and interviews or profiles of about twenty bands, from Bad Religion to Amorphis to .Murphy's Law to Deadguy to Sensefield to Battery to Corrosion of Conformity to fucking Type O Negative. There are also various other snippets thrown in for variety: top ten lists, a q&a piece about sex with some well-known musicians, that soil of thing. This issue also comes with a CD (is it just coincidence, or why does everyone now do Inside Front-style magazine compilations?) featuring bands as varied in style as those covered in the magazine: Subzero. Dare to Defy. Brightside. Anal Cunt. Texas is the Reason. Seven Gone, and a good twenty some others. As far as the CD goes, all the music is really polished (often loo much so for my taste), and though there are a couple interesting tracks most of it is out of my field of interest... any listener w ill probably have the same reaction, even if they don't like the same bands as I. The European bands on it are generally the Lost & Found ones that badly imitate old US hardcore, not the good modern ones (hat are breaking new ground. This magazine and (D are a really good resource together, and quite affordable, which is great, but All That is clearly geared towards people interested in purchasing music for their leisure time, rather than individuals who see music as an artistic force that could turn our fucked up world upside dow n, -b

55 to P.O. Hot 1520, Cooper Station. New York. NY 10276–1520

ALLIANCE FOR SURVIVAL #2

Half-size, smallish 'zine, a little messy but readable. Contains some random stuff (letters and responses, a son of stream of consciousness page of quotes and etc., thoughts on false alien abduction stories and popular hardcore themes such as veganism. Kinko's, selling out. etc.) that makes for decent-enough reading. The interviews with 25 la Life. Option, and the editor of the 'zine 'Farther than Forever" are pretty short, and, there are a few decent reviews as well, -b

52 to RO. Ros 60807/. San Die^o, CA 92/20

ANTHEM #5: -

Tree 'zincs like this are beyond all criticism, just for being free. Take it or leave it. David puls all the information he can at your disposal out of the kindness of his heart and wallet. This issue has a decent N. Carolina hardcore news section, brief interviews with Setback. Outrage. War Prayer, and Shutdown, some fairly useful reviews, and some commentary: some of which is notably intelligent and well-balanced, and other

parts of which are concerned with Christian issues or old-fashioned moral rules that I don't really find compelling (chastity comes Up). There arc a few photos, and the general area of coverage is modern day youthful straightedge hardcore. I hope this is around to serve its readership for a while to come, -b

stamps to 10025 Thomas Pavne Circle, Charlotte. NC. 28277

Anxiety Closet #7 Spring 1996

This is the only zine I've ever seen that has first aid lips for household pets. Not a bad idea al all when you think about it — you might not ordinarily have given your need for that sort of information any thought beforeh and. Aside from that, there are good interviews with Chokehold and Blindfold and less compelling ones with perennial zine features Quicksand and Shelter. An article on "Fascism in Hardcore" discusses various bands' frequent and casual advocacy of violence a s a solution to problems in hardcore. An appropriate touch is that they sent oui copies of the article to the bands they ciled by name —

ise to publish forthcoming responses from o thers. It's good to see people foster dialogue on issues rather than to have two groups attacking and defending redundantly..My only complaint about AC is the amount of wasted space — the personal ramblings of the two editors are not very compelling and run on and on. I here is also an overabundance of typical zine features like pro-straight edge testimonials and attacks on Civ for being on a major label. Lastly, the Simpsons trivia quiz in the back is just too damn hard — I hate to think of how much lime someone must have spent collecting the answers to questions like "How does Chief Wiggum open walnuts?" ($2 to4 Leona Terrace. Mahwah, N J 07430–3025)

BACKSEAT tf1

First of all. the fact (hat this 'zine is designed to be free is great — I'm always thrilled to sec kids getting away from the profit motive (however small the margin may be) and towards a free exchange of ideas. The 'zine is also founded with a commendable purpose: so that more women's voices will be heard in the community, which is something that I think has been sorely lacking. Not that there aren't columns by men in this issue (for example, there is an excellent article by Emmanuel Ortiz about the goals of (his 'zinc, which essentially says that (hey are in the best interest of both men and women), but at least half of (he columns and even one of the two band interviews (Tara of Disembodied... (he other interview is with Dave of Harvest) arc from a female perspective. The interviews are conversational, fairly lengthy: they go into about as much depth as the bands interviewed permit. One woman writes an article on "vegan hardline." which I found typically ovcrzealous and unbalanced, but most of the other writing was useful and well-done (an article about bicycling activism caught my attention). There are a couple good book reviews (it's always exciting to read book reviews...) and a total of four record reviews. Hopefully backseat will continue to exist, and other 'zines will follow it in encouraging diversity in the hardcore community.

postage to P.O. Rox I4H3, Minneapolis. MN 55414

BANTER "#99"

Four page, tabloid size newsprint hardcore briefer from NYC with a fair variety of short reviews, ad's, and a two interviews (Faction Zero and Advertcncia from Puerto Rico) that are very difficult to read. In fact, the layout in general is pretty damn messy. That's everything, -b

5/ to R.G. Walter, P.O. Rox 645. New York. NY 1000/

BLOOD BOOK "Handbook for Holy Terrorists" #4

Dwid's 'zine is back in a smaller, much slicker format this time, with all sorts of crazy artwork and collages. In the introduction, the editors convincingly criticize ihe 'fallen hardcore movement' for no longer posing a threat to anything al all. and resolve to still remain committed to being dangerous to the status quo on their own, apart from hardcore. What follows are interviews with Catharsis. Gehenna, and experimental noisemaker Maurizio Bianchi, record and 'zinc reviews, and a record trades page. The Ringworm demo (remixed by Dwid io ba clearer, more exciting and a little overdramlic on the vocal effects) comes with this issue on 7"... it's high time that demo was available by itself on record, it's the best thing the band ever did: fast, really punchy crossover metal with screaming-baboon vocals and triple time drum bursts; this recording is (he classic (hat Liar and Congress have patterned themselves al ter (especially Liar). Of course supplies are limited, sp hunt one down if you can... 1 hear there are a few at the Inside Front HQ...

RO. Rox 770213. hikewood, OH 44/07

BREAK FREE #4

This 'zine's real coup is the one-sided, one song Backlash 7" that comes with it: Backlash is on lop of their game, turning out some simple, old-fashioned straightforward hardcore, perfectly crafted with some layered parts, plenty of speed and catchy melody, and more emotional punch than they ever had before. The song builds to a real climax a couple different times, and to lop it off it comes with some very compelling and intelligent commentary on the subject of (he song: child abuse. The 'zinc itself contains a decent interview with Backlash, a little Internet resource page, a couple descriptions of good 'zines (except for Inside Front, which is inexplicably listed), plenty of record reviews. and a good deal of straightforward writing about the editor's (and some contributors') life and opinions about abortion rights, national funding for the arts. UFO's, growing up as the "fat kid", "why big families suck", etc. Son of a mish mash of material, and not all of it polished, but it makes for decent reading nonetheless, -b <

Chad Rucola, RO Rox 121. Lehman, PA 18627

BURN COLLECTOR #3

This is always a favorite of mine. Al Burian can write a few rambling paragraphs on anything (this issue we get pieces on the extinction of metal, H.P. Lovecraft: the king of the nerds, and Vincent "Buddy" Cianci, Providence's mayor/mafia don) and it makes for excellent reading, because he is such a skilled, insightful, and intriguing writer. For sheer interest value I would compare him with Henry Miller, although he certainly has a much more bleak and cynical view of life. Al has also included an interview with a

local weird guy from his town; an unusual choice for an interview, but ultimately more entertaining than any member of. say... well, we won't name bands here. That's not positive youth! -b

stamps to Al. 307 Blueridge Rd.. Carrboro, NC 27510

Con(tra)science #5

Con(tra)science is one of those rare zincs that devotes itself to backing up its opinions with facts and references. Its main goal is to refute or reexamine the "truths" many Americans learn from supposedly neutral sources such as ou r schools and the mainstream news media. This issue has well-written (and. just as importantly, well-researched and attributed) articles on the myopia of American school textbooks, the Smithsonian's exhibit commemorating the anniversary of the dropping of t he atomic bomb on Japan, and the perpetuation of our country's arms buildup despite the end of the Cold War. Some of these topics may seem familiar to followers of left-wing publications such as "The Ulne Reader". "The Progressive" and "The Nation", since this is where the majority of the citations in Con(tra)scicnce's articles arc from, but the attention to detail and quality of these articles is welcome and hopefully some of the information contained within will reach a new audience. Also included are interviews with Craig O'Hara, author of "The Philosophy of Punk", and artist Piotr Szyhalski. ($2 to PO Box 8344, Minneapolis, MN 55408–0344)

DESTROY BABYLON #3

This is a foaming-at-thc-mouth Hardline politics 'zine. Il's done so much better than most hardcore 'zincs that it's ridiculous: decent layouts, good grammar. thick as hell with a variety of well-presented content, a genuine sense of wanting worldwide change, and a generally well thought out approach to (heir 'zinc (unlike their politics!). It's amazing that these would-be fascist fundamentalists can put together something so focused while more level-headed punk and hardcore kids just turn out drivel. The contents include a few articles about various intra-hardline goings on, a list of recent illegal actions in favor of the hardline cause, an (unbalanced, superficial, one-sided and ultimately reactionary) attack on pornography, health and fitness advice (inclusion of this is laudable, at least), an interview with hardline metal band Talisman, an article on communal living, a couple essays by individuals who describe how they came to be hardline (one heard a good angel and a bad angel literally arguing aloud in her head, which is usually a sign that you're not qualified to make decisions... rather than good reason to join a narrow minded group of homophobes), and most interesting of all: an interview with the former singer of oncc-hardline band Raid, after he had started smoking pot and distanced himself from hardline. (I've been told by a current hardline member that the interviewer, who gently attacks the ex-singer for 'selling out, ' has now left hardline as well!). That interview is extensive and covers a lol of inieresting territory. Do you think I'm being loo cruel and closed-minded about hardline? Here's only a couple (of *many)* examples why I'm not: One writer laments the passing of times when homosexuals and child molesters were considered the same thing (and were accordingly burned at the stake). He also says, like Rush Limbaugh and other

reactionary conservative bible-thumpers, that homosexuals don'i want equal rights, but more rights than everyone else... that's a good excuse to give them no rights al all, right? Finally. God ("The Great Spirit of Nature that spawned us into being, you arc the Hardline that we follow, the Truth that we obey") is first on the thanks list — it's always easier to be a rabid absolutist if you think you're acting out the will of God and the truth (but how- can you tell if you're right about the "Truth"? See my essay in the beginning of this issue)... you want to be free of slavery to corporations and other men. but you still have to be a slave to somebody, right? Honestly. I'm just plain confused by the hardline edict that wc must live "according to nature" — how could you *not* live according to nature, to your nature? Ants build anthills, human beings build cities and make pollution. Thal doesn't mean we can't stop making garbage, but if we do. then *stopping* must have been somewhere in our nature loo. right? (And I hope it is as much as any hardline kid does — don't get me wrong!) -b

$2 or $3? to Cincinnati Hardline, P.O. Box 40941, Cincinnati. OH 45240

*ENGINE *3*

h's been about two years since I last saw this'zine, bul it was worth the wail, because this is everything you should get in a punk 'zine: in depth interviews that range from educational and eloquent (Los Crudos) to anecdotal (Assfactor 4 tells of .a near-fatal experience) to historical (N.O.T.A.) to conversational/ personal (Dave Mandel. Dan O'Mahony) to downright slupid (Spazz). Max R & R-slylc record reviews (read as: half-decent, but not great unless you compare them with Punk Planet record reviews) of a large number of hardcore/ punk releases, interesting/entertaining comic strips and other space filler, and by far best of all prpsc pieces by a couple old punk guys telling hilarious stories about old punk shows, failed relationaships. or why Black Flag makes them want to kill college students. This magazine is belter reading by far than most of the print I reviewed this issue... it's well-written, well-thought out (except Spazz — fucking first grade morons), and high on content.

$3 to P.O. Box 640928, San Francisco. CA 94164–0928

Excursion #1 Spring 1996

This is very much your typical straightedge zine, with a name that coincidentally has an X in it. many photos of beefy guys wearing baseball caps shouting, and not one but two bad graffiti-style drawings of cartoon charactcrsw earing Champion clothing and holding baseball bats. This is the visual accompaniment to ignorant shit like a list of "Whodey's Top 10 Chicks"; an account of having stopped a Chokehold show by dancing too hard and punching a girl who tried to make (hem stop (which ends with the writer being mad at Chokehold for saying the "incident "ruined (heir sei"!); and a vaguely proAmerican ediiorial with ihc first line, "What's up with the disrespect to America?" This tidy package is held logether by short, uninformative interviews with Tension. Culture. Built to Last and Driven, some bad record reviews, and several Victory Records ads. (673 Galli Court, Columbus. OH 43228) *H8Z: Hate8000Zine 42*

There is a big hardcore community in Belgium right now. a lot of newer kids and newer bands playing angry, metallic music: Congress. Liar. etc. This is (heir local 'zine,

and it conveys the general flavor of their scene in (he letters and show reviews sections. It also includes decent interviews with Integrity. Jose of Abhinanda and Desperate Fight records, and locals Regression, as well as a few reviews and articles on how hardcore in general and violent dancing in particular arc coming back in their region. Nice layout, and a serious bul exciicd approach... if Belgium hardcore gets much bigger we'll all have to subscribe to this, and wish we lived in Belgium the way eight years ago we all wished we lived in NYC. -b

$? to Jozef Demeesterstraat 33. 8800 Roeseiare, Belgium

HARDWARE 48

This is just about the best hardcore 'zine you can gel today, not because it has the broadest coverage by any means, but just because it is so well done. You will find here interviews with the famous Pushead, the infamous Half Off. the recently notable Ignite, Floorpunch. 97a, Enrage, and Ensign that tell you everything you could ever want lo know and more about the interviewees. These interviews are so much longer, more interesting, more informative, and better researched than any others you'll see that it's amazing. A wide variety of reviews, not long reviews, but a wide variety... that makes the review pages something like those in Max R&R, only from the perspective of old-fashioned irate hardcore kids. Plenty of ranlings, funny stories, and NJ news from the editors as well, plus scene reports from the four corners of the earth. I suspect that MRR in it's heyday was to punk what this is to hardcore now... maybe twelve years from now I'll be reading Hardware #150 — and by then it will suck, loo! I'm joking. I hope, -b

$2 to David K, 120 Coolidge St.. 2nd Floor. Linden. NJ 07036–4302

ICARUS WAS RIGHT #2

I reviewed this zine elsewhere a few- months ago. Looking at it again, I'm still impressed. Beautiful graphics, a commitment to a wide range of topics and styles of music, a strong advocacy of non-musical expression as seen in the book reviews and artwork (original and reproduced from other sources), incisive interviews with bands as disparate in their outlooks as you can gel (in this case, it's Fugazi and the Mr. T Experience!), and an overall commitment to being challenging and thought-provoking. This zinc's staff is obviously very ambitious and driven and I would expect even belter from them in the near future. ($2 to PO Box 191175, San Diego. CA925I9)

ICARUS WAS RIGHT #3

This was the most exciting, refreshing, inspiring 'zine in the review box this issue. The formal and layout are the very best around — this looks like the thesis project of a graduate student in graphic arts, what with all of the clip art, fancy arrangements, special effects, and reader-friendly text. And unlike many pretty 'zines, there is some serious content here... so the graphics complement the subject matter, making it more dramatic rather than obscuring it. There are extensive articles about Food Not Bombs (what it is, what it does, what it's like to be involved), censorship in the U.S. media during recent recent wars (carefully documented), and punk rock on the internet (pro's, con's, and howto's). There are editorials on consumerism, the Unabomer manifesto

(which comes with a few pages of excerpts from the real thing), and culture (why it is in itself a bad thing and hostile to human happiness). There are in-depth interviews with Unwound and the Promise Ring. There is a letters section (filled with intelligent exchange about relevant subjects), 'zine reviews and record reviews, reviews of books, movies, animated movies, and mature comics (remarkable in the variety of exciting genres and original works covered — the book section reviews everything from Henry Miller to Bertrand Russell to a collection of interviews with Jerzy Kosinski, author of "The Painted Bird"), and a biography of the tragically controversial artist Egon Schiele. All of this is decorated with plenty of propaganda, diatribes, photos, poetry snippets, notable quotes, and illustrations. The general theme is the life in its most intense and fulfilling manifestations, with all the danger, romance, and excitement that that entails. What I like most about IWR is that it makes punk and other "underground" countercultures relevant to life in general, by tying them m with the ongoing struggle of human beings to find freedom and meaning in life... a struggle that has been going on a lol longer than punk has been around, -b

$2 to P.O. Pox 191175. San Diego. CA 92/59

Last Breath #1

The majority of this zine is interviews with Falling Forward. Blood of Judas, and Instil. There's also a really healed response lo Todd Forkin from Starkweather's column in the last Inside Front where he dismissed modern hardcore as inferior to the old school, a weird discussion of using animal organs for transplant in humans, an article that's in favor of musical diversity in hardcore (hear hear), and a lol of sluff pulled off the World Wide Web. This zine is a little thin on content at present, but the editor asks some interesting questions in his interviews, and the articles show promise too. I must note that this may be the only zine you'll ever sec with photos of Indian Summer and Integrity on the same page. ($1 to 55 Waker Ave. Allentown. NJ 08501)

THE MATCH! #90

Interested in anarchism? In genuine, mature, grown up. well thought out anarchism as a possible social alternative to the systems we live under now. and not as an immature shock value sound bite? Read the Match!. Here you'll find (in addition to the overly extensive letters-and-responses section that seems to plague every serious anarchist publication) articles on how the Unabomer has successfully been used in the mainstream media to discredit anarchist thinking. on the drawbacks of computers (an article that I think relates to a more general problem we have today: that our technological development seems to have outstripped our actual need for technology, especially in relation to our greater need lo live really meaningful lives, thus wasting a lot of our lime). "How Businesses and Institutions Attempt to Control the Small Press" (much of it being an allack on Fine Print distribution), and a number of other interesting topics generally relating to the liberty of the individual. Similarly there are reviews of anarchist and atheist publications, notations of dangerous goings- on in the government and society at large, and entertaining reminiscences upon the author's past. /Ml of ihe writing is excellent and clear, as is most of the thinking here (it's

certainly more balanced and restrained than anything you'll read in Inside Front). If you want some interesting, challenging reading/ihink- mg material, to alternate with the ficiton and nonfiction books I d like lo believe you read, definitely try the Match', -b

$10 to subscribe... $2.75 per copy? to P.O. Pox 3488, Tucson, AZ 85722 MINORITY #2

Nice-sized, small print hardcore/punk 'zinc, written in Czech. If you speak Czech you'll want loczech ii out (ouch! sorry), because there is a wide variety of music coverage here: show reviews, lots of record and 'zinc reviews, long interviews with Ember. Clean Slate. Amity, and Metroschifter. a letters section. and columns, etc. The editors' lop ten lists alone demonstrate a healthy range of interests: they list the Damnation LP next to Hesse's "Demian", a Woody Allen film, and a documentary on experimental composer Phillip Glass. If you don't speak Czech you'll probably want to advertise here or send in records for review, because I believe this reaches a wide audience, -b

Roman Souma r. Topoldanska 4/9/10, Li tome rice 4120!. Czech Republic MIRROR #2

Aesthetically, this 'zine is really exciting because it successfully achieves the

rare feal of combining a clearly homemade presentation with real quality. The hand-torn cover, which uses a variety of materials, is al least as durable and attractive as any mass-produced cover would be. and much more original. The contents include a reflection on 'fame', some interesting quotes (the general theme being "life"), a few other pieces of fairly poetic prose writing, a litlle spot-illustration artwork, and some band photos. All in all it's a quirky, literary sort of read; not a bad thing to have on the coffee table, -b

$/ to Tom Nys. Broekem 6. 3740 Pilzen. Belgium

MURDER #2

Thin xeroxed N. Carolina 'zinc. A few long reviews, half of them of weird metal bands. There is a rambling sort of anti-religion article, at the end of which the author says that he believes in God simply because he docs not want to believe that ihere is no afterlife (bui my friend, wanting doesn't necessarily make it so...) This issue also includes an interview with Minneapolis' notorious Disembodied, -b

fifty cents to 6049 lake Bandt Rd., Greensboro. NC 27405

NO SCENE#8

This little free newsletter is basically an attempt for (he editor to communicate with olhers. In this installment, after his introduction (in which he complains about straight edge being on MTV), there arc interviews wilh Jug Life and Cold Front, a couple show' reviews, a list of straight edge 'zine addresses, and a "personals" section for lonely letter writers, -b

*a stamp postage to B***er, 3260 Starr #3. Lincoln. NE 68503*

OPEN SEASON #7

O.S. is a good 'zinc to read for some variety in your hardcore diet. Editor Eric has been into hardcore for a much longer time than most of today's zinc editors. and

remarkably has never lost his interest in it; so his approach to covering the subject is refreshingly honest, independent, and aggressive... somehow I remember those three qualities were much more prevalent in the hardcore community about seven years ago. It is this direct, fcar-no-conflict-or-contro- versy attitude that makes interesting the contents of this 'zine: decent-length show and record reviews, band photos, and non-generic conversational interviews wilh Cold as Life. Cornerstone. One Life Crew (interviewed long before their Victory CD even came out). Brother's Keeper, Disengage, and Envy. The roster of interviewed bands should give you a general idea of the music- covered in O.S.The 'zinc itself is not thick, but is well put together and has a decent amount of content. Suburban youth should be warned that the knowledge and mannerisms that Eric learned while he was in prison (assault and battery) may make some of you uncomfortable... -b

$1 to P.O. Pox 10282, Rochester. NY 14610

Psst... #1

A very short first zine with two pages of photos, interviews with a couple of ska bands and a bus driver, some random stuff, and a drawing of a turkey standing next to a building marked "Slaughter House" saying "Gobble gobble murder." ($1 to RO Bo x 4862, Palm Harbor. FL 34685)

PLAYDOUGH #3

This is a well-put together, fairly thick half-size 'zinc. The author seems serious and sincere about his work here, although I can tell from his various writings about his life (scattered throughout) that 1 don't have much in common wilh him (he seems to be a prcity happy camper... allhough I did find his meditation on the briefness of life convincing). There is a fairly short interview with Farsidc (in which the band says nothing of any interest al all... bui what do you expect from a pop band?), a number of show reviews (and I mean a lot'), a comparatively high number of record reviews as well (mostly more mainstream hardcore/mctal/pop). and more commentary from the editor (his writing is fairly polished, although I'd love to argue wilh him about some of the details). Playdough is made complete by the photos, ads, and interesting snippets (reprints, lop-ten lists, etc.) that arc interspersed throughout its pages, -b

$2 to Brian. P.O. Box 3. Manomet, MA 02345

POWER SCHLIEF #7

German hardcore 'zine wilh an obnoxious and sarcastic attitude. That's refreshing. and it would be more so. if only I could speak German. Bui unfortunately all I can tell you about PS. is that ihe cover is glossy, ihe photos and obnoxious pictures/snippets are entertaining, ihe interviews with Acme. Unbroken Stcakknife. Ego Trip. Sheer Terror. Snapcase, and Sick of ii All arc long and look educational, there seems to be lots of funny commentary, and al one point I am misquoted as having said "violence belongs to hardcore" (!?). If you can read German I bet this is great.

Axe! Orangemann, Stammbach 9, 74538 Rosengarten-Rieden, Germany

[Image not archived]

This is certainly the most hilarious and insightful comic you can find that has anything to do with punk or hardcore. Every punk superstar from Tim Yohannon to Jello Biafra is parodied, and there's a lol of great humor al the expense of generic punk/hardcore youth as well. On top of this the author actually sneaks in some of the most cuttingly true points I've seen made by anyone in the mediums of punk or comics. Write this guy, send him some postage or money or something, and beg him to pul you on the mailing list. I'm noi joking.

P.O. Box 1910, Beverly Fucking Hills. CA 90213

RAGE GENERATION #1

English hardcore 'zine from Singapore, includes reprinted articles (veganism, Ron Coronado, and a really interesting one aboul Islam), : lengthy band interviews (Carburator Dung. Fourside, Chronic Mass. Nccrous. Warzone, Propagandhi), columns (scene politics, etc.), some reviews of shows and records, and photo's, reprinted fliers, and more reprinted newspaper clippings, etc. Decently put together. 'This should be a useful resource and contact point for anyone into hardcore in the Pacific area, -b

Abdul Khalid, blk 225. pasir ris st. 21 #02-58. S (510225). Singapore

Refuge #6

The majority of this zinc is devoted to arguments, solicited from a wide range of people in the scene, for and against the death penally. It's interesting to see that many of ihe people who oppose the death penally don't seem any more passion ate about the issue than the people who are satisfied with the status quo. The few people who do have well-reasoned arguments really slick out. Also included are an inierview with Burial Ground and a letters section that is proportionately loo long for such a short zine, although it does allow the editor to make a well-reasoned defense of a woman's right to choose without resorting to name-calling, an unusual occurance in the zine world. ($1 to 123 Rice St., Trucksville, PA 18708)

RETROGRESSION/Warning: May Provoke Thought #1Mf6

This issue is definitely head and shoulders above most magazines, including the last issue of Retrogression, in fact. Light printing in some places is the only drawback: everything else you could want in a magazine is here. You'll find a very informative article on the German punk convention "Chaos Days", plenty of writing aboul editor Brian's experiences doing this or that (most of which serve to illustrate his mantra: "it's OK not to be a dick") and editor Dave's opinions, an informative (and important) article on knowing your legal rights with cops etc., an article on vegan/vegetarian nutrition, a resource guide to punk on the internet, a good long inierview wilh 7 Seconds, plenty of crucial politically educational reading concerning the upcoming election and conservative "welfare reform", a useless trivia page, a "lips on safer sex" column, lots of reviews (which are generally pretty good, but seem to cover so much ground that it's often disorienting), a hilarious rant entitled "10 Good Things aboul the Firestorm" (I do have to warn you that it's not very nice...), and lots of other really useful, interesting reading. The layout is excellent, and to top il off a 7" comp, comes with this as well, featuring Ascension (reviewed elsewhere in here: excel lent

Cleveland metal/hardcore wilh some emotional high points), Seven Years War (more jarring, sometimes rockish hardcore/posi- hardcore type sluff), Black Krondstadi (fast, old-fashioned straight punk with angry, spoken political lyrics), and Fork (alternative rock in some parts, just messy God-awful demo garage noise in other parts). Some records are classic (this one isn't!), but this issue of ihis 'zinc is itself a classic. A+. -b

$4 to Retrogression, Brian Hull, 104 Newport Avenue. Attleboro, MA 02703 Rust #3 Winter/Spring 1996

A very visually appealing zine from Seattle wilh a fairly basic computer layout and many good photos. There is a decent amount of local HC conieni (always a plus), mainly show reviews and a scene report. The interviews wit h Ian MacKaye, Shift and Guilt are interesting, if too brief in all cases. Perhaps ihe most interesting feature of the issue is a discussion of the pros and cons of major labels with actual A & R representatives who are pursuing punk and hardcore bands — in this case, it's David Wolters of Hollywood Records and Mike Giner (who used to do the zine XXX way back when) of Atlantic — plus one of the members of Orange 9mm. Understanding the way these guys justify handing over financial control of hardcore to major labels is instructive. However, the interviewer in all cases seems to be more interes ted in getting the major label side of the story than questioning the assumptions his inicrviewees have made aboul hardcore ethics, which is disappointing. (S3 to PO Box 2293, Seattle. WA 98111 -2293)

SELFWORTH #2

In this half-size 'zine, we find scene report from Belgrade and Bulgaria, an

[Image not archived]

article approaching animal rights from a socialist perspective, some band photos (well-reproduced), an inierview wilh politically conscious/sociahst band Feeding the Fire, a listing of other 'zincs and projects throughout Europe related to this 'zine, and more than anything else a lot of so-called "personal" writing, which is the real focus of this 'zinc. The editor and his friends share their feelings more than their rational opinions with us, on a variety of often politically-related topics. This is a hard kind of writing to pull off in a way that is interesting to the reader... but Selfworth is getting close to accomplishing this, which is an unusual feat, -b

Jan, Bosserveldl 32, Bigi SK Beek (L), Netherlands

SHOWCASED

Plenty of little articles here on subjects ranging from hardcore dancing to "breaking things for fun" to how fashion is never rebellious to an attack on MTV. As you can see, there's some silly sluff and some serious sluff here, and it's hard to tell which predominates. Probably the best piece is an in-depth attack on Chrisilan religion. There are record reviews here, but not only are they pretty short, they also review records from last month next to records that came out in 1989 (and if they aim to cover the last seven years of hardcore records, they fall a little short). Anyway, you wouldn't read this for the reviews, but for the writing, which is not very polished but sometimes interesting.

P.O. Box 151372, Cape Coral, FL 33915
SOBER #3

Sober opts for a more serious approach this lime... coming wilh (you guessed it) a tape compilation. The 'zine contains decent, often lighthearted interviews wilh Shutdown. Indecision. Scorch, Chapler. Brother's Keeper. Digression, 25 la Life, and Day of Suffering, and a couple pages of short music/'zinc reviews. The layout is clean, and the photos and illustrations look nice. The tape includes lyrics and addresses, and has songs by Oplion (by far ihe best here — see their 7" review for details). Chapter (this song is interesting bui too long; see their demo review for details). War Prayer (growling deathmetal). Catharsis (godawful shit), Polyester Cowboys (classic NC punk/hardcore crossover), Indecision, Shutdown, Digression (modern hardcore from those three, prelty exciling). Cornin' Correct, a live 25 ta Life Agnostic From cover (simple NYC hardcore from those two). Dreadsccd, and Scorch (modern, occasionally metallic hardcore, slill rough around the edges, from these young bands), -b

$4 to Dan-E Fresh, 311 South LaSalle St. Apt. Id. Durham. NC 27705 Statue #2

It's always good to have sources of news from Europe and the rest of (he world to remind us that US bands aren't the be-all and end-all of hardcore. This excellent zine from the Netherlands (edited by a guy who writes in English as a second I anguage better than most Americans do in it as a first) features interesting interviews with current Scandinavian favorites such as Veil and Congress, lots of revealing news about that area's scene (bizarrely enough, Cleveland hatecore is the new rage, so a II the kids start lights al shows now), some genuinely engaging personal writings about the changing of the seasons, and an inierview wilh 108 coupled with a debale over the relevance of Krishna and religion in general in which the editor does a good job of refuting the need for a controlling religious identity. I have to give Vic (1 mean Vraja. whatever) credit for voicing his views clearly — I imagine if you're always being questioned aboul your beliefs, you learn how lo present yourself and your thoughts mo re effectively. Anyway, this is a very good zine and should be pursued by anyone who wants to know more about the thriving European hardcore scene. (Pieter. Van Gocnslraat 8, 5463 HJ Veghel, the Netherlands)

Tadpole #2

Another European zine, this time from England, where (he hardcore scene is relatively much smaller than in the US or mainland Europe. I'm always glad to read aboul bands who exisl outside of the scene spotlight, wherever il may be; I wasn'l familiar with any of the bands in this issue (Slampin' Ground. Undone, and Schema) and was interested in hearing them discuss the issues that are important to their own local scenes. Aside from interviews, this zine is mostly record reviews, which I have lo say were far loo short lo be helpful, (uh oh. no address)

THINGS FALL APART "Report of the TEA. ladies Auxiliary #1"

This is an interim issue lo hold us over between TEA. #4 and #5. Richard is an irresistibly funny and indecently talented writer, and everything that comes out of his typewriter is interesting and memorable. Here, for example, we have a really telling

and convincing rant on how much people in punk/emo/ etc. today seem to want to return to childhood, and what's bad aboul this; a hilarious satire of punk/liardcore record reviews; a review of two books on

terrorism that contrasts their subject matter with today's armchair revolutionaries. with the result being unflattering for everyone; and a little poem/comic for Ciller. Check out TFA#5. out now in theatres everywhere. Il arrived too late for review; but I assure you that it's hilarious and really interesting (contents include a commentary on the positive and negative aspects of "emo" culture, some 'zine and book reviews, an interview w ith the defunct Action Patrol, and an extensive\meandcring conversation between the editor and a certain selfimportant individual who shall remain nameless).-b

slum/) to Rich? Rich. 2609 John Milton Dr.. Herndon. VA 22071 UP FRONT#7

A shortish, high-content 'zine focusing on Northeastern hardcore; though the editors are fairly young and it shows, (hey have a serious approach that manifests itself in a good layout, lengthy interviews with Age of Reason and Subzero (the latter of whom are extremely articulate in their criticism of the ill effects of mainstream media exploitation of the hardcore scene, and on other topics — I was definitely impressed), a whole lot of show and (short) record/ demo/'zinc reviews, and some nice band photos. All of that stuff is definitely useful. There are a couple pieces of written commentary that could have been a bit more polished, including an anti-choice piece on abortion that didn't really shed any new light on the topic. But for kids in the area, this is a good resource, -b

Darrell Tauro. 7 High Street. Collinsville. CT 06022

UPSTATE #7

The key feature of this 'zine is that it's put together by professional graphics/ design people. Consequently, it's appearance is beautifully jarring, manicly chaotic, pandemonical... it's impossible to digest what's going on everywhere at once. Crazy images and typesetting seem to be literally spilling out on the pages into your lap. This is exciting and original in a 'zinc. However, unlike Icarus Was Right (the only competitor I can think of in the graphics department). the content of Upstate really suffers. A good half of the writing is near impossible to read. This in itself might be a daring statement to the effect that "the medium is the message"... but where you can read the writing, it's simply not as good quality as the layout. Not that it's not belter than the writing in half of the bad straight edge 'zines I see, but it's just disappointing that it doesn't measure up to the dramatic presentation. There are articles about "punk today" and how violence is not a solution to any problem, vague emotional rants that arc hard to pin down as to subject matter, some interesting rumination on the ultimate purpose of graphic design, fairly good 'zine and book reviews, a short piece of fiction, an article on (he 'zine "revolution", an interview with a talented graphic designer (this is admittedly an original interview subject), and some music reviews (that arc at their most useful when they describe spoken word records by Beal generation authors, and al their least useful when they try to describe hardcore music... fortunately they spend

most of their lime in between on alternative records). This ‘zine is definitely an original, unlike any other — but somehow it leaves me unfulfilled. Maybe I just need to get used to Upstate. Hm... -b

$2 to 283 Reisinger Road. Sherrill. NY 1346DI208

VISIONS OF TOMORROW #1 -

Sort of an unusual, spotty collection of topics in this xeroxed ‘zinc. There is a pretty good interview with Damnation, some photo spreads, some commentary (a touching introduction in which the author describes the difficult life that has led him to become straight edge, an article about not judging by appearances. an editorial which suggests plausibly that the hardcore scene overreacted to One Life Crew, and a reprint from a book about veganism), a short interview with Tony of Victory records about the whole O.L.C. thing (which doesn’t really say anything new), and some filler pages of random nonsense. There’s some interesting sluff here, but I’ll be more curious to see the next issue, -b

SI to... shit, no address in the ‘zine. Here s editor Mike a phone nuniher: 414647–0945

WAR HYMN #1

Free handout pamphlet-‘zine... this is a self-proclaimed “Slrhalc Edge War Bulletin.” and in keeping with that purpose the subtitle reads “A new era in narrow minded thinking, which I think is hilariously direct. In fact, though this tide would usually be a real warning signal for intelligent ‘zine-readers, this first issue War Hymn is actually not unbalanced, excessive, or laughable. Instead, the contents are a couple tirades (one against the various fringe groups of morons and posers in the hardcore community, another explaining in an intelligent fashion why it is important to be able to defend yourself and accordingly recommending the best martial arts styles to learn), a short scene

report from Rome/Italy, a list of addresses for active earth- and animal-defense groups, and a few short record and demo reviews, -b

postage to Maurizio Ricci. Via Amico Bignami 12. 00152 Roma, Italy WELL FAIR #1

It’s great to see all these free ‘zines (although I’m a little nervous, since each one is only on its first issue). Here we have articles on how the Atlanta 1996 Olympics could be used for very visible protests, on how voting Republican will cvenutally make the world a better place in the long run (by making people more frustrated with their government in the short run — I have to say it’s a great article!), and D.I.Y. show booking (a good thing for sure). Kevin Zelko also contributes a really intelligent rebuttal to Noam Chomsky’s theory that animals do not use language, and there are a couple other pieces of writing here... plus the obligatory ‘zine and record review’s. There’s a lol of intelligence here. Good stuff, -b

postage to Well Fair. Huey proudhon, 4308 Oak. Apt. S. Kansas City. MO 64111

WHOLE NINE YARDS #9?

Comes with a "Whole 9 Yards" pen (1 used mine until it ran out, and it served me well), and a 7" featuring Eleven-11 (very melodic, with some quiet acoustic parts and a rock singer who. it becomes apparent whenever he gets excited, can't sing al all). E Manon (fast, rough, and surprisingly impassioned angry New York hard-core... 1 wish I heard more NYC bands this into what they're doing, and not just going through ihc motions), and Pitfall (bass, drums, and geek making farm animal noises, recorded on a boom box). The editor does a lot of stuff, and his layout style is about three times as messy and illegible as Rick's is in Back Ta Basics, but though it is present here as usual I can still make out a fair amount of content. What we have here is plenty of band and graffiti photos (not too well reproduced), short interviews with a graffiti artist. Nuclear Assault, and Goatamentise, a whole lol of reviews (not extremely descriptive, but there are a lot of them), lyrics for the bands on the 7" (it seems that No Redeeming Social Value was supposed to be on there, but somehow isn't), and lots of other really random stuff. I'm not sure if I got the cost correct, but if I did. the price is right... -b

$1? to R. Waller. GPO PO Box 645, New York. NYC 10001

WHOLE NINE YARDS ISSUE #10? #8? Hmm...

Gabe's unreadable layouts have got me again, and 1 can't tell which issue this is. This is probably the best thing he's done, (hough, in terms of amount of material present... between the scattered ten syllable demo and record reviews and general visual noise, we find a useless interview' with Sic-n-mad, show review's, graffili/band photos, a Full Contact interview, more fucking visual noise, even more goddamn visual noise, and what I think must be information on the bands on the CD. There's some good sluff on the CD: probably four or five of the bands successfully pull off Cro-Mags covers that aren't actually covers but original songs... they sure do fucking sound like the Cro-mags, though! That's a good thing, not a bad thing, and these songs make for nice listening, w ith ihe angry roaring singers, ihc rough and grating metal guitars, the midtempo pounding energy, and the catchy singalong choruses. Of course there are a couple really silly annoying joke band songs on here loo, playing fucking nonsense that I guess is entertaining to them but not io the listener. I think the bands on the CD are One 4 One. N.R.S. V. Setback, Struggle Within. E Manon. Sour. Gillele. Goatamentise. Puldown, and Sic-n-mad. I'd really love to be able to give band by band descriptions here, but the labelling is just not clear enough. Sorry. But, for 54 minutes of NYHC music (which is belter than most of the generic NYHC of today) and reading (??) material, the price is right. So hum this down if you like New York hardcore.

S5 to R. Waller, G.P.O. Box 645. New York. NY 10001

[Image not archived]

Ascension demo

Begins with a long, long horror movie sample. This band clearly belongs to the new generation of bands that listen to lots of Integrity and Earth Crisis, and consequently play midtempo metallic modern hardcore with shrieking vocals and a generally dark atmosphere. They're actually one of the best of those bands that I've heard, the only drawback 1 can see is a loose, sprawling tendency in their song structure, which surely

will improve as they continue. Their guitar work is confident and interesting, with occasional retained solos and divebombs. And although most of each song fall into the traditional hardcore formula, there is enough variety to maintain my interest: they throw in unusual parts (group screaming like damned souls in hell, faster parts, etc.). The lyrics of the first song (entitled "being and nothingness." perhaps in reference to Sartre's confusing philosophical book) is an excellent attack of Christianity. criticizing the way it encourages people to sacrifice the present for some future award. The rest of the lyrics are clear and intelligent, which sets them apart from the demo crowd, since most of todays demo lyrics are unclear and unintelligent. Three songs on the a-side. decent quality recording; five on the b-side. fucking messy recording! But. still good enough listening. Overall. this is a grade A demo.-b

17406 snyder Rd. Chagrin Falls OH 44023 — Chris 216–543 9115

Brother's Keeper- Two Dollar Bill

BK have been hit or miss in the past, but Mike and co. are right on target with this two song cassingle. 1 like cassingles. This js probably their best shit yet. due to the great recording, and the songwriting is catchy and hard. They're still singing about failed relationships but I won't hold it against 'em. Not so heavy in a double bass. Slayer kind of way. but it's chunky and funky and danceable, mid-tempo, etc. I always thought Mike's delivery style was a lol like Chuck D's. this does nothing to change my opinion about that. Really clean recording. There's a broken heart on the cover of this tape, which gave me a chuckle. *P.O. Box 11363 Erie, Pa. 16514–1363*

Burning Human- Death Is Mercy demo

This has been out for some time, but I still wanted to review it. Burning Human is a side project of past and present members of Stigmata, and a short guy named Jonah who sings. Most project bands tend to suck ass, but this is levelling. You know how a lot of bands sound like death metal with NYHC type vocals? This is more like NYHC with death metal vocals. NYHC with a hell of a lot of brute power and anti-human sentiment, great drumming, good recording. good packaging. Actually, there's a lol of deathmelal in wilh the deathmetal vocals and NYHC. There's a lot of hooks in here loo. Quite a few samples also. 1 don't know why, but a huge percentage of the stuff we got recieved for review this lime around contains way too many goddamn samples! I could've also used a lyric sheet, as I can't understand a single word Jonah says. This has one of the funniest copyright warnings I've seen in a long time.. *Burning Human , 2171 The Plaza. Schenectady NY 12309 (518) 377–0354 Cave-In*

This sounds like a badly recorded recorded practice tape, it says it was recorded on a fostex 4 track in their basement which explains everything. There's moments that sound ok. but this fails. The screechy vocals one minute. Paul Mcartney the next just sucks. Musically its tuneless, sloppy noisecore like Snap case or Groundwork. I thought that if you have a band, you practice AND THEN put out a demo. , *Chalkline*

A Cleveland area band that sounds more like they're from Syracuse or Buffalo wilh none of the violence or personality I'd expect oul of Clevo. Whal the fuck! Some of the riffs are ok. but the drumming, lyrics, and back-up vocals suck, reminding me loo

much of Earth Crisis, without EC's production values. The lyrics are in the "the blood on my hands of shame retreats into my mind as my true self is revealed" style that is just generic and gay as fuck. The drumming is choppy. Not good. *Chalkline 7950 Mentor Ave. G-8 Mentor, OH. 44060*

Chapter demo

Midpaced guitar chunks and groove, deep grainy vocals, atypical guitar progressions. and surprising song structure show that (his young band aims to develop (heir own style and approach to modern hardcore. That impression is reinforced by the insert, which includes a stapled booklet unlike anything I've seen before in a demo: it contains reprinted intelligent discussions of the place of religion in our era. band information, lyrics (which in their vague dissatisfaction are al ihis point probably the most predictable element of Chapter), and a spread about an imprisoned unionist/socialist. There are something like nine songs on this. Good job.-b

138 Walton Tea Room Rd. Greensburg PA 1560/

Corrin demo

I though! this would suck, because the packaging was artsy and shitty looking. In my mind, artsy = emo. and you all know emo = suck. Instead of emo. I heard a disturbing cross between Deadguy and older SFA that just blew me away. This band is definitely noisy and heavy, wilh lyrics about rape and suffering! They throw insane bursts of speed into the mix. and structure these three songs in a sometimes sloppy, sometimes tight style that keeps ya guessing. Not too shabby. *4 7No. Williams St.. Johnston. RI. 02919 (40/) 272-/513 Digression demo*

This demo comes in with a midpaced. '90s hardcore riff, and soon adds bass and choked up, angry vocals to complete the dancable cquaiion. The production is just barely good enough to do them justice — i.e. its better than most demos (but not great). The song structure is traditional, with a bass/drum breakdown and build up in the middle of the song. The second an third songs come in sounding a bit rock 'n' roll with a melodic tune (a la "Bricks Are Heavy" L7), before returning to the '90s hardcore formula. Although the L7 bit on a couple of songs is original, (his is extremely similar to the other new school hardcore demos we've received for review this issue. Don't get me wrong, if you like new school hardcore demos, you'll like this.-b

2214 Taggert st. Erie PA 16510 — Joe:814-898-1065

Dying Breed

Another Troy area band/with more of a hiphop influence than a lot of other bands from there. Great, distinctive drumming, good riffs, decent songwriting, good recording quality for a demo. More guest vocalists than I can count, coming off as a community effort of sorts. 1 like it, even though (here's "too much" of a Biohazard influence at limes. If you like Mcrauder or Zero Tolerance. you'll probably like this too. When they get going, they just pound out the moshmetal madness that makes you wanna smash your 40 against someone's head. The lyrics arc in the 'life in the ghetto is hard for me and the crew, and we're gonna fuck you up' style, but I gotta also say. Troy really is a ghetto, and the people in this band mean it. The guitar work isn't as simple as a

lot of NY bands either, and that helps set this apart further. *Mike Stack 232 3rd St. TroyNY 12180 (5/8) 273-926/*

Forward Defense demo

The cover reminds me of the Raw Deal demo, a desperate looking guy with a bat. Honestly, this is the first Aussie hardcore band I've heard since Vicious Circle/ Pcrdition's split Ip. This band is coming from a Negative Approach/ early NYHC/Oi! perspective, and it comes out pretty good. Il's hard for me to understand some of the lyrics due to the singer's accent. It reminds me of NOTA or Rejuvenate. One of the guys in the band is wearing a Clockwork Orange shirt. Good, raw mix. Ten songs. I like this the more 1 listen to it. *FD. PO Box 831. Canberra City ACT260/, Australia*

Groundzero- 1945

Cool demo packaging, but the everything else about (his is mediocre. Four average 'new' school' tunes with poor, lackluster drumming and lousy, weak vocals. This band just sounds like they have no heart. There's one song about child abuse that has decent lyrics, but other than that this is just no good east coast hardcore that doesn't stand out at all. Oh well. At least they're not poppunk. Groundzero. 7 High St. Collinsville. CT. 06022 (860) 693–0330

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Ad Rates for issue #10:

[Image not archived]

Of course we depend on our fellow punk and hardcore kids for distribution... and for contribut^ns to keep this magazine •Interesting. We'd kill for a scene report from your area or a •negative, hypercritical "letter to the editor." We also might be interested in a new columnist (Jr two. We're always happy to • receive anything for nlaterial that has something to do with the general theme of Inside Front.

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•more is coming soon!

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Introduction: Manifesto for Inside Front: Project Number Ten

**Why "revolution"? Why hardcore punk? Why Inside Front?

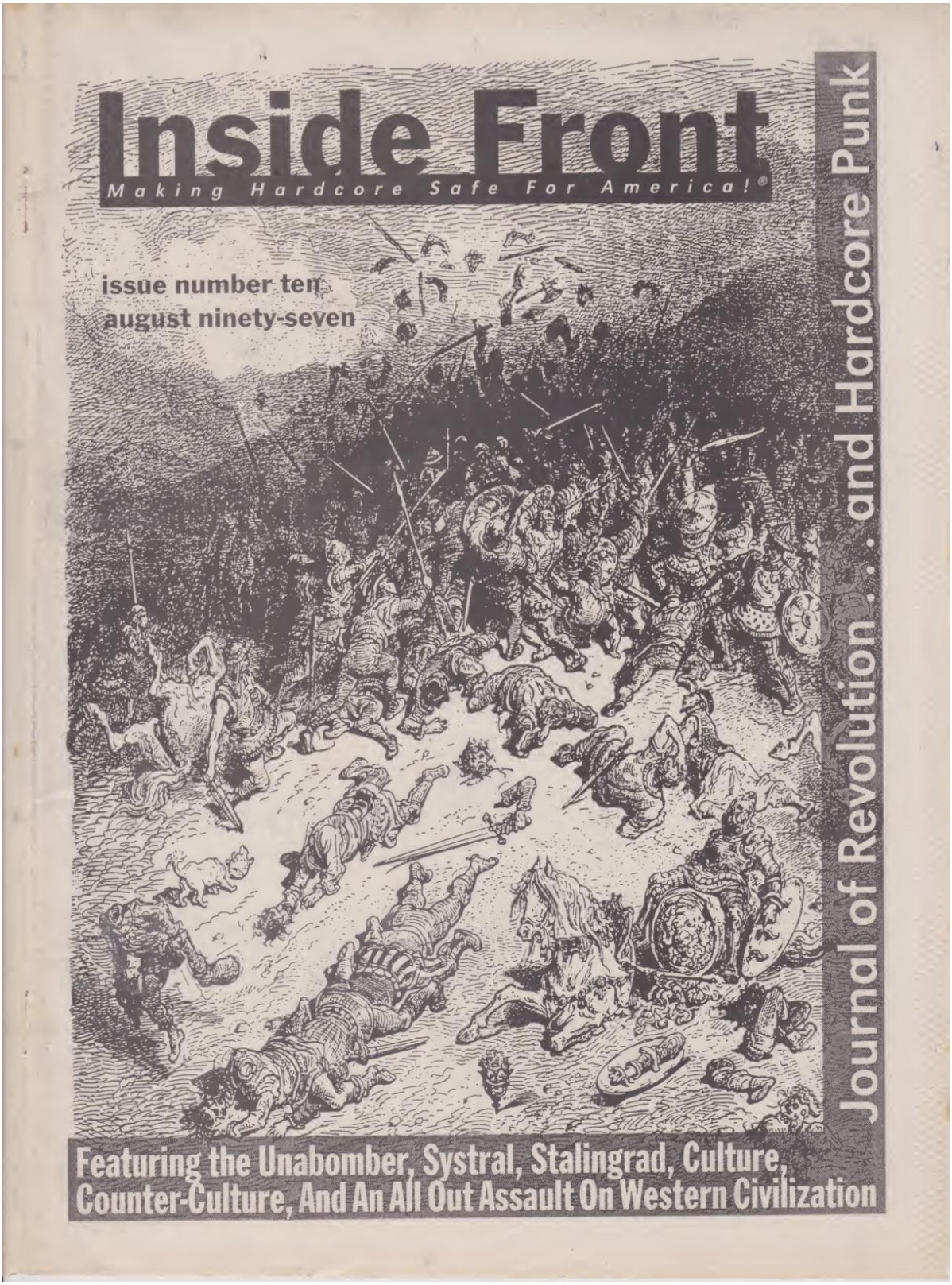
You're probably reading this magazine because you're interested in music made by bands from the hardcore punk community. Why does this particular music speak to you? Hardcore music is filled with fury, with rage, with passionate desires and high aspirations. It is music for people who are discontent, who want more out of life, who are angry about something. I think it's safe to say that most of the people who are involved in the hardcore community are drawn to it because they are dissatisfied with the world around them, and are conscious that they want something more. This even includes those who only seem to be involved in it for entertainment and social interaction, for otherwise, why did they choose hardcore over other "youth subcultures"?

The fact is that there are a lot of dissatisfied people in America today, and a lot of dissatisfied people in Europe and Asia too — in Africa, in South America, in Australia. There's a lot to be dissatisfied about in the world today. Anyone who thinks we live in the best of all possible worlds is not fucking paying attention.

So the obvious question is: What is it we are angry about? Why are we drawn to hardcore punk? What do we really want? There may be a thousand different answers to those questions, even a thousand different answers for each of us. But we owe it to ourselves to answer them, if we want to get anything out of our lives at all, out of our very numbered days — how many more days, months, decades can we waste living unfulfilled?

Thus, Inside Front. This magazine is dedicated to not only providing news about hardcore music, but also to the next logical step: addressing the question of exactly what it is that so many of us are so frustrated about and what we can do about it. We don't claim to have any final answers. But we do have some ideas we would like to put forward, in case some of you find them relevant to your own lives. For if hardcore is the music of frustration, then discussing the causes of this frustration — and what to do about them — must be an integral part of keeping up with the music itself.

And so, finally, "revolution." By "revolution" we mean change, fundamental change in our lives, to make them lives that we can live proudly and happily — change *now, * not in some far off hypothetical future. Many people are intimidated by this word, even though they are unhappy with their present lives. They think that real change is impossible, so in their despair it hurts too much to even think about it. But* we *have*


Inside Front
Making Hardcore Safe For America!®
issue number ten
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Journal of Revolution . . . and Hardcore Punk
Featuring the Unabomber, Systral, Stalingrad, Culture,
Counter-Culture, And An All Out Assault On Western Civilization

not given in to despair. We feel closer to our goals every day as we identify the forces that have held us back and decide how to strike against them. We will settle for nothing less than attaining our dreams and desires — life is too short for anything else!

This issue will (hopefully) come out immediately before I leave to tour for three months with Catharsis and Gehenna. My lease (on the infamous Inside Front basement cubicle where I've lived, loosely speaking, for the last three years) runs out just before we leave, so if you have that address or phone number, Mt won't be useful any more; just write to us at the Atlanta CrimethInc. address and it will reach me eventually. I don't expect to be able to have a living space of my own again for quite a long time, at least until sometime in 1998, but I have plenty of friends who will help me out — so that shouldn't interfere with this magazine any more than my lifestyle usually does.

Let me fill you in briefly on the purpose of this magazine, in case the corporate record label you work for in "promotions" has only recently added Inside Front to your list of magazines. Inside Front does NOT exist to promote music. This is not just a music magazine, and it's definitely not a music business magazine. All the fucking press packets I get from you go straight in the trash — nothing makes me more sick than the way your companies sell music as if it were soap. Music has the power to fill people with love and hate, to bring the dead back to life — and *we are* the dead in America and Europe today, we need passionate music more than anything else — but you just fucking treat it as another way to pay for your cable TV. When you do that you take away whatever power it had, and leave us here in this world of shit with NOTHING: nothing but fucking products to purchase and cute advertisements to make us purchase them.

And yes, I've heard all that shit about how "we've all got to eat" and we have to make money in music or else we'll have to make it somewhere else. When Henry Miller, my favorite writer, wanted to quit his shit job at the telegraph company and start writing books, his "friends" tried to dissuade him: "but you've got to eat, " they said. Henry Miller writes that when he looked back through history at all the men and women who had accomplished anything with their lives, their universal answer to this question was: "No, you don't have to eat." If you want to *live, * to be free to pursue your dreams and live according to your beliefs, to take on real challenges and live life for high stakes, there's no room for worrying about convenience or comfort. I'd rather be sleepless and starving and* true to myself *than another bored, well-fed cog in the wheel helping to ruin our world with every apathetic day.*

So I don't give a fuck about being a good businessman with this magazine. I don't give a fuck about being professional or responsible or providing for the future. As long as I think Inside Front will be useful to people who need it and meaningful for me to do it, I will, and when that time is over I'll fucking quit. I'm at a point in my life when most of the people my age are figuring out how to find a place for themselves in the status quo, reinterpreting their former opposition to all its objectionable attributes as mere youthful rebellion. Myself, I only feel more driven every day to figure out how to live free of the restrictions and controls everyone else is accepting on their time,

their desires, their future. The more of these restrictions they accept, the less they are able to see any other way of life, and the more hopeless everything seems. So the main purpose of Inside Front is to aid in the struggle of the hardcore punk community (and other counter-culture communities) to make it possible to choose lives and lifestyles different from the constricting, destructive ones the status quo offers us — NOT to sell music, to sell youth culture, or even to sell ideas.

Anyway, enough fucking rhetoric. We've already got enough to live up to with this issue, especially for the jaded old has-beens we're becoming! I hope each of you can find something in here that is exciting and useful to you. I try not to be one of those distant and unreachable magazine editors, so if there's anything I can do for you or you want to reach me personally, please feel free to get in touch.

The world only began to get something of value from me the moment I stopped being a serious member of society and became — *myself.* The State, the nation, the united nations of the world, were nothing but one great aggregation of individuals who repeated the mistakes of their forefathers.They were caught in the wheel from birth and they kept at it till death — and this treadmill they tried to dignify by calling it "life." If you asked anyone to explain or define life, what was the be-all and end-all, you got a blank look for an answer. Life was something which philosophers dealt with in books that no one read. Those in the thick of life, "the plugs in harness, " had no time for such idle questions. *"You've got to eat, haven't you?" This* query, which was supposed to be a stopgap, and which had already been answered, at least not. in the absolute negative at least in a disturbingly relative negative by those who knew, was a clue to all the questions which followed in a veritable Euclidean suite. From the little reading I had done I had observed that the men who were most *in* life, who were molding life, who were life itself, ate little, slept little, owned little or nothing. They had no illusions about duty, or the perpetuation of their kith and kin, or the preservation of the State. They were interested in truth and in truth alone. They recognized only one kind of activity — *creation.* Nobody could command their services because they had of their own pledged themselves to give all.They gave gratuitously, because that is the only way to give. This was the way of life which appealed to me: it made sound sense. It *was* life — not the simulacrum which those about me worshipped."

— Henry Miller, _Sexus_

""You've got to eat?" Well, yeah, but not as often as *you* eat."

— Al Burian, _Burn Collector_

Catharsis Samsara cd

Catharsis is beyond your lying, timid marolity. They destroy ond burn without judgement — kicking in windows, smashing splinters into eyes, they use their bload to write the poetry of their existench. With guitdrs like the twisted, burning wreckage af on oirliner falling back ta eorth, the rhythm of o Lotin American guerilla wor, ond

vocals from the filthiest cell in o mental ward after twa weeks on a hunger strike, their second olbum leaves yau wanting mare, with an insane desire to ...

Gehenna discography cd

the war of the suns of light and the suns of darkness

Gehenna's music has long Jjeen impossible to acquire because all of , $_{s}$ their records have been released by members af the band, who lead * h^{ves} of homeless, jobless freedom financed by anti-corporate crime.

But here, collected before any af them have been put in prison far good, ace oil of their studio recordings to dote, totaling twelve tracks. Gehenno play ragged, ugly, furious music, os uncompromising as their lives, with gutturol. vocols and bitterly poetic lyrics.

These songs are what it H sounds like to starve, to steal, ta sleep an the street, to fight against overwhelming odds far & physical and mental sur- B vival ...and ta never, ever f surrender.

Heil Is now, excruciation is this — this very instant in time, the present tense

both cds are each $10 U$A/ $12 world t wholesale prices: $6 U$A / $8 world

crimelhinc@ pobox.com `http://www.pobox.com/~crimethinc`

695 Rangewood Dr. Atlanta GA 30345 U$A

In Our Time — 12" Record

Jesus, Damad, Systral, Gehenna, Congress, Timebomb, Final Exit

Each of these bands, in its own way, personifies the spirit of the CrimethInc. undertaking: they all stand in defiant opposition to the existing social, political, and economic order, and offer instead their own alternatives of passionate, creative thinking and living. Musically, some of them arc devastatingly weighty and metallic, some arc brcathtakingly fast and straightforward, while others arc more discordant and hypnotic, but all arc moving and original. In addition to an insert which includes pages V of lyrics and other information provided by the bands, we have published a CrimethInc. pamphlet to accompany the music on this record. This pamphlet describes in detail the particular social/cultural forces against which we have chosen to take a stand, explains why these forces arc so dangerous to human happiness and freedom, and outlines possible resistance tactics which individuals can put into practice in their everyday lives.

This is not just a recording of abrasive, angry music, or a collection of revolutionary ideas, although it is both; above all this is vital proof that even in these standardized, subjugated times, there are a number of individuals who are doing everything in their power to make life meaningful and worthwhile for us all.

Catharsis CD $8, write for catalog
^Crlmethlnc.^; £, HS
CrimethInc. — its a slave's only right... to rebel, crimethinc@pobox.com
$8 USA/$10 world postage paid wholesale $5 USA/$7 worldppd

Letterbombs

Inside Front —

What the hell? Two issues ago you were talking about how it was important to have a good work ethic, which I could relate to, and now you say no one should work at all? Well, what do you think we should do instead? How the fuck are we gonna eat or get anything done? And if you're so against work, don't you think there are WORKERS in the factory where you get Inside Front printed? Besides, what about the people who like their jobs? Mine's OK.

Dan Spalding, P.O. Box 683, Hagerstown, MD 21740

*Dearest Dan, *

Originally I wrote a long reiteration of the article in #9 which you are referring to (even though 1 don't get the impression that you even read it!) in response to your letter, but on second thought, 1 feel that the original article spoke so well for itself so that you should just go back and read it again. Here are a couple quick points:

1. Of course I get Inside Front printed by "workers" (i.e. people who do what they do for money, not just because it's fun for

"if

you're so against work, don't you think there are WORKERS in

the factory where you get Inside Front printed?"

them). The fact that it's almost ifnpossible to get a magazine printed any other way is itself reason for us to doubt the system we live under... it doesn't give us any options. So you make a point in FAVOR of reconsidering the work/leisure system.

2. Many people, like you, think their jobs are "OK. " But, since we only have a limited number of years to spend on this earth, do we have TIME to spend doing things that are just "OK"? Human beings are adaptable, and can adjust to almost anything. Walk into any workplace and ask one of the workers there: "If you could be doing anything in the world right now, what would it be?" Not many people will answer '"flipping burgers!" "selling real estate!" "attending office meetings!" or "painting houses!" [I'm not suggesting that it's impossible to enjoy doing any of those things — lam suggesting that people don't enjoy them as much as they could, because they have to do them as "work" rather than its opposite: "play"] Do we have time in our lives to waste on halfhearted contentment, or should we always be pushing to live each day to the fullest? Most people are simply afraid to pursue their dreams because they know that in order to eat, receive health care, and survive, they have to spend the better part of their lives working for some employer, doing what they are told rather than doing what they desire.

But there ARE alternatives to living this way, and if we want to get the most out of our lives, we should consider those!

To give some more perspective on the whole work issue, I 've included a piece of writing about my own experiences with employment and UNemployment. This is something we can all put into effect in our individual lives, it's not just some nonsensical abstract theory'!

Inside Front-

I'd like to comment on the letter in Inside Front #8 by E. Maidstone.

The assumption that our life is economic in nature, which is certainly true to some extent, at least in the system we live in, in the way it was presented, seemed to be rigidly linking a good life to being financially privileged. It's undeniable that a certain amount is, in this society, necessary to survive, but believing that it immediately "buys" you happiness or the "privilege" of being straight edge is about the same mentality that is presented in TV soap operas. "You could be poor, you could be rich, that does not exclude you from the pain..." There are other levels of suffering found throughout the classes, like domestic violence, and drug abuse, too. But in the upper classes it is glamorized even more, and they can afford to go into some private rehab clinic or silence their abused children with a good lawyer and a court order or get them a shrink, whatever.

The reasoning in the letter has a bit of an authoritarian streak to it, conveying an image that the ghettos are only occupied by drug addicts, gangsters and the like, and that it is impossible to create anything positive in such an environment, which is simply not true, I believe, and takes away from the achievements of individuals or groups who try to better their situation, be it economically or spiritually.

That a standard is set by a privileged part of society, like the primarily white (male) middle class SXE scene, does not have to automatically devalue the idea behind it, although it should remain a reason to view it critically. And should it turn into a new dogma for the world to follow, there are already enough of those. The , world doesn't need a new religion, and it is still a personal choice.

Finally, living a drug-free lifestyle should allow anyone, especially if you're obviously faced with economic and political oppression in your everyday life, like in the ghetto, to focus on that, and direct the energy set free against the government. Of course, this newfound energy is easily misdirected and abused by the religions mentioned in the letter or political forces just waiting to gain power. So, education should be provided for, for example, by the privileged, well-off, middle class XXX kids. So much on that.

Take care,

Jani Jarvinen, Stockackerring 33, 0–85551 Kirchheim, Germany

Inside Front. & Co.-

Thank you to Adel 156 for the article on de Sade in I.E #9. It is a bright and beautiful thing to see philosophy being discussed in the pages of a hardcore magazine.

My. thoughts:

I absolutely agree to the importance of philosophers such as de Sade and Nietzche, but only in the sense that they had to exist for us to be able to create a viable moral philosophy without the empty rhetoric of organized religion.

What I mean is:

The only thing we can be sure of is life. And, as de Sade said, there are natural desires and emotions that come with human life. The first of these is knowledge of the self and protection of the self: egoism. That is the value of de Sade, Nietzche, and nihilist philosophy in general: the stripping down of centuries of religious morality to the acknowledgment of the only thing we can be absolutely sure of: (again) life.

Now, as I agree with the concepts of life and egoism as a start, I can not agree

How I Spent My Permanent Vacation

How I Spent My Permanent Vacation CrimethInc. anti-work, Inside Front 1996 Retrieved on 3rd November 2020 from crimethinc.com en 2020-11-03T09:56:35

More than what I eat, whether or not I use drugs, and what bands I go to see, the bottom line for me as a member of the hardcore community and the counterculture in general is this: stay unemployed. Do whatever it takes, but keep my time and my labor to myself. I'm proud to say that it's been over three years now since I worked at any job for someone else. Here's why — and how.

WHY

First of all, and most importantly, there just isn't any other feeling that can compare with the sensation of complete freedom and self-determination. I wake up in the morning, when I want to, and make plans to do things that day — to do what I want to. Nobody can buy a beautiful sunny day away from me at seven dollars an hour. If I suddenly have a new inspiration or idea, I can pursue it spontaneously without having to worry about how it will reflect on my future employment. I'm free to suddenly go on tour with my favorite band, to accidentally run into an old friend and spend the day catching up on lost time, or to stay home all day and write the first chapter of a novel if I am moved to. So my life contains a great deal more diversity and spontaneous opportunity than it would otherwise. And because I don't have to do the same thing over and over every day, all day (for example, sell real estate, wait tables, or program computers), I can do enough different things to keep everything fresh and exciting.

And of course I do things! I don't just hang out or sit around — I have all the energy that would otherwise be drained from me at work free to use on all the projects I care about. I can go to the library here (it's only $10, for anyone, for a yearly membership at the university library here — that even includes their video and CD libraries) and read or watch old movies, I can exercise, I can play music, write, do all sorts of creative, self-improving, productive things. If I had been working the past three years, it would have been impossible for me to have made Inside Front what it is — I wouldn't have had the time or energy to research and write it, to organize and publish it, or to distribute it the way I have. The same goes for Catharsis, the band I play in; the music we have made and the experiences we have had traveling and performing mean

more to me than any amount of money ever could, and Catharsis has taken up a lot of time that I wouldn't have had if I worked. The same goes for my involvement in CrimethInc. — because I don't sell my time to some office or business establishment, I have time of my own to dedicate to helping bands that I love get their music packaged the way it should be and available to others. The same goes for my involvement in other projects — writing for other magazines and pamphlets, fliering, and being active in my community in other ways. If I worked, even if it was at a job I liked (at a cafe with a relaxed atmosphere, etc.), I might not be unhappy, but my life certainly would not be as fulfilling as it has been with all of these activities in it in place of traditional employment.

Better yet, I get to work on these things that I care about however I see fit. I'm not following instructions, attempting to impress anyone who will be evaluating me for a promotion, or working within the confines of any restrictions on my efforts. I have completely free reign for my creativity. I can decide for myself how and when I will be most productive, rather than having to show up at work at 9 am every day whether that is good for my concentration or not. Thus I can make myself more effective and efficient than any boss ever could.

Finally, and most importantly, I'm voting both with my dollars and my time and energy against the existing system. I don't approve of the way most of my friends are treated in their places of employment; they usually have to deal with overbearing or incompetent managers, their tasks are often boring and repetitive, and they are typically not even given enough money to be able to take care of all their needs (many of which needs — nice clothes, transportation, etc. — are created by their jobs). I don't approve of the way many corporations conduct business (i.e. mistreating and slaughtering animals, destroying the environment, exploiting their workers, supporting governments that oppress and exploit their citizens, making products that are harmful to humans and the environment, etc.) and I also don't approve of the way our economy functions (with so many companies being interconnected and owned by multinational corporations) to force us to practically support the entire system whenever we support any particular company. When I don't work for them, they don't get to use my labor to perpetuate the status quo. When I don't receive an income from them, I don't have capital to give back to them for them to use to perpetuate the status quo. And most of all, my time and energy are mine to be used to fight against them, rather than to support present conditions. For example — how many of you know vegans who work at places that serve meat and dairy products, or other people in similar situations? We have to get away from that sort of thing.

HOW

Really, everybody already knows everything I've just described. Most people, if they had the choice, would love to leave their jobs or at least get new ones. Well-

publicized, reputable poles have estimated the proportion of Americans unhappy with their jobs to be as high as 90%. That's shocking, considering that our work is usually the most central and important thing in our lives. But people don't feel that they have any alternatives. The companies they work for will only let them have the goods and services they need to survive if they earn the money to pay for them.

My solution to that problem is to see which goods and services I can do without, and to look elsewhere for the others. I don't buy Pepsi to drink with every meal — that stuff isn't too good for you anyway, and Pepsi Co. is involved in some really bad shit. I don't spend a lot of money in bars or nightclubs; there are plenty of free activities I can do with my friends that are just as exciting. I don't buy fashionable or expensive clothing. I don't spend money on expensive amenities that are supposed to "save time" — because the truth is, they don't. Otherwise, where the fuck is all the time we should have saved up by now with our fast food, our microwave ovens, our automobiles, our fax machines, our computers? We're busier than ever today, overloaded with so many different demands on our time from these different "time-saving" devices and the jobs we work at to buy them.

So where do I get food, shelter, and other necessities? Food — I almost never pay for it. Here, even in North Carolina, which is not too diverse socially or culturally, we have this thing called Food Not Bombs. F.N.B. is basically a group of people who go to all the restaurants, grocery stores, etc. and collect the food they are going to throw away at the end of each day — because it's no secret that a LOT of perfectly good food goes to waste in those places. F.N.B. then serves this food downtown so that everyone who is hungry can have food to eat. I eat there twice a week, and each time they have a fair bit of food (bread, vegetables, canned food, etc.) left over that I can take home with me. Even if your town has nothing like Food Not Bombs, you can put the ideas into practice easily enough — before F.N.B. started here, I used to go to my friend's burrito shop and collect the beans, chips, and rice they would have thrown away at closing time. The Hare Krishnas serve free dinners here too, once a week, and I have no scruples about eating their food — who knows what they would do with those resources if they weren't spending them on keeping me fed? You can probably find similar opportunities that are unique to your area if you look. The consumer economy thrives on excess, so why not take advantage of it? Obviously this system wouldn't work if everybody in the world tried to do it, but that's not going to happen for a long time, if it ever does... so in the meantime we should get by however we can as individuals. We'll worry about arranging a completely work-free world when that actually looks like it might be in range.

Far too many useful things besides food are thrown away in our conspicuously consuming society, for that matter. You can get nice furniture that college students leave by the dumpsters at the end of the school year when they move out of their apartments. I have friends who have found everything from working clocks, stereos, and vacuum cleaners to new athletic shoes in dumpsters. And if you find the right

thrift shop (not "vintage clothing" shop) you can dress yourself pretty well for less pocket change than you can scrape out of a public fountain in one night.

Shelter is the second most serious challenge to a person who wants to avoid working (health care is the most serious, and I don't have any easy answers for that one yet). In Europe and, to a lesser extent, New York, squatting is a possibility. People often complain to me that squats are too dirty and dangerous for them, but I think if the people who do not choose to live under dirty and dangerous conditions normally were to organize squats of their own, that (obviously) their squats would not be too dirty or dangerous. Think how much fucking money you could save if you didn't pay rent! Even if squatting is not an option (since it is sort of discouraged by the authorities), it's possible to arrange cheap places to live. Plenty of people I know pay only a little over a hundred dollars a month to share an old house with a bunch of friends. I've known people who have been paid to stay at someone's house and take care of it while they were gone; I've known people who have worked on the house where they lived (painted it, etc.) in exchange for paying little or no rent; the list goes on. The possibilities are endless and ever changing, so I can only give examples here — you have to find concrete opportunities for yourself.

As for things that have to do with the hardcore scene — often if you're active, doing something that is useful to people (because I'm trying to encourage that here by speaking out against work, NOT discourage it!) you can barter it for the records, 'zines., etc. that you're interested in. If you write reviews, you can get all that stuff for free; you could trade a traveling band food or a place to sleep in return for their record; you could trade some rare records for a tattoo or vice versa; trade a copy of your friend's 'zine for another one that interests you; volunteer to help organize and clean up after a show in return for free admission.

Another way to make ends meet when you're unemployed is — brace yourself — stealing from corporations. This can range from the very petty to the other side of the spectrum. You can get a variety of materials you may need from some simple, low risk urban hunting and gathering. Toilet paper is, obviously, everywhere; so are cleaning products, matches, salt and pepper, coathangers, cardboard boxes, light bulbs, batteries (you can get them out of smoke detectors, for example, if you don't think it will endanger anyone), staples and staplers, pens, soap — just keep your eyes open. Copy shops often have tape, folders, markers, paper, and a million other typical "office" needs (it's a well-known fact that Kinko's has financed punk rock in the U.S.A. almost single-handedly). For that matter, stealing from the workplace is a time-honored American tradition, since so many people are so frustrated there; if you make friends with people who do work at these companies, chances are they will be happy to share a little of their companies' resources with you. Example? Since Inside Front #4, three years ago, I haven't paid for a single xerox copy; that includes thousands of copies of each issue from 4 through 7, thousands of pamphlets, and literally tens of thousands of fliers.

Do I feel bad about this? No. Corporations are distinct from traditional businesses in that they exist as separate financial entities from their owners. When you steal from

a large corporation, you're stealing from a business entity that exists to perpetuate itself rather than from a private individual. Sure, private individuals profit from these corporations, and some of them are not really all that bad; others, though, like Pepsi or Marlboro, are up to some really bad things, and the less resources they have to pursue those goals the better. Most of the workers at these corporations receive a set salary, and will not suffer too much if you steal from the corporation. These corporations, in fact, usually figure some loss from theft, etc. into their budgets — they know that's the price they must pay for doing business in an environment where their workers feel little loyalty to their employers or fulfillment in their work, and many people in society are hungry, fed up with their jobs, and fed up with being "honest" and waiting fruitlessly for change. If you actually did steal more from a company than they were prepared for, the people who will probably lose money are the stockholders — and the majority of stock is not held by working class men and women who are counting on it to be able to take care of their families. And if so much theft somehow occurred that these huge corporations like Kmart and McDonalds had to close, I would shed no tears about it! These companies and the multinationals that own them would disappear, never again to wreak wholesale destruction upon the earth's environment, never again to sell the same unhealthy, nasty-tasting hamburgers in every town from Los Angeles to Moscow through sheer force of advertising dollars. Perhaps they would be replaced by individuals who could be held accountable for their behavior by their communities; individuals who would care about their communities and act accordingly, rather than having to obey the impersonal and disinterested orders of a faceless profit machine. Individuals like my friend who owns the Burrito shop, who would give me food when he knew I couldn't afford it — because he knew I would do the same for him.

Anyway... Certainly, I'll admit it does take some time and energy to avoid working; you have to spend a fair bit of each figuring out how to survive without a steady income (at least you can do this on your own time, when and how you want to). Not to mention that you will have to go without some comforts and conveniences you may have been used to; but is that stuff really more important to you than anything else? Of course, more than anything else, it helps to have the support and camaraderie of your friends in an undertaking like staying unemployed, and that's where our hardcore community comes into this.

How Does This Relate to Hardcore?

Being a one-person economy is extremely difficult. Even if you don't work, you will still have no free time if you have to arrange all your food, all your shelter, all of your needs for yourself from scratch. But with others to work with, it becomes a lot easier. Food Not Bombs, the organization that I mentioned earlier, works so easily and smoothly because it is a group effort. Because a number of people help with obtaining the food, cooking, serving, and cleaning, it isn't that much work for any one individual,

and the whole thing seems more like a friendly social event than a demanding task. The same goes for all the other ways of obtaining resources to stay unemployed — not only are they easier in groups, but you will feel less alienated from the world if you do them with others.

Imagine if the hardcore scene wasn't just a bunch of kids wearing funny clothes, practicing their dance moves and camera angles at punk shows once every couple weeks. Imagine if everyone in the hardcore community, at least those who could (because of course not everyone can), quit their jobs and used all the potential energy we have as idealistic young people to try to develop a new way of life. We could use the networks we have already set up for touring bands, distribution, etc. to support each other in our attempt to break away from the employment system. Imagine how much creative energy would be unleashed, if we all stopped exhausting ourselves for "the man" and put that energy back into our own lives! Surely, all together we would be able to make something like that work. And then we would no longer be just another subculture with our own characteristic "rebellious music" and "fashionable clothing." We would be a fucking counterculture, a force that would work effectively against the status quo we all claim to reject — for the contents of our daily lives would, by themselves, do more to change the way the world works than our words ever could.

Does this sound difficult? It probably will be! But whether it is impossible or not can only be determined by trying it. And besides, what do we have to lose? Are our diet sodas and home entertainment systems really worth the lives we must sell away to buy them?

Letter bombs

defensively, to protect ourselves and our freedoms from those who would harm and restrict us by force. And there are forces here in the West that do restrict our freedom with violence or the threat of violence — what the fuck do you think cops are? How about prisons, how about the death penalty'? Why should we accept the domination of those forces over us any more than we would accept the domination of others who do not wear uniforms or work for the State? the editor.

Inside Front-

I just have some considerations about the fact that some straight edge kids/bands do no longer want to be seen as "straight edge"; something they were very proud of in times that it wasn't as well known, as it is now. Their explanation is that they don't want to be a part of the flock, that they want to do, just what they want do. But wasn't it trying to improve something by being straight edge that they wanted,

or was it just about being different, I ask myself. If you want to change something in the community you are going to need the help of the rest of the people in it. I'm personally very glad that more and more people are getting involved. It is almost impossible to escape

from being a part of a group. You can tell yourself that you are not and at the same time look around you and see the people you hang out with; dressing the same way- and by this I don't mean that there is any importance in the way you dress, but you can't deny it that hardcore/punk/straight edge/... kids are almost always recognizable as so (Why should this be considered a bad thing, every time I meet someone, it reminds me that I'm not alone and it makes it less difficult to go up to them to talk and to exchange ideas) — very often you listen to the same music; have the same ideas... Of course this is normal, that is just what makes it fun to hang out with them and you are there to support each other. The most important thing however is to always keep in mind what your goals are, and not to blindly follow your friends in whatever they do. I'm aware of the fact that there are kids who call themselves straight, to give themselves a certain image. But I'm sure that that kind of people don't stick around long and they are not worth it to give everything up for. And maybe some kids are being misjudged: they are called fake just because they haven't been SXE long enough; or because they listen to the "wrong" music... In my opinion the real hypocrites are those people who consider themselves to good to go and talk to these "fake/ uncool"-kids, so they won't even get a chance to learn what being straight is all about. Maybe, and I really do hope so, they just want to lose the name SXE, because they are afraid that it is going to be (or already is?) a fashion trend. In this case I couldn't agree more, but I hope they don't lose their faith in the theories behind it. I'm not saying that all I wrote just now is true for everyone. Everyone should decide for themselves whether they want to go, or stay straight (even if you don't want to call it that anymore). Surely they have their own motivations to declare they no longer are SXE but I would certainly like to hear what those motivations really are, cause the explanation seems a bit vague to me sometimes.

P. Hellriegel Heimolenstraat 28 3630 Maasmechelen BELGIUM

[Image not archived]

Dear Inside Front

Moderation is the key*. In all the issues of Inside Front since its first photocopied installment I can't recall an instance where our esteemed editor has said anything positive about the medium to which I have devoted my life. In the last issue (#9), the page directing following editor's note even included a rant titled "Caution: Television is a Slippery Enemy" continuing this anti-tv crusade my greatly respected friend has continued to wage. In this vignette, Mr. Dingledine raises some points I cannot contest, especially in regard to the hypocrisy existing in the hardcore scene's fight against corporate entities while still accepting MTV or other "news" outlets offers of the chance to get their voices heard. He disagrees with the widely popular notion of the mass media usefulness in information disbursement, claiming that it perpetuates the larger problem of television addiction. I must insist that those are two separate arguments, one dealing with the widely circulated myth that no one under 26 watches anything but MTV and the latter concentrating on the lazy ass people who wake up to Jerry

Springer and have seen all the "Roseanne" reruns. Watching tv doesn't make anyone watch more tv, having no life makes people watch tv.

This begs the question: why would anyone in the hardcore scene not have a life?

Most of us have plenty of sober time to ponder what to do with the rest of our day when we are done making "X's" on our hands with MagnaMarkers TM. I would understand not having a life if you didn't have so much in common with thousands of people all over the world who would love a pen-pal to exchange music and news with. You could pose the non-existent life argument if you didn't have hundreds of MAG Azines (don't be just a fan) available which address enough topics to keep anyone fairly interested; and if they don't talk about what interests you, write your own! The most important thing about the hardcore scene is that everyone can contribute something without getting into a clique or being rich or having any musical talent. Even before one gets the chance to climb on that stage to be adored, he can review records and shows for a local zine or make a few extra copies of a flyer of an upcoming show to pass out to open- minded kids at school. Simple acts of giving time and energy are what makes us different from people who need to spend thirty bucks a month before a show in the hopes of getting within 200 feet of the stage to hear songs they enjoy.

Starting in this issue is a 3-part article on how to do a tv show. The very nature of television is the reason we should be opposed to it for the most part. It exists to make the rich richer by getting the poor addicted so that advertising serves its purpose. That doesn't rule out the possibility that it does offer some positive aspects to information disbursement that wouldn't be otherwise available. Producing any visual programming is very expensive and to have it available for others to see can add thousands of dollars to your costs. Television, especially with the advent of cable and satellite, makes it possible to gain access to millions of households from one copy of your project. If you do a documentary on your scene, you can make some money selling the tapes for a few dollars over the duplication costs and maybe sell a few hundred outside of your area, OR you could have it broadcast all over the world and thousands of people could grow to love your local bands.

And heck, if you want to watch a show on the mating rituals of emus, don't hesitate. There are many animals not indigenous to my area, or even my continent, which I am interested in; and while I would love to go watch them mate in person (that was a joke, jeesh), time nor finances allow. And if Congress is in session debating a bill that directly effects me, although I am lucky enough to only live 30 minutes away from seeing it live, I would be whisked away after my 20 minutes of spectator time is up so I would miss the whole argument. It's a matter of priorities. Do I really need to know who the 25 year old secretary from Los Angeles is going'to pick on "Love Connection;" should I watch Tom Brokaw or read every interesting article in the newspaper in the same amount of time. I admit, sometimes I am weak and need to see what the after looks like on makeover day, but usually I don't even find the time to turn the tv on in the first place.

Your whole life is about rebellion anyway, so add Brian D to your list. Who is he to tell you how to spend your time? Maybe your butt will expand and you will be able to sing commercial jingles to make yourself a more well rounded person. Eventually you can hope to earn a spot on a television trivia game show and be able to pay off your satellite dish with your winnings. Dare to dream. Love, Susan Wills

*Only in television. Be a voracious reader, laugh until everyone calls you gigglebutt, and put your heart into cooking and letting your friends know they are loved. And call your mother.

*Susan Dearest, *

You say that "watching tv doesn't make anyone watch more tv, having no life makes people watch tv" Well, this was the point of the article you are responding to: Watching tv makes you have no life. See how that works ?

The more you watch things without actually participating in things, the less you have going on in your own life, and the more likely you are to turn on the television for some vicarious excitement rather than doing something yourself Of course, "moderation in all things" (although that sounds dangerously like the line my mother used to use to try to talk me out of feeling strongly about anything!) — there could be some benefits to watching television sporadically, I suppose. But for me, they'll never even make it worth the money I would have to spend to buy a television and cable tv. The money you spend on that shit has to come from somewhere, you know! And it's not worth it to me to go back to the fucking workforce just so I can learn some "commercial jingles" to hum on my lunchbreak.*

— **Brian D.***

Selling Ourselves Out

(Why just "selling things" is inherently counter-revolutionary)

Look at the hardcore community, from a distance — what do you see? The most visible signs of our existence, besides bands playing in basements and rented out halls, are the 'zines and records we sell. And open up almost any one of those 'zines, and you see advertisements for other 'zines, other records, other products. In fact, aside from the advertisements, what are most of our 'zines about? The record reviews, the 'zine reviews, the top ten lists all deal with products to buy and sell. The photos of hardcore bands hopping around and shouting invariably feature kids dressed in certain styles (band shirts, tattoos, etc.), as if to indicate that these fashions, which are not too cheap, are an intrinsic part of being involved in hardcore.

And when you get more deeply involved in hardcore, you find that you really do spend quite a bit of time buying and selling products. You start going to more shows and buying the records and 'zines you hear about. You buy some band shirts and maybe purchase some clothes, piercings, or tattoos that are similar to the ones your friends in the hardcore community have. You start a 'zine of your own, and have to worry about how to buy the copies to make it, and — how to sell it. You start a band, and worry about making demos and selling them, about buying equipment and being paid to play shows; you start a distribution, and worry about how to sell all the things you order; you start a record label, and you worry about selling records, buying advertising, selling more records, more and more buying and selling. That seems to be one of the main themes of hardcore today, if not the main theme: economics. One of the main things that identifies a kid who is getting involved in hardcore is the records and 'zines he buys; and the people who are more deeply involved usually spend even more time thinking about economics — worrying about money, about promoting their products, about sales and profits, since most of the projects we undertake in hardcore right now seem to be business enterprises. That's the problem: most of the projects we undertake in the hardcore community right now seem to be business enterprises.

Of course we have to sell things to be able to make them and share them with each other at all, living as we do in a capitalist system where it's difficult get anything for free. But if this is the case, we still should be more aware of the effects of the ways we conduct business, and also strive for alternatives so that we will not be limited to only one form of interaction. And if we truly are interested in transforming our lives in fundamental ways, rather than just going through the motions of being another youth subculture, buying and selling products should play a much smaller role in our community than it does. It should be extremely clear from looking at the corporate exploitation of the hippy subculture, the (pop) punk subculture, and a thousand other youth subcultures that any community/subculture that focuses primarily on products and image is vulnerable to being taken over by corporate interests. We can't beat "the Man" by playing his own game. Besides, there are so many other kinds of interaction that are worth trying, that might be better for all of us.

Selling Things Is Not "Progress"

First of all, and most importantly, we must remember that by itself selling things does not accomplish anything. Just because more kids bought hardcore records this year than ever before does not mean that the ideas on those hardcore records are going to affect more people in genuine ways. In fact, some methods of promotion and distribution that work to increase sales also work to distract attention (both the record label's attention and the buyers' attention) from the ideas that are addressed on the record, as we'll discuss below.

Buying and selling goods and services is the foundation of our economy here in the U.S.A, and Europe, and consequently, it often seems to be the central focus of our lives. We spend half of our waking hours and most of our energy at our careers, and almost all the careers available have to do with selling things or services, or promoting those sales, etc. And where has that gotten us? The companies that sell the most useless products, like Coca Cola, achieve the biggest sales, because they can afford to spend the most money on advertising and promoting their pointless product. A number of large corporations are destroying the environment (McDonalds, Exxon, etc.) and animals (the meat and dairy industry), financing oppression of human beings (Pepsi, etc.), promoting products that destroy people (the tobacco industry, etc.), and mistreating or underpaying their workers (Nike and almost every other corporation I can think of) — all in the name of profit, because profit is the most important goal in this kind of economy. The corporations that will not sell things as ruthlessly as the others, that will not stomp over anything in their path to increase sales, die out, while the corporations that act with the least concern for the world in their quest for sales come to dominate the economy (and thus the world) when "selling things" is the main focus. The products that cater to the lowest common denominator (bad television shows, silly movies, etc.) achieve the widest sales in this system, and come to dominate our lives. Because our society treats "selling things" as an end rather than a means, we live in a world that is fucked up in a thousand different ways.

Do we really want to mirror mainstream society in our own community by concentrating on that same kind of economic interaction? It seems possible that that system might have the same effects in hardcore that it does in mainstream society, if we're not careful. That is to say — the labels and other hardcore businesses that have the least scruples, that care the least about the value of their products and the effects of the ways they sell their products, might come to have the most power and influence in a scene where selling things is the main focus... because though other labels might care more about the way they go about business, they won't be able to compete with the marketing and business savvy of their ruthless, heartless competitors. And then, though some kids who have come to be concerned about issues like consumerism would choose to support the more independent/not-profit-motivated labels, the labels that were the most visible to the most people would be the ones who concentrated the

most on pure sales alone and thought little about anything else. In fact, if you look at hardcore right now, it's not hard to see that very thing happening.

Advertising

When you sell things, it's necessary to let people know that that they are available from you, and so advertising has become a fundamental part of the way we do business today, both inside and outside of the hardcore community. This affects us in a couple of ways. First of all, "lowest common denominator" advertising, which de-emphasizes the important qualities of the product (assuming that it has important qualities to begin with) and can lead people to purchase things which are useless to them, usually is more effective than truly informative advertising; you can imagine what kinds of products and business practices this encourages. Second, in a more subtle way, advertising in the hardcore community can actually contribute to the feeling that just buying and selling things *is* accomplishing something.

I. Most of the big corporations that use advertising to sell their products don't give a fuck about their consumers. Sales and profit are their chief motivations, so they will advertise their products in any way that will sell them, whether it is in the best interest of the buyers to buy them or not. Advertising of this kind boils down to low-level mind control: companies pay advertising agents (psychologists!) to figure out which images and rhetoric will sell a product most effectively. That's why car commercials have beautiful (so-called beautiful) women in them; that's why toothpaste commercials have meaningless statistics in them; that's why advertisements for soda and jeans are filled with things that have nothing at all to do with soda or jeans. These images, which have fucking nothing to do with whether the product will be useful to an individual viewing the advertisement, nevertheless make it more likely that the individual will buy the product. If you give a fuck about people at all, you can see how this kind of advertising is — dare I use this term? — unethical.

And unfortunately, these ads really are the ones that sell products the most effectively — even in the hardcore scene, it seems. Look in any hardcore magazine, and you see advertisements that have nothing to do with the products they are selling. Instead of using the space to^{z} tell you about the records that fuck about us, use your ad to tell us *why we* might want to buy it, rather than just trying to manipulate us.

II. But there's another issue to consider in our advertising as well. The way these corporate-style psychological advertisements work is by *selling images.* For example: a soap commercial features an attractive mother cleaning her sweet, well-behaved children's clothes, while her handsome husband relaxes in the background. This ad isn't so much selling soap as it is selling the image of the "perfect American family" — that's why the soap itself isn't discussed at all. The silent suggestion is that if you buy the soap, it will bring with it the status of having a perfect family and a perfect household. This sounds sort of farfetched, but it really works; otherwise the thousands

and thousands of advertising agents across the U.S. and Europe would not use this technique over and over to get people to buy their products. Of course the truth is that when you buy the soap, you just get soap — a perfect family life is not included with it after all. But the suggestion still works to keep you buying it.

A similar effect can take place in hardcore advertisements that, like the ones CrimethInc. sometimes makes, tout how "revolutionary" the products being sold are. These advertisements can sometimes work the way the soap advertisement I just described works: they can create the impression that by buying the record or'zine, the revolution will come with it, when that is simply not the case. Worse than that, when they are used to advertise records revolutionary thinking and slogans become just another marketing tool to encourage kids to buy things rather than to actually cause change. "Smash the State, " which used to mean *"vigorously strive to overthrow the government and the oppressive power structures built into our modern society"* now comes to mean *"buy the new record by Chokehold! "Thus* what was once a desire for real revolution is subverted into a motivation for consuming products and keeping the wheels of the present system turning. *To sum up:* ***Are you using your band to "sell" revolution, or are you using "revolution" to* sell *your band?***

In regards to this problem, it's up to the buyer to remember that just buying a hardcore record or political pamphlet, etc. is not, by itself, going to accomplish anything. That's common sense, but advertising can sometimes obscure the issue. And it is up to the labels to resist the temptation to make advertisements that seem to suggest that buying their records will accomplish anything by itself. Labels should make sure that it is clear in their advertisements that they are only selling *tools for* revolution, not revolution itself.

How Buying Things Affects The Buyer

Besides the pitfalls of advertising, there are other possible drawbacks to selling things in the hardcore community. One of the biggest of those is that the money to buy them has to come from somewhere. The more records, 'zines, band shirts, etc. a hardcore kid buys, the more money he needs to buy them. And not everyone can live off of a distribution/ label/tattoo parlor, you know. So the more records kids buy, the more money they have to earn — the more they have to work for some employer to earn the money! Elsewhere in this issue and the last one, the unpleasant qualities of modern day employment are discussed. That's not something we want to encourage.

Because it's not even like kids are buying hardcore records instead of the usual products from objectionable corporations. In the hardcore community, we sell *luxuries, * not necessities. No matter how many records, 'zines, band shirts, etc. you purchase, you still have to pay for food, for rent, for health care. So our countercultural businesses only contribute to the problem of people having to work jobs they don't like, by making it necessary that they earn more money to pay for our hardcore products as well

as everything else. And no matter how independent and D.I.Y. our labels are, they still aren't actually fighting against big business, because those big businesses have a complete monopoly on the goods and services we need to survive. It doesn't matter much whether your CD has a bar code on it when your food, your rent, your every other need is supplied by the companies that use bar codes on CD's.

So selling things like records and 'zines, at least right now, helps to perpetuate the status quo in which everyone has to work at jobs they wish they could quit. This is not to say that it's not worth doing, if the value of the records and 'zines outweighs their negative effects on people's lives. But it's worth keeping in mind. It might be *more* worth doing to try to figure out a way to liberate ourselves permanently from the employment system, rather than spending our energy on selling luxuries like records while most of our lives must still revolve around wasted time and wasted potential...

How Selling Things Affects The Seller

When you have to concentrate on selling things, as anyone working within the confines of today's exchange economy must, it's easy to get caught up in it and forget about whatever other goals you started with. In order to function at all in spreading your releases, no matter how good your intentions are, you have to worry about being at least profitable to survive — and thus, to some degree, you have to worry about making the things that you sell marketable. The ones who are willing to compromise more to make their products sell better usually do end up selling them more effectively, so the products that reach the most people are often the ones that are the most watered-down, the least genuine.

You must compete for sales with others who may have the same goals as you, which can create unnecessary animosity, and makes people work against each other (just to survive and keep functioning) rather than together, which might be more effective in accomplishing things. This competition makes you have to think about selling competitively, and it becomes easy to associate increased sales with making progress, when in truth the things you have to do to attain these sales increases may work against the goals you originally started with.

If you started out selling things to try to spread ideas of some kind, you find that you have much less time to think about the ideas, to talk about them with others, to work on nourishing their development. Instead, you have to always be working on practical concerns. There's no time for reading books, because you haVe to answer mail-orders or buy advertisements. You spend more time arguing with distributors than you do brainstorming with others who might have valuable ideas to contribute. Pretty soon sales are all you think about, , all you have time to think about, and it becomes hard to stay focused on your original goals, or even to really remember them, through the haze of practical business concerns.

And that is why there are so many businesses in the hardcore community that started out with good intentions and were completely transformed by the years of competition and worrying about sales. Now many of them care about nothing but making money, at any cost. Selling things can do that to you — it can strip away all your ideals and dreams, until you can only focus on profit. And those who focus only on selling things for profit will never be able to change anything for the better in this world.

Other Concerns

Some people think that the problems that an exchange economy (an economy which revolves around buying and selling things) creates for human beings are insoluble inside of such a system. This analysis suggests that as long as people only have access to the goods and services that they can trade their own goods and services for, human beings will always be in danger of being forced to spend their lives doing things they don't enjoy or care about in order to have the resources they need to survive. The thinkers who consider this flaw to be intrinsic to the exchange economy suggest instead a "gift economy, " where things are shared rather than exchanged.

This aspect of this discussion is really complicated, and cannot be treated in detail here. If you are interested in it, an in-depth consideration of the "exchange economy" versus the "gift economy" is scheduled to appear in the second issue of _Harbinger, _ a free CrimethInc. propaganda tabloid, in December of this year. *[If you want one, just write any of the CrimethInc. addresses and ask for one — the most dependable one is still probably the Atlanta address]*

To Conclude: Two Suggestions

First of all, we should consider all the other things there are we can do together in hardcore besides just imitating the businessmen of mainstream society by selling each other things. Despite its silly name, Food Not Bombs, which I mention elsewhere in this issue, is a great example of a way people in the hardcore community can work together in ways that are positive and productive for everyone. If you want to be active and involved in hardcore, there are a million different things (more useful things?) you can do besides starting a label, or writing a 'zine, or working on something else you have to worry about selling. You could organize fliering/propaganda troops, political action groups, sports or exercise groups, book reading clubs, self-defense (anti-police) vigilante squads, try starting a squat, arrange a hostel space for traveling bands and punk rockers, write articles for other people's magazines, try new mediums of expression (artwork, etc.). Of course, in order to have time and resources to work on projects that you don't earn money from, you'll need a supportive community around you, but that

topic is addressed elsewhere in this issue. Similarly, rather than just buying records, there are a million other things that a person who has only been involved in hardcore punk for a little while can do to participate. Corresponding with hardcore punk kids from far away is already common, and offers a lot of possibilities. Make mix tapes for each other. Come up with your own creative fashions, that you can wear cheaply or free, rather than paying for overpriced styles that have already been prefabricated for you. Break into abandoned buildings and go exploring, organize a walkout from your school or workplace, hitchhike around the world, sit up late at night trading stories and arguing about stupid Inside Front articles, go crazy. After you've broken out of traditional patterns of action and interaction, the sky's the limit.

And, second, we should certainly not give up on selling things like records and 'zines that cost money to make until some hardcore punk commando unit seizes a record pressing plant and starts making vinyl for free, w^ have to finance those records somehow. But we should always keep in mind the limitations of selling and advertising things — that these activities *by themselves* won't accomplish anything. We can buy and sell things without betraying ourselves, if we stay focused on our real goals. But in order to do this, we must be aware of the ways that selling and advertising things can compromise the power and quality of the things being sold — and even of the people being sold to. In this article I tried to describe some of those dangers, but each of us should think about the topic individually.

Last March, while my band was in the studio, I made some notes on the back of a lyric sheet for a "footnote" I'd like to put in every advertisement for CrimethInc. records:

Please do not buy this product because it looks attractive or because all your friends have one. For your sake, don't waste your money on it unless you know what it is you're purchasing and think that it really might be useful or meaningful to you. Please do not think that merely purchasing this product is going to do anything to change the world, or to improve your life or anyone else's. Right now, we can't effectively distribute these ideas and music without selling them, but just selling them is not our goal; it is only a means to an end. We try to sell these records in a way that does not compromise the power of their content — we want to sell them like we would sell any other kind of weapon against the status quo, with the emphasis upon their usefulness in making people feel alive and aware, making people dangerous.

You should buy a CrimethInc. product like you would buy a bomb — to* use *it, dangerously!

Endnote: This article is not a criticism of anyone in particular so much as it is a self-criticism of the hard core community in general. Of course Inside Front partakes in the same things we are criticizing here as much as everyone else does — we're NOT claiming innocence, but we are suggesting that we should all consider this issue and perhaps try to move forward.

Inside Front special late night (eleventh hour!) feature: The Unabomber

As participants in the hardcore punk community, our connection to the Unabomber should be obvious. We share the same basic dissatisfaction with our society, with the way things are, and we share a willingness to do *something* about this dissatisfaction (whether it be playing in punk bands or sending bombs to lobbyists for industries that would clearcut our forests) rather than merely wallow in it..

Whether or not we agree .with the Unabomber's *means* should be secondary. The media has focused all attention on the acts of violence he* had to use to *get* their attention, and has done everything in their power to not only dismiss or belittle the ideas he had to offer once he could not be ignored, but to demonize him personally by presenting him as a mere serial killer rather than a political activist with goals. This should come as no surprise, since the ideas in the manifesto attack the same system that the media itself is dependent upon for existence. And despite that, even the New York Times was forced to refer to him as a "genius" (on page one of the Sunday paper in late May '96).

In the punk community, and the counterculture in general, we have permitted the media to keep our focus on his means rather than on the subjects his actions brought up. Rather than saying "We may not agree with sending bombs, but his actions show that people really *are* dissatisfied, and that it will only get worse if we do not start to think about these issues, " we all moved as fast as we could to disavow any connection to the Unabomber at all. Nearly every anarchist or other left wing publication published articles distancing themselves from him, angry perhaps that his actions might make their cause seem less soft and cuddly to the American public. Even _Maximum Rock and Roll_'s book reviewer criticized the Manifesto in the same way that the mainstream media had (it looked to me like he copied his review right out of Newsweek) and suggested that instead of using it as an impetus to get out and act against the status quo, we should stay home and just read more books.

The fact is, the American public didn't even know about these issues that we are so concerned about until the Unabomber brought publicity to them by any means necessary. We don't have anything to lose if the Unabomber's actions demonize us and other anti-establishment groups in the eyes of the public, because we simply weren't

in the eyes of the public before. [I'll grant that some superficial media attention has been given to hardcore as a superficial youth trend, but the fundamental question of whether our society should be overhauled has *NOT* been on the tip of everyone's tongue.] Rather than trying to distance ourselves from his means, we should use the immense publicity that his campaign against our modern society has generated to bring more questions forward, to get people to really think about their lives and whether they can imagine a world better than this one. Each of us in the counterculture should use this chance to come forward and discuss the topics that the Unabomber has brought up with others, to try to increase awareness all around. We should see the Unabomber as a human being who dared to go to any lengths to get his message across, in these times of complete media blackout on *any* individual voice, let alone the individual voice of dissent.

This is particularly relevant now because the trial of Ted Kaczynski, a man accused of being the Unabomber, is approaching. This trial will focus public attention on the question of whether our modern, technological, consumer society really promotes human happiness. We should each us this opportunity to address these issues and get people thinking about them, and not be frightened into silence and submission by the media's attempts to portray all who are dissatisfied as failures or madmen. The more people come forward to say that this situation is unbearable, the less we who feel this way we seem crazy, and the more possible it will be for others to admit their own discomfort and join out struggle. Let's use this chance to make the flaws of our society visible, and to start to do something to change them!

The Unabomber A Hero For Our Time

by Nadia C. — originally published in Icarus Was Right #3

Pop quiz: what is it called when one of the finest minds of a generation picks a few individuals who are personally involved in the destruction of the environment (a timber-industry lobbyist) or of the attention span and reasoning ability of tens of thousands of Americans (an advertising executive), and kills or maims them in the pursuit of finding a voice for his concerns about social issues... concerns that otherwise would be heard by very few? Clearly, it is murder.

And what is it called when a nation of overweight barbers and underpaid clerks, of lazy unemployed middle class intellectuals and talk-show-educated housewives, of cowardly fast-food-chin managers and racist sorority girls, conspires to execute this murderer in the name of protecting the glorious status quo from his obviously deranged "mad bombings"?

The death penalty. And rightly applied, too, in defense of the right of forest clear-cutters and professional liars to continue bending our world to their vision without the danger of being molested by those who prefer redwood forests to Quik-Marts and sonnets to detergent slogans.

Seriously, and rhetoric aside, what is the difference between the two situations? In one case, a single person evaluates his situation and decides upon a course of action he feels is right. In the other case, millions of people, who are not very used to making up their minds by themselves, feel strong enough all together to strike out blindly against an individual who does not remain within their boundaries of acceptable behavior.

Now, our gentle and moderate reader would no doubt like to object that it is not fear of the free-standing individual that prompts the outcry against this terrorist, but moral indignation — for he has taken "innocent" life in his quest to have his ideas heard, and that is wrong in every situation.

But this nation of petty imbeciles is not regularly outraged about the taking of innocent life: as long as it fits within the parameters of the status quo, they don't care at all.

How many more people than the Unabomber have tobacco companies maimed and killed, by using advertising to addict them at a very young and uninformed age to an extremely harmful drug? How about the companies that advertise and sell cheap liquor in impoverished neighborhoods filled with alcoholics? How many citizens of third world nations have suffered and died at the hands of governments supported by such corporations as Pepsi Co., or even by the U.S. government itself? And how much animal life is destroyed thoughtlessly every year, every day in death camp factory farms... or in ecological destruction brought about by such companies as Exxon (our reader will remember the Valdez) or McDonalds (one of the better known destroyers of the rainforest)? No one is particularly concerned about these abuses of "innocent" life.

And indeed, it is harder to be, for they are institutionalized within the social and economic system... "normal." Besides, it is hard to figure out who exactly is responsible for them, for they are the results of the workings of complicated bureaucracies.

On the other hand, when one individual attempts to make his criticism of these destructive systems heard by the only really effective means, it is easy to pick him out and string him up. And our hypocritical outrage about his wrongdoings compared those of our own social institutions shows that it is his ability to act upon his own conclusions that truly shocks and frightens us most of all.

Our fear of the Unabomber as a freely acting individual shows in the attempts our media has made to demonize him. Details of his life, such as his academic achievements and his ability to live a Thoreauan self-sufficient existence, that would normally occasion praise, are now used to demonstrate that he is a maladjusted freak. Random and unimportant details of his life, similar to details of any of our lives, such as failed love affairs and childhood illnesses, are used to explain his "insane behavior." In speaking thus, the press suggests that there is no question at all that his actions were the result of insanity, pulling away in terror from the very thought that he might be just as rational as they. Newspapers print the most arbitrary and disconnected excerpts of his manifesto that they can combine, and they describe the manifesto as being random

and disconnected — they even describe it as "ramblings" with a straight face, despite the well-known short attention span of today's media.

But it is not necessary that we accept the media's typical over-simplification of the case. The Unabomber's manifesto has, as a result of his efforts, been published and widely distributed. We can all read it for ourselves, not just in disconnected excerpts, but in its entirety, and decide for ourselves what we think of his ideas.

Do not be frightened by the Unabomber's willingness to stand out from the crowds and take whatever actions he believes are necessary to achieve his goals. In a civilization so stricken with mindless submission to social norms and irrational rules his example should be refreshing rather than horrifying; for his worst crimes are no worse than ours, in being citizens of this nation... and his greatest deeds as a dedicated and intelligent individual far outshine those of most of our heroes, who are for the most part basketball players and cookie-cutter pop musicians anyway.

At least, given the chance as we are, we should read his manifesto and come to our own conclusions, rather than allowing the press and popular opinion/paranoia to decide for us.

[Untitled]

One group that has attracted my interest because of their light-hearted and creative presentation of serious issues is the Unapack. Their "Unabomber for President" campaign attained a great deal of attention in a number of different circles. I've included some of their material here, along with some perspectives bn the Unabomber issue from other sources.

Of course if we work together we can accomplish more than we can separately. One group that is organizing right now to achieve the goals proposed by this feature is a new version of the Unapack which will focus on using the trial to challenge the myth that everyone is content in today's world. If you are willing to share your perspectives or volunteer your creative efforts and energy, or you are just interested in more information, feel free to contact them at: Unapack, P.O. Box 12094, Boston, MA 02112 Some of the staff of Inside Front might be involved in this and other projects, so you can contact us about this too. You can also obtain copies of the Unabomber Manifesto from our address (no cost, just send a donation for postage), in order to read about his particular take on modern life and its shortcomings.

Take a chance with us

> This is not to be a POLITICAL revolution. Its object will be to overthrow not governments but the economic and technological basis of the present society.

— The Unabomber

Come on, baby, take a chance with us...

— The Doors, "The End"

The publishing of the Unabomber's manifesto in the Washington Post was an extraordinary event, and any honest examination of the subsequent press coverage reveals a simple but important truth: the Unabomber hit a nerve. Even Time Magazine, surely a symbol of corporate control, was seen quoting the Unabomber at length, and supporting many of his observations. Industrial society HAS been a disaster for the human race, and people ARE humiliated and degraded by the technologies they've created.

The Unabomber Presidential Write-Campaign is about revealing the resignation that people feel, the deep conviction that they are utterly helpless, that they have no choice but to join the parade, that their fates are determined by forces far beyond their control. Isn't Dilbert really just an expression of resignation, of passive aggression? How many people secretly hate their jobs, and subvert their bosses in countless subtle ways? Reveal that resignation, and it will turn to resentment and rightful anger.

The Unabomber Presidential Write-In Campaign is a serious election effort that aims to totally undermine the election process itself, by exposing the media's exclusion of all meaningful debate about the nature and direction of our daily lives. The useless charade of choosing between identical wings of the pro-business party, the Demicans and Republicrats, is the pale ghost of democracy in a mass society so vast and powerful and ruthless that it can only be controlled by machines. When people are angry enough to vote for the Unabomber, the media will have no choice but to deliver the message, even if it means death for the messenger. Votes for the Unabomber can't be rationalized or mediated or explained away. They are an expression of rage, not apathy, of utter "contempt for the brutality and indifference of our supposedly 'civilized" society.

Four hundred years ago, our suburbs and office parks were wilderness, forest and plains, mountains and rivers, teeming with an unimaginable diversity of life. Industrial society crushed out that diversity, and replaced it with monoculture: mile after mile of corn fields, each plant a genetically perfect copy, identical houses and cars in endless rows, one size fits all, even people standardized and stacked on top of one another like cans of beer. What native society ever built factory farms, or robotic slaughterhouses? What makes us so different from our veal cows, force-fed and chained to their pens, unable to take a single step? Who were the real savages? A vote for the Unabomber is a vote for the The Unabomber Presidential Write-Campaign wants to channel people's anger constructively, by directing it against the most obvious symbol of mass society and corporate control: the MEDIA, whose primary function is to maintain NORMALCY at all costs. Nothing, not rain or snow, not floods or drought, not terrorist bombings or even full-scale war can be allowed to disrupt the well- organized hive of worker bees, driving to work, slurping down their coffee and donuts, clean, smiling, happy, well- dressed bees, buzzing in conference rooms and cubicles, lining up

in shopping malls to spend the money they've sacrificed so much for on fashionable trinkets and food neatly wrapped in plastic. The media are the band that keep the troops marching forward, no matter how many comrades fall, crossing off the Hallmark holidays, on chaos of freedom, a vote for Wild Nature dare to join die barbarians at the gates.

We are the veal
UNABOMBER
FOR
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UNAPACK
PO BOX 120494
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Chris Korda — UNAPACK

Top Ten Reasons To Write-In Unabomber For President In 1996

All you have to lose in the Political Illusion
Lydia Eccles

1. **THE ALTERNATIVES**. Clinton, Dole, Buchanan. Moderate republican, right-wing republican, or Fascist? You have the right to vote right. And the right to silence. But isn't it incriminating?

2. **HE'S HOT**. His favorability ratings may be low, but his name recognition is close to 100%. We don't need to hype him — he's already hyped. A Unabomber write-in campaign surfs the media wave. (And the trial may be The Big One.) He's the perfect imposter to undermine the presidential election process as it unfolds, and turn the fraudulent election process against itself.

3. **THE VISION THING**. "The Industrial Revolution and its consequences have been a disaster for the human race." Regardless of what you think of the Unabomber and his analysis, the right issues are finally raised. Can you even conceive of any legitimate candidacy, election, or debate which will allow the real questions to be put on the table? We need to dish them out before they cool off... They're giving an election, but we're crashing it and having our own referendum on corpo-technocracy. If the Unabomber put a hairline crack in the myth of progress, we are applying a wedge, and we'll pound on it right up to election day. An anti-technological rallying point was born of a criminal chase with high

entertainment value. Is there going to be another opportunity to declare your independence from Western Civilization?

4. **WATTING FOR PEROT?** The election offers a "choice" once all the real decisions have been made. On top of being an anti-republican vote, the Unabomber campaign is a counterfoil to faux "populist" outsider-insiders like business magnate Ross Perot and Gulf warrior Colin Powell (a.k a. the military-industrial complex). The third party "alternative" is designed to safely channel voter alienation into a centrist, media-sanctioned agenda and immunize the system against real change.

5. **IF ELECTED HE WILL NOT SERVE**. So it's a nobody for president vote. He's not running, so it's a bottom-up free-for-all campaign. Campaign literature, posters, sound bytes, platforms, pranks, the rest: have it your way.

6. **DON'T WASTE YOUR VOTE** The media's like a psychiatrist — and you can't NOT communicate in an election. If you boycott the polls, you'll be counted as apathetic, complacent, or still worse, contented. If you vote for the mainstream lesser of evils, who don't actually represent your views, you've affirmed the political system and buried your voice. Either way you've wasted your vote. To vote Unabomber is to vote and boycott at the same time. If nothing else, it s a vote against the election charade. It can be only seen as absolute protest, ridicule, or a "none-of-the-above" spuming of the political menu. You can cast an anarchist vote you feel good about, and send the message that the presidential elections are a fraud. And you can still vote in local races and referendums where your vote counts for something.

7. **VOTE AGAINST THE PROPAGANDA MACHINE**. The Unabomber did an end run around the media monopoly, and published without editorial clearance. The Unabomber has, by the magnitude of his plan, exposed the media as a closed communications system, making it clear — in case anyone hadn't noticed — that it's a communications war. Mass media are launched from a heavily-secured fortress. Other terrorists seek publicity as a means to other ends. The Unabomber waged a guerrilla campaign to communicate as an end in itself. Notice how the press seeks to channel interpretation of the Unabomber story, covering it as a serial-killer story of crime and insanity, while excluding consideration of the ideas themselves; They would have us believe that it would be disastrous if media weren't controlled from the top. Op-ed pages resounded with journalists lamenting, "Why didn't he have to get editorial approval? What if copy cats are aroused, crazies who actually want access to the media, rather than simply being passive target markets for political and commercial propaganda?" Imagine mass communications not subject to corporate control. People might say anything...

even things not "fit to print." Exactly. When ABC Nightly News gets renamed Disney World, you'll cherish the memory of your Unabomber vote.

8. **HE'S GOT THE CREDENTIALS**. The Unabomber's use of violence should not disqualify him from consideration. His willingness and ability to effectively use violence to achieve strategic political goals merely demonstrate the essential qualifications to be president. After all, Colin Powell's ONLY qualification is his performance as an effective killer. No one's called him a serial killer, or said he craved attention. No running candidate has condemned the Gulf War genocide. This is a country that played war like a video game in a high-tech funhouse. We aren't even allowed information as to how many Iraqis, civilian or military, our tax dollars blew away. That Bill Clinton dodged the draft almost disqualified him. Luckily he picked up points for presiding over executions in his home state of Arkansas, including the execution of a retarded man. Dole's war experience gave him the right stuff... Violence? Cancer deaths caused by toxins in the air, in food, and workplaces... Violence? A minimum wage that is half the poverty level, with the hunger, stress, disease and early death that ensue... Violence? The media just finished re-elaborating the rationale for bombing Hiroshima and Nagasaki... Violence? Tenor? Anyone bringing up violence should put it all on the table, not just select attacks on the power structure. Anyone who can truly take a stand against violence in any form — and that would include the American Revolution — can say the Unabomber shouldn't be president on that basis. But he's not running anyway, and even a landslide wouldn't actually put him in office. The beauty of voting for an ineligible candidate is that personality issues are moot. We're voting Unabomber, not Kaczinksi, although Ted may turn out to be Thoreau with a bomb, engaging in military disobedience. And give a little credit to an ex-teacher who may have recruited the FBI to Anarchy 101 and assigned a required reading list of subculture rants.

9. **ENTERTAINMENT VALUE**. Watch your favorite TV pundits try to swallow, digest and regurgitate a Unabomber constituency. It's a message that can only be censored — not neutralized, coopted or explained away. The most minimal Unabomber returns will disrupt the usual discussion of false problems and false solutions (usually known as "reform").

10. **DON'T BLAME ME — I VOTED FOR THE UNABOMBER**. You can sport your bumper sticker after the election.(but not on a car). But only if we don't win.

Reprinted from SNUFF IT #3, The Journal of The Church of Euthenasia. Send $2.00 for a sample issue to: The Church of Euthanasia, PO Box 261; Somerville, MA 02143. e-mail: coe@net.com.com

www.xnvirolink.org/ogrs/coe/
www.paranoia.com/unapack/

"I see in the eyes of Ted Kaczynski a sorrow reflecting what we have lost. A profound magnitude of loss, consisting of growing personal desolation, the disappearance of community, the destruction of the natural world. It really is this devastating, and getting worse every day.

Kaczynski's betrayal (and of course his "guilt" is unproved) at the hands of his own brother reminds Us that pacifism, in its smug cowardice, is always, at base, the defender of what is.

But the machine has not yet eradicated all resistance, all capacity to think against the grain. In the Unabomber we can see the courage and honor of one who would not buy into this fraudulent society, who would not buy into the'dominion of technology. One who fought the brave new world order with pen and sword."

— Helena Sandovar, National Park Service, Denali Park, Alaska*

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Pour ticket to t6e new Jerusafetn

Dwgsht, zine recently teamed up with the politically inspired punk outfit Hand to Mouth to produce “Your ticket to the hew Jerusalem”, a literary and musical ensemble

featuring a .9 song 12" and a fullsized 72 page booklet covering environmental issues, veganism^ Vegetarianism, low-impact lifestyles, radical history, labor history, international struggles for democracy, the prison experience, d.i.y. punk and much more.

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And here's an example of that: having studied Nietzsche both on my own and in an academic setting (Nietzsche's thinking was the focus of my studies in the philosophy department of UNC-Chapel Hill, for which I received a degree with honors*) for five years, I have to disagree with the way that Adel apparently interprets Nietzsche; it seems he believes the traditional assumption that Nietzsche's ideas make sense in the mouth of nationalists and fascists. Nietzsche's philosophy has only been associated with those morons because after he went insane he was released into the care of his sister, a woman he had always despised — because she *was* a nationalist and a fascist, and a racist to boot. Nietzsche's work, which had languished in complete obscurity until then, was only made available to the public through her, and she portrayed it as being fascist and nationalist when in fact it was hostile to both. The unfortunate Nietzsche did not know this was happening, because by then he had lost all awareness of the world around him. It was not until after her death, when the original manuscripts (a great deal of which she had kept hidden) were released, that Nietzsche's real ideas became clear — and by then, idiots like Mussolini had already convinced many people that Nietzsche

was "on their side." This is amazing, considering that Nietzsche's writings are full of attacks on nationalism in general, Germany in particular, and any subordination of the individual to the state or the masses. In fact, the only nearly- successful attempt on Hitler's life was made by a Nietzschean faction of the German resistance.

Nietzsche's real goals had little to do with promoting domination and rule by force. Rather, he set out to describe and glorify the *self-control* that the creative individual uses. His concept of "overman" referred not to a powerful tyrant who would subjugate others, but to his hope that human beings would one day rise above our "human, all-too-human" • shortcomings to achieve a greatness unimaginable today. Nietzsche had a lot of really important things to say, and I strongly encourage everyone to read his books rather than just accepting the usual hearsay and drivel spread about his ideas in our superficial pop culture.

I also urge you to have a look at Adel's column. NOT because I agree with it — I'm certainly at a loss as to how the fuck fascism, of alt things, is supposed to reconcile the opposites of good and evil. I mean, fascism is submission to the rule of pure force, the most fucking ignorant and servile form of submission of all, if you ask me. But you should read Adel's column *because* you probably won't agree with it either. I don't want any of us to start feeling *too* secure and self-satisfied in our beliefs, so I figure it is my job to print things that will force you to consider arguments you might not hear otherwise. And the questions Adel brings up — the limitations of any ideological world view, especially the "liberal" one (whatever that means, now that Jessie Helms and company have turned the term "liberal" into a mere swear word) — are questions we all must answer, even if we don't answer them the way he does.

*7 *know it's really tasteless to boast about my education (my very bourgeois education!) like that, but I want you to know how serious I am about this subject. I want you guys to take me seriously here!*

politics (_keep_ reading!) of America's current position on crime and punish
ment.

For those of us who are free citizens in society, free to do as we please — there probably isn't too much thought given to this particular column's title. But, I think the media has successfully presented the issue often enough that we are all aware of the current wave of "getting tough on criminals." Since I am in prison, obviously I have an interest in the subject. I have a stake in the game, so to speak. What I am interested in doing here is extrapolating the truths about this current fad of "getting tough, " from the non-truths. For all fellow edgers, bear with me a paragraph or two while I discuss the mighty drug war!

The message sent to Congress and state legislatures a few years back was that America was losing the drug war. That the war being waged on the drug crises was not being fortified well enough; and as a result, was getting even further out of control. So, in a vain attempt to rectify the situation and turn the tide — law upon law was enacted to help re-lay the foundation by which the justice system could work from in

an effort to bring a turnaround in America's diminishing position in the "drug war" — whew!! — OK, now, nevermind

that most of these laws are constitutionally questionable — to say the

have the combined responsibility of both dictating a behavior, _and_ — eventually — modifying the-behavior to the extent that the citizen fully embraces the morality of the law, and no longer requires the law, or its penalty in his/her society. Without question, this is one of the most fundamentally unconstitutional ways to use the justice system and its statutes. It overtly implies that lawmaking is the only means for imparting morality to its citizenry! So, I guess legislators have given up on parents and educators teaching these jewels!

Back to the point. I see drug laws to be examples of Dual Duty laws. Legislators are hoping to both stop the immediate problem, and change society's $_{x}$ desire to use, distribute, manufacture, or possess drugs in the future. By being swift, sure, and severe in punishment, they hope to deter people's compulsion to be involved in the drug game. Neat, huh? So why doesn't it work? Well, lawmakers will tell you it's because they have not yet made the penalties severe enough. Consequently, the people involved haven't yet been adequately deterred. Ridiculous! Let me tell you, folks in prison here with me aren't the least bit deterred by the punishment, hell, most of them can't wait to get out and start doing it all _again_! Drug laws have _not_ changed the attitudes existing in this society that involve intoxication. For all their severity, drug legislation has only become more constitutionally questionable.

And so we come full circle to crime and punishment in general. The backlashes of the drug war are many, the focus today is no longer keen only on drug offenses. No, now _all_ crime is under increased attack. The war

[Image not archived]

now is even greater: "the Crime War." Certainly I'm not

[Image not archived]

suggesting we condone crime, or turn our backs on law enforcement. But, the downside of this heightened focus is that, now, all criminal offenses are treated with an almost supernatural seriousness. Sentences for every offense are liberally levied against offenders over

> . Rehabilitation is now only afterthought., if thought of at all.
>
> We're moving away from treatment for misbehavior, and closer to strictly • punishment. What happens when you release a bitter ex-con from prison after, say, ten years, when he received no rehabilitation, no reintegration, and no incentives existed for him to get out and stay out? HE DOES THE SAME THING HE DID BEFORE — COMMIT CRIME!! And for all the media's and politicians' talk of crime and its seriousness in this decade — did you know that _all_ crime has dropped since the '60's? That violent crimes (certainly the worst of all crime) have dropped _the most_ over all other crime since 1968, by _20%_?

So what gives? Well, crime and punishment is an extremely effective platform for politicians on the campaign trail. As a result, laws are made, in haste, which fulfill promises made to John Q. Public at election time. Since no one really has any way of knowing just what's going on in the justice system until they are personally involved — no motivation exists for the public to research the claims made by the media or politicians. Therefore we remain successfully hoodwinked regarding the statistical facts regarding crime in the '90's.

This state's governor, Republican George Allen, is an interesting character, he has successfully lobbied the Virginia General Assembly into abolishing parole; building new prisons; making sentences for crimes more severe; creating 870+ laws in 1994 alone; and has convinced them of the need to dramatically

money to be used on these recreation items — _even if we didn't want recreation equipment_! But the governor has allowed the media to hoodwink the public into believing we are living "high on the hog" — at their expense! So, what's the public's response? "Take it all!" And so that's what he's doing.

I have an interesting story about my last parole hearing in January. My hearing was after dinner, so the parole examiner (the guy who interviews inmates for parole and then sends reports to the parole board for review and consideration) and myself had a chance to shoot the shit after the hearing. He confided in me that he is against the new parole and prison system. He said he thought _he_ was conservative until Governor Allen and his SS troops moved into town! He said he saw no point in the parole boards' fever for flesh off the inmates' and their families' backs. It seems, he felt, that the parole board was denying parole to punish the inmates even further. He said that he expected Governor Allen to simply close off Virginia's borders and make it one big John Carpenter film: Escape From New York (or, Virginia)! The trend, he feels, is for things to get worse; to punish, since rehabilitation has been abandoned. Now these are extremely frank and candid remarks for a guy who works _in_ the system to make a hapless inmate _stuck_ in the system! That gives you an idea of the seriousness, no?

So, what's the moral of this bloated column, you demand? Don't get caught!! Ideally — don't commit the crime in the first place. But if you do — make no mistake — you're in for a ride if you get caught and enter the penal system. It's gotten so crazy that you're subject to _never_ live the conviction down — much less rise above and make anything of yourself. I'm going to discuss in my next column the craziness, and make some bold assertions about life as a felon and what the government intends to do with us. Until next issue!

Inside Front is relieved to report that Martin has become a (more) free man since he wrote this column! You can now reach him at: Martin, 9000 Maritime Ct., Springfield, VA 22153–1625

alter the current prison system. Oh, here's a trivia question: How many prisons does Virginia have? Answer: _over 30_!! We are now, inside Virginia prisons, experiencing a big loss in privileges afforded us. A loss of all personal property inside prison; a

reduction in the recreational activities such as weightlifting; reduction in the level of education permitted to us; and even a decline in the portions of food given to us. There is talk of making inmates pay for their own incarceration expenses! We already must co-pay our medical bills. Most Of our privileges in prison, in Virginia, aren't even paid for by the taxpayer — we, the inmates, pay for them!! Weights, cable TV, band program equipment — we pay _all of it_!! We have inmate trust accounts set up to spend the profits made on inmate commissary on the items permitted in prison for recreation. And, if we _refused_ to spend our trust account money? Well, the prison would _still_ force our

One of the great things about doing a zine is the amount of contact you get with people from other parts of the world, and with other life experiences and viewpoints than your own. I have been lucky enough to develop at least a semi-regular degree of communication with some of these people and have been often taught to challenge my beliefs and ideas as a result. Probably the discourses that have taught me the most have been with those people unlucky enough to be in prison.

We are taught in mainstream America that people in prison are evil and that we should neither desire or endeavor to make contact with them. I can't say that the first time I received mail from someone in prison that I didn't feel a little weird about it. After all, I am a product of American culture and all its social hang-ups. However, what I quickly found as I received more correspondence from individuals in prison is that they aren't so different from most of us living outside prison walls. Sure, some prisoners are guilty of horrible crimes, but the majority of convicts are locked up for offenses not so far removed from what any of us could or would do if we were forced into certain circumstances. As many as 65% of offenders sentenced to prison are there for property, drug, or public disorder crimes. An additional 15% are there for simply violating their parole conditions. I no longer believe that I was down on my luck that I couldn't be forced to break the law to survive. No, not all laws are broken because the perpetrator is

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fighting for their survival, but I believe a greater percentage of prisoners are there for reasons of survival than politicians or the media lead us to believe.

In 1991, a study of the Dutch town of Groningen was released that found that as the unemployment rate increased in recent decades, so had the crime rate. This connection between crime and unemployment was also found when looking at the 1930s depression era. The conclusion drawn from this study was that the amount of crime in a community is directly related to the level of unemployment that community has. People turned to crime when their other, legal options diminished. What I find most interesting about this study is that it puts a kink in our widely held beliefs about who criminals are and why they break laws.

In the U.S. we look down on the unemployed in much the same way we do prisoners-they are supposed to be lazy, useless, a waste of space. In the U.S., where the official patriotic belief is that hard work and merit can make anyone rich, those left out of

the workforce- for a myriad of reasons- are left to feel like dirt. All blame is placed on the jobless, but the question of whether the system within which we live is to blame is never posed. Instead, the government-speak so prevalent in the media goes on. and on about the existence of a "natural unemployment rate".

Terminology such as "the natural unemployment rate" truly illustrates the hypocrisy with which those who control our society operate as well as the flawed logic with which American society frames its beliefs. This "natural rate" is a result of the idea held by big business that we must have a certain level of unemployment in order to keep inflation down. (The justification is that if the pool of available labor is too small, then employers must compete for workers, which would drive up wages and increase inflation.) Yet our "leaders", rather than accepting that there will be some unemployed, and helping them survive, are eager to place the blame on the poor and jobless.

Politicians seeking votes by attacking both the unemployed and those locked away in our vast prison system. They boast of cutting benefits to the poor and promise to crack down even more harshly on those who break the law, all in order to provoke our reactions of fear, anger, and hatred against what we are taught are worthless members of society. There is never acknowledgment that if people are, in fact, "naturally" locked out of the workforce and are given no assistance, then these people will turn to other means to survive- often illegal ones. Unfortunately, those who turn to criminal acts then create justification for the politicians' self-serving attacks because they can say that these "criminals" must indeed be meritless as they 1.) can't get a job, and 2.) are law breakers. The result is a situation of entrapment for those individuals left out of the workforce. If someone is poor and out of work, they are attacked for their status in society and have trouble finding work. And, if this person turns to crime to survive, then they are making it easier to be attacked even more firmly overzealous leaders.

When employment is high, it's easy for us to dismiss those who break laws as 'bad seeds', no good, etc. However, when unemployment rises (as in the 1930s and again in the 1990s) more and more people turn to crime. Not all these new lawbreakers could be 'rotten eggs'. Obviously the feeling of guilt for committing crimes fades for those people who were once employed and now turn to crime to survive. Suddenly a realization begins to develop that unemployment isn't necessarily the fault of the individual. People start to see a flaw within the system; that the system may be the cause of unemployment and they don't feel so bad taking from the few in our society who hold so much wealth and power.

I am not trying to justify criminal acts. What I am saying is that we are living within a system that ignores the realities of why the majority of crime exists. And, instead of looking for real solutions, we further blame and punish those individuals whose lives become symptoms of a flawed societal structure based on extreme financial inequality. We demonize those people forced to the bottom of the economic ladder and refuse to admit that they are anything like us. The truth is, pushed into the same corner, many of us would probably make some of the same deci

k PERSPECTIVE III

WV^PtT^OOV'AiAt.

Imprisonment is the ultimate act of coercion perpetrated by the state. It represents the most grievous infringement upon not only individual liberty but also the social fabric within which we all live. The concept of caging human beings in response to an externally determined "crime" is at best barbaric. This tactic, born of religious reformers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, has exploded into a billion dollar industry; one of the fastest growing sectors of the capitalist economy today.

To examine the ethics of imprisonment we would first have to ask every individual in Amerikkka if they would deem it necessary for themselves to be locked away

for the betterment of society. I have a feeling that most people would not submit to such a fate, but all too many are willing to sacrifice the lives of others to such a

project. Prisons are not for "us" but for those who don't belong; the

"undesirables" or other social misfits, now including those with differing

represent little more than an escalation of this war on minorities and the poor. It is this ever expanding assault that has led some people to refer to the "War on Drugs" as a genocidal policy, and with good reason.

Beyond these facts of imprisonment in Amerikkka, we must address the fundamental issue of imprisonment as a valid means of maintaining the fabric of society. It is in this capacity that it falls miserably short.

Peter Kropotkin wrote over a century ago: "Prisons are the universities of crime". These words have taken on a new meaning as we rejoice'over the building of new prisons and are inundated with tv shows that glorify the state and its human zoos. What good does imprisonment do? Crime still rises, violence still abounds. In many cases one time offenders or

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otherwise socially adjusted persons introduced into the prison environment turn into lifetime criminals as a result of their experiences; they have gained their

diplomas.

Yes, imprisonment is a means of social control and a way to ensure the preservation of the status quo, but at what cost? Not only does the

individual suffer but the entire community. When one person is caged away, when one inmate is murdered by the state, doesn't this cheapen all of our lives because we allow

access to socially produced wealth, the reasons for economically motivated crime will cease to exist.

A complete revolutionary change in economics and social relations is not sufficient to deal with all the possible types of offenses that can be perpetrated by people towards each other, though. One can argue that there will always be social misfits and others who murder and rape for the sheer joy of the act; that society will always have

to deal with these persons and that caging them is the only solution. This is a narrow interpretation which discounts the role of social forces in the development of the individual, though.

Dealing with this situation depends upon the treatment of "criminally insane" persons in a society. Presently, most people we classify as criminally insane are left to themselves. They are either shuffled from "mental health" hospital to hospital or are totally ignored and try to fend for themselves, as we all do, in the present "social" world. That they can't handle this treatment by society is not surprising. We are all alienated by our lack of social relations or our status within capitalist consumer society. These "insane" persons are merely more prone to violent anti-social behavior than most of us. So, we deal with them by ignoring them, until they lash out and commit the horrible serial killings, etc. that they are known for. We fail to see, though, that the root of the problem is not the individual but the way we as a society treat her/him. In a radically different society that nurtures the basic social bonds that we all need, we will be well equipped to deal with the occurrence of such cases of "criminal insanity."

What I have attempted to outline in this essay are the possibilities for a change in our society and in ourselves. In particular, the possibility for a world without cages and prisons. A world where the sanctity of the individual is respected and embraced by the whole of society, whether in the eyes of the "criminal" or of our social institutions. But these should be taken as they are intended; as possibilities. The prospects and scope of this type of change are up to us and our imaginations. It is the people who will determine our course and I am but one person offering suggestions. That there must be a change cannot be argued; the deterioration of the archaic capitalist system is apparent, but if we refuse to act there is little hope. In the end, I only hope that this essay has caused some of its readers to consider the alternatives to our present state of affairs.

*statistics according to Federal Government surveys.

suggested reading:

"Live from Death Row" by Mumia Abu Jamai "In French and Russian Prisons" by Peter Kropotkin "Blood in my Eye" by George Jackson

"Prison Abolition" by Yves Bourque "Against Prisons" by Catherine Baker "A Brief History of the New Afrikan Prison Struggle" by Sundiata Acoli

"Until All are Free" by Ray Luc Levasseur "...They Will Never Get Us All" by Harold H. Thompson

I am currently involved with an anarchist-based group which seeks to organize, educate and aid prisoners in their struggles for freedom. We have a list of related materials concerning this topic for sale to help support our work, including many of the titles above. Please write for more information.

Raze the Walls! P.O. Box 23234 Savannah, GA 31405 email: mikeml0674@aol.com

May 1 marks a significant day for the labor movement in the United States as well as internationally. Sadly, the origins of the celebration of what is sometimes called May Day have been shadowed from American workers. Only when May 1 falls on a Sunday

is it celebrated as anything, much less a day to remember the struggles of the Working Class, both past and present, worldwide. The irony is that May Day started right here in the United States. Labor Day has been moved to September, perhaps in an effort to divorce the Working Class from the history of a militant people's movement that threatened the power structure of the day.

May Day is rooted in the struggle for the eight hour work day which began in the early 1860's. It produced some early . results as by 1867 six states and several scattered city counsels across the country enacted eight hour laws for local government and state employees. Then in June of 1868 Congress enacted the first federal eight hour law extended to federal employees. These laws turned out to be merely for show as they were ignored and no actual means existed by which to enforce them. In 1876, the law passed by federal government was repealed and it was declared that the government could make separate agreements with it's employees.

In the early 188O's the emphasis of the eight hour struggle was still focused on legislative action. It soon became clear to many workers that if Labor wanted and eight hour work day it would not come through the grace of the employers or the government but through the ability of the workers to instate tactics of direct action. Many workers realized the true strength of Labor was not at the ballot box but on the shop floor. At the 1884 convention of the Federation of Organized Trades of Labor Unions in the United States and Canada (later to become the AFL in 1886) a resolution was passed stating; "eight hours shall constitute a legal day's labor from and after May 1, 1886, and that we recommend to labor organizations throughout this district that they so direct their laws to * conform to this resolution."

The eight hour struggle crossed lines of color, nationality, and gender and by mid-April of 1886 a quarter of a million workers were involved. 400, 000 workers in Chicago, the mainstay of the movement, were on strike, and over 45, 000 more were granted a shorter work day without striking. At the forefront for the movement were the social revolutionaries, or anarchists. In part it was because of the dedicated work of the anarchists that Chicago became the nucleus of the struggle.

Since February 16, 1886, workers had been striking at the McCormick Harvester Machine Co., and by May 1, one half of the McCormick workers joined the eight hour struggle. On the afternoon of May 3, an eight hour mass protest meeting was held by 6, 000 members of the lumber shovers union. The meeting, located a block away from the McCormick plant, was joined by 500 of the striking workers. Anarchist August Spies addressed the crowd. As Spies spoke, strikebreakers began to leave the McCormick factory. McCormick workers, assisted by several hundred lumber shovers, attempted to drive the scabs back into the plant. A special detail of 200 police officers were sent out and, without warning, workers were met with clubs and guns. 1 worker was killed, 6 were seriously injured, and an undetermined number left with various cuts, bruises and broken bones.

Outraged by the sheer brutality of the police, Spies printed up a handbill which called workers to "rise in your might...To Arms! We call you to arms!". Roughly half of

the 2, 500 copies were circulated and a protest was later called for May 4 in Haymarket Square. Rain, and a late start, discouraged many of

the expected 20, 000 with only 1, 200–1, 300 actually attending. Spies started the meeting at 8:30 p.m. and was followed by Albert Parsons, and then finally Samuel Fielden — both prominent anarchists. Chicago Mayor Carter Harrison was present for the start of the meeting and before leaving early himself, advised Police Capt. John Bonfield that the reserved force of police officers should be sent home. Bonfield had been in charge of various other police campaigns to violently suppress Working Class action. Ten minutes into Fielden's address^ a storm threatened to hit and the remaining crowd fizzled to about 200. At that time, a column of 200 police officers showed up, headed by Capt. Bonfield and William Ward, demanding that the crowd disperse peaceably. As Fielden and others descended the speaking platform an unknown person threw a bomb into the crowd of police. Officer Mathias J. Degan was killed instantly, 6 others would die from wounds sustained by the bomb later. The police opened fire and the number of killed or wounded workers has never been determined.

Instantly, a Red Scare swe^t through Chicago prodded by the press and the pulpit. Raids swept through Working Class districts and all known socialists, anarchists, and communists were rounded up. State Attorney Julius Grinnell was quoted as saying "Make the raids first and look up the law afterwards". On May 27, thirty-one people were indicted and charged as accessories to the murder of Officer Degan. Of the thirty-one, only eight stood trial; August Spies, Albert Parsons, Louis Lingg, Adolph Fischer, George Engel, Michail Schwab, Samuel Fielden, . and Oscar Neebe — all anarchists.

The trial opened on June 21, 1886. The jury had been hand-picked by a bailiff of the court and all had professed a previous bias for the guilt of the Haymarket Eight. No proof was offered by the state that any of the men indicted or standing trial had thrown or planted the bomb. There were no connections made that might even remotely link any of the eight men with aiding or abetting the act. Only three of the eight were even present and Albert Parsons had even brought his wife and children of seven and four years of age. Charles Neebe was at home, in bed asleep when the incident occurred.

It was clear that the Haymarket Eight were not on trial for murder, but for their beliefs that held such danger for the power structure. In State Attorney Grinnell's final speech to the jury he stated "Law is on trial. Anarchy is on trial. These men have been selected, picked out by the grand jury and indicted because they were leaders. They are no more guilty than those who follow them. Gentlemen of the jury; convict these men, make examples of them, hang them and you save our institutions, our society."

On August 19, the case was handed over to the jury who came back with a verdict for guilty.. Seven men were condemned to death and one, Neebe, to fifteen years in prison. The execution date was set for November 11, 1887 and was met with international protest. Meetings of workers were held in Holland, France, Russia, Italy and Spain. Workers with money barely able to buy food for themselves or their families contributed to the Haymarket Defense Fund. Letters, petitions, and resolutions all called for a

pardon by Gov. Richard Oglesby. It was a grand display of worldwide Working Class solidarity.

Two of the defendants, Fielden and Schwab petitioned the Governor to spare their lives. The judge and prosecutor of the case asked for mercy for the two, and Oglesby commuted the sentence to life in prison. Lingg committed suicide by exploding a bomb in his mouth the day before execution. Then on November 11, 1887, Parsons, Spies, Fischer, and Engel were hung. As the four were buried, the struggle for a pardon for Fielden, Schwab, and Neebe continued. The grant for clemency was urged upon Oglesby as well as his successor, Joseph Fifer. But it was not until John Peter Altgeld was elected did a pardon become issued on June 26, 1893.

The person who threw the bomb has never been discovered. Some believe it was the work of business interests trying to discredit the worker's movement, which was a common tactic of the employers of the

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For those who read part one of my India story in Inside

Front #9, you will remember that I had just decided to stay in India even though my friend and only travel companion Hannah had left me to return to the USA. She had contracted dysentery and her departure meant that I was going to be totally alone if I decided to stay the remaining four weeks until my flight out. I was scared and confused but stoked at the same time because I knew that the burst of confidence would be enormous if I stayed on my own. She had told me that the most beautiful place she'd visited in the entire country had been a tiny hilltop village called MacLeod Ganj which was a part of a larger town called Dharamsala in northern India. The town was perched on a far western spur of the Himalayas and was home to the Tibetan government-in-exile (I'll explain that later) and the Dalai Lama himself. I'd decided to head up there right when I ran out of room for the last article. Now, for those who *didn't* read my last article, you should order a back issue from Brian today so you know what is going on in the next few pages...there was a lot of basic India info in there which I will try to touch on but probably won't be able to fully recount here. Also, please remember (and this goes out to new readers as well as

while screaming and yelling at each other in any one of about ten different dialects. Getting directions was as hard at the I.S.B.T. as it was anywhere else in India. Nothing is clearly marked there, and no one seemed to have a direct answer for me. In India if you ask one person for directions, there is a very good chance that they will have answered you just to give an answer and not in fact because they knew where they were sending you! I feared that I was going to get on a bus which was supposedly bound for Dharamsala and end up instead in Baghdad. In addition to all that was the fact that with my huge nylon backpack, hiking boots, nylon pants and Indian hand woven shirt (which I had purchased for about $1.60 from the man who made it) I was definitely a bizarre sight to.the locals. Aside from the fact that people were staring at

me as if I had walked naked into a hardcore show, there was a group of young men who followed me just laughing and pointing at me. I tried a few different techniques to get rid of them: first I gave them my best "hard guy" stare, but that was a miserable attempt at best — its hard to look tough when you hiking boots on which are so big that you keep tripping over curbs. When the mean look didn't stop the harassing youth, I pulled a 180 degree turn and tried making the most bizarre faces I possibly could at them. The effect wasn't what I'd intended. They loved it -1 was probably the strangest thing they had seen through there in a while. Eventually they got bored and wandered away. I happened to miraculously find my gate and I went up to the ticket counter to ask the man behind the window if this was the bus for Dharamsala. He looked up at me and shrugged his shoulders. I figured that he was either telling me that he didn't speak English or that he didn't know! Either way, I figured I was doomed. As I started to turn away, he said in broken English, "Open at 5 o'clock." I checked my watch. I had fifteen minutes until tickets were to be validated, and there wasn't anyone lined up yet, so I decided to just stand around and wait. When he finally opened for business, he did nothing more than slide a little partition open at counter level so that people could slide money through in exchange for their tickets, but this movement in itself caused sudden massive chaos. People just swarmed from all over to the window, and not wanting to be left behind in the bus station, I jumped into the crowd. It was insane, and I tried to be civil at first and just wait patiently in the crowd, but the people were going berserk, pushing and shoving. I decided to have some fun, so I used all of my kick boxing skills to get through the crowd and make my way to the the window. It felt strange elbowing someone in the ribs to get them out of the way, or putting my arm in front of a guy's face to block his view of where the window was so I could squeeze ahead of him, but it was the only way to get up there. A few minutes later, I was victorious, walking towards the bus with a validated ticket in my hand, having pissed off only a couple of young men and old ladies with my mosh pit/ticket window technique.

When the bus arrived at the terminal for boarding, I saw that it was very old and looked like it was held together with wire and duct tape. I should describe the bus interior because it is different that what we are used to here, and that comes into play a bit later. The seating was much like a Greyhound bus. I had purchased a "super deluxe" ticket which allowed me a seat on a bus with individual seats rather than wooden bench seats. In the front of the bus, just ahead of the entry door, there was a wall from side to side and floor to ceiling with a tiny door on the side of it. This wall separated the passengers from the "driving crew". It was almost like there was a little room up there. There were two drivers for the 6 PM to 6 AM drive, and one extra guy, in this case a thin man with a colorful turban and a sly grin. His job was to pack all of the luggage on top of the bus, to take tickets, to get everyone on or off the bus at the right time and to help the driver back up out of the terminal (I don't think the busses had mirrors). He would communicate to the driver from where he stood outside the bus with a whistle alone. No spoken commands were given as the bus was backing

up...it was all whistle code. The shrill whistle just added to the chaos. When the bus was ready, he jumped on and with a quick look at the passengers, disappeared into the closed-off front room. The guy made me a bit nervous, but I was fascinated by him: the drivers might have been in control of the vehicle, this was *his* bus. A moment later, he came out again, walking down the aisle and saying to each passenger "Five rupee...five rupee" which each person promptly paid him. When he got to where I sat, he put out his hand palm up and said "Five rupee..." but then realizing that I was not a regular passenger, he explained with a grin, "Put bag on top." I laughed. It was a total ripoff ploy! He was asking for a "baggage handling fee" and netting himself a little extra cash from all the passengers. I was on to him and he knew it, and his grin widened, but the reason / was laughing wasn't because he was ripping me off, but rather because the five rupees he was asking for were only worth about twelve cents...and he was just *so* confident that he was *the man* and that he was getting away with murder. I gave him 10 rupees and motioned for him to keep the change. He was stoked.

I put Danzig IV into the Walkman, and watched the sun set on New Delhi as we drove through the outskirts of the city. The sun was a round disk just sitting on the horizon (I know that's what the sun usually looks like!) but something about the way it was just sitting there, fiercely burning, made me think of a line from the book _The Red Badge of Courage_ by Stephen Crane when he said "the sun was pasted in the sky like a wafer". It was an intense sun for an intense land, and the scenery fit the mood: the slums on the fringe of the city were unbelievable...miles of shattered and broken buildings with fires burning everywhere on which people were probably cooking meager evening meals. As soon as we hit the city limits, the bus driver(s) went completely berserk...we picked up speed and started swerving in and out of the traffic which was heading in both directions. This went on for a couple of hours and I was sure that we were going to have a head on crash and end up on some obscure page of the Seattle Times as a tiny one paragraph story entitled "Bus Crash Kills 30 in India". After about twenty minutes, the bus pulled over at a roadside stand which had a sign reading 'wine and spirits' in English. The smiling bus helper guy rushed out of the front compartment door and ran to the counter, but I couldn't see what he was buying. About 30 seconds later, he ran back onto the bus clutching two bottles of whisky in his hands. With a quick glance to check if everyone was on the bus, he blew his whistle, signaling to the driver to leave and then darted back inside the driving compartment with the bottles. I imagined the TV commercial: *"This is your manic Indian bus driven This is your manic Indian bus driver drunk on a liter of scotch...any questions?"* As the bus picked up speed again, I began to prepare for a sudden and painful death. Things got even crazier as we headed north. We entered the Indian state of Punjab, which had been the scene of a lot of political warfare in the 80's and still was tense to the point where every intersection had blockades around which you had to slow down and drive carefully. Most of these blockades were manned by either one or two rifle-carrying soldiers who just waved the bus by, but at one checkpoint four soldiers actually stopped the bus. Two of them walked down each side of the bus from

the front to the rear and when they got to my window, the two on my side of the bus stopped and called out to their counterparts, gesturing for them to come over and look at me. The bus passenger nationalities were about 90% Tibetan, 9% Indian and then me, and I stuck out like a sore thumb. The soldiers didn't look friendly, and my heart *really* started pounding. Here I was — in the heart of Punjab at one in the morning — and I was being scowled at by four soldiers who seemed to be talking amongst themselves as to what exactly to do with me. I imagined myself bound for the pages of the next Amnesty International newsletter, and as the soldiers began to

have the turbanned grinning bus assistant unload ALL of the bags, I was sure that things might get a lot worse. I looked around for someone to ask what was happening, but no one seemed to speak English. I even asked out loud eventually, "Does anyone know why we are stopped?" but no one answered. I was really scared. After about ten minutes the soldiers seemed suddenly content with the hassle they had caused all of us, and without any acknowledgement of me they packed everything back up and let us through. I later had a chance to ask someone else about that series of events and they said that the soldiers were probably less concerned with my white skin than they were with the fact that I had a green hoodie on (a color worn by military personnel) and that I had a shaved head (a haircut associated with military personnel). They had probably thought that I was a spy. Well, the ride continued, up into the mountains, and along winding one lane roads on which cars would actually pass each other even though the drop over the edge was hundreds of feet down. At about 4:00 a.m. I had listened to Danzig about 43 times and had exhausted my suppjy of other tapes as well. I was sort of delirious from lack of sleep (it had been next to impossible to sleep on the ride), and that is when the kid in the window seat in front of me woke up, started crying out in Tibetan to his mother and then proceeded to puke out the window. I was at wits end.

The bus pulled into MacLeod Ganj while it was still dark, so when I was told to get off the bus because we were "here" but I couldn't see

where "here" was. I got my bag from the turbanned grinning bus extortionist and wandered up a side street to try and find a guest house where I could rent a room. As I got to where I eventually decided that I would stay, light was beginning to come up over the edge of the mountains to the east and that is when I first got a glimpse of where "here" was. I was in the most beautiful place in the world. The mountains were enormous and were just a couple miles to the east of where I stood. The peaks were majestic and snow covered, and the village I was in was on what amounted to the side of the mountain range as it descended to the valley floor, miles below the town. I rented a room for the morning (about 12' x 10' for $3 per day with hot running water — absolute luxury single accommodations) and watched as the sun began to come up. I could see that all of the houses in MacLeod Ganj were small and

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incredible view of the mountains and the valley. It was about 10' X 8" and cost $1.20 per day — a bargain. I decided that it would be in this room that I would write the

lyrics for the "Through the Darkest Days" 7" which we would be recording when I got home. It was perfect...! could sit outside and watch the monkeys and the mountains and totally focus on the mission at hand.

Later that night at about 9 PM, I left the guest house to head towards the fruit stand and my rendezvous with the bizarre Tibetan women. As I was walking down the path, I thought to myself that the last 12 hours had been totally out of control. I had a feeling that the day wasn't over yet, and as it turned out, I was right. The girls met me at the stand, and took me back to their room. I followed them towards a dark building made of smooth concrete which had doors along one exterior wall like a single story motel.

It turned out that these were the living quarters of students at the monastery/ school next door where one could study Tibetan politics and culture. I walked with the group towards the one slightly open door in the passageway, and when they invited me in, I couldn't believe what I saw. There were three other Western guys sitting on the floor of the 15' X 15' room, looking as bewildered

people and their oppression at the hands of the brutal Chinese government. I had no idea of the depth of it all. I had wondered why all of these Tibetan people were living together in northern India on a remote hilltop...the Tibetan women explained it all and it took a *long* time. They kept referring to "our community in exile", meaning MacLeod Ganj and the outer town of Dharamsala. In a few sentences or les< this is what happened. The Dalai Lama and his followers had been forced to leave Tibet in order to avoid execution by the Communist Chinese after the Chinese Army invaded Tibet in 1950, annexing it in the name of China. [For a complete and very thorough history of the Tibetan people and their struggle for independence, read _Tibet: A Political History_ by Tsepon W.D. Shakabpa] I was totally fascinated, not only with my hosts' political awareness, but also with their ability to switch from perfectly fluent English to Tibetan to Hindi without a thought. I am lucky if I can order food in a Mexican restaurant, let alone speak another language, but I counted at least three different languages which they spoke perfectly. The Fulbright Scholar was named Youdon Aukatsang, and she spent her time during the day working for the Tibetan Women's Association (Tibetan Women's Association;

Bhagsunag Road; P.O. MacLeod Ganj 176 219; Dharamsala; District Kangra H.P.; INDIA, or email: [twa@cta.unv.ernet.in]) which is a group seeking to stop violence and oppression of Tibetan women in the occupied territory. Women there are forced into getting abortions, and are often raped and violated by Chinese soldiers. I ended up spending a lot of time over the next few weeks in the office of the Tibetan Women's Association, reading their pamphlets and books and asking questions about the nature of their work. The song "Scars" on the first Trial 7" was inspired largely by my interactions with the dedicated women of the TWA. So, after we had talked politics for a few hours, I began to see the intense sense of purpose which was underlying every move and action for the people of Dharamsala. The town was absolutely on fire with political awareness and direction. These people lived to see the liberation of their people.

It was breathtaking to realize that. Everyone was dedicated to the extent that they would give their lives for the cause. I asked the women if they ever got a chance to meet the Dalai Lama, who lived in a small residence just a bit lower on the mountain from where we were. They told me that "His Holiness" often held public meeting/greeting times but that this had been curtailed as of late because three Chinese spies had been discovered in MacLeod Ganj, and the Dalai Lama was in seclusion for fear of an attempt on his life. Suddenly (and I really do mean _suddenly)_ after this huge conversation, Youdon stood up and announced: "Now we dance!". I was like, "Huh?" One of the other girls pulled a cloth off of an old cassette player which was plugged into some power source, and hit the play button. The cassette was all dance mix and techno songs! The Tibetan women started going nuts dancing. Yes, you are reading this right: in one second we are all sitting there talking about Chinese domination and how the Tibetan people are fighting for their lives, and in the next second the four are dancing like wild women to American techno songs. I think that it was at this point that my brain fell out of my head. No one should ever have a day this insane. Its just not safe. Well, without any other friends or anywhere better to be, I stood up and danced with those seven strangers for the next three hours! Eventually I left and went back to the guest house to document all of this in my journal and to get a full nights sleep. The moon was out as I walked back to the guest house and I was stoked. It was amazing how much difference one day in Dharamsala had made in me. I still felt far from home and alone, but it seemed okay now. I knew that I had definitely made the right choice in coming up north.

The next morning I woke up and walked down to "The

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Residence", which is how the Tibetans refer to the abode of H.H. (His Holiness) the Dalai Lama. There is a path which surrounds the house, about 1/4 mile away from the actual house itself, and the Tibetan Buddhists stroll around this path in a clockwise direction daily, holding prayer beads in their hands and chanting mantras. All around the path there are carved stones by the hundreds carefully placed on the hillside. These stones are carved to read "Om Mani Padme Hum" (to define this would take a book — check out _Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism_ by Lama Anagarika Govinda — the entire book is dedicated to explaining that mantra!) and are placed so that the person leaving the stone can see it when he or she passes by on their cycle of daily prayer. I found myself returning to The Residence daily and strolling around it once or twice. It was a powerful place. On one of the last days I was in India, I purchased a prayer stone from an elderly carver who lived in a hovel under The Residence. I placed the stone on a rock wall directly underneath the actual residence and was told by a Tibetan boy who I met there that the prayer stone would remain where I left it, completely untouched, forever.

There were tons of places like that to explore and over . the next week I spent each day walking through the hillside paths, stopping occasionally to read or to talk to someone — many people could get by with English enough to have a basic conversation.

I also discovered that there were different species of monkeys once you got outside the populated areas. It was totally common for me to be walking along a path and look up to see huge silver-gray monkeys just sitting in the trees staring at me as I passed. There were hundreds of them. I would often come upon small children who would just stare at me, amazed at the foreign traveler in their midst. One day, I was at the edge of another village higher up the hill than MacLeod Ganj, and I turned to see a little entourage of kids following me as if I was the Pied Piper. I waved hi and they just stared. I smiled and they just stared. I picked up three rocks and started juggling them, and they went completely off the wall...screaming and laughing and yelling for their friends to come and watch! Before I knew it, I was being led by the hand back into the center of their village where they called out for their friends and parents to come and watch me juggle. Amazingly enough, there was a total language barrier here. I had no idea what language they were even speaking. Regardless, I juggled for awhile and they were really into it. You hear Hallmark card sounding slogans about laughter as a universal language, but it isn't until you juggle 5 rocks for little Indian preschoolers and have them fall all over each other pointing and laughing that you really begin to believe. After the rock juggling experience, I headed back down into town to this other place which served momos and ordered a ton of them. I sat down to eat, and noticed that a monk was sitting at the table to my right. He was alone, and we looked up at each other occasionally and smiled, not knowing what to say. I had no idea if he spoke English. After a little while, I noticed that he was reading a Tibetan-English dictionary. He saw me looking, and passed it over to me, pointing at a word. It was a really basic dictionary, the kind with little drawings for all the words. He pointed at the word for 'teacher' and pointed at me. It took a while, but we had a conversation by passing this book back and forth and pointing at the words we wanted to say. His English wasn't very good, and he was looking for a teacher to help, him learn (a lot of the monks hope to learn English). I told him to meet me on the porch of my guest house later that day and that I'd be happy to help him. As a result of that invitation, we ended up spending the next two weeks studying the entire dictionary. I could probably write a book on this guy. His name is Molam Ra (Tibetan for 'prayer') and he had walked through all of Nepal from his native Tibet in hopes of reaching Dharamsala and entering a monastery to learn to read and write English and Tibetan. While on this walk, which took two months(!!!) he sold whatever clothes he had been wearing for food along the way. He even sold his sandals, and walked some sections barefoot!

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this cycle. This lasting state of joy or happiness is life's greatest goal and one reaches that state by serving others with acts of pure unselfish compassion. Lama Anagarika Govinda wrote on page 43 (really!) of _Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism_: "The more we lose our ego and break down the walls of our self created prison, the greater becomes the clarity and radiance of our being and the convincing power of our life. It is this through which we help others — more than through philanthropic deeds of charity, and more than through pious words and religious sermons." I consider myself a

caring person, but after being walked on by those closest to me more than once in my life and had found myself thinking in the months preceding my trip that there were limits to how much I could care

for someone else and how much I could prioritize their well being over my own. Something about the idea of *limitless* devotion (a fault of mine in the

past) seemed to be a betrayal of my own needs, and while writers such as Govinda allowed room for this, they also applauded the eventual negation of selfishness...an idea which I

found difficult to accept. I found myself wanting to leave a part of my heart intact at all times, which I guess could be seeh as selfish, but I saw it as realistic and necessary.

Seriously though, I asked Mi Pam about the nature of selfishness one day, telling him that I did indeed recognize the value in acting for the benefit of others, but that I was missing the point of why one needed to destroy selfish desires. He told me that "in this life the offer must be made of one's life to help others"...that "to do good in this life leads to happy feelings which will make the next life better". , He told me that the quality of one's subsequent incarnations on this earth are dependent on actions taken in this life, and so one must take care to respect all others, human as well as animal, who are by the very nature of their existence "like Buddha". For him, 'the soul' was seen as transcendent. I began to think that maybe I should strive to define "the soul", having heard about it a thousand times in so many hardcore song lyrics, and now in India as well. Mi Pam stressed that the respect was the priority, and not the concern with the quality of future incarnations. I told him respectfully that while I didn't believe in reincarnation, that I did strive to respect others as best I could and that I tried to be compassionate whenever possible. Mi Pam admitted that if he were to live in a city like I did, instead of high in the Himalayas, that some degree of selfishness would be required for him to acquire the basic necessities of life. He said with a laugh that "this would be wrong for the religion, but right for me." I detected a balance point in him: the ideals weren't as absolute as I was perceiving them. There was room for interpretation given different circumstances. This made me' a lot more accepting of what the teachings said.

On the flip side of compassion there is selfishness. Writer Ayn Rand had described a value system which promoted self centered thought and action without compromise. In _The Fountainhead_ and _Atlas Shrugged_, she described a philosophy called *objectivism* which held that dedication to objective and rational thought and the subsequent actions which followed were at the core of life. Rand saw the alleviation of suffering and the pursuit of happiness as respected goals yet she saw a much different path from the Buddhists in how one was to attain them: rational selfishness was the means to the end, or put in other terms, the path to follow is the pursuit of determined actions which benefit oneself. A word of caution before reading Rand: her works, while tremendous in their scope, have some really aggravating points. She championed technology and science, explaining that the rational mind was the ultimate mind, and thus saw native peoples worldwide as "ignorant savages" because they did not take part in

the domination of the natural world by the advancement of science towards the end of personal achievement and profit. It has always been difficult for me to look past this side of Rand's writing in light of my work with the Western Shoshone Defense Project and their struggle against people Rand would have loved:' gold mining companies...and The Sea Shepherd Conservation Society and their fight against profiteering whalers. Aside from the ugly side of Rand, her concept of selfishness as a virtue is absolutely fascinating. She challenged the widely held belief that selfishness needs to be demonized, arguing that, "Whoever preserves a single thought uncorrupted by any concession to the will to others, whoever brings into reality a match stick or a patch of garden made in the image of his thought — he, and to that extent, is a man, and that extent is the sole measure of his virtue." The point about her work is that she championed selfishness, seemingly in direct opposition to the principles I was reading about in the Buddhist teachings, and it was a good exercise to tear at each side to see what I agreed with and disagreed with in each of them.

I believe in a moral code which is filled with inevitable contradiction: a code which never lets go of either compassion or objectivity, regardless of the fact that they are sometimes in opposition to one another. I strive to find a balance between the two. I identify my "soul" as my own

ability to fully recognize and understand the implications of my existence. This makes me responsible for myself and for my actions. At the same time, it also requires that I consider the world as a whole, and the effect that my existence has on it. If I was to focus completely on myself, it would negate the concept of social responsibility. It has been said that true revolution begins when you are able to face yourself in the mirror. I believe that. At the same time, I feel that I do have certain responsibilities to both society at large and to other people. Neither objectivism nor compassion has satisfied me completely. Balancing the two creates a situation where dishonesty with the self might have disastrous consequences for either myself or others. For example, it would be easy to commit an action which benefits me alone, and then simply fall back on Randian selfishness for my justification without much consideration for others involved. Likewise, it would be easy to commit an act of total benevolence, using Tibetan Buddhist teachings as a prime motivator, while disregarding my own needs and desires. Neither would be fair. The balance between these two concepts is a synthesis, a sort of *objective compassionism, * and while this somewhat of an oxymoron, it speaks more realistically to me than either extreme does when considered on its own. In India I realized that honesty is to be prioritized above all else. Self honesty is at the core. If I lie to myself and then act upon what that lie creates, then every subsequent action from that point onward is based on a foundation of sand. The foundation must be strong, and to make that strength a part of my life, "all I need is the truth."

The Dalai Lama himself wrote in _The Power of Compassion_ that Buddhism was a sort of bridge between the extremes of materialism and pure faith, essentially "a science of the mind." He wrote: "Although I speak from my own experience, I feel that no one has the right to impose his or her beliefs on another person. I will not propose

to you that my way is best. The decision is up to you. If you find some point which may be suitable for you, then you can carry out experiments for yourself. If you find that it is of no use, then you can discard it." I have tried to blend truths together and disregard points which I find unsuitable. Read the books for yourself though and let me know what you discover, as I have had to leave out countless nuances and concepts here simply for lack of space. Be in touch. I'd really like to know what you think.

It is strange, but when people ask me about what I saw in India, I usually say that I met the Dalai Lama, but that this was not the most intense thing which happened to me. That isn't to say that the event was insignificant by any means, but rather that it seemed perfectly aligned with everything else I was reading and thinking about and therefore was more of a dramatic punctuation mark and less of a statement itself. The Dalai Lama is truly an incredible man — and the Tibetans will argue that he is much more than a man. In fact, there was one afternoon when I placed Molam's photo next to the Dalai Lama's on the table in my room and he went white with horror. He couldn't even speak until I took his photo down and placed it *beneath* the Dalai Lama's! On the day that the Dalai Lama announced that he would be holding public audience, I lined up early outside of the residence along with hundreds of other people who had traveled to see him. We all had to pass through Indian and Tibetan security checkpoints...evidently neither nation wanted full responsibility for His Holiness' well being...security was VERY tight. I even had to leave my wristwatch'behind for fear that it might contain some small potentially lethal device. We all lined up, and then waited for the Dalai Lama to emerge from his residence. Around my hands I had wrapped a katah (KAH-tah), which is a ceremonial prayer shawl. To carry it and then place it around my neck just before greeting the Dalai Lama would be seen as very respectful. I had also purchased a strand of prayer beads and I wrapped these around my hand before shaking hands with the Dalai Lama, so that they would be blessed in the eyes of the

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to all those who meet the Dalai Lama). The significance of this string was clearly demonstrated to me a few months after my return to the States when I was eating lunch at a Tibetan restaurant in Salt Lake City (House of Tibet — go there!). The all-Tibetan staff were eating their lunch at a round table in the center of the restaurant. I walked up and said hi and said that I'd recently been to Dharamsala. A few of them looked up. Then, without a word, I pulled the prayer string around my neck out from under my shirt collar and all of them suddenly just looked up and froze wide eyed, saying quickly to each other, "Dalai Lama...Dalai Lama". It was really intense.

Shortly after meeting His Holiness, I had to return to New

Delhi to catch my flight home. It was really hard to leave MacLeod Ganj, not only because I would be leaving good friends, but also because I knew that I would have to get back on the bus with the psycho drunken bus drivers again. That's

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I've always been suspicious of Socialist/Communist

ideology, for many different reasons. But this column isn't about my misgivings; it's about what I feel, and what I know to be true for myself. To give you a brief bit of back ground information, I'm about as bluecollar, or proletarian as you can get. I'm a machinist, I get dirty, and I never went to college. I grew up White trash on Maple St.

• on the west side of Rochester. By no

"^!^^S means am I an expert on political terms

> or political theory. I'll leave that to mn and Lefty Hooligan! Anyway, I think a **1** major hurdle to relevant social change **I** in this country, is a definite lack of **I** class consciousness on the part of it's **I** citizens. To me, class consciousness **1** can be summed up in my hatred for **I** rich people, which I feel every day. **F** Every time I see some yuppie fuck in his new Saab, I just wanna drag 'em from his car and hang him from a
>
> **F** fuckin' lamppost. Yep. Class Conscious- **w** ness for me comes down to hate. I can feel the hate the upper class has for a working **F** slob like myself, and I hope they feel my hate
>
> too.

u?oC youps>< ttavwt £> Abraxas

fascist-like system of policy, such as Richard Wagner, Bernard Shaw, Gabriel D'Annunzio, T.S. Elliot, Carl G. Jung, Ezra Pound, Ernst Junger, William Butler Yeats just to name a handful. Despite your bumper-sticker logic with phrases like "Fascism = Ignorance" and "Liberalism = Enlightenment" which the left is so fond of destroying their cars' appeal with, reality lies somewhere in between. This world of existence and ideology is crammed with gray areas and it always borders where extremes meet, coming together on completely new ground.

In this article I will raise a few points using Hermann Hesse's wonderful novel _Demian_. It is quite interesting to point out that Hesse is a writer who is not in the least been connected in any way to Fascism, but I think we'll soon see that his themes enclose a Gnostic ideology which is at it's very core in tune with Nature, which in turn, is a key concept that a person such as myself seems far more open to understand than those of the "Right" or "Left", especially the later.

Many of those who criticize are quick to emphasize the individualistic and liberal qualities of Hermann Hesse's works, as well as his opposition to war and battle. I will not question this, for it can easily be taken in may different ways. A Fascist does not always have to be prepared for war, nor does he have to want to fight one. I will neither contest Hesse's documented pacifism, I do state that things are not as easily classifiable as they seem. _Demian_, though, is a writing that allows a myriad of interpretation, and it is in my opinion, as many others, that some very ominous conclusions may be extracted from this work... ones which hardly prove nor give fact to the prevailing "liberal" view of life and history.

In the opening of the book we find that Hesse has already made some intriguing remarks through the voice of the novels protagonist when he states, “I have begun to listen to the teachings my blood whispers to me”, and goes on to say that his tale has the qualities of “chaos, madness and dreams... like the lives of all men who stop deceiving themselves.”

Pemian was written in the aftermath of the first World War, curiously the war which laid the groundwork for a sort of Fascist ascent into Spain, Portugal and Italy, the very form of government that was obsessed with concepts such as “listening to the call of one’s blood” and accepting the . unbending laws of “truth” and “Natural order” of the universe. Hermann Hesse’s “individualism” that everyone pins on him is rather a hard find in _Demian_ for he goes on the state in the prologue, “No man has ever been entirely and completely of himself’, and he has Sinclair (one of the ‘ novels characters) comment in an admiring fashion to a group of soldiers at the near end of the book, “Many, very many, not only during the attack but at every moment of the day, wore in their eyes the remote, resolute, somewhat possessed look which knows nothing of aims and signified complete surrender to the incredible.” Such thoughts ring with a resonance heard before quite often in such Fascist phrases as “an organized will”. To quote William Butler Yeats, who I mentioned before as a Fascist sympathizer, “The borders of our minds are ever shifting. And many minds can flow into one another... and create or reveal a single mind, a single energy.” Drawing such a totalitarian conclusion from Hesse’s work so far must truly annoy his more “liberal” appropriators, as well as with most of the readers as well. I can already read your thoughts months before this even goes into print, “But in Fascism there is no place for the independent individual!” To this I will use the most vile of all examples, that even a crazed Nazi believes in independence and one needs to look no further than the most crazed psychotic Nazi himself, Adolph Hitler which wrote in Mien Kampf a chapter entitled, “The Strong Man Is Mightiest Alone”. So even a drug-starved megalomaniac believed in the importance of individualism, yet I find that

even the most “liberal” says that my social and political outlook is wrong and I should change... what happened to individualism there? I digress...

One of the most truly important sections of Hermann Hesse’s work is in the closing of the book when the two main characters, Demian and Sinclair, are pulled into the middle of a European war. Now here is where it gets good... even though Hesse has been known to be an extreme pacifist, the passages at the close proclaim that war is necessary, a vital factor in the evolution of man and consciousness. As Sinclair states, “Deep down, underneath, something was taking shape. Something akin to a new humanity... The most primitive, even the wildest feelings were not directed at the enemy; their bloody task was merely an irradiation of the soul, the soul divided within itself, which filled them with the lust to rage and kill, annihilate and die so that they might be born anew.”

The central idea behind this great novel was that Emil Sinclair reconciles the world of darkness and light. How does he come about this reconciliation? He stumbles upon

the Gnostic deity Abraxas, a god with qualities of both good and evil. Sinclair becomes enthralled as he listens to a teacher mentioning that "it appears Abraxas has a much deeper significance. We may conceive of the name as that of a godhead whose symbolic task is the uniting of godly and devilish elements." In addition to Abraxas' unification of good and evil, he is the complete unification and reflection of the universe, of an equal balance of peace and war, life and death, darkness and light, joy and sadness... he is the heat of summer and the cold of winter. This important concept of a once opposite coming together in duality, transcends past most human limitations and goes one step towards a much more mystical significance, and hereby is harnessed a new power for true creation and evolution.

Some of the most important minds of our times have been aware of such thought throughout history. Plato wrote in many of his plays how life could not sustain itself without two opposite yet equal elements holding it together. The Greek philosopher Heraclitus wrote, "God is day and night, summer and winter, war and peace", then again later, "Life and death are the same; for the latter change and are the former, and the former change and are the latter", to finally, "Opposition unites. From what draws apart results the most beautiful harmony." —

Later in the book, Sinclair is then told by Damien that, "Who would be born first must destroy a world and fly to god, a god whose name is Abraxas." Which is the same as the books application of the war, being that the principle of creation is only predicated upon by destruction. Whether we realize it or not Hermann Hesse is walking on areas where angels fear to tread when he explores Sinclair's soul. It has been pointed out, even by "liberals" that the novel and Hesse himself is very much indebted to Nietzsche and Carl Jung. As for Neitzsche, his adoption by Fascist thinkers has been well documented for years now. And if we look into the writings of Benito Mussolini, "To understand Nietzsche, we must envision a new race of 'free spirits'... strengthened in war, in solitude, in greatest danger... spirits endowed with a kind of sublime perversity, spirits which will liberate us from the love of our neighbor." And don't even give me the argument about the Axis alignment between Hitler and Mussolini, if your country was a border away from a land that was entirely destroying a whole continent you probably wouldn't think twice about kissing a little ass to protect what you've created... plus the Japanese were in the Axis and they weren't Nazis — or Aryan.

Well, back to the book. The character Demian, provides Sinclair a with a method to expand and search the deepest beings of his soul. The strength provided to him from his journeys gives Sinclair a finality to interact with the world outside. As in most mythos which provide a pantheon of deities, rather that a monotheism, the main godhead or deity "leader" (i.e. Zeus, Odin, Melek Taus, etc.) have an odyssey or parable that tells of their internal spiritual realization. Thus a

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our existence, the light and dark, right and left, and bears a life of action by dynamic vital feelings, uplifting the belief in free creative will and a noble "soul". It is clear that such a premise has no room for Christian morality and, extended, the entire Christian

world as we have known it. If we were to put this into practice the results of such a rejection may neither be pleasant or even humanitarian, which explains why secular liberal thought is so unwilling to even acknowledge such an approach to living.

In _Demian_, Sinclair and his mentor Pistorius' "new religion" may well be cruel and unforgiving to most, but for as Carl Jung once wrote, "We cannot possibly get beyond, our present level of culture

unless we receive a powerful impetus from our primitive roots. But we shall receive it only if we go behind our cultural level, thus giving the suppressed primitive man in ourselves a chance to develop. The existing edifice is rotten. We

• need some new foundations. We must dig down to the primitive in us, for only out of the conflict between civilized man and the... barbarian will there come what we need; a new experience of God...We name it by it's name, Abraxas."

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with wild abandon like in the Bouncing Souls video. I am forced to edit the creativity of friends. Those bastards (even if they have parents), those men and women who have forgotten what the American flag is SUPPOSED to stand for, my friends, is the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). So what have I done? I have studied their charter and all relevant and applicable laws, because that's just the kind of person I am.

As with anything, there are several ways to do things and still have them come out well. Since I have yet to find any of those concerning making a tv show, I can offer some practical advice for the novice looking to corrupt young minds with moving images and sound. There are lots of ways of getting around the FCC regulations concerning content as well as little tricks in the original Communications Acts that can make anyone with a little determination a serious threat to 1. the well being of American youth and 2. anyone trying to keep a secret in order to be deceptive for personal gain. I hope you use this power for good instead of evil (directed to the state of New Jersey).

"We still gorge ourselves on the thoughts of their pre fab culture." — Born Against

Section 1: Where can I see it?

So you have an idea for a weekly series or special or want an event to be televised. One of the first things to consider is what venue you wish to use to reach your audience. The standards of production quality are much higher for broadcast tv than for cable. And since it is such an expensive format, one should also make up a budget and look to see what kind of advertising may be available before starting on this venture, if the channel you choose allows advertising at all.

There are many ways to have a program visually broadcast:

1. Broadcast (NBC, ABC, CBS, FOX and local affiliates and independent channels): Transmitted over airwaves from area stations. May be affiliates of national networks offering both syndicated and network programming or independent stations providing solely syndicated and local origination programming. Commercially funded by advertising and free to public.

2. Public Broadcast (PBS): Transmitted over the airwaves, educational and public affairs programming funded by the government (through the National Endowment for the Arts), private and public corporations and viewers like you. Usually offers little local programming. No commercial advertising, free to public.

3. Basic service cable (USA, Lifetime, ESPN): Primary level or levels offered for subscription. Basic cable offerings may include transmitted broadcast signals as well as local and access programming. In addition, regional and national cable network programming may be provided. The basic cable stations (like CNN and the Discovery Channel) are commercially funded and also receive revenue from the cable subscriptions in the form of licensing fees.

4. Premium/Pay cable (HBO, Showtime, Cinemax): A network or service available for a additional monthly fee. Funded by subscription fees. No commercial advertising.

5. Pay-per view (movies, special events, and concerts): Pay service that enables a subscriber to order and view events or movies on an individual basis. In the case of special events, may offer advertising in the form of sponsorships.

6. Cable access (Local and government channels): Local channels operated and provided by local system carriers to provide a voice for the community and a venue for public interest programming of a non-commercial nature. Any resident may provide or request programming to be aired. Facility and equipment use are offered free for residents. Funding comes from membership fees, grants and the operator's investment. Non-monetary sponsorships permitted. The stations are considered "must carry" by system operators. The obvious choice as far as I am concerned after the Supreme Court ruling on June 28^ (see Part 2).

7. Leased access (What we aren't supposed to know about, but Robin Byrd does): Local cable access channels where time can be purchased for original programming. The channels are funded by the cable operator, grants, and membership fees. The programming is privately funded by the individuals purchasing the time. Purchasers may sell portions of their show to advertisers. Leased access stations are considered "must carry" by system operators.

8. Satellite and offshoots (DirecTV, Prime Star, USSB): A radio communication service in which signals transmitted or re-transmitted by space stations are intended for direct reception by the general public. Unlike broadcast television and cable, which distribute programming locally, direct broadcast satellites (D.B.S.) can transmit multiple channels of programming directly to the entire continental US. Like cable, one has to subscribe to a carrier on the D.B.S. system. Satellite tv carries many of the stations found on cable tv, but offers the possibility of pirate

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channels. Commercial, non-Commercial, and pay-per-view offered.

9. Internet broadcasting (See You-See Me, Quick Time Conferencing, Share Vision): Anything goes for now. With the use of software, images can be transmitted in almost real time. Pirate stations inevitable. (If you want to help me make one, write me. I need lots of programming).

Now that you have a basic idea of the avenues, where do they get their shows? Broadcast and the basic and premium cable networks produce shows as original programming or licenses shows in 13 week seasons. With cable access, one can keep going as long as he chooses. In most areas, leased access is done by contract over any agreed upon period of time (my normal contract is for 3 months).

Section 2: Basic industry information and statistics (National Cable Television Association, 1995)

Broadcast television is available free to all 95, 360, 730 television-owning households in the US. Or these, 61, 025, 350 homes subscribe to basic cable television services for a penetration of 64%. The average monthly fee for basic cable is $18.86. Almost 91.75 million television households in the United States are "passed" by cable, which means that the cable is available in the home.

The number of households that subscribe to a premium channel is roughly 42 million. The percentage of basic cable subscribers who also purchase premium channels has grown from 23.6% in 1975 to 74% in 1994. This percentage actually peaked in 1984 at 87.5%.

There are 11, 351 cable systems operating in the US. Cable's share of viewing audience has also continued to grow over the years, from a low of 9% of total television homes in 1983–1984, to its present high of 26% of all television households in 1993–94. The viewing shares in households with cable tv are a bit surprising. In 1994, of households with cable, broadcast network affiliates held 44% of viewing time while cable television (including pay cable) accounted for 45%.

Cable systems' expenditures on programming have grown tremendously over the last eleven years from 19841995. In 1984, cable systems spent $1.7 billion on developing programming for cable systems around the country. By 1995, that figure has become over $4.5 billion a year. *

Section 3: Moolah

The weekly budget for a soap opera is between $800, 000 and $900, 000, spent mostly on the large production crew, huge staff, and numerous sets. Where do the stations come up with the money to blow that much (don't forget that most networks have at least 3 soaps that are run daily) on such horrid "entertainment"? ADVERTISING. Each of those soaps bring in more than a million dollars an hour for their broadcasters in advertising revenue. Companies have found the way to reach the women who lead fantasy lives through television and they are willing to pay for it.

There are 3 different forms of advertising:

1. Spot purchasing: Through the 1950s and 60s advertisers purchased specific time slot spaces during the commercial breaks on programs that had the demographics to which their products appealed. That was back in the old days when there was some guarantee that a show would last a whole season. In the early 70's, a drastic change took place in the television industry as programmers realized they didn't have to keep a show on for an entire season if the ratings flagged. Suddenly there was no guarantee for a program to get past the pilot episode [an actor's contract could last anywhere from a week to 5 years based on how many people happened to catch the shows pilot (which would depend on how much promotion the station/network did and what competition was on that night)]. And then the program may be replaced by another pilot with a demographic that the advertisers weren't seeking, so to commit to a time slot was a dangerous risk.

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Broadcast (as in "broadcast channels"): stations transmitted over

the airwaves, free to the public. Can be either commercial or non-commercial in nature.

Cable (as in "cable channels"): stations transmitted through coaxial cables to receiver unit loaned by cable system to subscribers.

Coaxial cable: a type of "pipe" for electronic signals. An inner conductor is surrounded by a neutral material, which is then covered by a metal "shield" that prevents the signal from escaping the cable. Slowly being replaced by fiberoptics.

Direct broadcast satellite (D.B.S.): High-powered satellites designed to beam television signals directly to viewers with special receiving equipment. Operate at a much higher power than standard satellites, and

transmit in a frequency different from the standards.

Fiber optics: thin strands of ultrapure glass or plastic which can be used to

carry light waves from one location to another with digital clarity. Enough information can be housed to create video-on- demand capabilities.

Local origination programming: shows developed from a local station. Can be syndicated to reach other markets. _

CLASSIFIED AD'S

Classified ad's are now free in Inside Front (we figure that's the *least* we can do for you poor bastards). Ironically enough, we used to get a fair number of classifieds for each issue, but now that they're free, we don't seem to be getting any. Come on, this space is yours to use, don't just passively sit there, collect records or something! Anyway, here's ours:

Will buy or trade for: anything by G.I.S.M. besides that CD bootleg, the Amebix "No Sanctuary" record, a sleeve (or copy of a sleeve) for the Amebix "Winter" 7",

any Amebix artwork/inter- views/photos/video footage/live recordings, rare or live recordings/ video footage of Diamonda Galas, the original Zygote vinyl, the Trial 12" on "Hipster" (rip off) records, old issues (or even copies thereof) of Vague magazine, collections/reproduc- tions of artwork by Ernst Fuchs, good photos/video footage/ live recordings of Systral, Timebomb, Gehenna, Catharsis / Stalingrad, or Final Exit, obscure brands of root beer/cream soda/ other unusual independent sodas (Iron Horse root beer, for example!), anything else you think we might enjoy. Contact us at the CrimethInc. headquarters in Atlanta.Burnside "

The Rebirth" 7" Available August '97 from Gut Punch records. Four songs from the most brutal band from NJ. $3 ppd. US $5 world. Write for mailorder list. GPR, 103 N Grove Ave #2, National Park, NJ 08063 USA

classified ad:

Still looking for B'zrker (Boston) shirt, Burden Of Proof shirt, Vision- Just Short cd, old issues of Silent Scream 'zine (Tulsa/Austin), Beowulf shirt, No Mercy shirt, Excel shirts, and a couple other things. Open Season 'Zine, po box 10282, Rochester NY 14610. ps, OS #8 out soon with Dying Breed/Politics Of Contraband 7" and interviews with War-time Manner, Polites, Dying Breed, Execution Style, Breakdown, Lockjaw, Nine Shocks Terror, and lots of fishing pics.

[Image not archived]

Today, of all the bands playing hardcore punk, in all its different manifestations, Systral stands completely apart. Some bands make music that sounds a little different from their contemporaries, but Systral's songs sound to me like they were composed by fucking Martians. Even the production on their recordings sounds unnatural. I was really excited to get to do this interview with them. The letter with their responses, incidentally, was apparently dropped into the ocean for a while by the German postal system on its way over — it arrived barely legible, with all the photos soaked and stuck together. I could just make out a note with them that said "please take good care of these and return them when you're finished." Too bad! By the way, don't believe Bjorn's words about the origins of their name; "Systral" has more to do with their troubles with German insect life than with their peculiar affinity for American animated comedy.

INSIDE FRONT: What is a "Systral" ? How does this relate to your band? BJORN: "Systral" is the weird-sounding name of Bart Simpson's beloved slingshot which he uses for terrorizing people.

IF: To get right to the heart of the matter, Systral's music and packaging, which evoke images of the worst destruction and cruelty that humankind has wrought upon itself and the environment, and Systral's lyrics, which address this topic in an often despairing manner, make it clear that Systral is concerned with the fate of our species and our planet in the face of the devastation and suffering we have brought and continue to bring upon ourselves. Do the members of Systral have any solutions in mind for the crises we are facing?

SONKE: No, I can't offer you any solution at all because I can't even tell you why there is so much shit happening in the world. It just happens once in a while that I realize that something is really wrong out there and I think about it for some minutes but afterwards I completely forget about it again. I don't want to waste my time thinking about that bullshit anymore, don't want to get totally frustrated and depressed. This may sound very simple,

but to explain this exactly I would need 666 more pages and even more English lessons.

BJORN: I think there is no solution to all that shit that is happening and that is the reason why we have none. I guess that if I would think too much about all that pisses me off I would finally end up insane and run around shooting people with a pump-gun. Therefore I try to take things easier now than I did in the past and make the best out of this life without hurting too many people. *IF: The history of humankind is soaked in the blood of countless examples of man's brutality and murderous desire to dominate, which have risen infrequency to. a fever pitch in the twentieth century as our methods of exploitation and extermination have become ever more efficient and effective. In the past ninety[1] years we have witnessed, among other atrocities, the slaughter of millions and millions of people for religious, ethnic, and political nonreasons, the continuation of abominable labor conditions and worker treatment, and the invention of weapons which can destroy this entire planet a thousand times over. Do you think the cause of this kind of behavior is something "natural, " an inherently destructive element in the nature of humankind... or do you think these horrifying actions and attitudes have been learned by our species and can therefore be unlearned? '*

BJORN: For far too many people the horrifying actions and attitudes you mentioned mean profit, money, and popularity and they don't give a fuck about any victims or something. That is a fact and I don't think it will change in the future. It is nothing that has been learned by man and can easily be unlearned, and it really makes me scared.

IF: Now let's back up and discuss Systral as a band. What musical backgrounds do the members come from? What is Systral's connection to Acme and other bands?

BJORN: All the members.of Systral love the music that Acme were playing and we know each other quite well. Many people think Systral is an exAcme band, but Sonke is the only ex-Acme member of Systral and that's all. I used to do the vocals for Carol until they split up but I can't think of any connection to any other older band.

SONKE: I used to play bass for Acme but it got too boring at a time when we were playing shows nearly every weekend. We did two tours then and afterwards we all needed a break. Since a few weeks we practice again but unfortunately we lost our singer's telephonenumber and we are now an instrumental-band. If anyone of you thinks he is brutal enough to sing for Acme, please write us.

IF: Has the membership of Systral changed at all? The music on the more recent 10" sounds somewhat different from the older 7".

BJORN: At the time we recorded the 7" we only existed as a three-piece band. It was me and my brother Denny doing the singing and Dirk who now plays bass played all the instruments on *Maximum Entertainment.* In order to play live we needed a drummer and a guitar player and that was where Andy (guitar) and Sonke (drums) joined Systral. One year later we recorded the 10" as a "real" band and we wrote all the songs for it together. The musical development from the 7" to the 10" came with our new members and a more serious attitude to

wards our music. Since a few weeks we have Sven from Metoke in our team as a second guitar player so I suppose you can expect our new record to be again a little different than the past recordings.

SONKE: It became very boring to play only fast songs that are over after thirty seconds so we decided to change that, and are now doing thirty-minutes ballads with bongos and acoustic guitars.

IF: Systral's songwriting seems to take the traditional grindcore formula (high and low vocals, fast and slow parts, lots of samples) and turn it on its head to create some unusual, unpredictable, consistently unique music. To what do you attribute the originality of Systral's music?

BJORN: I think we are quite good in stealing from other bands and arrange our songs in a certain way so that no one will ever notice that we are just goddamn betrayers. That is what makes Systral kind of original and I hope that won't change.

IF: This would be a boring question, but in the context of question #6 it might not be after all. Are there any bands that the members of Systral feel are doing or have done what Systral is trying to do? What "musical tradition" does Systral feel a part of if any?

BJORN: Some bands played or play music to get rich and famous, some bands do it because they have the urge to express something with their songs and others are just doing it for fun. We mixed all this together and do what we want to do and therefore I don't think that Systral does anything that has never been there before.

IF: From what social background do the members of Systral come? What are you presently involved in besides the band, where do you work and live? And(wbat was it in your lives that led you to create Systral? What experiences in your own lives have you drawn upon to create your music?

BJORN: Dirk used to be professional soccer player and he was quite successful for a while but suddenly he got serious problems with his right knee and the doctors gave him the advice to end his career immediately. He then decided to become a bass player in a Rock'n'Roll band instead. Since he was born Andy's only passion has been riding big, dirty motorcycles and playing guitar. I can't remember that he did anything else in his life than that. Dirk and I met him five years ago at a Harley-Davidson meeting here in Bremen. Denny was killed five years ago by an assassination and went straight to hell. In order to see his beloved girlfriend again he made a deal with the devil. He sold his soul and his voice to the devil who sent him back to earth to be reunited with his one and only love. Sven isn't really human but a perfectly designed computer-

animation combined with an artificial intelligence and there is no social background or past life existing. Sonke's past is a dark tragedy of cheap cocaine, gun shoot-outs and dirty smelling girls (that is what he said!!!). He once decided to become a shaolin-shadow-boxer, but he was too dumb to remember all the different moves, he's even getting in trouble when he's drumming. Finally, my past life is something that I'm not allowed to talk about. I promised years ago that I won't ever reveal any details about my former existence. It needs to remain a secret.

IF: Speaking of lifestyles, where do the members of

[Image not archived]

Systral see themselves in ten years? What will you be doing then? BJORN: We'll be rockin' and rollin' in hell.

SONKE: Yeah!!!

IF: A number of interesting hardcore bands seem to be coming out of the Bremen, Germany area right now. Describe this better for those of us who are not informed about this. What is it like to be a part of the hardcore community there?

BJORN: In Bremen there is a bunch of nice people playing music in different bands but I don't want to call this the "Hardcore Community" because I don't think there is one. Well, maybe there is one but if so I don't feel like being a part of it. All the people I play music with are good friends of mine and I am convinced that no one of them thinks he is part of something like a "Hardcore Community."

SONKE: Too many people who identify themselves with punk/hc think they are cool because they are "active" or something. I don't care about things like that, I want to meet people who are kind and funny and I don't give a fuck about what they do or what they don't.

IF: From the fliers I see, it seems that Systral does a fair bit of traveling to play throughout Europe. What have you learned about the European hardcore community from playing in different cities and nations ? What have you learned about Europe in general?

BJORN: As a band we have been to England, Belgium and many places here in Germany (can't wait to conquer the States) and the one thing I have learned is that there is some nice people everywhere as well as a bunch of assholes but I don't want to talk about an hardcore community because it bores me. *IF: In 1997, over fifty years later, what attitudes do you see in Germany about the Holocaust? Do people still feel guilty, implicated in the wrongdoings of their grandparents? Do people try to deny that it happened and that we are capable of such things?*

BJORN: There is an exhibition these days about the German Wehrmacht and its brutal activities in Eastern Europe during World War II. This exhibition is shown in several German cities and you get to see photographs, videos, old documents, etc. Most people who have been there feel shocked and sad or feel kind of guilty but on the other side there is also people who try to deny the murder of millions and think that the Wehrmacht was not that bad at all. Some people even think that with such an exhibition the names of 'brave' and 'innocent' soldiers are spoiled and therefore they

demonstrate against it. There is still a minority of people here that seriously denies the brutality of the Holocaust.

IF: What is the significance of the title of your 7", "Maximum Entertainment"? It seems to have a theme of mass media and the commodification of suffering... please explain.

BJORN: In the media today nothing sells better than destruction, suffering, murder and war, and it seems that for many people there is nothing more entertaining than this. The more shocking something is the more people want to watch it, not to be informed about it but simply to be entertained. With the picture of the destroyed rainforest and the title "Maximum Entertainment" we tried to depict how sick this development in today's media is.

IF: What is the significance of the title of your 10" then — "Fever... the Maximum Carnage"? And what does "16V... the maximum turbo injection with alu-socks" mean? What exactly is an "alu-sock"?

SONKE: The whole title is just a stupid joke you cannot understand so I refuse to explain it.

IF: Explain how the cover art from your records fits into the general theme of Systral's music and message.

BJORN: For the reason that Systral doesn't have atypical message to spread, the cover art simply represents what the members want their records to look like and so it fits into our comprehension of "artwork, " though I think the cover of "Fever..." could be better than it actually is.

SONKE: More skulls, more flames, more motorcycles...

IF: What are you trying to say with the first song on the 10", "Soul" ? Who is sampled at the end of this song, and how does that fit into the context of the song?

BJORN: The lyrics of "Soul" describe a really important situation or state of mind that you need once in a while in everyday life in order to not get insane. It is a state of mind that makes you feel totally relaxed or a situation in which you have nothing to care about. The sample at the end is not really related to the song by purpose but I think the sound of the voice fits in with the lyrics. Unfortunately I don't know who the voice belongs to.

SONKE: Probably a pothead, too.

IF: To whom is the song "Narrow-Minded Criteria " directed?

BJORN: The song goes out to all the people who use things like veganism for example to raise themselves above other people and point their fingers at them, saying, "Look, those are the bad guys, not me!" In my opinion you need more characteristics to be cool, it's not that easy.

IF: Is the song "Eight" on the 10" called that because it's the eighth song on the 10", or for some other reason? BJORN: You guessed right, it's called "Eight" simply because it is song number eight, that is all.

IF: How and why did you decide to cover "Confide In Me" by Kylie Minogue?

BJORN: We all love the original version by Kylie Minogue, it is a really good song and doing our own interpretation of it is our way of saying "thank you" to Kylie and showing her how much we appreciate her work.

IF: What would you do if her record label tried to sue your band?

BJORN: In that case we would enjoy the over-night popularity that would come along with a news headline like "Systral sued by Kylie Minogue's record company."

IF: Motorhead. A band — a myth — a legend. Describe and explain in one hundred words or less their important place in the history of rock and roll and Western civilization in general, and how Systral's rendition of "We Are the Road Crew" relates to this.

SONKE: I don't know if they are so very important for Rock'n'Roll history. The best thing about them is that they are now fifty years old and they lived Rock'n'Roll right from the beginning. That makes me feel happy and whenever I'm surrounded by idiots I just have to think about Lemmy and know immediately that I don't have to become stupid like them. Also I wouldn't know what to do all day long, if I couldn't raise my fist and shout "Motorheaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaad!", in case they wouldn't exist.

IF: Does anyone in Systral ride motorcycles? Does any of Systral's audience ride?

BJORN: We all do, of course. Big, black, evil motorcycles you will get to see when we come to tour the USA next year. I don't think many of our fans can share this passion with us because it's a quite expensive hoppy as you know and you definitely need the money of a Rockstar to afford such a luxury. *IF: What are some new bands that are worth checking out right now?*

BJORN: There is a new band from Bremen called Morser and it features members from Carol, Systral, Assay and Metoke. It's a bunch of eight confused young musicians who listened to too much Slayer, Carcass and Brutal Truth records, but they are good. They are really good. They have an LP/CD. on Per Koro records and you should keep your eyes open for it.

IF: What are Systral's plans from here? What records or tours do you have planned? and what do you want to have accomplished before Systral breaks up?

BJORN: Our future plans include a U.S. release of "Fever... the Maximum Carnage" in late '97 on CrimethInc. and a 5". In August/September '98 we plan to tour the U.S. and meanwhile we write a whole set of new songs in order to release a 12" but we don't know when this will happen, maybe early '98. There is going to be a split 7" release of Systral and Acheborn as we speak. Before Systral breaks up I want to have an appearance with the band in an episode of the Simpsons like RedHotChiliPeppers or Smashing Pumpkins had one and I want to see Homer Simpson headbanging to our music. That would really kick ass.

IF: Please give a brief history of Systral's releases and related affairs. BJORN:

7" "Maximum Entertainment" on Per Koro records

"No Desire to Continue Living" 10" compilation on ReEducation/Farewell Records

* "Plot" 12" compilation

1995 Systral banned from German TV and Radio for obscene lyrics and disrespectful behavior

"Fucking Noise Terror" CD compilation on Sound Pollution records

1996 England tour

1996 German Underground Award for best Hard Rock/ Heavy Metal song with "Narrow-Minded Criteria"

10"/CD "Fever... the Maximum Carnage" on Per Koro records

split 7" Acheborn/Systral *IF: Thanks. Anything to add?* BJORN: If you wanna do like Dystopia or Sparkmarker did, then come to Germany and record in the holy Kuschelrock chambers and get rich and famous. For questions, comments, etc. write to:

[Image not archived]

Bjorn Schmidt, Daniel-von-Buren Str. 25, 28195 Bremen, Germany

Questions answered the 26th of May, 1997, by Russ, who insisted that his opinions do not necessarily reflect those of the rest of Stalingrad.

Inside Front: Why *is* there a Stalingrad? What is it you are trying to accomplish, why is this band the best way to do it?

Russ/Stalingrad: I can't really remember an exact date for the band's inception (around 1992–93). We formed at the same time as a lot of other U.K. bands, being influenced by the resurgence of punk/hardcore in the U.S. and Europe (the whole Born Against, Rorschach thing). There were hardly an decent bands going here at the time (well, none that we were into), so we saw an opportunity to get our 'ten pence worth, ' so to speak.

I think we sort of set out wanting to do a M.I.T.B., Neurosis, Swans sort of thing, but things gradually developed a momentum of their own as we learned to play a bit better (none of us had been in bands before) and developed our own sound.

The main reason I'm in Stalingrad is because I enjoy it (most of the time) and it helps me to unload my anger and other emotional baggage. (And I like making a fucking racket!)

_LR:_ For that matter, why the name "Stalingrad"? How does it relate to the music and your goals? Why did you choose it?

Stalin: "Stalingrad" was chosen after a great deal of soul searching. I think we were pissed down at the pub and someone said "Let's call ourselves 'Stalinist'!" and we thought this was quite amusing — so 'Stalingrad' evolved from there. It's quite an evocative name and it sort of conjures up all sorts of meanings for me. Totalitarianism, war, fascism, it's a good _strong_ name!

Some people have thought we were communists, others have called us Nazis (probably because of our singer Rich's 'sense of humor'!). At least it doesn't pigeonhole us into some shitty category (I hope not!). LE: Do you think a band can use music effectively as a platform to express political views? Or can music only express emotions adequately, even if they

[Image not archived]

you define that term?

Stalin: Stalingrad isn't really a platform for any political views. I guess we're more of a commentary, a reflection of what we see going on around us, we're just taking the whole fucked up situation and throwing it back in people's faces. We're quite confrontational as a band playing live, but we're not really out to change people's minds, we're just saying "look, this is how we feel." Our political role has really been restricted to playing benefit shows for various causes, which among other things has gotten us in trouble with our "right wing friends" in C. 18 (a violent neo-Nazi group in the U.K.). Actions speak louder than words. There is a place for political bands, but if by "political" you mean "100 anarcho-peacepunk-crust bands making punk a threat again" then you can count me out.

1. _.F.:_ Describe Stalingrad's involvement with the 1 in 12 Club. What are the functions and goals of this club, anyway? Is it working to serve these purposes successfully? •

Stalin: Briefly, the 1 in 12 club is a 3 story ex-warehouse in Bradford City center, owned and run as a club by its members. It's an anarchist center of sorts in that we promote non-hierarchical structures, all decisions are made at weekly meetings — we run two bars, a cafe, meeting space, internet access, anarchist library, gig room and P.A., and allotments for food growing. All this has taken 15 years of hard work by a lot of people. We do make a smalkprofit now, but for years were in debt because of poor management, lack of local support, and general slackerdom. However we're much more well organized nowadays. There's still a lot of work and possibilities to explore...

The 1 in 12 club is the glue that binds us together, so to speak. The punk scene in Bradford is less ghettoized than in a lot of places as a

result. There's a wide variety of people involved in the 1 in 12 — punks, crusties, sXer's, hippies, ravers, people from all sorts of backgrounds, of all ages.

The importance of the punk scene has been huge. It has sort of been a beacon in the darkness, when everywhere else has fucked up we've consistently provided a cheap space for bands to rehearse and play. My involvement is primarily to do with running our sound system, I'm sort of responsible for the maintenance, repair, and rebuilding of it and I'm supposed to be training other people to use it. (Gulp!)

1. _.F.:_ What else do you do with your lives — where, if anywhere, are you employed? Where (if anywhere) do you live? What kind of lifestyles, financially and culturally, do you generally lead?

Stalin: Yeah I work (but only part-time) in a day center for adults with learning disabilities, the others work now and again. Rich, our singer is a welder. Justin, our bassist, is a truck driver and lives on a travelers' site in a caravan. Bri, our drummer, is an international rock star in Doom, and drives bands around (when his van isn't falling to pieces!)

I actually have a fairly well paid job which I actually enjoy (but I only work part-time) but Hive fairly cheaply but comfortably. Sometimes I wish I had more money other times I'm not too bothered, I've got a fair amount of freedom and spare time in which to do other things (like this fucking interview!)

Most people I know are either unemployed or in shitty low paid jobs. The welfare system is really fucked up — you have to continually prove that you are "actively seeking work." And this means taking any shitty job you're told to or you get your money cut. A lot of people around here earn money from doing scams or other illegal activities (the "black economy"). The rules governing people "actively looking for work" mean that if you look weird (i.e. have piercings, dye hair, etc.) then they can really fuck you over. I used to be really anti-work but there's no fucking way I'd voluntarily go back on welfare now, there're no freedom wherever you look.

1. _.F.:_ Speaking of that subject-Brita in seems to be a much more class conscious society than the United States, where the myth still exists that everyone is part of the (safe, happy) middle class. How does this class consciousness affect the way people interact, and how does it manifest itself in the punk community? From what economic background are most Stalingrad fans, in Britain? Why do you think this is?

Stalin: Bradford is a bit of a shit hole-loads of poverty, unemployment, bad housing and general shit. I don't know if it is fair to' lump people into general categories, but I think generally there is a class difference and an age difference. A lot of the hard core punks who have been around for a city where you see some really fucked up shit, while have a totally different outlook than your fresh faced young "emo" kids. I think that my view of things and outlook is totally different than some youngster coming into things now, being colored by ten years of living in the inner city where you see some really fucked up shit and there's more important things than stupid kids arguing about how, fucking vegan they are or "how their mates have betrayed them" or whatever. Blah, blah. Fuck! They are not talking to me, saying anything I haven't heard a thousand times before.

_|, F, :_ What function does the information about Patty Hearst that you included in the picture disc packaging serve? How sympathetic is Stalingrad to groups like the Symbionese Liberation Army... or the Red Army Faction? And speaking of your liner notes, I've had quite a difficult time following the lyrics of some of your songs with the printed lyric sheets — particularly the third song on your split with Underclass. Please offer me some insight into this problem.

Stalin: Yes, our lyrics are obscure. All the stuff about Patty Hearst and the biblical stuff is all down to Rich-it's all part of his "cut up" technique of lyric

writing. It annoys me sometimes in that if I ask him for an explanation he just shrugs his shoulders. Stuff about the SLA and RAF is interesting-al- though I'm not Mr. Revolutionary Anarchist myself. I guess the nearest we've got over here is Class

War, who are a bunch of "wanna-be working class heroes." I see echoes of Nazi Germany in all that stuff — "we have found new homes for the rich" etc. = genocide?

LF/ The theme of a lot of Stalingrad's songs seems to be private suffering and neurosis. Describe some events from your lives that have directly influenced particular songs.

Stalin: Yeah, I've had my fair share of "private suffering and neurosis." I hope we're not glamorizing being fucked up or depressed because it is not a nice experience. Depression from my experience of it is something you have to actively fight against — not wallow in or use as some sort of badge of credibility. I'm just another dysfunctional, alienated person and there's millions of us out there. Then again I'm better off than a lot of people in a lot of ways.

LF/ Biblical imagery often appears in Stalingrad lyrics. How does it get there, and why? What are you speaking about in "Nothing to Gain" when you sing about Shiba the son of Bichri?

Stalin: The biblical stuff was something Rich got into at one point — he sort of had a fascination with weird shit like that; that's how it got into our lyrics. _I.F.:_ Stalingrad's vocals really push the limits of the capabilities of human vocal chords. Do you encounter any throat problems (hoarseness, infection, cancer)? Do you have any advice for singers trying to take care of their voices?

Stalin: Rich fucked his voice up when we played in Europe last year — we've told him to take it easy but will he listen? Will he, fuck! [k]

_I.F.:_ Stalingrad uses many traditional elements of metal in your music. I mean, many people think Stalingrad is a pretty fucking metal band! Say something about the increasing use of metal stylistic devices in punk music... I think this is particularly interesting since, besides black metal in Europe, the metal genre itself has really waned in popularity and creativity this decade.

Stalin: None of us is into metal, really. (Well Bri sort of is). I think the thrash/doom/death metal scene sucks big time and is full of pretentious wankers. I personally don't like a whole lot of straight forward metallic hardcore either, (i.e. Agnostic Front, Biohazard etc.). People think that "hardcore" is just some sub-genre of heavy metal, especially on MTV and in some music magazines. God help us if that ever did happen. I hope there's more to it than that. I don't think that Stalingrad are a particularly "metal" band, whether other people do or not is their problem. "Rock" music in general doesn't interest me.

LF/The packaging of Stalingrad's releases is usually a little confusing and mysterious — no listings of band members, lyrics printed close together in a jumble, disconnected images in the background. Is this a postmodern attempt to escape the confines of "meaning"? Is it just the result of poor planning and laziness? Or do your inserts, when taken together, spell out a message in some strange code? , _Stalin:_ Yes...sometimes...not really...

1. _.F.:_ Why did you decide to do a picture disc 7"? What is the significance of the elk on the record?

Stalin: We had a lot of arguments over the picture disc. I was sort of against it, as it was really expensive — in fact due to unforeseen problems the second pressing of it actually cost more than the first! We argued a lot about the art work, Rich basically did it himself without really consulting us and that pissed me off — we're not really very democratic and that's nearly split that band up on several occasions. The elk is a tribute to Laibach-"Who can doubt the power of these horns?"

_I.F.:_ A German friend wrote to me that when he saw Stalingrad perform, between songs the singer would pick an individual out of the crowd and shout insults at him... but he was disappointed to find that when he went to speak to the singer after the show, he was actually very friendly. Would you substantiate or deny his report?

Stalin: Yeah, Rich is just a pussy cat really...one amusing incident occurred when we played in Bristol and I thought Rich was going to have a fight with this guy in the audience. Apparently he was screaming the lyrics to "Vienna" by Ultravox in his face.

_I.F.:_ Tell a scandalous story about Stalingrad involving at least two of these three themes: sex, violence, suffering. Come on, make it entertaining.

[Image not archived]

Stalin: I could tell you some real scandalous shit but unfortunately not about

Stalingrad as we lead a life of asceticism and strict moral discipline. During one incident of "suffering" whilst on stage I lost my rag and drop kicked my guitar into the audience, smashing it in the process. I felt a bit stupid after that. There's the usually tour/gig stories of people in Germany waking up in bushes covered in vomit but I'm sure you're not interested in that... LF/ Say something insulting about some band or individual. Make sure it's controversial and gets you into trouble. Here's your chance!

Stalin: Erm..I don't know...Nick Royals looks like Gonzo off the Muppet Show. I'm only saying this because I know he'll read this.

LF/ "Hardcore" in the most recent sense of the term seems to have become a real force in British punk over the last few years, after being notably absent from Britain for quite a while. Why do you think this is? Describe what you see as the present state of the British "hardcore community." _Stalin:_ "Hardcore" has always been a shortening of "hardcore punk" to me anyway (something a lot of people could do with taking on board before they make ridiculous definitions of what should or should not be included in our precious little scene). The U.K. scene sort of imploded after all the hype Napalm Death and Co. got in thejate 80's — a lot of people left, got disillusioned, got into rave and techno etc. Things have picked up recently, although there's more (and better) bands than there have been for a whileaudiences at gigs fluctuate widely — shit like NOFX and the Offspring etc. is huge over here, and things have definitely become more inward looking especially in the traditional scenes (Le. SXE and traditional punk) and there's a lot of conservation both politically and musically. Hardcore punk to me means

more than buying expensive designer geaf and listening to all the "hip young bands." Or maybe it just means fuck all — I'd hope not.

_LE:_ How do the British punk and hardcore communities interact with the European "-" communities, as compared to the way they interact with the USA "-" communities?

Stalin: The U.K. scene sits somewhere in the middle, and me personally, I listen to a lot of U.S. hardcore and stuff. But I don't have the fascination with "Americanism" that a lot of people seem to have. The European scene is more marginalized and more radical politically than here or the States and I think we have more in common with Europe in a lot of ways. A lot of grassroots U.S. bands don't make it over here or can't be bothered to play here with a few exceptions. I think the Europeans viewed the U.K. as a lost cause for a while but this attitude is changing as people here get more organized, and more bands are getting on the ferry. _LE:_ OK, name some good British bands, etc. that we imperialist morons in the USA probably haven't heard of yet. Do you have any other favorites from Europe?

Stalin: Good bands, around here Kito, Voorhees, Hari Kari, Ebola, Revolt, Sawn Off, Hard to Swallow (who may have broken up by now). There are SXE bands like Unborn and Canvas, Area Effect, there's probably loads more lurking around in the woodwork. I'm into stuff like Golgotha and Zorn, all that fucked up German hardcore fucking rules. ,

LF/ Did you ever see the Amebix perform? What did you think of them while they were around?

Stalin: Yes, a few times, I was well into them back then — it all sounds like bad Venom these days though, .but their early stuff — first two 7" and 12" still fucking rules. The Amebix like the Subhumans were a very peculiarly En- glish/West County sort of band so it's weird to see all these crusty U.S. punks absolutely worshipping them. I bet if they reformed now they'd seriously cash in — I hope they don't: I personally find all these people who constantly gripe about "how good the old days were" when they weren't generally even there, fucking tedious. Things were just as shit then as they are now — but then again at least we thought we could change the world and felt a definite part of something in contrast to now a days.

LF/ Tell us a funny joke (demonstrating that notorious British humor) to close the interview.

Stalin: A joke is Agnostic Front playing in Bradford for 8 pounds tonight — and people actually paying to see them.

*If you want to write Stalingrad (to accuse them of selling out by consenting to do an Inside Front interview, etc.), you can reach them at: **Russ/Stalingrad Barmy Army, c/o 1 in 12 Club, 21–23 Albion Street, Bradford BD1 2LY, W. Yorks, England.***

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I first got to know Damien from Culture under extremely hostile circumstances. He had been very vocal in some unfounded criticism of my band the night before, and we were playing together on New Year's Eve (his first show back with the band after a few

years). Some of the people with us wanted to solve the whole thing by dragging him into an alley and kicking his head in. I spoke to him about it instead, and eventually it turned out that we have a lot in common.

Damien has been in and out of quite a number of Miami- area hardcore bands, also including Morning Again and Bird of III Omen. He is now back in Culture, who are working with European metal deity Good Life Recordings — their new release is a split record with Belgium's Kindred. Their willingness to end years of "hardcore imperialism" by signing the (massive) profits from their records away to a label in the European economy, after so many years of U.S. labels like Revelation sucking dollars out of Europe for their second rate American 'hardcore', is laudable. And from Damien's ability to correctly use terms like "predominant construct, " "Zapatistas, " and "biome" in context, it should be clear that Culture is not just another vegan straightedge band with a thesaurus and a closet full of hardcore uniforms.

Inside Front: Explain why you chose the name "Culture" for your band. _Damien/Culture:_ The band was named Culture before I was in the band. Their reasons were indirectly related to the Resurrection song... "I am not youth culture." It was about culture denial, about rejecting mainstream culture and all the self-destructive ideologies implicit in it. Why we're not called "Anticulture" or "Disculture" or "Counterculture" I'm not exactly sure, I think it was more that the band was supposed to serve as an analysis of the culture they were going against, as an exhibit: "this is your culture." _If, ;_ So is this an assault on *all* culture, or just the particular culture that has hegemony in our society today?

Cult.: Just that particular, predominant construct...

_I.F.:_ Because I think it's possible to make an argument that *all* culture is the enemy of human happiness. I mean, "culture" is, by definition, a set of limitations upon human behavior and values enforced by tradition. Different people have different needs and desires, and so any given culture has the potential to prevent people from having happy lives by imposing limitations that are not appropriate for them.

Cult.: But when it comes down to it, counterculture is cultural also.

LL Really? I would define "counterculture" as just striving to not be constricted by any set of traditional cultural restrictions.

Cult; But striving towards that, that whole concept of revolution, is very cultural. The whole counterculture thing is very cultural.

_|.F, ;_ So do you think we could construct a culture that would have the freedom human beings need intrinsic to it? A culture that would be positive for all human beings?

Cult.: Yes. That would be a culture in which everybody understands the need for respect for that freedom. We're at a point globally where there is little time to waste, and we are nearing the end at a fast pace. Right now in order for us to attain a positive culture globally, it will be necessary to transcend all the minor cultures and subcultures that have developed, and realize what our common goal as people on this planet is. It is not just survival, but *harmonic* survival. And that is possible.

But in order to achieve that, it's necessary to have those subcultures, to have all the countercultures and the different subsects.

_I.F.:_ Why do you think that is necessary?

Cult.: Because more often than not, those are the tools: the eye openers for the other cultures...

_I.F.:_ You're speaking of such things as hardcore, punk rock...

Cult.: Yeah, hardcore, punk rock, the Zapatistas, communism, socialism, anarchism...

_I.F.:_ Do you really think that these different answers to the questions of how to live and how to think are equally viable?

Cult.: I think they are important in attaining that goal of transcending all the different cultures, because it is always necessary to have ideas thrown in a culture's face that completely try that culture, that oppose it, even if they are ideas that just look better on paper and probably will never be followed through. I encourage any culture of opposition to any mainstream culture, in any form that rears

its head.

|.F.:Tie that back into the purpose of Culture the band, before we get too academic here.

Cult.: The name of the band me^ns to me, an analysis of modern culture, a display; our chance to call out the flaws that are afflicting our global culture, humanity's culture rather than just American culture and Chinese culture... our self-destructive culture, our flaws as humans, which am very cultural.

_I.F, ;_ So you think It's Nurture, not Nature, that has led us to this

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position.

Cult: Well, it's natural to progress, to want to be on top of things, to be on top of the pyramid. But we've gotten to a point now where we have surpassed that natural drive and our destructive behavior now is the result of nurture, of the environment we've created, of our surroundings, of our culture.

LE: So do you think the medium of hardcore in 1997 is a legitimate medium in which to combat this progression, despite being as much a part of or at least a mirror to our culture as it is?

Cult.: Yes, if I didn't, I wouldn't be involved, and neither would you. Of course there are always going to be people who are involved for the wrong reasons, people who are more concerned with the style than with the lifestyle, people that no matter how long they go to shows are never going to quite understand what it's all about. But it's definitely a viable tool towards our goals, because even if it's only a small percentage of the kids who are listening, there are still a number of kids who do understand what we're about, who do get it, who do develop a lot of the same ideals, that do realize that these ideals are positive and consistent with our common goals — the goals that I think anyone possessing any sort of logic and reason would develop.

I.F.: The devil's advocate argument would be that these kids, the aware ones, inside the hardcore community, do rebel, but they rebel inside a closed space. That is, when they act upon their negative feelings against the status quo by purchasing records and making 'zines for other people who feel exactly the same way as they do to read, they keep the rebellion inside a cage from in which it cannot affect the outside world.

Cult.: Preaching to the converted. I think it is important that people take these ideas outside the hardcore scene.

_I.F.:_ Does that mean we have to take our piercings out and have our tattoos taken off?

Cult.: Not at all. That means we have to take our piercings and tattoos to a more publicly visible place — I mean, obviously, aside from the tattoos and piercings, we have to take fliers and 'zines and propaganda that represent our beliefs to hand out in public places. I think that people, no matter how much they are set in their ways, no matter how much they have grown up to not even question what they are doing, I really don't think that there is anybody who is completely closed off. Improvement and survival are in everybody's best interest. I mean, that's how we ended up in the rut that we are in: we took advantage of the fact that we are rational, sensible, logical, intelligent beings (yes, that's negotiable), and we used that logic and intelligence in our quest for survival, and now we've gotten to a point where the way that we're living is completely unintelligent and illogical and irrational. I think that there is a good number of people who, if approached with a good flier, something informative, a good pamphlet, a good book, would exercise that still very human power of logic and intelligence and see that what we're doing is the opposite of that and completely change their ways.

_I.F.:_ So what do members of Culture do, besides the band, to reach people? _Cult:_ Rich, the guitarist, and I have always been involved in writing 'zines, and things like that; I do a lot of fliering. I did a 'zine called _Neverland_, I was doing a 'zine called _Stake_ until a few weeks ago, but...

_I.F.:_ "Steak" as in "steak that you eat, " or as in "we have a stake in survival"? _Cult:_ As in "survival." I also take any opportunity that I can, when discussing my band, which is actually pretty often, considering it's one of the few things I have going right now, to explain to people that aside from being a straight edge band and a vegan band we have a lot of different motives than your typical straight edge or vegan band. I don't want to knock any of those bands or kids, we do have the same agenda. But I think that a lot of our motives run deeper, and I'm sure that there are a lot of bands whose motives run deeper than ours as well, but that all comes with time, and attaining more reasons for the decisions which you've made. But I think there are a lot of bands and

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Western Maryland. by ristright Records

Hagerstown, Maryland is about 45 minutes north of DC, but has only a very small and tightly knit punk/HC community... STRONG INTENTION is becoming more

active, playing frequently on the East Coast. Looks like a tour this summer with One Life Crew will he happening *(editors note: yeah, right!).* STRONG INTENTION'S debut 7" is out on FistFight Records, for those that haven't heard S.I., their style is old fashioned, Breakdown meets Confront HC. Also, FistFight Rees is the only punk/ HC label in Hagerstown, which has released three titles to date. WMAC is an "autonomous" collective, and is surprisingly active considering the young ages of many of it's members. WMAC engages in anti-establishment propaganda, an anarchist publication called Hope, various protests and direct action against animal exploitation, sets up shows, etc. Some of the key folks from WMAC are in the crust band CONTROL, who are actually pretty inventive for that genre, fusing nontraditional styles and messages into their 1 OOmph blitz.

We have a great club here for alLages shows, so if any band (punk, hardcore, anything but indie) would like a show in this area, contact FistFight Records (Adam) for information. That's basically it, small but growing.

FistFight Records/Strong Intention (Adam) PO Box 364 Hagerstown Maryland 21741 ph. (301) 745–6591

WMAC (John Koutz) PO Box 1872 Hagerstown Maryland 21742 ph.(301) 7910929

News Listings:

Out now on FistFight Records-Big Bubba 15 song

CD J_ust Reliable Homicide_: Eugene, Oregon punk thrash in the vein of Negative Approach and Septic Death. Strong Intention 7" 6-song EP mix of Breakdown and Confront Two Minutes Hate _Odds_ 7" punky hardcore with pissed vox. Please include name with listings for distributors. _FistFight Distribu_t_ion_ (PO Box 364 Hagerstown Maryland 21741'0364) ph.(301) 7456591 distribute mainly smaller labels and bands stuff, ' also revolutionary propaganda from many small presses... looking for bands/ labels/distros/etc. to trade with for FistFight Records releases, y Cev?^atoon/ Fall Silent Hello, from Reno, Nevada. Levi Watson here still trying to convince a lot of you that we do have an underground music scene. Not only do we have an underground scene here but we have always had one. A lot of you probably think that we have been dead since the late 2 Seconds moved to Sacramento and turned lame. Wrong again. The truth is that Reno has been producing great music for a long time. The reason why no one hears about it is because no one wants to give good Reno bands a chance. The fact is, if a lot of the Reno bands moved to New York they would get the attention they deserve. Anyhow, enough crying about how hard we have it (because no one cares, not even me) and let's get to it.

BANDS:

Probably one of the best bands in the Reno area at this point is December. Do not get confused with the New York black metal hand or anybody else who uses the name. This is the real deal. Straight up metal, new metal that is. A lot of you kids now days are afraid to use the word "metal." You describe Earth Crisis as metallic hardcore, or metal influenced hardcore. Why not call it what it is? Metal! That is it. Hardcore, as it used to be, is dead. The bands who played hardcore the best did it in the eighties.

No one wants to hear the same shit over and over again. Like Josh from Congress said in I.E> #9: "Metal saved the hardcore scene as it is today."

The new December 8 song CD is a mix of good metal groove over some of the most intense and intricate drumming you will ever hear. The vocals range from actual singing to high pitched shrieking to low and gruff, all by one person. Great song structure, and a cover of Twisted Sister's "The Beast" the best thing to come my way in 1996. Really amazing stuff. Write December @ P.O. Box 33098, Reno, Nevada 89533. (702)885–5929.

Cranium is another great band out of Reno that has 3 of the best musicians I have ever seen play. They play a style of music that I can pretty much guarantee no one can really describe. It is metal, but the jazz influences are overwhelmingly apparent. They kind of remind me of Meshuggah. The time signatures are pretty much all odd, and you have to really pay attention when you listen or you will get lost. There are no boundaries to what they can do, it's a very improvisational and free sounding band. There are no vocals but I think that a singer would just slow them down. I really don't think any one in this area could do it anyway.

They need someone to put out their full length. Somebody do it! Contact Ryan @ 328 East Taylor, Reno, Nevada 89502 (702)3223096.

Swing 7 is a band that reminds me of Deftones mixed with Korn. They just got done recording a full length CD. I wish that they would practice more because the music is kind of sloppy. The vocals are super good. Good singing, great screaming. They play a lot of shows and they really mean well. Get the CD. It was really recorded good. Contact Shawn @ 220 Floreca

Way. Reno, Nevada 89511. (702)8511276.

One of the 2 straight edge bands in town is **F** called Last Standing. These describe them" selves as Straight Edge Hardcore. They also say that they sound like Coalesce and Bloodlet;. Wait

a minute. First of all, Coalesce and Bloodlet are not even near being straight edge bands, nor have they ever been. Second, since when have Coalesce and Bloodlet been "hardcore, " bands? Never. They have always been metal bands to me. I don't know. I don't want to waste too much time here but I feel these things should be known. They will release a 7" by summer. I can't really describe their music cause they don't play too much, and every time they do play, Fall Silent is usually playing so I can't see them. Contact Phil @ 20 Mogul Mt. Circle. Reno, Nevada 895 23.(702) 345–6521.

Quick interjection. My *name is Matt, I'm from Reno, and I know a little about Last Standing. Judging from their demo tape, they're slow, a little groovy at some paints, but never fast. Whatever happened to fast parts in hardcore songs? Anyway, their overall style could be compared to a mix of all the Victory bands, namely Strife and E.C. 1 haven't heard any new stuff, but 1 doubt that it's comparable to Coalesce or Bloodlet. Last Stand' ing draws a big crowd to their shows, but it mostly consists of a bunch of 15'year olds who have been straight edge for about a month or so. That's all. Oh, by the way, the other straightedge band in Reno is Unconquered. They're basically the same*

vibe as Last Standing only a little more dark and even slower, and they've been around for a lot longer. No real information about Unconquered was obtainable for this report. Thanks. Now back to Levi.

The last band I would like to mention is Fall Silent. This is my favorite band of all time. I am probably the only one who thinks this, besides these 4 other guys I hang around. We play music. I can't really describe it. It is kind of like death metal and it is kind of like thrash/groove stuff. Basically, it's metal. The lyrics revolve around personal matters sometimes, but most of the time they are about social issues that I feel need to be addressed. Brian D. described our CD pretty well in IF #9, refer to that if you what a comprehensive review. The new Fall Silent stuff is a lot more complex than the stuff on the CD. We are trying to progress as much as possible in the way we are putting songs together. We are going for better structure and more interesting time signatures. Look out for our new 7" on Moo

Cow Records. It should be in all of the distribution centers by the end of April *(Editors note: Now, very long ago — sorry!)* We toured with Gehenna in the summer of 1996. It didn't go as well as we all thought it would. A very few number of people gave a shit about us and a lot of shows fell through. It was expected though. Watch out for the Fall Silent and Unruh US tour 1997. I could go on forever about our band but I won't. Contact Levi @ P.O. Box 15051, Reno, Nevada 89507. (702) 826–3165.

There are a lot of other bands in Reno, none of which the readers of Inside Front would really get into. If you want to find out about any other bands contact me at the phone # or address above. This is the metal/hardcore scene report. There is also a punk side of Reno that will be discussed elsewhere, at a later time.

LABELS:

Peter Menchetti is doing 702 Records. He is doing really well. He has been putting out good pop punk since about 1994. He is well known for putting out all of the Scared of Chaka records. He is getting into some mere aggressive punk lately. He just put out a split label Spazz/GOB split 5", which turned out really cool. If you want to get a hold of Pete, contact Pete @ P.O. Box 204, Reno, Nevada 89504. (7()2) 324- PUNK.

Satan's Pimp records is another label that has been very active in the last few years around the Reno area. The most recent thing that came out from them is the Spazz/ GOB split 5" with 702 Records. They have put out a whole

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gang of records though. They are mostly involved with the real experimental noise stuff and really dirty punk rock. They also are responsible for a lot of the GOB releases. Really nice people, very dedicated to what they

do. Contact John or Leah @ P.O. Box 13141. Reno, Nevada 89507. (702) 329–3332.

Revolutionary Power Tools (Reno bunker) put out their first and probably last release in June of 1996. It was the Fall Silent 12" and CD "No Strength to Suffer." The reason that it was most likely our last release is because I can't afford to put out any other bands. I can't even afford to put out any more Fall Silent releases. I don't really think I could work as hard on other releases other than our own. Bands aren't putting

much effort into making music nowadays. I really wish they would. Contact RPT at the Fall Silent address and phone above.

I can't really think of any more labels in Reno. CONTACTS.

If you are touring and need to get a show in Reno, call any of the people mentioned in this report. There am nd clubs in town that do shows. Really there is only, one place to do shows in Reno and that is F.S.U. studios. The guys who run it aren't that bright and it will probably be closed by the time you are reading this. F.S.U. stands for "Fuck Shit Up." From the name alone I think you can see what I mean. Of course there are basements that will do shows but you can't rely on those.

Reno is an over 21 town so there isn't really anyone who cares enough to get a steady place to do shows, so if you are touring don't think it will be easy to play here because it isn't.

RECORD STORES

The last important thing to mention is the new Reno record co-op. It is called Resurrection Records and is now open for business. It is owned and ran strictly volunteer and all by kids. Punk rock kids. It is the only punk rock record store in Reno and it has some really good stuff. If you are ever in Reno, or would like to get your records sold there, contact Resurrection at 318 Broadway Street. Reno, Nevada 895?? (702) 3 24-GOAT.

Things are always changing in the Reno scene and from here on out we will out we will try to keep the rest of the country up on it. That is it. Love Always, Levi James Watson.

Brussels, Belgium by Alain Herszait

Hi everybody! My name's Alain and I've been asked to write a scenereport about my local scene, Brussels! I'm gonna try to be the more complete as possible but forgive me if I forget to mention some details... The Brussels hardcore scene in 1996 is a lot more interesting than it used to be about 3 years ago! The band that started to get popular at that time was **DEVIATE.** Besides them the Brussels scene was practically equal to none. Today DV8 are still around. They've released so far 2 albums and 2 mini-CD's and soon their brand new album shall be available (March '97) and it should be the bomb,

featuring Matt Henderson and Freddy Madball on a couple of songs! They still play that HC mixed with a large dose of metal and they recently add to their line-up a second guitarist.

DV8's drummer runs a record label on which all the DV8 records came out (I Scream Records c/o Laurens, Broekstraat 10, 1730 Kobbegem). After Deviate, the first band that has been signed on that label is

DOWN BUT NOT OUT. They became popular very quickly especially to the skate-kids, which are numerous in Brussels. Their music sounds a lot like HC/punk of the early eighties, bands like Teen Idles or Circle Jerks are their main influences. The band released an album and a 7" and one can say they're the leaders of the Brussels skate-punk

scene. DEF SOUL (27 rue Cluysenear, 1060 BXL) are from Brussels too and released a nice picturedisk last year (1995) which was recorded by Andre Gielen (DV8, Channel Zero). This 7" is still available, just

write to the above mentioned address! They played HC mixed with metal but unfortunately they broke up recently. **OUT FOR BLOOD** (Av. V. Olivier 10A/67, 1070 BXL) belongs to the bunch of new bands that make up the Brussels scene. They released their first demo tape in March '96 and they became pretty popular to the Brussels audience by playing regularly in their hometown. The band decided to record their new songs and to release them on a full CD which shall be available by March '97. The new songs have been recorded at Midas Studio (Congress, Regression, Liar...) in November '96 and are still in the. same vein than the demo, maybe a bit more old-school but mainly influenced by NYHC (Neglect, 25 Ta Life, Sick of it all, Madball, ...). Furthermore, the demo songs have been released on vinyl on a Swiss label (Division Records, P.O. Box 208, 1400 Yverdon 3). The 7' is available now and contains 1 bonus track recorded live in Dour. It's pressed to a limited edition of 500 on red wax. WISE UP (13 rue J. Lambotte, 1050 BXL) is a young band that started more or less in the same time than OFB. Their music is more old-school influenced than the other bands already mentioned. Wise Up members listen a lot to SxE music and they even cover a 7-Seconds song! There's a demo tape available and 2 brand new songs shall be featured on a comp, tape very soon. SPEAK OUT (6, Place Dewandre, 1150 BXL) feature some Wise Up members. They play old-school HC in the vein of Gorilla Biscuits! A demo is available. **BACKSTABBERS** (c/ o Yves, 32–2 4610735) formed recently and they're getting popular in Brussels too. They play regularly in Brussels and each time their set gets more and more powerful. Featuring some DV8 roadies, their music is close to NYHC with some metal riffs. Their demo should be available soon. **HATEFUL DISTRICT** (26, Dreve des Maricolles, 1082 BXL) has Xavier as frontman. The band is composed by some members of Out For Blood + Wise Up and they've played their very first (powerful) show very recently! A demo tape is available. The music and lyrics are pretty similar to Neglect... MY SIDE (125, rue de Veeweyde, 1070 BXL) is another band that has a demo available. Their music is quite original, I would describe it as powerful 'emocore'... LOOKING UP (61, avenue Albert, 1190 BXL) belong to the

skate-punk scene. They've been around for several months and listening to their very well produced demo you'll notice easily the Operation Ivy influences. INCENSE are influenced by punk/HC too. To my knowledge they've got nothing available yet. More young bands form and go regularly thus this scene report is far of being complete. A compilation tape featuring most Brussels bands should come out soon. The bassist of Out For Blood works on it. It's sad to say but there's no one in Brussels really involved with 'zincs. But there's a record label called RPP (av. V. Olivier 1OA/67, 1070 BXL) that releases records, CD's and tapes for US (Indecision, One 4 One, Krutch, Tension*, ...) and Belgian bands (Solid and Out For Blood). The new OFB record shall be released on RPP too. If you wanna buy records at the cheapest price, there's one

address you should try: WTN Distro (av. V. Olivier 1OA/67, 1070 BXL). Best prices and a wide choice but mostly focusing on hard-hitting HC since this mailorder is run by the OFB singer. There's a skate-shop in Brussels and it's located in the centre of the city, near the Central Station. The owner is called Yves Tchao and he's involved into the HC scene for more than 10 years. He's a really cool guy and he won't rip you off. He's not in it to make big profit with your money 1 His shop is called "Ride All Day." In J Brussels there's not really a venue where hardcore shows take place regularly.

However there's a place called j "Magasin 4" where some shows take place sometimes. Finally if you want to have a drink listening to cool mu- f sic, you should try a pub called "DNA, " especially on Friday night after 11 pm. The DJ used to sing for Def Soul and he buys stuff at WTN distro pretty regularly so you know what to expect! That's it! I hope with this short scene report you'll feel the envy to know more about our scene and get in touch with some of the aforementioned bands. See you soon in Brussels!

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fy[a]&avid Mancilla

Well, I've promised this French scene report to many people for a long time, I tried to do it as complete as possible, I tried to talk about everybody, even if some people do not belong neither to unity nor to brotherhood... I surely forgot some people, but if I did it's because they're not very active in the HxC scene. You should know that there is also a Melodic HxC scene in France as well as a politically correct scene (Emo, Crust...), if you want info about them read HeartattaCk or Flipside?.. I focused my attention on the people who work hard for a strong and united scene. The French HxC scene used to be very small, but for the last 2 years it has started to grow up, there are many different styles of music and ideologies, it's all about respect and tolerance in order to go ahead. Feel free to get in touch with the French scene it deserves your support!

OK, let's start with the biggest bands:

KICKBACK from Paris exists since 1990. They did a first excellent demotape called "The meaning of pain" in 1991, quickly followed by a now collector 7" on Inner Rage Records (Paris) called "No one gets out alive", pure angry metallic Hardcore with a big NYHC influence. Then they signed 2 years ago with a subdivision of a major called Hostile, they recorded their first CD "Cornered" with Jamie Locke as producer and it killed, a very good work with a big good sound. Now they have line-up problems and they plan to go to Boston (USA) in order to record their second album. They have toured with Merauder, Madball, Sick Of It All and recently with Body Count (!!!) in Europe, check them out! Contact: Hardway Records (the singer's label)

**HATE FORCE, ** from Pau, the south of France, is certainly the oldest Brutal Hardcore French band. Their first name was Oncle Slam, but they changed for Hate Force with their second record "Back for

more" a real brutal bomb. They've been disrespected by some people from the scene, but they are very good and real nice people, they are the grandfather French Hardcore

band! They had a lot of line up problems, and they came back 2 years ago with a very experimental style, but always brutal and unsane. Their guitarist left the band again, so their future is black! Contact: Wall-Ride

**STORMCORE, ** from Rennes, is also an old band they started in 1992 and put 2 demotapes out as well as a first MCD called "To the point" on their own label, Hardside Records. After many gigs in France and Europe they changed their bass player and recorded new songs that are out on a new MCD "In for the kill" on Mad Mob Records from Germany, and in a couple of split 7"'s on Inner Rage and Back Ta Basics. They play Brutal Metal Hardcore, they sound like a mix of Slayer, the Cro-Mags, Integrity and 25 Ta Life. They have toured with bands such as Integrity, Madball, Sick Of It All, Abhinanda, 25 Ta Life, Earth Crisis... Contact: Hardside Report 'zine

**SEEKERS OF THE TRUTH, ** also from Paris, are getting bigger and bigger since they put out a first CD on Lost & Found Records from Germany. Before they were called Shit Happens, and they did two demotapes under this name, very good L Old School Hardcore with a Metal touch. They sound very much like S.O.I.A., Shelter and Youth Of Today. They recently put out a new MCD on Lost & Found again. Contact: Frangeul Sylvain / 101 rue Jules Valles / 93380 Pierrefitte

UNDONE from the suburbs of Paris was also a very well known band, they played Old School Hardcore with an Emo touch. They did a couple of 7"'s as well as an LP. Unfortunately they called its quits a few months ago... Contact: Stonehenge Records Now let's talk about the rest of the scene, for the last 2 years bands have started almost everywhere in France and it's ultra positive. Some of them suck, but we have some real great ones, I concentrated this report on the best acts, for me...

UNDERGROUND SOCIETY from Rennes is one of the greatest hopes in the French HxC scene. They play Brutal Metallic Hardcore with a Death Metal edge, like a cross between Merauder and Congress. They've recorded 2 demotapes and they recently put out their first 7" on Hardside Records. A split 7" with Setback from New York is also on the way on Inner Rage. They kill live, so check them out! Rennes HxC Style! Contact: In Da True Spirit 'zine

CHILDREN from Tarbes (South of France) is also a big hope. They have just recorded a first demotape, but they are not satisfied with it and they do not want to sell it anymore. They are going to record something soon, maybe a 7"... who knows... Anyway their ultra Metal HxC mixed with the Old School edge is da shit! Sounds like Hatebreed or some H-8000 Crew bands. Also from Tarbes you have a band called **WALL-RIDE, ** they sound typical NYHC and have put a demotape out. Contact: Tarride Damien / 1 bis rue J. Jacques Latour / 65000 Tarbes

HEADWAY from Toulouse (South of France) is also a promising band. They have just recorded 2 demotapes and have 2 new songs ready for a split 7" (with A Way Of Life) on Mosh Bart Rec. and a French HxC 7" compilation on Stonehenge Records. They sound very original, a cross between Bloodlet, Negative Male Child, Integrity, All Out War with a yelled voice. Yeah, a very good band! Also from Toulouse you should check out bands such as HANG UP (Brutal Metal Hardcore) and SPOONFUL

(Brutal Original Metallic HxC) those 3 bands have an original sound and seems to be very influenced by the Cleveland Holy Terror style. HANG UP and SPOONFUL have a demotape out, plus a split 7" for Spoonful. Do not miss them! Contact: Exploitation 'zine

RIGHT FOR LIFE from Nantes is representin' the Old School spirit and music. They sound like Youth Of Today, Judge, Project X, pure youth crew style. On stage they kill and their singer is very

active in the scene. They have 2 demotapes plus a split 7" (with Spoonful on Wee Wee Records), they plan to do a 7" on the singer's label, The Age Of Venus. Also from Nantes check out 2 other youth crew HxC outfits: **SLAMFACE and POSITIVE YOUTH** all these people are involved in skateboarding and some of them are really big in France! By now only Slamface has put out a demo. They are the Nantes KDS CREW section!!! Very nice people always representin' the scene! Some of them are Straight Edge, but is it important? Contact: The Age Of Venus Distro

TRAPPED IN LIFE:, DROWNING, KNOCK OUT, STREET LAW are Brutal New School Hardcore bands from Paris. They are all new and only Trapped In Life and Drowning have a demotape out. They are heavily influenced by the East Coast scene their influences are All Out War, Hatebreed, Breakdown, 25 Ta Life, One 4 One, Darkside NYC, etc. They are also very active in the scene, doing fanzines, labels and belonging to the Dark and Crosne Crews! Contact: Inner Rage Records A WAY OF LIFE and UNEXPECTED PAIN from Rennes are starting to do their shit in the scene, A Way Of Life is very influenced by the Death Metal and Black Metal scenes as well as the East Coast and the H-8000 style, Unexpected Pain is more of a Cleveland orientated band but NYHC is also a big influence for them. Both bands are good and promise a good future. The first demotape of A.W.O.L. is finally out! Contact: Hardside Report 'zine GIVE A CHANCE and ARKHAM from Aix En Provence (South of France)

[Image not archived]

are both influenced by the East Coast style HxC and the New School SxE Hardcore, .both with a demotape out. Contact: Fallais Nicolas / 395 Chemin de la Souque / 13090 Aix En Provence

Other bands I have to mention are: DISPATCH, from the East of France, they call themselves Hatecore, but they sound like a typical NYHC band with a punk touch, they have a demotape out. In the same vein we have a band called ALL SPYZ from Gisors (North of France), they put out a first Mini CD and now a better demotape is sold. Near their area a new promising band has started, they are ZONE AFD, they sound New School with a good music quality. MOELO'S from St Brieuc put out a first demotape too, they sound NYHC too but with a punk touch, they are not bad at all, a promising band (they also do a newsletter). You also have an Old School SxE band called UP RIGHTS with a demotape out, they are from Toulouse. HARDSIDE from Paris has a more NYHC sound, they have some shows behind them as well as a demotape. In a town called St Etienne there are two good HxC bands that released a

split 7" together: BAD TASTE (HxC Punk) and SWITCH STANCE (SxE HxC). There are also 2 bands from Rennes strictly composed with KDS members! STRAIGHT UP (Stampin' Brutal HxC) and AS ONE (Total Old School HxC) that has a demo live out. By now there is no vegan SxE HxC band. On the Emocore side check out ANOMIE, PEU ETRE and FIGHT THE SUCKAS. On the Punk Hardcore side you have to listen to MASS MURDERERS and DISRUPTIVE ELEMENT they sound very good and are very active in the scene.

Well, I think that's all concerning the bands, I tried not to forget any of them, I have only talked about the best in my own opinion, there **are others like Tribal Zone, Speculum, Dig It Or Die, Diatribe, Misdeal, Twilight Zone, Toxic Blast... but** they need to work to improve their quality...

Now concerning the fanzines let's say that it's also very recent, we have 100% Hardcore fanzines since 1994. Before there were just 2 or 3 HxC zines!!! I will just give a list of Hardcore fanzines that you can trust: •

EXPLOITATION (Dufour Mathieu, 3 Allee du Var, 31770 Colomiers) Done by the drummer of Headway, he has just put 2 issue out. It's a well done zine on A5 size.

IN DA TRUE SPIRIT (Tual Tanguy, 114 ter rue de Chatillon, 35000

Rennes) Done by the bassplayer of Underground Society this zine kills, it's a A4 sized with tons of info, reviews, etc... Only Brutal Hardcore I

DISTRICT (16 Bd Saint Marcel, 75005 Paris) After 2 issues they have mixed their work with the zine Self Chaos, now it's better and they do a good job! High quality zine!

DIABOLIK (P.O. Box 4, 94111 Arcueil, cedex) This is a regular 8 pages A5 format zinc. Out every 2 months this is a good job that keep everybody informed about the HxC scene as well as some Hip Hop and Melodic HxC. It's free and very well done!

DARK (Inner Rage Records) This is a new zine in the vein of Back Ta Basics, it's done by the guys from the Dark Crew, very informative, check it out!

KILL WHAT (Kelly, 9 avenue de la Gare, 34440 Nisean) This zine is done in Boston! Kelly lives over there so it looks like an American zine on recycled paper like Inside Front or HeartattaCk^ 4 issues out til today. Very open minded.

SATYAGRAHA (Sisquellas J. Francois, 24 rue de 1'Arbizon, 65320 Borderes / L'Echez) This is a good zine with tons of info, reviews, etc. Sometimes he speaks about Gothic and Death Metal. A5 size. 5 issues out!

ONE BLOOD ONE CREW (The Age Of Venus) Done by the singer of Right For Life this zine kills with a lot of personality and much stuff in it. SxE orientated and 100% KDS!

POUNA (Jaulin Frederic, 4 rue Emile Legrand, 16000 Angoulleme) SxE ori

entated zinc, this is also a good job with a lot of info, reviews, etc. A4 sized and 2 issues out.

KICKFLIP (Dudouit Thierry, 27 rue des Chennevieres, Apt 27 Bat B, 27950 St Marcel)

New fanzine A4 sized and with info, reviews, Brutal HxC and SxE. He also does a SxE orientated mail-order catalogue.

DA HARDSIDE REPORT (David Mancilla, 22 Allee de Maurepas, 35700 Rennes) The HxC French Bible!! Done by myself, it's a book full of news, reviews, scene reports, etc. Brutal HxC and SxE orientated. A4 and 2 issues out. I also run a HxC radio show, I book gigs, do a mail-order, a label, etc...

ABOVE SUSPICION (Potart Julien, 12 avenue du Coteau, 94290 Villeneuve Le Roi) This is a small HxC zine entirely done with info- found on the Web. A5 sized just 1 issue out. The guy who does this is very young.

URBAN SOUND (Hode Fred, 28 Bd A. Comte, 13010 Mareeille) This is an excellent zine A5 sized that supports with a big brotherhood spirit the HxC scene. A great job, 2 issues out.

SxE INTERNATIONAL ZINE (Boisleve Yann, P.O. Box 7523, 35075 Rennes, cedes) Yann had. the good idea to do this with only the contribution of every SxE kid that want to contribute. It's full of scene reports from all over the world, reviews, interviews etc... Before it used to be a Newsletter. This guy run an animal liberation group.

COEXISTENCE (Olivier Bresson, 9 impasse du Ruisseau, 25400 Audincourt) A A5 sized zinc, with a few pages, some interviews and reviews. SxE orientated. 4 issues out !

ELEMENTS OF LIFE (Lepy Ales, 24 Allee F. Leger, 95100 Argenteuil) Done by the bassplayer of Seekers Of The Truth this zine supports a lot its local scene as well as the worldwide HxC community. A good job on A4 sized, just 1 issue out.

CHAOTIC WEB (Pangs Agoros, 8 / 10 rue F. Arago, 93500 Pantin) This is the first French zine on Internet!! Check it out! There is a lot of info about the scene ! E-Mail nahitfol@mygale.org — www. mygale.org/03/nahitfol.

There are others fanzines and newsletters I forgot, here is a list of the lasts that came to my mind: Stonehenge, Inner Rage, Gorge, Blind, Soul Side Newsletter, Earquake, San Jam (also an Emo label), Wee Wee, Sun In My Head (with a lot of humor !), Nocif

(with a lot of Grindcore in it), No Sense, Cheval de Trole (Emozine), Thalion (Vegan SxE zinc), Murder, La Main de la Bete (Emo photozine), L'Oreille Cassee (from Melodic to SxE and Brutal HxC), Life (free), No Way Out Newsletter, La Lune Noire (also a mailorder catalogue)... Get in touch with 'em!

About the labels we don't have any big Hardcore label, but some small ones that start to do a good job for the French HxC scene. Some of them have also a mailorder list, so get in touch with them if you want your stuff distributed in France.

INNER RAGE (Dablin Jean Marc, 5 rue A. Fleming, 95460 Ezanville) Releases: 7" 's of Overcast (USA), Starkweather (USA), Kickback (Fr), Dare To Defy (USA), etc. Out soon: Split 7" Setback / Underground Society, MCD of Inhuman (USA) and some splits with Drowning, Trapped In Life...

Mailorder catalogue

DIABOLIK Releases: 7" 's of Neglect (Live), split Satanic Surfers / Seven Hate, Stormcore (Live)... BOISLEVE INC. (see fanzines) Releases: some compilations tapes,

a split CD with Personal Choice and Rawness, an international SxE CD compilation with Autocontrol, Stonewall, X-Acto...

Mailorder catalogue. SxE orientated. WEE WEE (David S., 25 rue Goudoul 31240 Saint Jean) Releases: Split 7' Spoonful / Right For Life

HARDSIDE (Le Paris des Friches, : 35310 Chavagne) Releases: MCD of Stormcore, 7" of Underground Society Mailorder catalogue

STONEHENGE (More Christophe, 2

[Image not archived]

rue Jean Jacques Rousseau, 93400 Saint Ouen) Releases: 7" 's of Fingerprint, Undone, French HxC compilation LP... Out soon: French HxC 7" compilation Mailorder catalogue

HARDWAY (Bessac Stephen, 8 rue Bertin Poiree, 75001 Paris) Releases: 7" 's of Disciplinary Action, Confusion, All Out War and Bulldoze (only NYHC) Out soon: 7" of End Of One, MCD of Backstabbers (Bel)...

HOLY FURY (Gaillard David, 4 rue du Seigle, 50120 Equeurdreville) Releases: split 7" Pitfail / Shit Happens. His brother also does a good HxC Newsletter. '

THE AGE OF VENUS (Lehuby Olivier, 5 rue du Berry, 44000 Nantes) This is a mailorder catalogue, a radio show, a gig organizer, and a future label!

MOSH BART (Loic and Sonia, 6 place Camille Pelletan, 33000 Bordeaux) This is also a mailorder as well as a gig organizer and a future label! Very active and nice people! Out soon: A.W.O.L. / Headway split 7"

NOISE EAGER (Lefebre G., Le rieu Chemin du Ferradou, 31700 Blagnac)

Mailorder catalogue .

ACTS OF DEFIANCE (P.O. Box 90, 932 70 Sevran) A good mailorder from Melodic HC to SxE and NYHC, also a label.

THALION (M.B.E. NH08, 19 avenue Foch, 77508 Chelle) Vegan SxE mailorder, also a zinc.

Well, that's all concerning the French Hardcore scene. I'm sorry for all the mistakes and people I forgot. I did this sincerely. Feel free to get in touch with us, and spread the word that Hardcore lives in France!!!

WeP"84™

There's a number of decent new hardcore bands playing out in the U.K. at the moment, making a name for themselves through hand work and commitment instead of brown-nosing the morally corrupt U.K. hardcore hierarchy-cliquey bands, labels, zines etc. will _NOT_ be heard from here, if you want stupid ass gossip and scene bullshit then check out the Simba or Subjugation mailouts, fool! KNUCKLEDUST is a fairly new band who've been playing a heck of

a lot of shows in their short existence. They play fast solid hardcore comparable to confront with a hint of the old N.Y. style in there. They've recorded a good, hard 5 song demo tape that totally rocks so if that sounds like your bag-check' em out!!(C/O Pierre, 45 Crest RD, Neasden, London, NW2 7LY,) SCALPLOCK are a band with a similar sound to Knuckledust — hard, ruff, older style hardcore and are starting to

play out more. They've got a demo out now with some good lyrics relating to the plight of indigenous people and the onslaught of western civilization.(24 West ST, Tollesbury, Essex, CM9 8RJ) DEADFALL represent the North East in fins, style. Solid and heavy without being overly metallic, I'd use No Escape as a pointer. They had a tape which I think is now sold out though if you send them a blank tape and a S.A.E/I.R.C I'm sure they'll dub you a copy.(C/O Chris, 19 Pinewood RD,

Marton, Hiddlesborough, TS7 8DB) PUBLIC DISTURBANCE from Wales play tough sounding N.Y. inspired hardcore, which is similar to Rykers/Madball etc. and it is stompy stuff indeed! They kick much ass live and their demo is brutal with 6 songs of S.W moshstyle so check it!!(C/O Sean Mckee, Bryher, Pleasent View, Port RD,

Barry, S. Glam, CF6 29QA) A more melodic sound comes from Grimsbys IMBALANCE. They successfully combine melody with the old skool '88 style making them an English cousin to the likes of H2O. They've got a good clean well produced tape available for £2.OO/$5.OO. They are looking for shows as well so if you can help out then drop'em a line.(C/O

Andy, 232 Willingham St, Grimsby, North East Lincs, DN32 9PY) AREA EFFECT hail from Manchester with their brand of stomping str8 up hardcore combined with a scorching vocal attack. A recent rehearsal

tape shows that they're heading into more '88 style territory. They are recording a 7" pretty soon and they have shirts available.(3 Heywood ST, Swinton, Manchester, H27

OWD) WITHDRAWN from Liverpool are the U.K.'s premier EdgeMetal outfit and rock in a style that is a combination of Integrity/ Carcass/Overcast. They've just recorded for a M.C.D. release on Sure Hand records though it is probably best to contact the band direct, T-shirts should also \

be available by now.(C/O Chris, 108 Brookhurst RD, Bromborough, Wirral, Merseyside L63 OET) STATEMENT the one man drug-free vegan project has recorded for a full length release entitled Genocidal Justice. It was supposed to come out on Militant records though I think it's now being released by France's Green Fight records, anyway its good, Slayer inspired vegan metal. (Statement, P.O. Box 15, Stroud, Glouscester, GL5 5YJ) After 3 event filled shows, the "controversial" vegan SxE band BLOODGREEN have split up due to being banned from a number of venues and incurring the wrath of the hardcore "elite." Ex members are now involved in SxE bands WITHDRAWN and UNBORN as well as more covert activities. 'ZINES.

LANGUAGE OF THE MAD is a new zine, focusing on bands who play the D.I.Y. style. The first issue contains interviews with KRUTCH/FAHRENHEIT 451/STORMCORE and BLOODGREEN.(C/O Steve, 32 Booth ST, Audley, Soke-on-Trent, Staffs, ST7 8EP) NEVER GIVE UP is a SxE zine from Portsmouth

put out by a cool guy. He has put out two issues so far and it keeps on getting better and fatter, issue one features articles on str8-edge as well as interviews with Stampin' Ground, Madball, Ignite, etc. Issue 2 is double-size and has pieces on pit violence,

communication, as well as interviews with Avail, Public Disturbance and Refused, (c/ o Paul Bradley, Glenfield House, Furzely Road, Denmead, Hants, PO7 6TX).

The second issue of Disconnection 'zine is out now and includes interviews with Cleveland's Ascension, Spazz, No Barcodes 'zine and a corny one with Gorilla Biscuits from back in the day. Lots of reviews and a few short articles from a drug-free vegan perspective, (c/

o mark Sandwell, 9 Beechwood Avenue, Preston, Lancs, PR2 3TL). A Show of Hands is another new 'zine put out by the bassist of Public Disturbance, cut and paste style, issue 1 has interviews with Medulla Nocte, Taint, and a couple of others. Also presnet are lots of music and show reviews. I believe another issue will be out shortly, (address: Public Disturbance)

T.F.S.A. 'zine should be out by now, it's got a shitload of interviews with bands from the USA/UK/and Europe including 25 ta Life, Out For Blood, Stormcore, etc. lots of reviews and some columns. This is put out by Pierre from Knuckledust, the hardest working man in

U.K. H.C. He also does distro and puts on shows in London so support this true hardcore hero! (address: Knuckledust) Deliverance is the UK's most militant 'zine by far. Articles on eco-militancy, direct action, abortion, etc. there is also an interview with

Italy's Absence (vegan SXE metal). This is real heavy shit guar

anteed to upset the P.C. police — feel the fury! (Deliverance, P.O. Box 5, Sheffield, S3 9YH) Echoes of Death: Edge-metal is the main course on offer here, lots of reviews and interviews with Deadfall, Unborn, Withdrawn, Congress, Abhinanda. Despite the lack of articles the author's personality comes through well in his questions, (c/o Martin Robinson, 36 Staindale, Guisborough, Cleveland, TSI4 8SU, U.K.) DISTROS

Sure Hand have a good selection of SxE/N.Y.H.C./hetalcore releases at reasonable prices (P.O. Box 476, Bradford, BD1 1AA)

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T.F.S.A. carries primarily N.Y. style hardcore from the USA and Europe (Knuckledust address) Screams of Salvation handles the militant side

of things and has a good variety of 'zines and booklets dealing with veganism, eco-defence, direct action, etc. also some of the more extreme vegan edge

music is available (Deliverance address) NEWS

UK heavyweights Stampin Ground have a CD out soon on We Bite records which I think is entitled "Second to None." They've been playing shows constantly in the UK and also in Europe with the likes of Ignite, Warzone, Liar, etc. Both of their 7" ep's have been reissued and remastered on one CD. For those unfamiliar with S.G.'s sound, they have that heavy new school crunch combined with a N.Y.H.C. stomp. (Stampin' Ground, P.O. Box 65, Wallasey, Merseyside, L45 3QE)

Philippines (mostly bands from the dge scene-ai^Lsome from Manila) mer lalde

Laguna is also known ac the Strong South or the South Edge. Right ndw, this area is packed with lots of he bands and kids into it. Lets start with Laguna's pioneer he band BIOFEEDBACK. Unfortunately BFK is dead due to some members were busy with their personal jobs and careers. But Rey (vocals) is now in another band with Dennis of Cross Blood Manila called "BULLDOZED" which plays much faster and heavier than BFK. Before they plan to play in the vain of Y.O.T. or new old school bands like Madball and One Life Crew but suddenly they have decided to play in the kind of Integrity with lyrics similar to Catharsis and Integrity also with a touch of heaviness of Slayer meets SOB with moshy singalongs. Nobody has done it here before in Manila (except for those Death Metal and Crusty bands) so they're definitely a heavy unit to watch out... BFK is already dead but they have managed to release a debut cassette out under Mutilated records. They have their own original sound that made them great. You can also get a copy of their debut cass. through Rey or me. Another he band from Laguna is NFH or NEW FOUND HERITAGE, they play in the vein of NYHC bands, you should cheek

these guys if you're into heavy hardcore. By the way, they have a new demo out now! Laguna has also a sXe band named SOCIAL OUTRAGE, a very controversial band. They're into straight-edge. Not really SxE but they're militant against drugs and alcohol but they eat meat. (Hey, this is a 3^{r}^ world country bro's, vegetables are a bit more expensive than meat). Right now they're working for their debut demo that will be out soon. They also appeared on a local compilation cassette along with N.EH. called "Building & Bridges". These guys do also do a newsletter called "Mark The Head". If you're into rap mixed with he, you should cheek out SKREWHEDS, cool

brothers also from the south. They play kind of a Biohazard but they're much heavier! CYCO CHICKS, an all female band that play in the style of SOIA and Helmet (so they said), that's what they say

here, but never seen these sistaz play live until I heard them on the

radio live unexpectedly, I was surprised when I heard these

girls doing SOIA songs like "Pushed Us Too far" "Injustice System"^. and 7 Seconds "Regress No Way" and some very good, fast, tight, strong old school original songs, you should check these girls coz they know how to rock as hard as you guys! Another good he band is LOCKDOWN, the only he band in Batangas (far south area). Heavily influenced by Madball and lots of brutal nyhc and Cleveland influences. This band is composed of young kids 16 and up except for their lead vocalist (from the legendary hardcore band INFERNAL WRATH) who's been in the local scene for quite a while now and a good real bro to Cross Blood and runs CXB records in Batangas. Too bad L.D.

called it a day due to some unknown problems (like most of the bands we have here today but I've heard from Roderick that their pumping up a new group with old-school members, ex-I.O.V. axeman, Garry and Arthur ax-askals

and they'll be playing the same style as Lockdown but a

different line-up. And if your into crossover he cheek out RESURRECTED from Manila. They are formed from the ashes of old

legendary he punk band IOV. I've seen them live once and they can definitely make your balls fall into the ground. MORAL ROT is Philippines crust gods. Awesome brutal power and very political. LOADS OF MOTHERHOOD a new band that play in the style of nyhc and crossover bands. A bullshit "Club Dread" band. Just check them out. O.K. There's also a Krishna band here called THE WUDS. They were the first krishna band, before Shelter, but they play more like punk. They have lots of cassettes and one CD out but all of them are in Tagalog (Philippine language). EMPTY, a new band who also plays in the N.Y. hardcore vein, the only hardcore band on Taguig, M. Manila. Also a new band but very aggressive is FKF, don't know what's the meaning of this 3 capital letters. I always forget. Damn!! The only thing I know is that they play in the style of Old school h.c. bands. TAME THE TIKBALNG, do I have to mention this band? They claim they're hardcore on a TV show (featuring local dub bands that don't even relate to the real underground) but I don't know, they were playing Slayer and Metallica a couple of years ago, in case some kids here don't know they used to be called INQUISITION and had totally long hair! Ironic eh! One more thing •they charge to high at gigs and don't usually support other hardcore bands, 'zines or anything just those "Club Dread" alternative bullshit etc. Hardcore bands are now polishing their original materials for an upcoming compilation which will be put out by Guerrilla Records being run by a Filipino in New York USA.

FANZINES: "Keep the Faith" (KDF) The only hardcore zine and is now on its #4, actually its a newsletter full of local info from the South and Manila area. Done by Rey of BioFeedback and Anti Fanzine and Cross Blood Laguna. Also joining the KDF newsletter crew will be me also and I'll be doing a column or something like that. POSITIVE X is also in the making of its 1st killer issue which will contain interviews with Strife, Social Outrage, Empty, Emission, Rawness, Cochebomba and Victory rec. and also with lots of scene reports

columns, reviews, etc.. , just watch out for it!

DISTRO: CROSS BLOOD, a collective networking label is the only hardcore and I mean HARDCORE label here in the Philippines. They're run totally D.I.Y. by Rey. If you want to distribute your stuff here, just write. They are really great dudes and are more than with ing to help everyone who's into hardcore. And lastly don't write to Cross Blood's old Manila address, he moved out last February. Write to Dennis Matibag, Blk. 3 Lot 20, Hope St., Dreamland Subdivision, Sucat, Paranaque, Philippines. There are tons of addresses here but it won't fit in this scene report, just write to me if you're interested in any Hardcore and punk (and Death Metal even!) bands, zines and labels.

Please write me. You don't know how much mail can lift my spirit. Traders are all welcome. Cross X Blood c/o DENNIS C. MATIBAG, ENGINEERING LAB. / UNIVERSITY OF THE CITY OF MANILA, INTRAMUROS, MANILA, PHILIPPINES.

Please don't put the label's name, just his name. This his place of work and they're always snooping around.

The only good thing is mail reaches a week earlier than his residential address. Also write to KDF and CXB Laguna c/o Rey Bravo, J; 123 Sibulo Subdv., 4023 San Pedro Laguna. And lastly to me, I'm the one be- j hind this so called POSITIVE X zinc, a SxE/hc zinc. If you want to know more about our growing scene, looking for pen-pal, trade, help you in your project, or just want to chat with me, just feel free to write me: ELMER TALDE, 133 Villa Alegre Subd., Pinagbuhatan, Pasig City, 1602.

NFH c/o Adi Jelano, #2 Balagtas St., Pacita Complex 1, San Pedro Laguna 4023 SKREWHEDS c/o Alan Sta. Cruz, Blk. 43 Lot 2, Dapitan St., South City Homes, Binan Laguna, 4024

MORAL ROT c/o Joi Tan, #63 Amado T. Reyes St., Mandaluyong City, 1550

CYCO CHICKS c/o Roselle Manahan, 91 A Bonifacio St., Rizal Village Mkt. M., Manila, 1200

SOCIAL OUTRAGE c/o Philip Umayam, Ph. 4 Blk. 14 Lot 3, Pacita Complex 1, San Pedro Laguna 4023

LOCK DOWN c/o Roderick Castillo, J.Y. Orosa St., Bauan Batangas, 4201

FKF c/o James, 65 MH Del Pilar St., Sto Tomas, Pasig City, 1600 Well I guess that would be all. Thanx for everything. Support the Hardcore scene. Brotherhood and Unity to all! Peace to all the Brothaz and Sistez chillin out there!!

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Troy, .New York by Eric Warner

First of all, I'd like to correct the glaring errors I made in last issue's Troy NY scene report.No,

actually, let me say that the Troy scene is a bizarre part of the Albany hardcore scene (which is unquestionably the healthiest, best-supported hardcore scene in the whole state. Ask any band that plays there.) with a (for the size of the city) large number of great bands and supportive, hilariously violent kids.

Really I shouldn't say kids, because most of the people who go to shows from Troy are in their mid-twenties. Troy and much of Upstate NY like Binghamton, etc. is very economically depressed, and as you hardcore social historians all know, economic hardship breeds tension and violence. So because of that, Troy is a dirty, violent place, with a lot of dirty, violent (but lovable) people.

Stigmata and Withstand are the two most well-known Troy bands, and they both have full-length cd's out within the past eight months. They both have more shit out right now than I care to list. WarTime Manner got back together and have a song called (ahem) OPEN SEASON on the Capital Punishment comp., along with Execution Style, Dying Breed, Burning Human, and Politics of Contraband. War-Time also has a split 7" coming out with Two By Four on Back

Ta Basics records. Oh, and a possible split cd with Cold As Life! That is , if there drummer Bob 'Froggy' Agars can keep from landing in jail once again for violating an order of protection on behalf of his bitchy ex-girlfriend. Dying Breed have recorded

eight new songs for a slpit 7" with Politics Of Contraband, for TTK Recordings (Matt and my label) and a cd scheduled after that. I should say barely recorded because the drummer got his shoulder dislocated by Troy's finest the second night of recording.The split should be out in the fall, and the cd hopefully by Christmas. If you're wondering what any of these bands sound like go read last issue's scene report.

Burning Human have recorded six new brutal death tunes for a possible 7" release. Interested labels should contact the address at the end of the report. What's up Jonah! Politics Of Contraband are back after a long break, speaking of which they're playing with Breakdown in a couple weeks. Unlike what I said last issue, they only have one demo out, which was put onto the 'We The People' comp, cd along with the demos for Burning Human, Dying Breed, and War-time Manner. Ted Etoll, promoter extraordinare put that out, along with the Common Ground cd. comp, with Skinless, End Of Line, and Straightjacket, all from the Albany area. Execution Style have an excellent demo out and areworking on new shit for a possible upcoming split cd with a secret Western NY hardcore supergroup! All of these bands can be reached one way or the other by writing to Mike Stack 232 3rd St. Troy NY 12180. Most of these bands literally live and grew up within a block or two of each other. I'm probably forgetting a few things but it'll have to wait til next time!

Listings

In addition to the distributors listed in this sectlTJTrtn the last three issues, here are some more trustworthy distributors to contact... by the way, looking back at Inside Front #7, which came out only two years ago, it's hilarious to note that almost all the distributors I listed in it have quit by now.

Green Hell: This is one of the biggest distributions in Europe (at least of the distributions that qualify as *hardcore* distributions! Lost and Found is a

fucking profit-hungry, deceitful, remorseless corporation, anyone can tell you that), and they have always done right by us. In fact, they've done a lot to help Inside Front and CrimethInc. accomplish our objectives, and they seem to be really sincere. I'd recommend them to anybody.

Life Force: () This is another of the bigger European distributors, also very trustworthy, in our opinion.

No Jobs, No Masters^ (P.O. Box 41012, Greensboro, NC 27404–1012) This is basically yet another new branch of CrimethInc., formed to try to create an alternative to many U.S. distributors who concentrate on the more popular and marketable "hardcore items." They already have quite a selection, considering they just got going.

Out ta B_omb Distro, and 'Zine;_ (c/o Yoshinori Oe, 1236–20 Shimotomi, Tokorozawa, Saitama, 359 Japan) This guy seems to do a reputable distribution in Japan.

Crossblood: (Dennis Matibag, Blk 3 Lot 20, Hope St., Dreamland Subdv., Sucat Paranaque, M. Mia., Philippines) These guys are working hard to keep hardcore available in a nation where most people can't afford to buy imported records and CD's. See if you can help in their worthy cause.

Crucial Response USA: (Jason Scheller, 1121 DiSalvo St., Toms River, NJ 08753) This guy distributes all the Crucial Response records in the USA, and that includes a lot of good fucking records: Man Lifting Banner, Mainstrike, Dead Stool Pigeon, Spawn, etc.

[Image not archived]

Have I turned in to your way of life? Has the mainstream caught up with me? This is me questioning myself and ending on the top when I realize that what goes against me makes me stronger. HAVE YOU WON? Another thought rejected, a wall built around us, a wall of suspiciousness, a gorge in my mind I m wondering if I lost as I crouch in a corner of my mind. Have I lost[7] Have you won? The chains around my wrist are making me stronger in the search for light The chains around my wrist are making me stronger in the search for clearness. The chains around my wrist are making me stronger in the search for truth The chains around my wrist are making me stronger in the search for freedom. Go, go. go... Have I lost? Have you won?

I saw this beautiful gid everyday on my way to school for over a year. When she stopped coming I thought nothing more of it. About six months later I saw her again and she was so thin. I understood that she was sick The thing that was the most painful to see was her face. She was the one who used to laugh and flirt with the boys the most, but the pain and suffering that I saw in her face made me afraid. This society makes these girls sick So it's *time for some changes...*

GUIDELINES FOR BEUTY Untie the knot around my throat. Baseless accusations of me being guilty I never said thin means beuty Gorge yourself with the beuty Tomorrow she is not there I never said thin means beuty Take'advantage of girls with complexes for the quest of beauty, which means for the quest of money

Hardcore does not appear to be the tough thing to be in to. Like bands and major labels paints it out to be. Therefore the media and labels makes hardcore look like something it s not. That is a mask that I despise. In the end of the song I'm not saying I'm weak What I'm saying is that the people who builds this scene of ours are very strong. They are the strong cards. But since there's no good unity between the strong cards we are fragile. DEFINE, A feeble pulse is all I feel of what is left. This hard hollow shell is so far gone A face I never wanted forced upon me.The superior mask of the tougness I never shared. I despise the mask I'm forced to wear that isn t what I define as myself Pictures of me blends before my eyes.The one you think is me can never fit to mine. I can feel your eyes pierce through me. But do you really know what you 're starring at?

I despise the mask Tm forced to wear tahat isn 't what I define as myself. My cardhouse based on the life I have chosen to live one windblow and I will fall The cards are strong but it's foundation is shaking The way I'm dedicated to is slowly destroyed by your judgement..

I am not hard. I am fragile. , »

This is not a crybaby lyric. These are my feelings before our drummer decided to quit. These are my feelings and may not give you anything. So *what, I don t care since*

this is the place where I express my feelings. WIDE. Go* My vast storage of feelings. A part of my life slipping away The part that taught me the most. That formed who I am — I know I should be glad that I ever had the oppurtunity But when I m losing my grip. I just can't feel rewarded. So now show me that you feel the way I do. I'm not begging you to keep this alive I, just hope that the feeling is still the same. Don't forget the fun we had. Don't forget the people we met.

(I know I never will)

Thanx to the following: Don the demon, Brian and Inside Front/CrimethInc, EMS and SA Mob/Brother's' Keeper. Grey Days Records. Holy Fury Records, Bridge of Compassion crew. Wounded Records, Linkopmg Crew, Skylten, Expose zine, Retrogression zme(R.I P). MRR joe D. Foster, Soumi Die Hards, friends, families and girlfriends..

Outlast are: Henrik Lindqvist, Karl Blom, |on Lindqvist, Goran Bartol. Lyrics: Henrik Lindqvist. Music: Outlast Recorded winter -96/97 by Don the Demon at East Mental Hospital VBG. Photo/Layout: Pasanen. Man with flag painted by Karl Blom.

For our previous releases, t-shirts, hoods and stickers write to: Wounded Records, Box 193, 612 24 Fmspang Sweden. Band info: B O.C. CREW. Box 1903, 581 18 Linkoping, Sweden. Send SASE, IRC or 1$ for reply £

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Editor B. DiaWo.'s Top 10 Reasons For Sticking Around Another Month: 1. Gehenna "Birth of Vengeance" 7"

2. Watching Damad play "Head Heart Hell" at the Church of Deliverance in Savannah, with a root beer in my hand and my broken nose pouring blood everywhere.
3. Final Exit "Umea" CD
4. Stalingrad side of split 7" with Underclass
5. Acme CD (if only it came with more liner notes!)
6. His Hero Is Gone (both live and on the new LP)
7. Congress "The Other Cheek" CD
8. magazines: AJA, _DWGSHT_and anything by A1 Burian Aim _Collector_, etc.)
9. Kilara live, Earthmover live
10. Hard to Swallow side of split 7" with Underclass

☒*Two CD's Tm probably more excited about than anything on this list are the Gehenna 'discography" CD (Gehenna 's music speaks to me like nothing else ever has) and the Trial "Through the Darkest Days" CD — but i can't realty list them, since Tm*

involved in releasing them. The older music Tm listening to this month includes the Zygote and GJ. SM CD rereleases. ;

Dan's Top 10 Things To Distract Him When He's Hungry I.Food

6. Muslim Gauze "Hebron Massacre"
7. Merzbow "Oersted" CD
8. Kreator "Terrible Certainty" LP
9. tie: Motley Grue "Shout at the Deyr/mbre food
10. _The p^hted Bird_ by Jerzy Kosinski
11. * tie: Unruh 77Cat Stevens ,

☒*That's why we have Dan in the music department instead of in mathematics.*

Richard's Top 10 Things He's Tired of Reading

About All the Time in Zines:

1 Star Wars 2.80'sMetal — 3 The Simpsons 4. Japanimation 5. Satanism 6 Serial Killers 7. Graffiti

8. Tattooing
9. Veganism
10. Straight Edge

Paul Maul's Ten Steps Closer to Terrorism 1, Catharsis "Samsara" CD

2. Gehenna "Discography" CD
3. Alaskan wilderness
4. Bulgarian SLR 95

5 "Brazil" Movie Soundtrack

6. New Che Guevara biography
7. Glock 19 with a few hi-cap mags
8. Tom Waits/Bob Dylan
9. Bauza & Ashton Maduro Robustos

10. Heckler & Kosch MP5 A

IT. _Grendel_ by John Gardner
☒*Gesture of solidarity with Dan Fuzzy Chops Young.*
St
r- bookworm richie rich e = menace eric Charles warner d — live fast dan young t « mad bomber danny kittle t. " p = sacrificial lamb paul maul

Reviews. We're proud of our reviews, we don't feel

like many magazines in hardcore do very good reviews these days. We try to pack each one with as much detailed information, honest evaluation, and merciless humor as we can. If you're not pleased with a review, please hold the *writerot* that review responsible, NOT Inside Front or our kindhearted, gentle editor. It's getting more and more difficult to compose long, useful reviews of everything that comes in here, considering the limitations on our space and time; but we try to make sure that everything from the hardcore punk community that comes in gets reviewed. The promo shit from the big corporate (or corporate-style) companies, the ones who can afford to send out a million copies of a new record blindly, well., , it's not usually relevant to anything the staff or readers of Inside Front are interested in, so it generally doesn't find its way into the review box. Above all, it makes more sense for us to save most of our review space for the small, independent bands who depend upon us for exposure, rather than giving it to bands who already have a whole army of press agents working around the clock for them. Sorry, Rancid and Earth Crisis. See you on MTV!

_Absinthe 7^{W} _-How I feel about this record is not much unlike how I feel about the Judas Iscariot record. Revolutionary in the sense that it is good. They took the time to arrange all of the lyrics into one of those little booklets that contain religious lessons that I always find

> at phone booths. Anyways, I was not bored to a drooling stupor by the creative extent to which they went to abstract the norm. The lyrics throughout are not unlike the magnitude of the lyrics found in any Gehenna song, just pure lyrical terror and wisdom: 'You're so perfect. You've perfected bowing. On your fucking knees.' I really believe that these are genuine people that genuinely want to fuck shit up for the misguided soothsayers who attempt to fill our heads with discrimination and lies. A fucking beautiful piece of art and music, -*d*
>
> *King Of The Monsters 8341 E. San Salvador Scottsdale, AZ 85258* _Age Limit 20 "Wrong or Right For Yourself" 7";_ This is a lot better done than I expected. A lot better. What we're dealing with is very straightforward, moshable older N.Y.C.-styled hardcore, a little Breakdown "Sick People" in there, a little Sick of It All, definitely comparable to 25 ta Life too. In fact, probably closer to 25 ta Life than any of

I those other bands, with the occasional metal double bass drumming and gruff yelling vocals (fairly deep, but not nearly as deep or rugged as Rick's in 25 ta'). What makes this work is something intangible: it has energy. It's not really original, but it has an immediacy, a conviction that makes it sound like the traditional ideas they are using are original. There are some good riffs here and there (Judge could have written a couple), a couple powerful builds, a little speed, competent drumming and recording.The singer's enunciation is fine, although the lyrics demonstrate some clumsiness with English. Where I can make out what is intended, I'm excited about the genuinely positive ideas in them. Yeah, if you like 25 ta Life, Breakdown, those bands, you'll be very pleased with this, *-b*

> *Support Independent Hardcore (that's the name of this label, not just a sticker Victory records used to put on their releases until Sony Inc. started distributing for them!!), Nishi Osu Bldg 3F, 2-27-30, Naka- ku, Nagoya, Japan*
>
> _Age of Reason "" 7":_ Gorgeous red Hydrahead records vinyl. Fairly uptempo music — not spe'edy, but a quick marching tempo. The guitars hit a couple of chunks, but spend more time striking open chords, sometimes discordant ones. Every once in a while, the guitars throw in an interesting bit of nonstandard lead work. The second side enters with a little acoustic work, before getting back to the formula. The vocals are distinctive, though they may be the part of this band that listeners find hard to swallow: the singer has a sort of singsongy yelling/speaking voice that never really lets loose in a scream or a melody. The first song is a different version of their song on the "Over *

the Edge" compilation that came out a while back on Endless Fight. The recording quality doesn't hold them back. This doesn't sound exactly like your standard fare hardcore, but it's not miles away from that either, and it doesn't affect me emotionally too much. I'm glad to see the record come with a little 'zine including lyrics (not badly written, addressing child abuse and the cycles of abuse it generates, psychological depression, violence, etc.) and some explanations. I guess they get points for being named after my second favorite J.P. Sartre book. *-b **

Hydrahead, address below

Acme "To Reduce the Choir to One Soloist" CD: The music comes in over the sample — an army officer informing his "underlings'[1] that they are worthless shit — a highhat count over a sudden feedback swell — and then the vocals slice through like a chainsaw through flesh. And that is literally what this music conveys: what it's like to feel excruciating physical pain, to have your arteries shot through with thick hollow needles, your flesh torn from the jagged bone, the shot of salty dizziness when your nose breaks or a flying brick hits your forehead. And at the same time, mental anguish: what it's like to *hate, power- iessfy, * the authorities who lord their ignorance over*

you, aware of what it is, parading it like a virtue and laughing with malicious glee as you twist and turn in helpless rage at their pointless bigotry and cruelty To spit venom and fire with your dying breath, in the face of everything that kills, everything that has made the world uniformly ugly, uniformly embarrassing, fucking petty and worthless: Acme, A lashing out at mediocrity, at polite happy mediums, at all which is nice rather than beautiful, at all which is safe and obedient rather than noble, at everything in ourselves that asks that we settle for a long life of quiet desperation, that we burn "twice as long and half as bright" This is the music of emotion, as uncompromising as emotion is, music to hijack planes to, music to execute civilians to in the name of some irrational cause, music that cannot be reasoned with, cannot be shown sense, cannot be humanized. It's scary, powerful stuff. It is the reflex strike of violent, bitter, thoughtless hate against a violent, bitter, heartless world. The eighth track, the same song as the first on this discography, begins with a horrifying speech in German and I swear just from the twisted tone of hatred and self-satisfied superiority in the voice it is fucking Adolf Hitler addressing the Nazis, the fucking Nazis* whose grandchildren it is making and listening to this music in Germany today. *And I, too, am implicated, for when the music comes in, frothing with impotent rage; with hatred beyond all bounds of reason, that is my hatred, my irrational desire to destroy and humiliate, to destroy fucking everything, that I feel, living in a world of such brutality, of such pointless suffering, of such pathetic, stupid fragility of human life — burn it all fucking to the quick, raze it all, we've learned human beings can just as easily be housewives or assistants at the deathcamps — knowing that, how can we sit still so quiet and polite, playing video games, talking about the soap operas, as the walls of our hollow hearts crawl with roaches? Drop the fucking bombs, uncage the fucking viruses, end it all, and the more humiliating and slow it is the better. We've earned it. That's Acme.* -b

Edison recordings

Ageing "fragments" 10": This is one of those Italian records that, just like the Headsman "Morning" LP that I liked so much, nobody in the U.S. will ever hear about, even though it really deserves to be heard. Maybe you kids who count on me to hate everything but ugly, violent hardcore punk will feel let down by this, but I'm really excited about the melodic metal with which this band garnishes their '90's hardcore sound. What this record has that far too many other records in this style lack is *drama.* When the guitars play the chunky parts, they convey real tension and intensity; when they strike high notes over the top of everything else, the notes bleed with emotion; when an acoustic part comes up, it works to sound haunting and gentle — they even use a piano intone song, that's daring, and it works out fine. The playing and composition is really strong, that's one of the main reasons they can pull off a style of music I thought had been run into the ground: they're good enough musicians to always do something exciting and fresh just when you thought you knew what was coming. There is plenty of complexity in this music, different layers working

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together to really keep the listener busy following everything, and tempo changes, etc. — everything you could ask for. The vocals might be the hardest part for many people to gebused to, but despite hating this kind of high, pointed dramatic singing (like Ray Cappo does in Shelter) in almost every other context I've heard it, I think it really works with the other instruments here? The lyrics are intelligent and have some real feeling in them. The recording is great because it's clear enough for you to easily distinguish every note of each instrument, but at the same time personable enough that you can almost see them standing in the studio playing the songs when you hear it. I have to admit, despite myself, that this music wrings a lot of emotion out of me — the high guitar notes and melodies are so fucking tragically beautiful, it hurts to hear anything this beautiful in such an ugly world, *-b Twilight, Marco Voltani, Via Calzolari 3, 40128 Bologna, Italy ' Hey, here's a request to you Italians — one of you please put this 10" and the Headsman 12" on a CD so I can listen to them regularly, since I have no record, player. Thanks.*

All Out War- Hymns Of The Apocalypse 7": Damn. Talk about nonessential. A two song 7", with both songs appearing on other releases. If you like Merauder, Integrity, double bass moshmetal with funny, hard to describe vocals, then you're probably already familiar with All Out War. Sometimes I like their sound, sometimes not. No lyrics or band photos appear in this 7", so be warned. The first side, 'After Autumn', appears on East Coast Assault 2, and side two, 'Destined To Burn', appears on the Philly Dust Krew comp., and if my memory serves me correctly, on All Out War's other 7" on Hardway Records. Decent production, predictable structure, I dunno.-e *(S.U.R. Records, po box 574, Vails Gate, NY. 12584)*

Attitude Adjustment- True To The Trade 7": Wow. Long time since I've seen that name. For those of you understandingably too young to know, A.A was a political thrash band from the mid-eighties, who put out an Ip on Pusmort, among other things. This record has five live songs recorded at various points in their existence, a couple demo songs, and two studio songs from '95, one of which is a Crucifix cover, where Sothira actually sings his own song. I'd compare Attitude Adjustment's sound to Excel or DRI, fast clean thrash. An interesting 7", but not essential.-e

(Minority Productions, 2555 46th Ave., SF, CA. 94116)

The Bar Feeders 7"-l'm going to go way out on a limb by saying that this is the most brainless, candy coated, annoying record I've heard in a while, and I like it. I mean this record is covered in melody like leeches from the swamps of the New Orleans bayou. Maybe I just like this record because I don't have to criticize them for being some misinformed hardcore cock-rockers. Let me give you a rundown of the extra goodies that this record included: collectable red vinyl, two recorded prank calls, and they were considerate enough to include one of those little plastic things that goes in the middle of records with the big holes in the middle that otherwise you wouldn't be

able to listen to. [Maybe Inside Font should do that — editor's note!] *-d 9 6 Highland Blvd. Berkeley, CA 94708*

Big Bubba "Just Reliable Homicide" CD: Can you guess from the name that this is obnoxious, fast, slightly messy and under-produced, straightforward, '80's-punk influenced music, with not always perfectly spelled lyrics about average people being neglected as politicians and superstars get free rides, killing people who bother you, being a loser, and many less serious issues? There's actually a count off that goes "one-two-fuck-you!"-!!! Can you guess from that piece of information that the packaging is a little haphazard, the singer has a hoarse yelling voice that occasionally sounds like vomiting, and that the instructions "piss off" will be issued at some point during the record? Well, you're doing good. But, I'm confused by the punk wearing a cop uniform on the cover of this CD — that certainly doesn't fit into the equation anywhere! Maybe this warrants further study, *-b*

Fist Fight, 40 East Washington Street, Apt. 2B, Hagerstown, MD 21740 _Blackbelt 'The Downfalls of a Modern Society" CD:_ I'll forgive them that the title is misleading (this record doesn't really go into too much detail about that subject), because this is a lot better than I fucking

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expected. The music is nice and fast, nice and simple, straight-to-the- point speedy hardcore, without being rehash "old school" shit at all. The transitions are good, the songwriting is decent, and most of all, there's enough of the spontaneous energy that is necessary for music like this to work. The most interesting detail, which saves them from sounding exactly like all the other competent bands in this genre, is the vocals. Sure, the textbook backing vocals rear their predictable heads occasionally, but the singer has a really distinctive voice: he sings like hardcore singers did in the mid-80's (not late '80's, mid- 80's — that means he does NOT sound like a wannabe "old school" singer) and really haven't since. He yells in this angry, nasal tone, maybe like (Age of Quarrel era) John Joseph's kid brother would have sounded... it really reminds me of something else but I can't think what. I wouldn't have been surprised if I heard these vocals on the Peace compilation, does that help? Anyway, good CD, this band's next release (I'd recommend a 7" for them, so they can concentrate their skills into a small, high-density package) could be fucking great. *-b*

Sektion 8 records, P.O. Box 6111, Plymouth, MA 02362

Blindside CD: Listening to this cd is kinda like watching the special Olympics. I can appreciate the effort and sincerity of the participants, but... I still feel creepy and uncomfortable watching/listening to it. Whew! Glad I got that off my chest. On with the review. This cd is typical of the sound put forth by many of the bands in the Buffalo/Erie area, which is well-recorded, Judge-influenced mid-tempo hardcore. Like

Despair, Snapcase, Union, etc. However, Blindside is cursed with a hideously whiny, Christian-lyric writing wuss of a singer who ruins what would be listenable 'new school' hardcore.He speaks a lot also, in a voice identical to that fuckin' lurp from Bongwater, you know, the alternative rock band who sings about cheesecakes and how cool Jesus was. Apart from him, this band wasn't bad at all.-e *Blindside c/o Travis, 514 W. Penn St. Butler, Pa. 16001*

Bloodpath-Class War tape-This is actually a really good tape, to my surprise. Five songs of super-fast Swedish straight edge hardcore. But more importantly than the cliche issues dealt with here, they eloquently speak about their frustrations with the ciassist system their country operates under and their music is convincing enough to make me believe they aren't fucking around with hardcore catch phrases like so many of the useless hardcore bands out there today. The music is similar to Final Exit or Refused and the tape cover is completely fucking DIY, photocopied and folded with lyrical explanations and everything. These guys obviously put a lot of effort into what they are trying to get aQross to the listener. Let's hope this will be characteristic of things to come, *-d* •

Jonas Posen, Rullsbensgatan 174:13 906 55 Umea, Sweden _Botch "The Unifying Themes of Sex, Death, and Religion" CD:_ We reviewed the best tracks of this CD last issue, but having scammed one off the band, I still feel like I should let you, the lucky reader, know it's out there. Here we have Botch's first 7" — featuring plenty of nervous energy, crazy noises, jumping around and playing noisy hardcore with torn-throated vocals, occasional thrilling double bass, and their fucking classic cover of Orf's "O Fortuna" off Carmena Burana (that one song is worth this whole CD, I remember when I first heard "O Fortuna" actually wanted to cover it too but couldn't imagine how — well, they sure did figure it out!) — their song off the Mountain Records 12" compilation — which should be reviewed elsewhere in this issue — and their first 7" — which has the same energy and intensity as their later stuff, just a tiny bit dirtier production. The CD production sounds great, and makes their music sound better than it did on the vinyl; and we get the lyrics, etc. in a quite attractive little package. OK Botch, you've summed up your past with this CD: now make a record that will earn you a place in history, *-b*

Excursion, P.O. Box 20224, Seattle, WA 98102

Brutal Truth-Kill trend suicide CD- Relentlessly heavy music that doesn't let up from start to finish, whether it's creeping along at an (evil) snail's pace or kicking the shit out of you from every side like a gang of thugs. Sometimes the production is a little weak. Too much

drums, not enough guitar, too much guitar, drums sound too trebly, almost like a shitty drum machine. All this definitely gives this release a unique, yet untypical character. Definitely a tasteful mix of grindcore and sludgecore. Brutal Truth's best release so far. *-d*

Relapse Records

Catharsis — Samara CD: Picture the most trying moment in your life'- with all of the intensity, agony, severity, beauty, and mortality that it entailed- and your have entered the created musical wot Id of Samsara, complete with a 20 page printed map of the dreams and destruction contained within. After a demo, a 7", and a CDep, this is Catharsis's premier full length, and for the first time we get to experience a forty-five minute continuous onslaught of music and emotions constructed and orchestrated to a degree unmatched by any record in recent memory Whereas most bands have certain aspects that are stronger than others, Catharsis comes through with consistently solid performances: unique and creative songwriting full of technically complex music and genuinely amazing, ground breaking lyrics, precision musical performances in all respects, guttural, cathartic vocals and an impassioned, dark and pungent aura that emanates from the music. Most music falls short of conveying any real emotion, any true feeling, but the difficulty in making such a sensation come across in recorded music has been overcome here, to a fantastic degree. In *Exterminating Angel we* are given a slow, operatic intro that is droned into feedback and an agonized scream and then punctually halted and then began again with fearsome, twisting guitars and chaotic rhythm that remains throughout the song (except for a sudden tempo change in the middle)- — and as you can see here, it is impossible to describe the music literally and accurately- because as with all good art, there is more going on here that f can convey in writing. The lyrics start with the present "so much, unspeakable, in the four chambers of my heart (in the torture chamber of my heart)" and move on to the lament "We burned down the candles of our youth, bathed our lifes in heart and soil" and when the Angel has done her work, a maniacal declaration erases all doubts, "Fm never coming down again? Experience this band now, live and/or on record so that in ten years you can tell your cellmate that you were into (the future legendary) Catharsis back in '97 before their roadies killed the band in their sleep. And, the elaborate packaging is superb in quality, content and effect (especially considering it came from a smaller label).-p

CrimethInc., address everywhere.

Cause For Alarm — Cheaters And The Cheated CD- I'm gonna try to do a straight review of this cd, without getting into the pros and cons of Victory records, old bands getting back together, etc. So here we are with a cd from one of my favorite older hardcore bands, who an average member age of over 30, and a drummer who (however briefly) played in Slayer. Ya know, if it takes putting out money making stuff like Strife and $napcase to have the money to put out an awesome cd like this, then so be it. So much for not getting sidetracked! Anyway this cd does it all the way around for me. Great recording, tight as hell structure, intelligent lyrics, I love it. Keith sings more than yells, and it comes off well, without sounding forced or uncomfortable. Ask yourself if you'll still be into hardcore or at least thinking for yourself when you're 30. 'Fish On A Hook' stood out for me, with lyrics about being a mindless, bar-hopping consumer. CFA does a good job of putting their own twist on fast hardcore without sounding like rehash. Good for them.

(victory)

Cavity “” 7”: First side of this 7”: Remember what I said about the Age of Reason vocals? This guy sounds like their singer did, only gruffer. The gruffness helps, although the delivery here is perhaps a little more flat. Midpaced music, very bluesy riffs. The guitar production is really thick and full (you geeks out there will say “heavy, dude!”) and the drums, etc. all sound good.’The emphasis here seems to be on playing “heavy, ” throbbing, pounding bluesy stuff, and they do it well, but I can’t help but think of Soundgarden, rock and roll, grunge. The second side begins with some grainy guitar noise, then the deep bass ushers in what seems to be a jazz improvisation distorted beyond all recognition. I’m definitely more partial to this, since it’s a little more original, atmospheric, effective... on the other hand, Fudge Tunnel still did it better! Packaging? Cover by Pushead, but it’s just some bright colors, no skulls this time — and there are no lyrics, just a little

recording information. Come on! *-b*

Rhetoric Records, P.O. Box 82, Madison, Wi 53701

Chalkline “Parade” 7”: Starts with quite a pretty, well-executed acoustic part, which continues for a while, an incomprehensible sample sitting over it near the end. Then the melodic electric guitars come in, with some power, and this sounds like the music on the Grade/Be- lieve CD. That’s a good thing. They toss in a few seconds of noisy, high guitar lead stuff at the end, that’s good too. The vocals are screamy, typical of this kind of emo-influenced hardcore but not weak. He does some melodic singing later which isn’t as good but still doesn’t fall completely flat. Actually, scratch that, the singing is OK at the end of side one but fucking sucks at the beginning of side two! Lyrics about patriotism (against), the effects of divorce (they offer no answers, I guess there are none), and, uh, typical “personal stuff.” *-b Toothless, RO. Box 6731, Louisville, KY 40206–0731*

Chisel 7”-rm sitting here listening to this hipster crap, wondering why the fuck I haven’t smashed it yet. I’ve been to indie rock house shows and scenester parties enough to recognize the soundtrack to some pretentious bunch of thrift store hippy shit-talkers when I hear it. One song is called, ‘It’s alright. You’re o.k.’ That is just not relevant to my life right now. I don’t have any food, I’m being run out of town, and I have been betrayed by everyone that I know. Fuck no, it’s not alright. Fuck this moog synthesizer, snap your fingers to the beat, hey! let’s be hip! shite. Does the guy that sang for Rorschach really like this stuff, or is he just putting out his friends’ record’s? Let’s pray for the latter, *-d*

Gem Blandsten records po box 356 River Edge, NJ 07661 _Cleanser- Grime CD:_ This cd starts off great, with a bizarre, pounding tribal drum beat, and sludgy, ugly FudgeTunnelish riffing. Really unusual guitar sound and unusual structures for the whole cd, these guys strive to attain their own sound, which they do. However, the vocals blow! They alternate between sing-songy crowning, and powerless cat-like yowling that can’t hang with the ugly, heavy music. Melodic, sparse breaks pump in and out of the tight stinking rectum created by the brutal off-key riffing and talented double-

bassless drumming, which chooses instead to put the toms and whatever the fuck else to unusual perverted use. After awhile, the vocals seem to finally fit with the music, but if they were better to begin with, this cd would've been a masterpiece. Such is life.

(NOTA Records (not the band?) PO box 654, Farmingville, NY 11738) _Coalesce "a safe place" 7":_ No packaging! No lyrics! Nothing! Grr! Anyway, Coalesce pounds out some pretty forceful music here, great production, vocals deep and roaring (definitely simitar to recent Bloodlet, although not as flat and boring), deep guitars and grainy (often very audible) bass. There are some good transitions, so they don't stay in the slow throbbing thing long enough for it to get dull; instead they throw in some faster parts (never speedy) and bend their rhythms a little. They definitely know how to craft and execute music well. Two songs... Above average, but I think I've said all there is to say. *-b*

Edison, RO. Box 42586, Philadelphia, PA 19101–2586

Congress "The Other Cheek" CD: By far, this is Congress' most powerful recording so far. Plenty of blasting fucking speed, plus excellent metal production, tight songwriting with surprising transitions, and amazing high shrieking vocals create the kind of real excitement and drama that *good* metal (Le. Carcass "Heartwork" CD) can. I know that sounds like an advertisement for the record, but I swear Inside Front gets no royalties from the sale of this CD, I just think it's great fucking music! There are guitar solos on it, played perfectly, as if this was a Metallica record or something, and if you can handle that kind of thing they're great, they only add to the drama and technical quality of the music. The fourth song is probably the best, it comes in with a bang at incredible speed, moves through a couple classic verse/chorus's, and pulls back into midtempo metal for a few seconds before taking back off with the most incredibly fast, out of control (punk as fuck, no concern for sounding pretty!) thrilling snare drum roll I've ever heard. The fifth song gets even faster, doing some doubletime drumming where (because of the tuning: the snare is tuned really high) you can actually pick out the individual snare drum beats. That's a rare thing! And fuck, the second song is great too, with a really fast chunky riff to drive it and an unbelievably long scream at the end. The riffs here are all well written, memorable in that way that melodies are when they seem familiar the first time you hear them even though you've never heard them before. The vocals are excellent, to say it again, you can literally hear

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his vocal chords tearing as he shrieks, and even better than that, he knows what so many fucking hardcore singers today do not: how to *enunciate* so it really sounds like he cares about the lyrics. Those lyrics are actually pretty poetic too: "by the rules of a golden denial, in the rain of a forthcoming trial, on the pace of the upward spiral

— I overcome." The packaging includes good (comic-book style) artwork, eloquent explanations of each song, and a mission statement in which Congress dares to assert "we'd like to see the hardcore community decrease to a small community consisting of *REBELLIOUS DIE-HARD FIGHTERS WHO ARE ABLE TO CHANGE THE WORLD* rather than a bunch of trendhoppers with a sheep mentality." Capital letters and italics mine! *-b*

Good Life, address in here somewhere

Constraint "twelveeighteen" CD: The first time I put this on, it did nothing for me, striking me as being too similar to the other-chunky midpaced modern '90's hardcore bands of this genre. Now, my system cleaned out by that Cripple Bastards CD, I'm enjoying it more. There's definitely energy here, which is crucial. The vocalist has a deep screaming voice, pretty gruff, and he usually enunciates enough to sound like he means it. The music doesn't change tempo much, but there are plenty of transitions, many of them unpredictable, which liven things up. The guitars do a lot of that "chunk-chunk... chunk-chunk-chunk" thing, and alternate it with striking open chords — you know what I'm talking about. Maybe Culture is a good comparison, but so many bands do this sort of thing these days that I can't remember any of them individually. Hey, they just started doing this unusual, post-Bloodlet, dramatic and unusual guitar thing (the end of the fourth song) that is really exciting. The verdict? This is well-played, above average modern (i.e. chunky metallic) hardcore, and shows some promise, *-b Life Force, RO. Box 101106, 04011 Leipzig, Germany*

Contrition CDep: Decent, unremarkable European straight edge in the vein of other unremarkable American bands like Strife. Enough fast parts to keep things interesting, and enough hooks in the slow parts to hold my attention. I liked the anti-fascist lyrics of this best. From the thanks list I gather this band is krishna.Or maybe just one member is. Whatever.-e

Time For Revolt Records, /NR. 10107907 Gorkwitz/Scheiz Germany _Converge "Caring and Killing" CD:_ A collection of all Converge's older material. Musically, Converge has a fair bit of variety on this — there are definitely some parts where singer Jake is doing the Starkweather thing, spitting unbearably tortured vocals over grinding midpace metal, but he does many other things too: speaking, yelling over faster music, melodic singing, even some emo voice-breaking crying stuff. The guitars are similarly varied, playing chunks one place, Slayer-metal in another, unusually-paced open strummed jazz chords others, heartbreaking harmonic cascades still other places — there's also some gorgeous, very nonstandard acoustic work. The drums and bass follow the patterns set by the other instrument, there's occasionally some interesting tom drumming, and the pace of playing varies quite a bit. Jake's lyrics are truly poetic, evocative and beautiful in their best moments. Converge was still sharpening their claws on this release, so, understandably, some of their experiments work better than others, but there is plenty of moving music here, and the wide emotional range of expression makes it all the more touching. The packaging includes great things — all the lyrics and recording information, photos, and most of all an explanation

from Converge for the release of this CD (which also is an attack upon any kind of commercialization of hardcore — and I hope they stick to that). However, it seems like the quality of the graphics was really fucked up somewhere in the printing process (or even before that — the photos are bad computer scans, and nothing is more unpleasant to look upon that a badly scanned photo) and consequently they are all hard to read, which sucks. I wish they'd done that better, because this is a really important record. Also, the mastering of a couple old, old songs near the end is a LOT worse than the earlier songs on this CD. *-b*

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Hydra head, 91 Hillside St. #1, Roxbury, MA 02120

Corrin "Despair Rides on Angel Wings" 7": Excellent recording. Very good, dramatic beginning: a gasping sample I can't make any sense out of, echoes, wind blowing, echoing scraps of guitar work.This makes me more predisposed to the music when it comes in: midtempo, fairly predictable, sometimes chunky, typical "holy terror" (whatever) hardcore with those deep screaming (not too well enunciated) vocals. It doesn't actually get going until after a couple minutes, when the guitar throws in a moving lead. Then it backs off into some gorgeous acoustic (above average, oh yes!) work, and comes in ten times better than it was before, with more originality in the guitars, some crazy deep vocals, everything better. The second side begins with more echoing drama, and a metallicly melodic guitar lead ushers in the more predictable straightforward slow "metal"/"hardcore" part. This part is spiced up by some leads a few minutes latej, before quieting again to one of those acoustic parts they do so much better (excellent — other bands have no business doing acoustic parts after this) with a surprisingly well- used Apocalypse Now quote; this ends with a great scream, not forced at all.This band has only to learn how to play their "traditional" hardcore parts as well as they do their non-traditional parts (and improve their lyrics a little), and they will stand head and shoulders above the other third-generation "holy terror" hardcore bands. Definitely better than I expected. Hey! Ha ha ha! I was about to joke that it looks like Converge designed their cover (a painting of a crucifixion and a woodcut of an angel) when, looking at the liner notes, I discovered that I was correct! And, gorgeous Hydrahead vinyl, *-b*

Hydrahead (what the fuck is a hydrahead?), address below

Cripple Bastards "Best Crimes" CD: The first thing that strikes you about this CD is the hilariously terrible recording quality present throughout. I mean, the quality is so bad that it practically qualifies as experimental music. I actually mean that as a compliment, because unbearably bad recording quality is indispensable for music like this: ugly, filthy, repugnant grind punk, fast as fuck (not speeding-bicycle fast, speeding-bullet fast) with occasional weird noise breaks, distorted gargling throat

cancer vocals that span from high shrieking to low grunting, and general unpleasant impolite unethical mayhem.The guitar amplifiers are so cheap that the guitars sound something like keyboards. Obviously these maniacs don't give a fuck about doing anything right with their music, and that attitude pays off by investing their songs with a real vicious immediacy. These guys predate most of today's popular "power violence" (that's a stupid name for a genre if I ever heard one) grind bands, like Spazz and Man is the Bastard, and they outdo them too, if you ask me. Being from Italy probably helps. They cover Rorschach's song "21 st Century Schizoid Man" (that was a joke, did you get it? fuck off!) and do it even crazier, which is impressive. Nice Grand Theft packaging, plenty of funny pictures, but couldn't the page of famous punk personalities praising their music have been used for a couple lyrics? *-b*

Grand Theft Audio, address somewhere around here, we promise _Cycle-Roller coaster CD_- This is not a well written record. They should have left this kind of whiny rock music to Texas WAS the Reason. Maybe I'm a little cynical and callous, maybe my words are not completely objective and sympathetic, but printed RIGHT on the CD it says Virginia Hardcore. I'm still waiting for that one to come out. In the meantime, leave this alternative rock crap alone, please, *-d Second Nature Records PO Box 11543 Kansas City, MO 64138* _Damad "Rise and Fair CD:_ If His Hero Is Gone would be the perfect opening band for Systral, Damad would be the perfect opening band for His Hero Their music is amazing in that it is somehow simultaneously hypnotic and filled with the kind of nervous energy you get from sticking needles through your flesh The snare drum bangs away in hectic abandon, shaking your heart around in your chest, while the droning guitars carry your soul out of your body and far away. Now, the vocals. This is where Damad stands out from almost every other band in this issue, in a way that is truly exceptional. Their singer goes from bitter, disgusted growls to low, monks-chanting invocations in a singing tone to higher singing, screams, and just about every other range of vocals you can imagine. At her best moments she reminds me of Diamanda Galas. Her lyrics are really powerful, multilayered poetry offering no answers to the answerless tormenting questions of life, but giving them some dignity by presenting them as they really are. Excellent production, just like His Hero (OK, maybe not quite THAT powerfuL but excellent still). There are parts on here some people may think aren't perfectly pulled off, but the overall intensity really carries this record. And the artwork is fucking perfect, a page and a bone-chilling image for every song. Between songs you get samples from the movie "Swimming With Sharks, " which convey the general heartlessness of the world, especially the particular one we have created for ourselves to suffer in b *Prank, address below* . : J

The Damage Done "" 7": Old-fashioned, fast, bouncy, inspired 80's punk/hardcore sounding a little like Infest or Gorilla Biscuits, perhaps. In fact, they just went from a fast punk riff into a fun danceable breakdown part, just like Gorilla B's would have done.There's an all-around lighthearted attitude that, rather than making this record seem silly or childish, really carries over to make the listener feel excited too. Hey, they just did that G.B. breakdown thing in the second song too. That song ac-

tually fades out in the middle, like it was too long and they just cut it off, weird. All right, I'm on the third song and I'm still enjoying this. The yelling singer really seems to be having a good time, and at the same time he comes off as serious and sincere. The music is simple, moving, just short of being catchy — there are plenty of singalong parts that don't seem cliched at all (that's a real feat to accomplish in 1997!). The packaging is just what I like to see, good quality without looking corporate, plenty of lyrics and clever pictures. The lyrics too are good: positive, well-composed, and addressing serious issues such as mass media misinformation and socialized pressures. This seems so fresh, so excited in its simplicity, that I'm amazed it didn't come out in 1986 (musically, it sure could have). And... six songs! Axel Orange sent this to me, taking a big risk... and he got lucky, I give this record two thumbs up! (Although I admit I'm just going to go back to listening to Gehenna now.) *-b*

appropriately, it's on "Young 'Til We Die" records, c/o Marc Friedrich, Lerchenstr. 53, 71334 Waiblingen, Germany

Darkest Hour- The Misanthrope CD: Death-metalish stuff very similar to bands like Blood Runs Black, and Disengage, with some Crowbar in there also. Lots of lyrics about evil within, torment, blood, suffering, etc. No solos, or at least none that I noticed. I think that you can be as metallic as you want as long as you keep your guitar solos to a non-existent minimum. Darkest Hour definitely do justice to the subgenre of deathcore, or evilcore, or Holy Terror, or whatever the fuck you wanna call this crap! I thought it was cool that they not only dedicated the cd to a friend who had passed away, but even put a picture of his gravestone on the lyric sheet.The vocals remind me of Citizen's Arrest. Not a bad effort.-e

(Death Truck Records, Po.box 10611, Burke, VA. 22009–0511)

Dead Ideas "Where To?" cassette: Begins with a fearsome sample, background noises, a woman's voice — I don't think it's in English. The first song is excellent, it sounds a lot like the Cro-Mags "Age of Quarrel" stuff, fast, energetic, yelling vicious vocalist (reminiscent not only of John Joseph's Cro-Magnon vocals, but also of the vocals on the Blackbelt CD reviewed above) — there's a little later Agnostic Front stuff thrown in there too, it all works well. After that they have some more really good songs, punctuated by a few that work less well when they stray from the Cro-Mags/Agnostic Front stuff into less energetic rhythms. The production is raw, raw in a perfect way: it has plenty of personality and bite, clear but definitely not slick or over produced, *-b Free Mind, Jordan Schiptchenski, Prohod St., #7-13; bl. 228A ap. 29, Sofia, Bulgaria*

Dead Stool Pigeon "Strike Anthem" CD: Musically, this is very fast, very straightforward, almost more punk (not Discharge punk, but not diet "pop punk" either — I know, it's Final Exit punk!) than hardcore — it's definitely got a lot of energy and good recording quality, and a enough variety too (a guitar lead on the fourth song, for example, plus time changes, chord

changes, backing vocals, and catchy choruses). Everything is well played, yes indeed, this is well done. Still, I think it's missing a little something that could make it a classic. Maybe their next record will meet that criteria (this record includes their last one at the end, and it's nearly as good). Politically, this band is extremely vocal about their class-conscious, class-war politics; it's great to see a band clear about what they believe, especially when they believe in something that is actually relevant. I'm not sure I agree with them about everything ("class consciousness" often becomes class prejudice, which is obviously problematic, and I'm not sure if they're fighting for nice gentle socialist working conditions or for real change in

the fundamental way we all live) but at least they're up front and intelligent. A few more words in the insert (which does have lyrics, quotes from workers on strike, and pictures of them dressed up in very fancy clothes to go bowling... hm, I'm not sure how well fancy fashionable dress goes with a criticism of our capitalist consumer economy) and I might have known *exactly* where they are coming from. Anyway, this is a good record, *-b*

Crucial Response, Kaisersfeld 98, 46047 Oberhausen, Germany _Deadguy- Screamin' with the Deadguy quintet CD_-On the opening notes of the FIRST Deadguy release for Victory, Tim Singers' voice explodes into vicious guttural noise blasts the guitars a symphony of vomitous chords and schizophrenic arrangements , but after the departure of Tim, as well as guitarist Keith, the creative nucleus seems to have gone with. I couldn't tell if the first song was actually a Deadguy song or if they were going to break into a Snapcase medley. Full of screamy anguished vocals, crazy guitar induced noise, and powerful drums, but this just doesn't size up. They even experiment with some kind of whiny vocal thing on the second song, which is very weak, and the CD ends with them playing the same droning, monotonous riff repeatedly for about four or five minutes it seemed like, which really didn't seem like a proper ending to a piece of music. Overall, a lackluster effort, and the catchy graphic design layout that worked so well for them last time seems clumsy and forced this time. Deadguy does what Kiss It Goodbye does better what Rorschach did the best. Amen. *-d*

Victory Records

December- Rise Of The Fall CD: This band lists Pantera as an influence on the cd booklet, so at least they're being upfront about where they get their sound. At first I liked this, but after repeated listens I couldn't take anymore. See, I don't care if your band is influenced by Pantera, but I CANNOT stand the strong korn influence here, especially on the vocals! That right there is enough to make me give these guys a short, shitty review. I mean, even if everything else about this record is a violent mix between AF-Victim In Pain and the NOTA 12" (which it is far from) YOU SING LIKE KORN.-p *(December, po box 33098, Reno NV. 89533)* _

Despair- As We Bleed CDep: Despair and Slugfest have always had a strong Judge influence to me, heavy at times without going over the edge into full-blown metalcore. This is competently played, mid-tempo, chunkilly drummed hardcore, without a whole lot of speed. They sound good, but I could go for more variety in their writing, because everything starts to sound similar after awhile. Except for the recording quality, (this cd isn't as clean as their 'Pattern Life' cd) this is very much in the vein of their other stuff. And I like it a lot better than most of the other garbage on this label.-p

(Initial)

Devoid of Faith "Slow Motion Enslavement" 7^{n}: I really like this Coalition label so far. They put out undeniably *genuine* hardcore punk music, and they do some of the most original (and, for the Larm CD, comprehensive) packaging I've seen. I imagine some of that quality comes from working next door to Wicked Witch records. This is good in the same way Substandard is, maybe even better: its gritty as fuck, fast and furious, filthy and disgusting. During the rare slow parts I can see endless black clouds rolling in from the horizon, and the rest of the time I just feel like I'm being run over by a locomotive as the guy in the driver's seat shouts profanity at me. This moves me like Extreme noise Terror did, and the two bands could easily play together. Six fucking songs, all good ones! Eloquent, direct lyrics about consumerism, consumerism, and consumerism, different aspects of an important issue. Excellent, creatively formatted Discharge-style black and white insert — appeals to my sentimental streak for older hardcore punk. You should be able to tell by now whether or not you'd like this, but I'll give you one more hint: it will probably appeal to you more if you have had a mohawk at some point in your life, *-b Coalition, address in Larm CD review*

Disbelief- Making Progress 7": I liked the lyrics to the song 'Making Progress', which is about vigilantes righting society's wrongs. Fuck all that noise about obeying laws and letting our shitty judicial system solve crime! Make your own justice! Ok, the music is to my liking also, in the vein of fast, positive bands like Vision and Verbal Assault, but with a modern feel to it. For the record, the phrase 'a modern feel to it' means a slight hip hop influence in the drum dept., and chugging riffs that use a couple different parts of the scale. Yep, I like this 7" fine and dandy even though they thank God. For Christians they sure do like violence! 'Blood is shed because violence works'! I might be tak-

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ing that out of context, but what the hell. I gotta talk about something in this review!-e

(Disbelief, 12218 Rolling Hill Lane, Bowie, MD. 20715)

Disciple- Scarab 7": Unusual and aggressive sounding metalcore, and unless, it was Matt's shitty stereo, the drums have a weird bongo sound to 'em. It works pretty good though. Amazing packaging for a 7" with glossy full-color covers that look like it could be a fuckin' Cranberries 45.The vocals are raw and tough sounding, with a much more Christian lyrical content than Disbelief. Disciple also isn't as fast as Disbelief. From Erie, but they don't sound much like Brother's Keeper or Abnegation. I believe one of the members of Brother's Keeper put this out. Not a bad effort.-e

(SA Mob, po 1931, Erie, PA. 16507–0931)

Disembodied "Diablerie" CD: First of all, the title of this CD (which means, basically, "devil stuff") bothers me. If they explained somewhere, even in some song, what it means to them (is their band "devilstuff" because they're anti-Christian? Are the social forces that keep us playing miniature "golf "devil stuff"?) that would help, but no, they just print the definition of the word on the on-CD artwork and leave it at that. That makes me feel like they're just taking the whole silly "evil" "scary" metal/hardcore thing at face value, which makes them look pretty superficial (that would be like if Slayer's "South of Heaven" record had been titled, instead, "Scary, Scaaaarrrrryyyyy Stuff"!). Leave it to Inside Front to spend most of the review criticizing the title of a record! Anyway, the feedback at the beginning is beautiful, and the first riff, which alternates chunks and harmonics at a high speed, is pretty exciting. Every once and a while, for the rest of the record, these exciting moments come again, but besides that, after the usual '90's hardcore equation begins (midpace, metallic riffs, acoustic moments, samples, screaming, etc.), I can't find much that truly moves me. I think the vocals are holding them back on this recording: the vocalist tries his hardest to shriek and scream, but his voice doesn't seem to be strong enough to do what he needs it to. Sometimes he dresses up his vocals with spoken parts, which sometimes work, and sometimes seem to just get in the way. I think another reason why this record doesn't move me as much as it should is the recording: it's not bad, but if the drums and guitars had more powerful (better-mic'ed? better mixed?) sounds, and the whole thing was clearer, that could help. Or maybe not. Finally, the lyrics aren't evocative enough to really work, instead they come off as a little predictable. Sorry everybody, I can't love every CD that comes in... *-b ferret, 72 Windsor Drive, Eatontown, NJ 07724*

Dissolve- Dismantle CDep: Metallic noisecore that does very little for me, with Milhouse from the Simpsons (or someone who sounds very much like Him) singing. This cd came out about a year ago, but time doesn't mean much to us here at Inside Front. Ok, I'm noticing a reaccuring weak spot in a lot of the stuff I got for review this issue. I'm talking about the vocals. Here, you've got a band striving for originality, with unusual timechanges, an ugly sound, and almost enough hooks, and they drop the fuckin' ball vocal-wise. Consistently weak, the singer sounds at times like a weaker Zack/lnside Out. Now occasionally the music also drifts into drawn-out, abstract, self indulgent coffee house territory, but I put most of the blame for this cd failing on

• the vocalist. I think they broke up anyway.-e

(Elevator Music, po box 1502, New Haven, CT. 06506)

Divisia-What's left of us CD -This is a band that plays fast-paced crusty punk, but with the vocals I can't avoid the glaring similarities to Bikini Kill. However, Divisia's singer's vocals seem a little subdued when you consider a lot of her lyrical content has to do with some pretty serious personal issues that most females have to deal with at some point in their lives (rape, how the modeling industry makes females feel about themselves and their appearance, etc.) There are definitely some strong moments in here when the music and her vocals/ lyrics make me want to break shit, but overall, they're pointed in the right direction, only not quite there yet. *-d .*

Theologian records 200 Pier Ave #2 Hermosa Beach, CA 40254 _Drained- No One In Control CD:_ I like this a lot, mostly because I was

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reminded of one of my favorite Boston bands of the 90's, (also where this band is from) Bzrker. Down to earth, choppy, metallic, with vocals reminding me of Billy Milano or Choke when he still used the stick to hit people (instead of as a homosexual sex toy). I'm also reminded of Bitter from Boston. Steering clear of most modern hardcore cliches, these guys belch out a surprising blast of hateful angry metalcore. The vocals are the best part of this. Not much double bass, more crash-cymbal riding, with Prong-styled noisy guitar riffs. Shouted choruses. Not a whole lot of fast paarts, but a lot of good dance parts. I don't know what else to say.-e

(Drained, 2 0 Birchwood Ave., Plymouth, MA. 02360)

Drowning Room "The Divinity Syndrome" 7": I've been told that I would like this band, but sorry, I don't think I do. The sample at the beginning is badly integrated into the music (take some lessons from Corrinl), and when the guitars come in their tone sounds a little off. When the harsh, V.O.D.-style vocals come in, it's saved for four measures, but then that fucking awful V.O.D.-style nasal singing shit happens, and I'm turned off again. The first song is midtempo (I've had to type that fucking word in every review since I started five records ago today) music, flavored with a tom-drumming part here and there, but otherwise pretty straightforward modern N.Y.C.-style hardcore stuff. The second song starts faster, thank god, actually a little speedy. The third and fourth songs (at least there are four songs here, I've reviewed too many two song 7"s today) sits somewhere between the style of the first two. The cover is H.R. Giger work. In the thanks list they accuse some treacherous friends of theirs of being "ultimate dirt dicks, " and the record ends with the sample "Hallelujah! Holy shit, where's the Tylenol?" — that really makes it a lot easier for me to take them seriously. *-b*

Trip Machine, P.O. Box 36, New City, NY 10956

Earthmover 'Themes From Everyday Life" CD: This collects the Bmover 10* with some other material The 10" material sounds excellent here, and still carries the same punch, the same urgency, the same refreshing genuine street-level grit it had on the vinyl Earthmover's version of hardcore punk manages to draw on the straightforward raw energy of older bands like Negative Approach and the Crc Mags, while having modern sound quality and easily evading comparison with today's backward-looking bands. This is the soundtrack for growing up poor, sleeping in your truck through the Detroit winter, having to fight for survival and sanity, for making mistakes and trying your fucking hardest to overcome every obstacle in your path — the guitarists, drummer, and rabid yelling vocalist all hammer this home with complete abandon. The 7" is on here, re-recorded, and it certainly lives up to the 10" material now. At the end is a live set that conveys Earthmover's energy better than any of their studio recordings have yet, it makes for really good listening.The packaging is excellent, full-color and well-laid-out, plenty of liner notes, lyrics, and song explanations ("this song is about the difficulty of putting a violent past behind you"). I can't recommend Earthmover enough as a sincere, impassioned, 'one foot in the gutter the other foot in the ...other gutter[5] band -b

Plus minus, P.O. Box 7096, Ann Arbor, Ml 48107

Elliot 7"-Okay, okay, okay. I have to admit it. I love this record, and it's emo as fuck. It's the singer's voice. I have really liked it ever since he was in Falling Forward. The music isn't anything too remarkable, but suitable to complement his strong singing abilities. He has nice transition from soft singing (not speaking, thank goodness) to very deep, emphatic screams that are hauntingly saddening. I mean, I have ragged on emo music so much and that's because I think most of it is complete garbage, but this is emo's brightest moment. It should savor it, then slay anyone else who ever fucking tries to put out another emo record. The quality of music on one side is actually quite good, but I can't tell you which one, because these emo kids never

put labels on anything. But you'll know what I'm talking about when you hear it. The packaging is irritating and pointless like the plethora of other pseudo-artistic emo crap packaging that you get. Oh yeah, not to end this review on a sour note, this is a damn good record. How emo is that? *-d*

Initial records po box 17131 Louisville, KY 40217

End in Sight "Obiter Dictum" 7": Woah. The first song was decent, screaming hardcore, but in the second one... the singer sounds EXACTLY like the vocalist for Pearl Jam. I mean, the first song is pretty fast, simple, with a little metal at the edges and these deep, distorted throaty vocals that are not bad (although there's a sign of things to come when he says "Yeeeyaaah like he's in a rock band, between lines). Then the second song comes in acoustically (and remains fairly gentle and melodic for its entirety), and he sings in that wailing Pearl Jam rock voice all the way through. If I didn't have liner notes (but no lyrics, damn it) I would think Eddie Vedder was in this band. Maybe if I could read the lyrics it could give me some idea why?!! Because I'm in.f ucking disbelief here. Anywhere, the second side — it starts out with this kind

of Smashing Pumpkins dance music/ rave-influenced riff, and then there's that rock singing again.The weird thing is that End In Sight is a hardcore band, they've always been a hardcore band, and even when they're playing this music it just sounds like they're a hardcore band doing rock covers. Maybe this is a joke? I mean, the third song ends with a drum roll like Motley Crue would do at the end of their set. The final song is a hardcore song, with a mixture of screaming, talking, and then... that rock singing again. If they really want to play rock music because it's fun for them, OK. I mean, it's pretty clear that this is NOT an attempt for them to become more marketable, because the only people who will hear this record are hardcore kids; in fact, they're actually committing commercial suicide (this record was originally supposed to come out on Good Life records...). If they're willing to do that to play music they enjoy, then we should all praise them for it, I guess! *-b*

Grey days, c/o Tuomo Miettinen, Mannerheimintie 82 A 5, fin-00250 Helsinki, Finland

Eyelid-Bleeding Through 7'-This is their demo on the 7" format, and I can't figure out why I never heard it until now. Put out by the infamous Phyte records, this is good modern hardcore, and it came out in 1995. Eyelid has a skilled vocalist and they blend melodic guitars and harmonics with heavy, chunky guitars as well as can be done with those varied elements of popular hardcore. They opt to add the trendy sample-between-songs-that doesn't seem to have any relevance to the music. This is one of the few remaining straight-edge hardcore bands in the US that stands above the rest. If they toured with Trial, I'd be excited to see that show. Collector's take note: green marble vinyl. Strife who? *-d*

Phyte records po box 14228 Santa Barbara, CA 9310 7

Eyelid-...days infected CD-This is the band that Strife wishes they were, and I guess they know that since they intentionally fucked Eyelid over so badly on their tour. Good vocal abilities, heavy guitars that switch from fast to slow with precision, and technically flawless drumming. Now that I think about it, Eyelid's music is a testament to why I can't figure out why bands like Strife and Earth Crisis are so popular and bands like Eyelid are left behind in relative obscurity. The production sounds much better than the aforementioned bands on surely a much smaller budget. The CD artwork has this E(for Eyelid, you dummy.) that looks like it was drawn by the same person who did the Amebix logo. Definite bonus points. This is a tight, enjoyable piece of music. A must for fans of new school hardcore style. Typical packaging, band photos abounding, nothing to challenge the mind, *-d Ammunition Records PO Box 461 Bellflower, CA 90707*

Fall Silent "Nineteenhundredninetyseven" 7": The mix and production on this is top quality, really impressive: every instrument, every cymbal and guitar string comes through perfectly and completely distinct from every other. The musicianship is hard to believe, everyone is playing the most technical, talented lines I've heard, and the band is tight as a machine. Song structures have gotten even more fucking complicated and crazy than on their last release. They take a musical theme and do something different

with it every measure in both songs, which is dizzying to the listener, and leaves him or her struggling to keep up. Plenty of different original use of guitar chunks, acoustic parts, sudden changes, metal metal metal. All that in itself makes this good listening. As for actual musical effectiveness, this has some parts that are really exciting, and then other parts that are impressive without really taking the listener to any great heights. The chorus of the first song is really moving when it reoccurs (especially when it comes in the last time with an awe-inspiring scream), but in the verse part the vocals sound sort of like Rage Against the Machine with their high- pitch and hip hop rhythms. Vocalist Levi does some great stuff on this record, as he did on their last one, but he's definitely at his best when

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Desperate Fight, no label address, but you can harass singer David at Bolev 17B$_t$ 904 31 Umea, Sweden — the liner notes read "all interviews sent our way will be handed out at shows and answered by volunteers"!

Floor 7"-Let me say first that I really like this band a lot. Their music has always been very interesting and their arrangements always well done. They have taken the trademark 'Black Sabbath' sound and it their bastard son. The only thing I can't figure out is why they mixed the vocals so horribly. I mean, if they turned up the vocals to an audible level, they would be as good as Kyuss, easily. The packaging for this 7" is the best I've seen in a while when it comes to innovative ways to package a record and make it look interesting. Definitely of the Jade Tree side of things. Tasteful uses of samples as well. Another good band that has broken up. Next thing you know, the Amebix...oh, really? Nevermind, *-d*

Rhetoric records po box 82 Madison, Wl 53701

Gehenna The Birth of Vengeance" 7": Pure loathing, terror, the distilled essence of the heart of nightmare. Filth. Spitting out life in one final bloody gesture of disgust When you suffer in life, *really suffer, * it carves out a deep space inside you, a space which then can be filled up with soul, with feeling. That is the true soul that Gehenna's dirty, ugly music possesses. It gasps, strikes out blindly, writhes as it pitches forward at horntying speed down into the pits of nothingness. Every note on this record will stick in my head for the rest of my life, for as long as I remember what it is to feel like the shit of the world, to be despised, to starve and freeze, to lie choking with pneumonia on the floor in an apartment that belongs to a friend who doesn't want me there anymore but won't be ready to throw me out into the snow to die... until tomorrow. I can't tell you what it's like to feel if you can't feel, but if you know what that is, this record . This is the record. Lyrics: "no tremor runs through his voice, so many more will come and go and die and the worms in my heart rejoice " When you feel so fucked up and everything seems so black that world destruction seems the only hope, at least you can*

take comfort that it is coming fast, and feel no regrets about that one thing at least, after life has let you down in every other respect. The throat-shredded singer proclaims "this is my testimony, and for it I'll be forgiven in hell." Perhaps in "hell, " in the lowest ranks of the damned, the homeless, those destroyed and rejected, his rejection of life in this world will be understood, "forgiven." Or perhaps there is no forgiveness to be found anywhere in this world, and he will only find it in "hell " in the bitter comfort six feet of maggot- filled soil, the "hell" of sweet nothingness that awaits us all. The record ends with "Cave In" — the same eight notes repeated over and over again, pounding home the nausea with repetitive, meaningless, petty life that anyone with half a heart today has felt. "Life is bitter, my heart rots, don't say a fucking word agam My body is cold and dead and I feel life cave in " -b Revolutionary Power Tools, P.O. Box 83694, San Diego, CA 92138

The Great Brain-Satan Superman 7^{M}-lndie rock with a lot of bass and low end. That's the only way to make indie rock listenable. I can hear the Universal Order of Armageddon influence in there, I think. When they sort of drone out and make unusual noise is when they're most interesting, but when they come together to actually play a discernible music structure, they sort of end up sounding like a Dinosaur Jr. ripoff. The vocals (or lack thereof) do not irritate me. This is an upside. Their ability to pull out of a swirling mess of feedback and bass pulses into a tightly executed pop shows strong musicianship at the very least and at times achieve quality enjoyable music. People ; who long to be happy will enjoy this record, *-d*

ment, I can only think of about four other existing bands I would grant that honor to. The mix is thicker and more weighty than anything you can imagine it rolls over you like a fucking tank, every instrument clear as a gunshot yet simultaneously overloaded, and the deep vocals have the same flamethrower effectSystral's have, though they are not as deep There's a great deal of real variety and creativity in the playing and songwriting here, which is a real find in grindcore/crust-type music like this. The guitars do all sorts of twisted, fucked up, unexpected things with feedback and other weird noises, the singer sounds like he fucking means it (like he's clawed his •way out of the tomb, back from the dead, andhe fucking means it), the artwork is suitably deranged and messy, the lyrics are viciously political — this is just a great record hands down. Drawbacks? I suppose the songs could be individually a little more memorable/ catchy, but they should have that down perfect next release, since when F saw them perform they were twice as good as this CD — twice as dirty, twice as enraged, twice as never-look-back furious terrorist killing machine. I suppose the title refers to the number of songs on the record (although the songs from their old 7" are also on here), suggesting that each song is equivalent to a firebomb blow against the status quo. If this music affects others like it affects me, they're dead on right about that *-b*

Prank, P.O. Box 410892, San Francisco, GA 94141–0892

Hitch "Triggered Backwards" CD: This is in a major key. The recording is good quality, really clear, and powerful too. The drummer, and in fact all the musicians, are tight and skilled. The packaging has a lot of colors and the lyrics to one of the six

songs. The singer sings, sings melodically; I'd like to be able to criticize him for singing in a way that bores me to tears, but he occasionally sounds a little more serious (puts a little bite in his voice), so it sounds like he cares, and so I can't really complain about that. The music has a hypnotic, droning effect; it does have intensity, in an ephemeral way. This is rock and roll, no way around that, and I'm desperate to hear something that makes me feel SOMETHING (I just reviewed the Never Only Once CD, and I'm desperate), so I want to hate this, but it's gotten the better of me, and I can't.There's some interesting metal leads thrown into the third song, and the singer even screams over them for a few seconds. Plus, there's plenty of interesting tom stuff with the drums, and the power of metallic hardcore creeps in past the melodies here and there. When I want to listen to something besides hardcore, I'll put on Diamonda Galas or Dead Can Dance; but if you want to listen to something more like rock and roll that has the sort of grooves and feeling that can be found in the general vicinity of hardcore, I guess this is pretty good. The back page says "time is the fire in which we burn." OK fuck it, if I could have gotten lots of lyrics and more band information in the packaging, and I knew these guys and saw them play every once in a while, I would say this is a good CD. Even though they play rock._-b *Machination, distributed by Good Life, address around here somewhere*

Hot Water Music-Fuel for the hate game CD- There isn't a whole lot about this that isn't heartbreakingly beautiful. Very emotional lyrics, emphasized vocals, melodic guitars and genuinely intelligent song structures that collectively pull at the heartstrings of the melodic music lover in me, although I'll never admit it. The artwork for the layout is well-chosen, and they include interesting takes on the typical band photograph. This is Jawbreaker meets top-quality(?) emotional music done by people who have smoked way too many cigarettes. — *d Toybox Records see Victory *

> _Human Remains-Usinq sickness as a hero CD_- This is the best thing Relapse Records has ever put out. This is complete aural warfare. The relationship between all the instruments is perfectly executed. The vocals are brutal and nearly unrivaled in death metal. The samples are tastefully used and the guitar work is unique like none I've ever heard. It's a shame they didn't persevere. This is the heaviest record I've heard in a long, long, time. Scary artwork, band photos and lyrics are included, -*d* $_t$

Relapse Records

> _I.D.K.- To kill for the good of the fight for the right to be right CD_- This sounds a lot like old Underdog, with maybe a little Black Train Jack thrown in for good measure. Decent punk rock riffs, with interesting lyrics add up to entertaining songs. The vocals are way too loud, however.(lt was produced $_4$by the singer, no less) The insert is covered with comic book

style artwork and photographs of the singer. This is not bad for the mid-tempo pop-punkish music in this genre that I usually cannot tolerate. A well done effort as a first release from

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this promising band as well as label, *-d*

Bush League Records PO Box 10165 New Brunswick, NJ 089069998

Ice Nine "Psychology and Extreme Violence" 7": This record is fucking abrasive, like shoving gravel in your ears. Sandpaper screaming, blastbeat madness, flying sparks shooting past your head from the speeding guitars, irrational transitions, electric shock therapy. A marching drum snare beat brings the second song to a close, before the third song comes in like a car wreck. The guitar feedback at the beginning and end of the record sounds like fingernails on a chalkboard. The production is appropriately dirty and noisy. There are some sort of pointless silly samples about violence, maybe they would make sense if I knew what the lyrics were, but the packaging of this 7" doesn't even include them. That sucks. There's a lot of music on this record for a 7", though, and that's a good thing here in 1997 — or maybe it just seems like a lot because so much happens so fast, *-b*

Rhetoric, RO. Box 82, Madison, Wl 53701

Impel "Writhe in Pain" 7": The singer has a sort of singy yelling voice, that goes with the music, which isn't really aggressive, a little more reflective than anything else — in spite of having all the traditional elements of hardcore, chunky parts here and there, open chords, etc. There's a melodic solo (melodic, not metallic, melodic) in the first song, followed by a less electrical part (not an acoustic part like Judge or Slayer or any newschool hardcore band would have, rather a quiet part like Fugazi would have...). OK, now I've got it: this is that so- called "post-hardcore" stuff, like Fugazi, although in places (the beginning of the first song on side two) it's a little more powerful than Fugazi would play. But, the singer is singing vague poetry in a fragile voice, the band is playing at a slowish midpace, and the music never extends to any real extremes, so yes, what we have here is Fugazi- esque "post-hardcore." Another melodic solo appears in the third and final song, and then the music gets a little more intense, but it's over before anyone breaks a sweat. Attractive packaging, featuring a breathtaking photo of a cloudy sky. Gorgeous swirled blue vinyl, by the way. *-b*

Ammunition, P.O. Box 461, Beiifiower, CA 90707

Indecision- Unorthodox CD: I don't like the vocals, you'd think that a fat little guy like him whould be able to belt 'em out, but no. High pitched yelling that took away from the above-average song-writing. Dude, fatness is supposed to add bass and bile! Anyway, this is what I would consider modern hardcore; hiphop influenced drumbeats, with slightly complex guitar riffs and ahealthy Slayer influence. Indecision is more political and anti-religious than I expected, which is fine because I'm reviewing their cd for a political, anti-religious publication. There's nothing wrong with being political, as long as you aren't just repeating political cliches. Nice packaging, 15 songs, lyrics,

band photos, not a bad effort at all. I could see these guys really making a difference, -e

(Exit, PO box 263, NY, NY 10012)

Indigesti "Lubeck Live" CD: I'm an Indigesti fan, but an unusual one, since I haven't heard anything of theirs except the recent releases of their less well known material, like this CD. I hope that doesn't disqualify me from the review section! I do wish I had heard more of the studio versions of these songs first, that would have helped me to make more sense out of the live versions (that's common sense). But even if you've never hear Indigesti before, you still might enjoy this CD; I do. It's got plenty of raw energy and immediacy, the music is fast and simple mid-'80's hardcore punk (more like Bad Brains "Rock For Light' than anything else I can think of from that era: lots of speed and transitions, eclectic influences, guitar leads, crazy singing vocals that are all over the fucking place, etc.), and the lack of pretensions goes a long way. Besides, you have to check out a band who, on their one trip to the U.S.A., thought it was more important to play Omaha, Nebraska twice in a row (at the same lounge) than it was to play New York — to give you an idea of chronology, they played with Uniform Choice that tour. Sound quality is not too bad, not perfect either. Good, informative, entertaining packaging. Come on, I just compared them to fucking Bad Brains at their peak, give it a try. *-b*

Vacation House, Via S. Michele 56, Vigliano B., (Bl) Italy

Insurrection CD-This CD opens with the best :22 of music that I've heard in my life, 'including a Natural Born Killers sample (my sweet spot). The greater part of the rest of the CD sounds like Slayer fucking around at practice, however. There are some shining moments when the drums do something really fantastic or a brilliant guitar part creeps in, but it cloesn't seem to ever come together as a cohesive unit. The vocals sound a little forced and unconvincing, but all the lyrics come with explanations, as well does the band name. I feel like they touch on only the broader subjects that are easily tossed around by this as well as the majority of the vegan straight edge bands without having the research to back them up: cruelty, sexism, capitalism.

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Sure, we all know how fucking horrible all of these things are, but it seems like the interests covered here are fashionable politics and record sales. Nothing new here, including slick graphic design, with little or no feeling. The layout looks like a mix between Deadguy and Jade Tree, *-d*

Life Force records po box 101106 .04011 leipzig germany

Ire ^7"; Fuck, Im really excited about this record. Musically, it isn't the very best thing we have this issue, but their hearts (and minds) are in exactly the right place, and that really translates to make this powerful I mean, the first song is about the fucking Intifada resistance to Israeli oppression! If there's anything truly worth raging about,

it's the fucking genocide and persecution that the Israeli government inflicts upon the Palestinians, which our fucking U.S. government funds. The song comes in so haunting, with singing in Arabic, it gives me goosebumps. And when the music comes in, it is spasm- wracked, chaotic, abrasive hardcore punk with bursts of double bass when you least expect them, shrieking high vocals, plenty of unusual time signatures and original transitions. Ire definitely can spit outrage and disgust, they wrench the listener around mercilessly with their pandemoniacal cacophony. The second song is in French (these kids are from French-speaking Canada, where people get beaten to death for speaking English), and comes in with shrieking over a naked rush of double bass, very powerful. It addresses the savage treatment of and disinterest towards Native Americans, while people fight over such stupid shit as what language is spoken in Canada. They also do an acoustic part in it that, in context, is far more ghostly and moving than today's usual predictable hardcore acoustic part. The third song also measures up, addressing the same questions that the article "How Ethical is the Work Ethic?" did in Inside Front #9. The packaging includes lyrics (in a total of three languages, they definitely get points for that — most Inside Front readers can barely speak one) and a detailed, intelligent discussion of the subject of each song. Excellent All I would ask is that this band tighten up their slightly sprawling song structures, and keep working on going in the direction they're aimed, and they'll be fucking great Well done, *-b Schema, RO. Box 1161, Battle Creek, Ml 49016–1161*

Integrity "Seasons in the Size of Days" CD: The new Integrity full length is definitely an Integrity record, and definitely makes for good listening, even if it is not quite as far of a move from their older material as I'd expected. The songs still have some really catchy, powerful parts, although they really don't stray too far in style or construction from the formula of the last record they did.The experiments they try with playing with more variety work better on this record than they ever have before — the fifth song, which begins melodic (like their excellent "Jagged Visions of My True Destiny"), ends with a spare acoustic arrangement that really works, and their noise song at the end (with piano and excellent whisper track) works one hundred times better than "Unveiled Tomorrow's" on the "Systems Overload" record did, even if it is too long. The production is incredible, the best they've ever had by traditional standards (although I thought the production on their other three LP's was always really well suited to them). The solos are a step in a new direction — they sound'like Slayer-metal solos (out of control, crazy irrational solos) rather than the Metallica solos they had before (more orchestrated, blues-based solos). Dwid's voice is at its strongest ever, believe it or not — he can hold out notes forever without losing any strength or power; however, he doesn't sound quite as furious as he has before, his delivery is a little too straight. Really, there's something somehow lacking from this record overall, that prevents it from living up to the amazing work that Integrity has done before. It is a really *good* record, but not a truly great record. Often the

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music here sounds like it is on a record being played a few r.p.m. slower than it should be — "Sarin" definitely comes off like that; if it had been a little faster it would have had all the energy and urgency it needed, but instead it seems to be moving in slow motion. There is one thing that I know really bothers me: there are no lyrics in the insert. If they had printed lyrics it would be clearer what this record is about, and it might be clearer what is *important about* it; and the big individual band-member pictures they put in here instead really don't help. Integrity could go one of two directions from here: they could be content to be Integrity, to *have been* Integrity, and stop trying; then, this would be the last decent record they make. Or while they still have it, they could use all their potential, and they do have more talent and potential than almost any other hardcore band today, to push their music to the next level of intensity, to make a record that would render the last fifteen years of hardcore punk tame and empty by comparison. So my charge to Integrity is this: if we must live in this shit world, smothered by the mediocrity and triviality of so many pointless days of life, the least we can have is a little incredible music — music so incredible that for an instant it can transform the world, transfigure and transcend it — and we don't even have enough of *that yet.* Try *harder, -b*

Victory

Ironside "Ecstatic Ritual" CD: A discography of all the material (minus the Stormstrike 7") recorded by this seminal European "holy terror" band. I mean, nobody said "holy terror" back in '92 when this stuff was recorded (and anyway, that term has had a sort of weird history since it first appeared — in the pages of one of the first Inside Front issues, in fact), but that's what we have here: whispering and hissing vocals, midtempo, ugly, "evil, " "heavy, " very metallic hardcore, played by straight edge people, with plenty of religious imagery and a doomy, negative attitude. Ironside was one of the first European bands to play this stuff, and they weren't too bad either, although a little monotonous in larger doses. The packaging has all the necessary lyrics and information, plus some hilarious, ridiculous pictures, *-b Life Force, address nearby*

Irony of Lightfoot... "" 7": Now, I know this label can afford to press records on better vinyl than this opaque United-Pressing-Plant-style stuff (UNLIKE Inside Front, I might add!). Anyway, the vinyl doesn't really hurt the sound quality, which works fine for them (though there's room for improvement on their next release). The first side begins and ends with irrelevant samples. The music is textured with fairly complex melody arrangements, with more than enough transitions and changes. It's not aggressive or abrasive, but it's not gentle either; the guitars play some unexpected leads, there are some discordant open chords struck, some chunky builds. The vocalist does a lot of this (fairly impassioned) speaking stuff, occasionally rising to a yell or scream, and adds a little singy melody sometimes. The third song ends with his doing

this silly Pearl Jam "yeeeaaah" stuff as an obvious joke (he says "oh yeah" again in the fourth song) but I'm not amused. Packaging includes lyrics, typed (badly). Verdict? I'm told that this band is fairly young, and I think they need to get more mature and focused, but I think they do demonstrate some potential, *-b Wreck-Age, P.O. Box 263, New York, NY 10012*

Jaded 7"-More of the trademark emo sound. Nothing terribly interesting here. I guess they're broken up now, and I can only hope they've gone on to do bigger and better things. Slow to mid tempo music with off timing drums and jangly guitar that is unappealing to my ear. I will admit, however, that I may not be qualified to review this kind of music effectively, because I am predisposed to thoroughly detest anything of this sort. But as someone who appreciates quality music, or even music with conviction, or , dare I say, emotion, this is neither quality music nor emo music with any emotion. This 7" came with a little zine that I guess they put out. It includes some recommended travel spots in the US, some book reviews, some music reviews, and recommended record mailorders, *-d*

Witching Hour records 6722 Gates Head Ln. Indianapolis, IN 46220 _Jihad "Old Testament" CD:_ The equation here is: brief moments of

guitar melody which quickly explode into ugly, ragged, midpaced hardcore, given purpose and personality by the torn-throated screaming. During the first session of songs on this CD (which collects most of this now-defunct band's music) there are some weird overtones, from the bass perhaps, that make it sound like there's someone humming (or playing a kazoo?) in the background sometimes — that's really unusual. Anyway, there's definitely enough chaos here for the music, complimented by a rugged mix, to be harsh and abrasive. That's what works about this CD. I'll quote Andy from Earthmover, though, and say that sometimes it just lacks the urgency it would need to be truly exceptional. At least the vocals are first rate, their rage emphasizes the singer's character rather than erasing it (which is what happens to many singers today who feel like they have to sound angry — they just sound like everyone else who thinks they have to sound angry...). There's a live set at the end which helps convey the band's personality. The packaging is good, has lyrics (which are quite intelligent, as you'd expect from their Maximum Rock & Roll interview) and a couple pages of the bahdmembers complaining about people who spread rumors (did that really warrant treatment in the liner notes? Isn't something more worth addressing than scene infighting?) *-b Makoto, P.O. Box 50403, Kalamazoo, Ml 49005*

_Judas Iscariot-Harrison Bergeron Bound? 7_To me, this is a record of monumental proportions. Not some yellow marble vinyl 7' with abstract photographs, and slick computer font band name, with glossy band/crowd shots where the band is playing to 2000 people when they opened for Earth Crisis, but when they come to your town only 4 people show up and you can't figure it out for the life of you, nope, none of that shit. What this has, and plenty of it, is text. Not some vegan straight-^ edge, I've heard enough about generalized factory farming whining text, but philosophical, intelligent text Each band memberwrites and gives you an intimate look inside them

as people other-than-punk-musicians. This record will challenge your punk/hardcore complacency No more memorizing catchy lyrics, I think that these guys are definitely onto something. As for the music, it easily qualifies to be an accompaniment to the package. Equal parts blasting beats, frenzied guitars, and screamed vocals, as well as some quieter moments as bridge points between each formidable vessel of energy and fury. They even had the audacity to sneak in a few horns here and there. Wise up, and support intelligence in hardcore. A definite breath of fresh air. *-d*

Mountain records po box 220320 Greenpoint post office Brooklyn.NY 11222'997

Justice Unknown- This Is What Rage Is About CD: Justice Unknown has the exact opposite singer from Indecision: a skinny guy with a big, deep as fuck voice. Indeed, the vocals on this cd are fuckin' great, roaring and growling like a charging bull-moose. Tight , atypical moshmetal, with wicked chunkiness. Lyrically they could use some imagination, but I think with time and experience they'll improve. One great line is " I wiped my ass and saw the face of Christ". This is one of the better cd's to come my way, even if they are being dangerously naive by saying " Rage Against the Machine Are Communist Scum" on the lyric sheet. No, ratm are clever capitalist scum who use their commie/leftist hiphop schtick to fatten their already substantial bank accounts. Funny isn't it? They've gotten rich by crying about the very system that enables their success.

(NOTA, po box 654, Farmingville, NY 11738) •

Krakatoa "Clouds Burned By Sunshine" 7": I expected to hate this, because it looks like very predictable emo from the packaging (a pretty picture of a landscape). But my expectations were immediately changed when it came in with an excellent recording, lead guitars playing some fairly haunting lines. It pulls back for a second as the singer speaks (yes, in that fragile emo speaking voice), then breaks out again as he starts screaming (yes, in that torn emo screaming voice, but it doesn't sound so weak as to be unconvincing), and the song alternates likes that. The other song starts acoustically (yes indeed, with that distorted emo speaking that happens at times like that!) before starting to "rock" again (shit, and the singer is singing like he's in a "rock" band too...). It's not really aggressive at any point, but the powerful parts are indeed powerful, and the record definitely accomplishes what it is supposed to. Packaging contains the necessities (lyrics, requisite photo of young white male holding microphone, band history listing bands that developed from this one: Harvest, Threadbare) and nothing more. This is not groundbreaking, not really my thing either, but certainly effective in its genre, *-b Second Nature, P.O. Box 11543, Kansas City, MO*

Kurort "Oslo" 7": OK, I'm thrown a little off balance by this one, I guess that's good... Generally, it's fast, but there are no cliches here, in fact there's nothing I can predict, and just when I think I've figured out what they're doing in the fast parts they go into a funkish acoustic part or something equally unusual. It's not complicated stuff, in fact it's pretty simple stuff, but the details (where the transitions are, what they do with their riffs, the general song construction, etc.) throw me off. The vocalist doesn't

scream, he just yells, in a voice that is very real and has enough strength to work. The lyrics are NOT IN ENGLISH, for the first time in about two issues of reviews. That's just fine, of course, since the lyrics are listed in English in the packaging. The lyrics are probably my favorite part, although they are equally off- putting: they are sort of abstract, but abstract in a poetic sense rather than a vague sense. Here are some lines: "Be honest: nothing will change the human urge to destroy. Living space gets smaller and smaller. Especially in our heads." And, the entire lyrics of their song entitled "H.I.V.": "Virus. Me or you. No more brothers, no more sisters. You or me. Love is a riddle with giant holes. Love is gangrene. To the sea. Why? Why? Why? Why? To the sea." *-b*

Conspiracy, Lange Leemstraat 388, 2018 Antwerp, Belgium

Land of the Wee Beasties "" 7": This is another Sunney Sindicut record, from the inner circle of the emo conspiracy, I believe. Honestly, though I can't enjoy any of this music, for whatever reason, I sort of get a kick out of the whimsical quality of a lot of the Sunney S. releases. I mean, the name of this band is hilarious, and the packaging of this record (though spare and low-quality) is sort of appealing in its handmade appearance. Musically, it's all acoustic, pretty, gentle, with bad production and singing nasal vocals that I find unbearable. Actually, the second song on the first side is a sort of emo version of a reggae dub, with the echoing drums and everything, and I enjoyed it — very original, good atmosphere, creative, *-b*

Sunney Sindicut, 915 L St. #C-166, Sacramento, CA 95814

Larm "Extreme Noise" CD: Fuck yeah. I shouldn't have to tell you more than what this CD includes for you to understand why I'm excited about it: 1. seventy-one minutes of messy noisy, punk rock, completely carried away by its own boundless energy and remorselessly disrespectful to all musical expectations. That is the total of all the music Larm ever recorded, and while it's far from pretty, it's got a lot of spirit, enough adrenaline to last all 71 minutes, and there's even a fair bit of variety in the musical experiments they try. Above all, speed in the music. 2. Two different fucking booklets! One, listing all the lyrics and recording/release information (75 songs in 71 minutes, and yet the lyrics are all pretty intelligent and interesting!). The other contains some really eloquent essays by the members about their goals and experiences with the band. The layouts are tasteful and attractive, and contributed everything else in this package just as they should. Every fucking discography should be done this way, with 36 pages total of vital information, seventy minutes of great music, and durable packaging to hold it all. Fuck it, every goddamn record or CD should be done this way, discography or not!!! *~b*

Coalition, Jeroen Vnjhoef, Visottemtraat 54, 6532 CK Nijmegen, Netherlands ;: <

L.I.G.H.T- Good Solution CD: I was told that this band's name is an acronim for'Living In God's Harmony Together'. Now, I'm trying to be open-minded at this point in my life, but you'd better have some awesome music to back up a ridiculous band name like that. Honestly this is the worst shit out of Cleveland to come my way in a long time. Horrible whining vocals that change into a BoneThugs rap style

frequently, with melodic, alternative rocking, quicksand influenced music, that also shares common ground with ekindel, Snapcase, God I hate this shit!!! Way too much melody and introspective wimpy touchy- feely thoughtfulness. I gotta ask, if Cleveland is such a hard scene; then why the fuck hasn't this band been beaten to a pulp by now?!! Honestly, this shit is like a nail in the hardcore coffin for Cleveland!-e *(Uprise Records, po box 360141, Strongsville, OH. 44136)*

Litterbox 7"-This is unlistenable. It sounds like a bunch of drunk punks with a drum machine. The mix is absolutely horrible, which very well may be intentional. I'm sure their hearts are in the right places, and I think I heard some lyrics about eating all of someone's food while they're away, which I can relate to, but other than that, this definitely leaves a lot of room for improvement. I think they may have been a bit hasty in their decision to record some songs. Maybe some more practice is in order, *-d*

Axhandle records 35 Sunnyridge Rd. Spring Valley, NY 10977 _Lockjaw-Gutted 7"_-From out of the cracks somewhere in NY, I think

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Buffalo, comes one of the best tough guy hardcore bands I've heard in a while. They demonstrate masterful guitarmanship, as well as using the drums to effectively put emphasis on all the right parts, and blended with a mid 80's NYHC style of aggro vocals, which makes for hardcore that leaves you bruised and beaten, yet craving more. Very aggressive lyrical content and a packaging layout demonstrative of top quality hardcore bands releasing music these days. This label seems to have a tight grasp on finding the right people to work with and doing what the fuck is right for them and ignoring the status quo. *-d*

Thank The Knife records po box 10282 Rochester, NY 14610

_M.I.J, 7"_-This sounds a lot like the Promise Ring. What else do you want me to say? The lyrics make for good poetry. They do this cool stop/start thing one time on the record. Their singer knows how to sing very well. You would think that eventually someone will be compelled to do something new and interesting. Don't get me wrong, this is top-notch whatever it is. I'm just making it my whipping boy instead of saying it sucks, which it doesn't. The production is good, not that typical super-trebly guitar jangle that kills my eardrums. Very tight musicianship. These guys are not imposters. I'm just tired of twenty really good bands playing variations on the same song, *-d*

One Percent records Minneapolis, MN 55414

Miltown 7"-This is a rock-n-roll record. Catchy hooks, pretty singing and everything. The songs sort of sound the same, and I hate to make a pop culture reference, but they remind me of that MTV band, Bush. The lyrical content seems to be of a higher quality than MTV caliber bands, to Miltown's credit. Like I said before, I'm

not an expert, only a critic. And that makes me an asshole by default, but I have to be an honest asshole and admit this is the furthest thing I've heard from hardcore since the last time I turned on MTV. *-d*

Hydra Head records po box 990248 Boston, MA 02199

Never Only Once "Saving Grace" CD: Good quality recording, much better than I expected. I mean, this is pretty damn good production. Lots of strummed open chords, only the occasional chunk, and that kind of singing that bands who are "progressing beyond hardcore" have — yes, dear readers, this is rock and roll. How do I describe that kind of singing? Well, it's melodic, like it carries a tune, but still kind of throaty, and people who sing that way always do it with this weird accent that I've never heard anyone actually speak with (imagine a Rock God wailing "yeeeeeaaah!" and you'll know which accent I'm talking about). Spare packaging, does include lyrics. I guess I should cut them some slack for being from Vermont, and for doing this in a pretty low key fashion, although I don't really get the impression that the "D.I.Y." thing is a really big deal to them. If I love records, I can write good reviews of them; if I fucking hate them, I can write even better reviews; but this one, God, I wish I could feel something about it. *-b*

Pressure Point, P.O. Box 907, Colchester, VT 05446

Ninefinger-Ninefingered CD-This is incredibly bad, and I can't believe that it has Mike Dean from Corrosion of Conformity singing on it. It sounds like someone got him really really drunk, beat him up, and told him everyone in COC quit and that he had to do and he had to do a new album in twenty minutes or less, complete with a cover of Motley Crue's "Dr. Feelgood", which, uh, makes the original sound good.

* Slow, droning, bluesy tuned-down guitars, lazy, babbled vocals, and sloppy drumming comprise this effort, for a lack of a better term. Real slick layout, real bad music. Not a good combination. *<1*

Too Damn Hype Records

None Left Standing- Stingray Candy101 CD: Right off the bat I'm reminded of my wusscore favorites Enkindel. And where there's Enkindel, Fugazi and terrible commercial indie rock aren't far behind. Rock production, rock structure, why the fuck did you send this crap to Inside Front? 'Be my Sweet-talker, I'll be your tightrope walker'. Yeah. You do that.-e

Rhetoric Records, Ro. box 82, Madison, Wl. 53701

_N.V, Le Anderen- Sound Of The Streets CD: T_his time Grand Theft Audio throws me a curveball by putting out a cd comp, for a Dutch Oi!

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band, one that I've never actually heard before. Anti-Fascist, and very young looking from the many pictures in the booklet accompanying this cd. Well-recorded streetpunk

that reminds me of Last Resort and 4Skins, and actually sounds pretty damn good. It's odd to me that a Dutch singer would have an English accent, or maybe he just has a Dutch accent and I'm too ignorant to recognize it. I feel so guilty. I'm being accent-ist. This band showed great wisdom by having an antihare krsna song on here, that was written a good five years before the krsna movement showed it's ponytailed, beaded head in our movment.Then again, I'm struck by how intelligent most of the lyrics for NV Le Anderen were, considering the time this material was originally released in 82–86, and let's face it; Oil bands are not typically known for their intelligent lyrics. I can relate to this cd better than much of Grand Theft's other releases.

(Grand Theft Audio)

One Day Closer "Unconquered" 7": Coalition, which gets points for having a logo that reads "fuck music, " also gets points for releasing a variety of music. The last two releases I reviewed were dirty punk, while this is modern straight edge hardcore — still with the same inventive packaging and sincere approach. Good work. The music on the first side of this record is nothing really groundbreaking, midtempo chunky stuff with the occasional guitar lead, but it's played sincerely. This band has apparently been compared to Unbroken, and I think that's not a far off comparison. The deep screaming vocals sound very Unbroken-esque, and the guitars have the same metallic sound too. Their drummer is better than the guy in Unbroken was, he can do some decent double bass, etc. The best work is the fast material on the second side, it has real urgency and stands head and shoulders above the first side in my opinion. The packaging is creative and the liner notes are excellent (showing real intelligence in their stance against the status quo), but the lyrics could be a little more original (they seem to focus mostly on being straight edge, and even warn those who live a "life of intoxication" that their "actions shall be judged"...). I think that "Big, " who plays bass here, is the same Big who sings for Mainstrike, another European band that I really like, *-b Coalition, address at Larm CD review*

Out For Blood- Strive To Survive CD: Metallic moshcore excellently recorded, great vocals that remind me of Tommy Rat (Rejuvenate). The music is like a simpler Merauder, with lots of hooks, one mosh part flowing into another (no pun intended). It still amazes me, how these European hardcore bands learn English so well, when I struggled with freakin' Latin in high school. Breakdown comes to mind, and Enrage. This cd drags at some points, but that's gonna happen with most releases. Out For Blood are at their best during their their fast parts which unfortunately aren't frequent enough for this reviewer. Lots of shouted choruses like... Biohazard. Which is fine, except I like a bit more speed with my European NYHC. Other than that, this is pretty good. Sure it's unoriginal, but that's gonna happen when everything's been done, -e

(RPP, Av. V. Olivier 10A/67, 1070 Brussels, Belgium)

RE.LM.E, "Relax With..." CD: We're seeing an interest in "experimental music" (whatever the fuck that is — shouldn't that be ALL music?) coming from a number of different corners of the punk community right now, and now one of those corners

is Grand Theft Audio. On this CD, there's a fair bit of very distorted screaming over speedy drums, often with a distorted guitar in the background where you can't quite hear it like you usually hear a guitar. But there's plenty of other weird things that sound like keyboards, strings, bells, and many of the songs are.written differently than the stuff around them (there's a pop love song written to guns that starts out really radio-friendly, for instance). The lyrics are generally intended to be shocking and obnoxious, though I'm not sure if in 1997 I can really be moved to outrage by a song about using steroids and killing people. On the other hand, some of them are right on (viciously satirizing pop star angst, attacking pseudosatanist half-wits for misusing Nietzsche quotes, etc.). Anyway, to be able to carry something like this CD off as well as they do, you actually have to gather together some pretty talented musi

cians, I think, so we should give them credit. But I'm trying to imagine an Inside Front reader getting something of real value out of listening to this CD, and my conclusion is that it works more as novelty than as anything else. A side note — having talked some to Brian from Grand Theft, and reading these extremely antisocial and violent lyrics, I'll be damned if Brian isn't in this band... *-b*

Grand Theft — address nowhere in this issue! If you want this CD, you're fucked! Too bad! (evil laughter)

The Proles "Thought Crime" CD: The first four tacks on this CD are from a reunion-type thing, fourteen years after this band broke up (and even those are now three years old now). Parts of the second song sound a lot like the Clash ("do you want to make tea at the BBC..."). But more than that I'm hearing here the sound of the "ever fallen in love with someone you shouldn't have fallen in love with" Buzzcocks (god I fucking hope that *was* the Buzzcocks, it's been so long...) — in fact, their music reminds a fucking lot of that song. A little Angelic Upstarts in the very melodic, high, extremely dramatic vocals too (once again, I hope I'm remembering correctly). I'd even say that where their music isn't like the Buzzcocks, it's like the 'Upstarts (when the 'Upstarts weren't experimenting with reggae, etc. — that *was* the 'Upstarts, right?) — in fact, the song that just came on sounds more like the 'Upstarts' reggae-esque stuff... None of this name dropping will help the typical Inside Front reader, I'm sure, so to sum up: this is simple, melodic, rock and roll, street-level and grainy enough to qualify as punk, but bouncy and sugar-sweet enough in places to alienate someone who considers Extreme Noise Terror to be premium punk. Their oldest recordings are the best, I think: the most direct, the least overdramatic. Of course Grand Theft has given us plenty of packaging and notes (although I wish we got more lyrics), and their remastering gives the illusion that the original recordings weren't godawful. Reading the liner notes, I learn that the Abrasive Wheels opened for them — I guess that's to their credit... Now go listen to the Angelic Upstarts, Sham 69, and the fucking Last Resort song "Freedom"! Especially if you've never heard them before, *-b*

Grand Theft Audio, 501 West Glenoaks Blvd., Suite 313, Glendale, CA 91202

Psywarfare "Holocaustal Angel" 7": Those Cleveland people are finally starting to get somewhere with their noise experiments. Whenever you enter an entirely new

genre, you're bound to just stumble around for a while, trying to get your bearings; and there was a time when Psywarfare was definitely doing that, but it's past. I wouldn't say that this stuff can really evoke powerful emotions yet, which is the mark of great music, but you can tell there's more confidence and skill now. There's also a fair bit of variety: track one is haunting at the beginning, and really exceptional, until the distorted noises begin (they're interesting, but can't live up to the threat of the haunting introduction); track two sounds like rave/disco music played with scraps of backwards noise; track five includes some interesting vocal manipulation at the end, while the other two feature more hypnotic noises and vocals with heavy effects on them. The packaging Wicked Witch has supplied is phenomenal, all shiny silver and black, *-b Wicked Witch, address below*

Pushbutton Warfare CD: That's more like it. Fast picked riffing, raw, throaty vocals, excellent breaks, violent lyrics, good packaging, good hooks, this cd has got a lot of heart.Plenty of good, tight fast parts. Justin no longer sings for Pushbutton, but from what I hear their new singer (who actually sang forthem before Justin) is just as good. Man this rips! I could compare this to a tougher old Leeway, and I think I will. Less rock than Leeway, this cd does what so few others can, and that is, it holds my attention! Well-written songs, that are pretty original for this style. I think a couple of these songs appeared on their demo, in different form. For awhile Pushbutton was getting out and about quite well, busting their asses. Hopefully they're still together and perhaps just taking time to write new stuff because they've got a damn good thing going! Jesus, I just cannot get over how fuckin' good this is. And if my memory serves me correctly they only charge like 6$ or something! Who says you can't have DIY tough-guy hardcore?!!-e *(Crazy Man Records, PO box 521, Hadley MA. 01035) (413) 2532719* `http://www.avisions.com`.

Quixote 7"-This is mediocre power pop emo music. The lyrics were actually interesting to follow along with the music until I got to the spelling errors, which just annoyed me. There are, to be honest, a few points on this record where they play some musical arrangements that are saddening to my heart, but this is probably more likely attributed to the fact that EVERYTHING in my life sucks right now. I guess some of these people are also in Jihad. Well, I would honestly rather hear a Jihad record. File under Promise Ring, *-d*

Makato recordings po box 50403 Kalamazoo, Ml (NO FUCKING ZIP CODE!)

The Rickets 7": I don't have the final packaging for this, but just to

give you a foretaste: this is messy, youthful punk rock played by some kids who are obviously enjoying themselves. It doesn't break out of any of the traditional formulas, but at least they don't seem bored. Inarticulate lyrics about rioting against white power and the white house, television, etc. that come off as funny in their lack of discretion, moderation, or any seriousness, *-b*

Kids United, 9328 Raintree Road, Burke, VA 22015

Rubbish Heap "Path of Lies" 7": Sometimes this band does simple things that I've heard before a million times (like breaking out into a doubletime speedy part, or doing

a pounding build with tom-drumming) but somehow they manage to really fucking move me. That only happens a few times on this record, but Lm still impressed by that, and the whole record is pretty good; the energy and immediacy necessary to make a record like this work is here from beginning to end. It starts with a sample of a woman telling about being abused, which is pretty serious, fearsome stuff.The bass is rugged and deep, the guitars are rough, tough and grainy, and in fact so are the screaming vocals. The mix is clear without being so perfect that the music loses personality. The songs are well-constructed, not too predictable, with speedy ano midpaced parts (maybe a few more midpaced parts, but they don't get boring or repeti- five, because there's more than enough variety). Packaging is excellent, it's all rough and dark (in keeping with the music), and features a handmade-looking (i e personable) many-page booklet with lyrics, plenty of original artwork, and eloquent explanations of the lyrics and the band's intentions. From the booklet: "I watched the clouds rushing by, they have nowhere to go, and yet they waste no time getting there; up to you now to make a decision, there's no much time left ...Or are you ready to die?"-b

Conspiracy, address above

Six Going On Seven 7^{H}-This label, Hydra Head, has 666 all over everything, and I have to say from the music I've heard so far, there's more evil in my breakfast cereal than in any of these records. Crafty packaging, super-poppy music that at times is almost a clever disguise for their Fugazi influence. This record kind of makes me feel like I'm taking a walk in the park, which annoys me right now, because with my luck as it is, I'd probably step in a pile of dog shit. There's also an element of Doghouse records emotional type business going on here if you listen closely. This is not at all a bad record, it's just either too melodramatic, or too happy, and I can't figure it out and it's pissing me off. -*d*

Hydra Head

16-Drop Out CD-From the first notes, I knew that this was going to kick my ass. This music is so heavy that the bass rumblings from my speakers made my CD player start skipping from all the way across the room. If you like doing push-ups, this is good push-ups music. It sounds like the drummer is hitting his drums with a baseball bat. The vocals are not altogether impressive, but to me they are secondary to the pounding rhythms of the music anyway. I think that they got the name 16 from the amount of BPM's (beats per minute, you dummy) each of their songs are. Slow, dirty music akin to Eyehategod, only better production. This CD packs the kind of punch that this brand of music needs in order to be effective. 16's music makes me want to hurt you. -*d*

Theologian records

Slugfest CD: I remember these guys being pretty good live, and they were better than many of their Buffalo peers from 91–93. This is a discography of sorts, and it's pretty good. Slugfest was one of those bands that was just a little afraid of going over the edge into being "too metal", and it shows in their music.Scott's new band Despair is virtually indistinguishable from Slugfest, same style, same structures, etc.

Very much like Judge, with less fast parts, and more chugging stomping parts.Enough catchy parts to remain memorable. It's weird to me that so many people consider this band to be 'old school'. This isn't quite my cup of tea, but Slugfest was quite good in their time, and judging by how many bands sound like them now, they influenced quite a few people, -e

(Initial Records)

Speaker Killer "Scale Sheer Surface" 7": This seems to me to be a more abrasive cousin of pop punk, played in a messy, yelling, shouting breaking things kind of way. Maybe not pop punk, but something like that. The singer yells or talks (a little obnoxiously), or adds a little melody to his voice sometimes, and the band plays quickly, even exploding into triple time bursts for a fair bit of the second song; the bass does song funkish stuff sometimes, sometimes the guitars play

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messy harmonics, I don't know, this is unusual and off-putting. OK, I'm listening to the third song now, and there's no resemblance to pop punk, it's just a lot of remorseless noise, loosely structured around that funkish bass. I really don't know how to react to this, to be honest, and neither would you, I'll wager. Now they're playing a little pop punk again — now they started just making noise again. Now a little funk. Noise. Hmmm. *-b*

Conspiracy, address above

Splintered 12 CD- This is the record that nearly made me never review another record as long as I lived. I'm a pretty smart guy, and I couldn't think of anything objective for the life of me to say about how bad this is. If you remember the band at your high school that played college rock cover songs in the talent show and got all the girls, well, now they've obviously decided to put out a record. I think they did the CD insert on the broken ink jet printer they must have stolen from the high school they attend. They'll probably get signed to Victory, *-d Shiny Shoes PO Box 459 Haverhill, MA (no zip code, come on now guys...)*

Stickfigurecarousel- 7". Comes in with a chunky build, which crashes into noise as the record starts. What we have here is some noisy, (emo-influenced?) hardcore, with bursts of speed and discord, quiet parts, sudden explosions of melody, and that torn screaming that we've sort of come to expect with this kind of music. There's an incredible moment during one quiet part where.it sounds like there is a woman with a beautiful, echoing voice singing in the background, and you can't quite make it out to be sure. That was really good; it happens again in the third song, and is probably the high point of the record. The transitions and occasional unusual rhythms are. well done, and the second side starts with some really powerful melodies. In fact

I'd say the whole record is really well done, a first rate example of this kind of modern cacaphonic hardcore. All they need (needed, I guess, since they seem to be broken up) is something to distinguish them from the other bands in this genre — something like Ire's multilingual politics (for this band is musically probably a little more effective than Ire).The song explanations are written well, the lyrics are more heavyhanded. They also could have had a better name, don't you think? *-b Schema, address above*

Stigmata- Hymns For An Unknown God CD: Even though Bob Riley (Stigmata's chunky singer) blew off going to my wedding, I'm still not gonna drill this cd. Bob's breathing a sigh of relief right now, heh! This cd was recorded three years ago at Normandy Sound, and you can tell. Flawless recording, with music hard enough to smash open Al Capone's vault. Three years haven't tarnished the greatness of this cd one bit. Originally this was nightmare-ishly released by a rich cokehead in Albany who had inherited a million bucks or. something (Rob Occhialini, 518/432-6352, prank the fuck out of him!) and never put out ads, never got the cd distributed, never gave the band their copies, never got the cd's out of Albany, nothing. A couple years go by, and Too Damn Hype re-releases the cd with lyrics, a thanks list, etc. and here it is. If it matters, I have Stigmata tattoos on my body, and that was before this cd was released in the first place, so you know there's a serious conflict of interest with me reviewing this. But that's hardcore for ya. Ok, many of you crybabies will whine that this is too metal. Let me reiterate that after roughly twelve years of metal/ hardcore crossover, it's a little late to still be bitching about bands being "too metal"! Totally smooth structure, sweet drumming perfection, excellent catchy riffs that don't spill over into technical excess, this record is a masterpiece, and in the three years since it's release I have yet to stop listening to it. Sinqe this record came out Stigmata has had several lineup changes, but Bob and Jay Suhkes remain from the lineup that recorded this record. More current information is available in the Troy Scene report elsewhere in this issue, -e *(Too Damn Hype)*

Silent Fall "In a Perfect World" CD: This begins with an atmospheric introduction, mournful guitar notes fading in and out, and the singer speaking (in a voice that seems to lack something, maybe drama?), before the modern hardcore (midtempo, a couple chunks, some struck

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open chords) comes in — then, his voice is definitely the weakest link, just sounding too weak and uncomfortable to come off. The second song works better on the verse parts, because it is faster, and this seems to work better with his voice — the occasional guitar leads help too. He sort of sings in a yelling way, and has a mid-range voice, and... yes... ah ha! This reminds me a lot of early Endpoint. The third song has the same faster verses and midtempo choruses, the same melodic yelling, and yes sir, I'm hearing

a lot of Endpoint in this. I guess if you liked Endpoint this will work fine for you, and you should take my criticisms of his voice less seriously.The production is good enough but not amazing. The playing is occasionally a pinch clumsy, but the songwriting isn't too bad. Now, having listened through it, I can say that if for some reason you wish there had been a perfect sequel to, say, Endpoint's "In a Time of Hate, " this should rub you the right way. On the other hand, I always thought Endpoint was one of those bands emo-ish hardcore kids listened to only because they knew they would get injured at an Integrity show. Final note: now that I've opened this CD up, I can't get the fucking insert to fit back in it, I think it's not sized quite right! *-b*

One Percent, RO. Box 141048, Minneapolis, MN 55414–1048 _Stalingrad_ isn't quite as unbelievable as

their split with Underclass was, just becuase the songs on that record were so perfectly written, so simple so catchy in their cruel aggression that they were instant classics in my book But this is a fucking great record Stalingrad play these simple songs, straight to the point, no extra filler, that because of their simplicity and pure remorseless purposefulness strike right through to the heart. Their vocalist puts almost every other singer today to shame — he's up there with Mike Cheese from Gehenna and the guys from SystraL His voice is deep, threatening, merciless — you can hear the tissue of his vocal cords ripping as he shrieks his rage and disilliusion with everything. OK, fuck it, the last song on (I think it's) the first side is at least as good, as catchy as anything on that split 7" was. I listen to this and imagine a man cutting flesh from his body, nailing it up piece by piece to the wall, until finally he expires in a pool of blood as the sky in the distance darkens under a mushroom cloud. Terrifying, *-b*

Armed with Anger, address below

Strong Intention 7":

I saw these guys a couple months ago in Buffalo and I thought the same thing about their live set as I do about this 7". Nice people, decent meat and potatoes fast part/slow part hardcore that doesn't break any new ground, but isn't really trying to either.They do a Negative Approach cover, as many other bands do, and the packaging is very diy. Some of the lyrics are a bit cliched, but don't I don't hold it against them. Strong Intention works very hard, and it's my bet that they'll accomplish much more than the lazier, perhaps more talented bands out there. In other words, what they lack in talent, they make up for in effort.-e

(FistFight Records, po box 364, Hagerstown, Maryland. 21741–0364) _Tank "Family" 7":_ I like Detroit. The hardcore kids there are street level and genuine. They aren't rich kids looking for some subculture to entertain them through their youth, they really don't have anything else going for them in the world except for their hardcore community: they grow up listening to Motorhead, they have to work shit jobs, and they express themselves by dancing hard as fuck and helping each other survive. So while this record is far from being among my favorites this issue, I appreciate the spirit in which it was put together. Musically, these guys sound like they really liked the first Biohazard record, before that band became fucking shit (and after they were

fucking nazis). There's a lot of simple, midpaced danceable parts, tough gruff vocals that incorporate some (hiphop influenced?) rhythmic stuff, occasional double bass. The recording could be better but it doesn't hold them back at all. There's an unexpected, interested part

at the end of the second song with some unusual guitar special effects — I definitely enjoyed that. Five songs, not bad for a 7" in 1997. Lyrics are simple, positive and straightforward, although they lack a little dexterity. Gorgeous orange vinyl from Andy's label here too. *-b +/- records, RO. Box 7096, Ann Arbor, Ml 4810 7*

Tension "Agent of the People" CD: This has all the elements that the older Tension music had, that made those older recordings great: energy, speed, good songwriting and transitions, plenty of guitar noises for spice, moments of melodic or otherwise unusual musical experimentation, excited shouting vocals, politically aware lyrics. Unfortunately, while Tension's music is now a little more polished, it seems to have a little less energy, a little less excitement in the vocals, a little less spirit. Not to say this is limp by any means — it just can't quite measure up to the incredible raw excitement that those old Tension recordings had.The recording is very clear and professional, but sadly the guitars should have been louder. Who knows what will happen to Tension, if they are still around; every time they are about to tour or really get active, it seems like something happens to one of them and they can't. If it weren't for that, they would be a great band, and an important one — and that's too bad, because it would be great to see a band so vocal about its revolutionary (post-Marxist?) ideals become popular in the straightedge hardcore scene, *-b*

Uprising, RO. Box 490, Laguna Beach, CA 92652 — that's the Vegan Reich guy's new label[1]*.*

Times Expired-The Unseen 7": Just when I thought I could get done with the vinyl reviews without making more enemies, there's the Times Expired 7" looking up at me. I 've said before in my own 'zine (which shall remain nameless) that there's nothing wrong with a slight hip hop influence to your music, or even a strong one if it's done well. This is heavy newer Leeway-style rapcore with occasional sung vocals, also like Brother's Keeper. Both songs on this two song 7" start off with fast parts to try and trick you into thinking its hardcore, but then...honestly this was so bad I couldn't get through the 2nd song. Hip hop overkill ruins this for me. Wicked corny.-e

(Overdose Records, 12218 Rolling Hill Lane, Bowie, MD. 20715) _Tired From Now On-Romantic LP_-From the onset these guys have got everything turned up to 11 and are beating the shit out of everything that's plugged in within 200 feet of their reach. Similar in schizophrenic musical structures to the Deadguy of OLD. This was produced by the ever-growing-in-popularity Steve Heritage, who seems to know how to work with a band in order to bring out their strongest points. One guitar seems to be maintaining the super-heavy unusually timed rhythms, while the other adds depth with melodic guitars and frenzied noise making. The vocalist could have used a few different techniques to make the vocals a little less monotonous, but they are still convincingly tortured nonetheless. Truly awe-inspiring artwork graces the front and

back of the album cover, and not that it makes the record sound any better, but mine was on red vinyl with an etching of their logo. This band is broken up now, and boy is it a shame, -*d*

No Idea records po box 14636 Gainesville, FL 32604–4636 _Trial "Foundation" CD:_ Talking to people about Trial, the subject that comes up most often is the question of their attitude: Trial is a posi- band if there ever was one. That is, their lyrics and entire approach are so positive and straightforward that they are either exciting or off- putting to people. Many people love the simplicity of their methods and the directness of their lyrics, while some others find the lack of any kind of irony or room for interpretation a little overbearing. I think that's why a _Hardware_ reviewer once described their lyrics as "heavyhanded." On the other hand, that guy couldn't even figure out how to spell "CrimethInc." with the fucking 7" cover in front of him, so I guess we can discount his opinion! Anyway, on to the music: Trial plays fast, energetic hardcore descended directly from the straightedge bands of the late 80's, and they are one of the best bands in this genre, too. There's plenty of variety in the songwriting, plenty of transitions and skilled guitar melody and drumming. Greg's yelling sounds less like Black Flag-era Rollins here, it's more hoarse-sounding this time (hoarse in a way that doesn't decrease its power).The playing is tighter and more skillful than it was on the CrimethInc. 7", and the recording has improved a little too. In fact I'd say Trial almost has their mixing and production down perfectly. Still, there are two places where it could be better here. Most of all, the backing vocals, while they must have been fun to do, are still not well integrated into the main vocals. The same goes for the (rare) use of echo, which sounds a little too obvious. Now, at the end of the review, I'll tell you what I really love about this band: first, the moments when the music is powerful enough to be truly anthemic (the beginning of "Condemned, " for example) — I suspect we have guitarist Tim to thank for many of those parts. That, I think, is Trial's calling, to write anthems that will inspire people... Second, the thing I appreciate the most about Trial is their live performances. Sure, everybody hops around and has fun, but this band stands apart from almost all others because of singer Greg's eloquence. He, more than any other hardcore singer this decade, is able to speak clearly and concisely about important issues in a way that can truly convey their urgency. If hardcore ever does become a effective force for social change, it will be specifically because of the efforts of Greg and people like him. So Trial and bands like them must strive, as they progress, not only to play passionate music, but above all to *communicate, * to never let their ideas take a backseat to the music that they inspire. Trial is doing great with that, I only ask that Greg never stop or curtail his speaking when they play, and that their next release go into more depth in the liner notes,* -b

Trial: 427 11th Avenue East, Seattle WA 98102 (CD on New Age) _Note:_ Fuck, Pm finishing up the 'zine this morning, and the reviewer didn't get to that Trial CD version of the 7" on CrimethInc. — let me just say that it has ten times the insert information the 7" had, a vastly improved mix that really shows off the excellent guitarwork and

puts the backing vocals (finally) where they should be, and includes the five demo songs — which are some of their best material, and really shine here. It sucks nobody could review it in time, — the editor _Tripface — Someparfsorrow CD:_ Whenever I see the word spiritual used in an ad to describe a hardcore record, it makes me suspicious. Over the years, I've had far too many products and outlooks pushed towards me for consumption, in the name of 'spirituality'. Ok I'm nitpicking. This in fifteen songs of midtempo, slightly heavy, slightly emotional, occasionally melodic, repetitive music that didn't do much for me. I believe Tripface is probably sincere about their lyrical subject matter (mostly girls and lost friendships), but their music failed to win me over. I did like the song Tripface qite a bit, and I liked the song 'Volition' also. With a name like Tripface, I thought they'd be more trippin' and crazy, but they just never really built up the momentum I was lookin' for.-e

(Exit, po box 263, NY, NY 10012)

_Unruh T-_Mike Cheese from Gehenna may have met his match This is my new favorite band. From the opening notes, the vocalist drools and growls spasmodically into the microphone until the very end. I listen to this and I am excited about the end of time because I'll have an Unruh song in the back of my head and it won't seem so bad. This is just the right combination of musical elements to send someone over the brink of insanity. This is definitely a hardcore record. Ultra-heavy guitars, brilliantly played drums, and vocals that fit this music like a glove. Heavy duty packaging includes an obligatory live band photo, and some very well done hand drawn artwork that looks very Pushead-esque. This is similar in style to Unbroken, only this is one thousand times better, *-d*

King Of The Monsters, address at the beginning of the review section, far, far away

_Vitality- Bloodline CD: T_his cd starts off with a sample from Blood In, Blood Out'and then kicks into some ass-kicking Ringworm styled metalcore, but with more metal. Maybe a cross between Ringworm and the German Hatecore band Erosion (my favorite European band). Impressive speed and power with great guitar work and a great recording. Sure the cover art is corny in an 80's power metal style, but from what I understand, that's what those Good Life/Stormstrike bands like! Manowar and Virus looking shit! Ha! Remember Virus?!! Anyway this has great breaks, and Vitality gets in there and kicks ass without wasting time. Seven songs in 18 minutes. This cd really is a surprise. From the lyrics, I get that they support animal rights, and are anti-Christian, I thought it was funny that they thank Clevo. Not Integ, or Confront, or Ringworm, just'Clevo'.' I can't get over, how much power this band has. I wonder how many American kids will ending up passing these guys by for American bands who have more hype than substance, bands like [censored], and if that happens, it's a tragedy, because these guys rip.-e '

(Good Life Recordings, RO. box 114, 8500 Korttrijk, Belgium) _Veil CD:_ This is modern hardcore, not too much metal, fairly straightforward. There are plenty of tempo changes, and they get really fast sometimes. They have the token hardcore acoustic parts that have been done a million times but keep coming back; I'll be happy

when we all move on. In fact their acoustic part at the beginning of the second song ushers in an almost entirely melodic song that is not executed smoothly enough to work out.Their recordings are just barely good enough to not ruin this, they just aren't clear or full enough to

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flatter the music much. And their singer's voice, too, just barely escapes ruining this — it has personality, which is an important thing (and rare these days), but it isn't as strong as it needs to be, and the backing vocals don't quite work on the otherwise catchy choruses. This band is at their best when they're playing really fast — I wish more bands would do that (variety, you know), and they do it well enough. I like the samples before the fifth song, attacking consumer society — in fact, the vocals sound a little stronger there, too, maybe? (It could well be, since songs 1–4 and 5–7 are from different sessions, previously released as two 7"s). The Misfits cover at the end is fun. Gorgeous packaging, all full-color pictures, with the lyrics and other necessities. *-b*

Lifeforce records, address above

Vent 7"-This was Hydra Head's first release, and they have since improved on their choice of releases. This sounds like Burn with bad production. Mid paced chunky guitars, and blatant misuse of the double bass. There definitely was potential here, but I think they are now defunct. This just doesn't really go anywhere. For all the anger in the singer's voice, this comprehensively falls flat. Like I've said, if you've heard the Burn record, you might want to check this out, but then again, if you've heard the Burn record, do you really need to? Fancy green vinyl, *-d*

Hydra Head

Warzone- The Sound Of Revolution CD: This is the full length album I bitched about wanting Warzone to release last issue; a full length of all new songs.I saw Warzone in Buffalo a couple months back, and it was the first time I'd seen them since the last time they had played Buffalo ('88). Neither their sound nore their message has changed since then. Let me also add that I enjoyed their tremendously, even if Scott Vogel and I couldn't get them to play 'Skinhead Youth'ISure they had that one bad record, anyway this is 11 songs in 21 minutes of fast, inspirational hardcore that sounds slighlty more raw than the stuff on 'Don't Forget the Struggle'. If you are familiar with Warzone then you know their sound. There's only so many ways you can describe them. I enjoy this cd almost as much as their live set. BUT, there's one problem. While Warzone and their message haven't changed since '88, 1 have. I've changed a lot. And I don't give a flying fuck about unity in the scene. Still, I can appreciate Ray sticking to his guns, and putting forth a positive message, hell he's got me by ten years! I can honestly recommend this cd, especially of you like old Warzone. So what if they don't have the same members as 'Don't Forget'. Those guys were fuckin' guidos anyway!!-e

(Victory)

Zyklome A "Noise and Distortion" CD; Ask around and have someone tell you what their name signifies, it's pretty serious shit. The MRR review of this record said that you can ruin a band that had a few great songs by putting all their bad ones on a discography with them; I don't really agree, I think if a band did anything good, since CD's can go up to 70 minutes as cheaply as they can go to 10, that you should put all their stuff on the CD — some people might like it, and at least if they don't, they won't waste lots of time and money trying to hunt down rare music by the band just because they like the few good songs the band did. But the order of the songs on a discography does make a difference, and I wish the really good songs on this CD (the really fast punk shit, with that great '80's punk marching snare drum blasting away like a fucking machine gun, the singer yelling as fast as he can to keep up with the music, etc. — I'm thinking specifically of the stuff from the Pushead compilation) were closer to the beginning. Anyway, that's the stuff worth listening to on here, and it certainly is exciting stuff, great fucking '80's punk, no pretensions, no rock parts, all speed and shit noise, yes. Skip the first few tracks, from when Z. A sounded fucking terrible. Some of the live stuff at the end is definitely listenable, though. This is probably the best-packaged Grand Theft CD this issue, with all the lyrics (thank you! see, it wasn't that hard!), a detailed history of the band, photos, fliers, and recording information. *-b*

Grand Theft, address in these review pages nearby, I promise, no

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really!

Arise/Corrin split 7": Fucking Arise. Ha ha! They dare to rain on everyone's parade by sounding EXACTLY like vintage AC/DC on this recording. Same production, same catchy repeating blues-rock guitar riffs, and, well, I just discovered from the liner notes that this is a cover... I guess I'm a geek for not recognizing what it is, I hope it is AC/DC (whatever it is it was written in 1984, and is called "jailbreak") so I won't seem too ignorant. At the end of the song, they let loose in Arise fashion for a few seconds, the singer shrieking brokenly, the music falling out except for one throbbing tom drum, before they come back to finish with a blues-rock '80's guitar solo. The Ijner notes read "recorded live, never practiced." Fuck yeah! After that kind of disregard for hardcore tradition, Corrin has a lot to live up to. And after taking a second to get going, they actually do, with a really ominous Slayer-esque ("South of Heaven" era) guitar line that repeats for a while (maybe a four measures longer than it should have, actually) before the screaming and standard metal hardcore chunky parts come in (rescued from being predictable by some nice unusual lead guitarwork). A couple obviously forced deathmetal grunts sort of detract from the rest, but on

the whole, Corrin's sort of abstract brand of modern, metal hardcore ("holy terror"?) makes for good music, *-b devil's head, 99 Reservoir Rd., Westhampton, MA 01027 — or — Infidel, RO. Box 116 0, Vineyard Haven, MA 02568*

Cave In/Piebald split 7": A slightly muffled, unusual guitar sound had me wondering if my record player (well, not mine, I don't have one, but the one I am borrowing) was fucked up, when I put on Cave In. It doesn't hold them back, though; their songwriting (alternating gunshots of viciously abrasive hardcore with gorgeous sweeps of melody) carries them far above any practical concerns (like having good guitar equipment). Their music is really good (I guess I could do without the moments when their singer actually sings, but those are mercifully few), their lyrics (anti-television indoctrination) are right on, and they have the best fucking logo ("Cave In" spelled out with element boxes from the periodic table of the elements) of the decade. Not since the days of the Subhumans have we had a logo this good! And the artwork on their side of the 7" is well done and original. Piebald's side of the 7" features a stupid as fuck picture of one of them on a tricycle, setting the stage for shit melodic post-hardcore that includes "singing" on the part of a tone-deaf, fucking annoying geek. [Gently, gently, reviewer boy!] Seriously, I don't like the Piebald side, I don't like anything at all about it, except maybe that Ire appears on the thanks list. I did like that Ire 7"! *-b*

Moo Cow records — address not on 7" — oof!

Detestation/Substandard "USA Meets UK" split 7": With lyrics like "woke up drunk, pissed the bed, what a fucking mess, gonna smash the state, smash shit up, fuck the law, society's collapsed — has it? fuck! — destroy, attack, pass out on your face" (I'm not joking!) I thought I would just have a laugh at Substandard, but they actually play some fucking good punk rock. 100 miles an hour, no compromise, never giving the listener a break, they charge forward through some three chord speedy yelling angry fucking punk that sounds as fresh here as it did, well, ...fifteen years ago. Detestation have better lyrics and writing in their half of the 7" (anti-conformity stuff), their music is a little bit more "modern, " the guitars sounding a little more metallic, the speed and aggression still there. Their singer has a high, squeaking shrieking voice, which is certainly harsh, but may (for that reason?) take a little getting used to. Their second song is a Kaaos cover *(very* old- fashioned punk song structure — we're talking the first Exploited LP here, at least), and her vocals have an echo on them, like a punk band would have used in 1982 when no one had ever tried using echo before and the novelty still hadn't worn off. This is an enjoyable, obnoxious record, overall, *-b*

Wicked Witch, RO. Box 3835, 1001 AP Amsterdam, Netherlands _Drowning Room/Veil split 7":_ Drowning Room had a weirdly sung intro part, giving way to surprisingly fast metallic hardcore with hoarse vocals. Weird in a good way. I wonder if they named their band after the Lament 7"? Veil was quite enjoyable with very fast, and veeerryy

slow energetic stuff, with awesome roaring vocals. Although they dragged the sludgy slow part out too long, I liked 'em quite a bit. Crazy. I also thought it was crazy for. Moo Cow to not put their name anywhere on this release. Huh?-e

(Moo Cow)

Enemy Soil/Desperate Corruption split 7"-This is definitely not Enemy Soil's most memorable effort to date. I'm pretty sure they're using a drum machine, and the vocals are less than convincing. Overall, it sounds kind of experimental and thrown together, like they weren't altogether comfortable with where they were trying to go with their music. They have definitely come a long way since this recording. As for the Desperate Corruption side, it is absolutely fucking maniacal. It fucking plows right through you. They are definitely at the forefront of the current Japanese grindcore scene. The vocals are definitely one of the strongest points which is rare for this kind of music. This makes any 'evil' American death metal band look tame. I'm definitely looking forward to hearing more from Desperate Corruption, and avoid this Enemy Soil release in lieu .of their much better music, *-d*

Bovine records PO box 2134 Madison, Wl 53701

Hard to Swallow/Underclass split 7"-The first fucking note of the Hard to Swallow side of this record tears into you like being ripped from slumber in the gutters by the 4am streetcleaner. Absolutely the most unruly shit I have ever heard. Superhu man metal riffs and layered Slayer harmonies prance demonically around jazzy interchanges which give us all a much needed opportunity to take a deep breath before the next phase of the onslaught. This is a band of historic proportions. Hatred and vomitous disgust never sounded so fucking beautiful. If they did a split 7" with Systral, I guarantee it would be banned in 48 states. I feel like Tve listened to a whole full length three times after only hearing the Hard to Swallow side of this 7". Let's see what the Underclass side has to offer. It's unfortunate that I listened to the Hard to Swallow side first, but that's not to say that the Underclass side isn't fucking awesome. As good as any Born Against song, each offering from Underclass if full of conviction and nervous tension which culminates in several aural blasts that leave me completely expired. I remember once (well, maybe _more_ than once...} running from the cops and the feeling of exhilaration and exhaustion is not dissimilar to how this record makes me feel. If you feel anything, I mean REALLY feel anything, you need this record, *-d Days of Fury records PO box 65 Wallasey 145 3QE UK* _Morning Again/Shoulder split 7":_ Shoulder occasionally plays some pretty melodies, but when their singer is singing in his melodic (rock and roll?) voice, this sounds to me like, well, modern day rock and roll. I guess what I mean by that is alternative music. Yes indeed. Morning Again, on the other hand, definitely have been listening to a lot of metal; and so the combination of these two bands is unusual. The drumming on their side of the 7" is quite speedy in places (I think the drums are mixed too loud there, actually), which is good to hear in a modern metal/hardcore band. The guitars are playing those imitation Slayer riffs, more Slayer-esque by far than almost any other band doing that today. They throw in an acoustic part, which is carried off with more confidence than most bands' acoustic parts are (it really reminds me of Metallica's "Welcome Home: Sanitarium"). Many bands like Morning Again don't include song explanations, so I'm glad to see them here. And the lyrics have a couple good moments of clarity: "what you consume

is your true protest, each dollar you spend supports what you detest." I wish they'd included a contact address, *-b in fact, their label, Moo Cow, didn't fucking include an address either!* _Pole/Stroke split 7":_ Gorgeous cover art, featuring a picture of the Northern Lights. Pole is a band that a number of friends of mine have been counting on me to like, so as usual I feel kind of bad when I don't really react positively to their music. I think the production could have been better here, and their vocalist sounds a little hoarse and tired when he starts screaming at the beginning. Then he does some singing (a little off tune, maybe?) over an acoustic part. Then he starts screaming over a traditional slowish chunk/open chord hardcore part, and it works somewhat better. The tempo increases, and there's a shoutalong part; I guess it's not terrible, but the songwriting and execution could both be better. Their second song goes a little more smoothly, apparently attacking belief in a supreme god. That's to their credit. OK, moving on, Stroke: the recording sounds better. The drums have that reverb on them that I'm a sucker for. We're still dealing with that slowish chunky hardcore... oops, they just did a fast part where the singer did some bad melodic singing and the snare drum sud- — denly disappeared. There's a moment where they briefly sample some

monks chanting, that sounded pretty good but it sure was gone fast The second song starts in a quiet, haunting manner, but contains a lot more ineffective singing, *-b*

You can get this from Eric Hillenbrand, c/o Stroke, Riegelstr 57, 73760 Ostfildern, Germany

Reversal of Man/Enemy Soil split 7"-How do I describe the ROM side of this 7"? Absolutely crazy shit. Maybe a hint of Universal Order of Armageddon with super high-pitched screams of terror with socially conscious lyrics. They have moments of undistorted guitar which leap into absolutely action-packed spurts of guitar and drum blasts, complimented by the sensory-piercing vocals. They use samples that don't seem to be congruous with the music. Great music. The Enemy Soil side is such an unbelievable improvement from when they used a drum machine, to now having an actual human drummer. Although I don't know many humans that can play drums that fast. The guitars are a little disguised behind the drums, bass, and vocals. Oh, the sweet double bass...music to my ears, *-d*

Fist Held High records PO box 2652 Madison, W! 53701

Substandard/Pink Flamingos split 7": Substandard's music personifies exactly what I think punk rock is at its best: fast, uncompromising, unattractive, bitter, noisy, rugged mix, deep raw shouting vocals with European accent, simple choruses, angry lyrics about real life shit (wasting money on a lottery you'll never win, etc.), bang bang bang snare drum, the works. Great stuff. They play this style of punk with real excitement and freshness, where others now are just rehashing. And Pink Flamingos is actually almost as good, definitely worthy of appearing with Substandard. They too have that crucial speed-limitbreaking velocity, simple chorus, rough ugly dirty punk thing going on, and it sounds real, not rehashed. Their lyrics about drinking to the past and future on New Year's Eve are actually more sentimental than they are idiotic, which works well enough, although musically that song has more weak spots (the

beginning) than their others on here. Bottom line: this is a great fucking punk 7". Hats off to Wicked Witch for keeping this music alive and relevant, *-b*

Wicked Witch, address in here somewhere

This Side Up/White Frogs split 7": This side up sounds a little like old Bad Religion, fast and melodic, with confident, slightly mournful sounding speaking/singing vocals, occasional high guitar leads over the rhythm section. It also sounds like there might be a little old British punk in here, say, Stiff Little Fingers maybe? I like some of the lyrics a fucking lot: "I open my hardcore dictionary, I know it all: the concepts, the phrases, the rules, or — there's no rules at all? I hear them every day from the mouths of my best friends, it starts to seem like some kind of new religion... I open that book again, there's lots of wisdom inside, so many positive and clever things. But we are six billion people in this world, it simply cannot be written for us all." White Frogs is musically not much different, maybe a little clumsier in their songwriting and execution and lyrics, but not too much worse. The vocalist sings more rather than speaking the lyrics in key. I liked This Side Up more, but I think "White Frogs" is a fucking hilarious band name! And all my suspicions are confirmed when White F's covers a Bad Religion song, singing it in (I think) their native tongue (as it happens, they're from Brazil). Both bands show real sincerity by writing about their intentions in the (user-friendly, well done, attractive) packaging. In fact, and this is excellent (and unfortunately rare), the label too includes information about its intentions (usually labels don't, and since being a record label means being a business, in that case they give the impression that their only intention is... to get $$). Pretty red clear vinyl, *-b*

Goodwill Collective c/o Dario Adamic, C.P 15319, 00142 Roma Laurentino, Italy

A Compilation For Atonement 7": The title of this compilation is pretty funny, they get points for that. The Integrity song on here sounds like a reject from the Systems Overload full length: overloaded production, hurried song- and lyric-writing, simple approach. It even steals it's end from the first song on that record. The breakdown part just before that is admittedly catchy, though. State of Conviction has some bad transitions in their music, they definitely have that aggressive metal/hardcore Cleveland sound but I think they have some work to do. The Psywarfare songs on here are not as advanced as the ones on the Wicked Witch 7", they feature distortion and a badly received AM radio station. Ending the 7" is Rape Whistle, which is basically the musicians of Integrity soundchecking their instruments while a couple people fuck around with blowing a whistle, shouting into an echo machine, and, rumor has it, quite a bit of drugs and alcohol. Nobody's really going to listen to side two of this record more than a few times, I mean, I hate to say it, but history will bear out my testimony. The vinyl is a pretty grey color. From the packaging, I get the impression that all of Dwid's obsessions (Charles Manson, the bureau of alcohol, tobacco, and firearms, etc.) have somehow infiltrated the head of the

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kid from Dog Collar. At least in the thanks list on the last page somebody makes fun of Integrity's latest drummer for wearing sweatpants.

-b

Dog Collar, P.O. Box 31472, Cleveland, OH 44131

I Can't Live Without It 12" compilation; The first song, by Botch, comes in like machine gun-fire and never loses intensity After that we get more emo music, which occasionally rises to levels of screaming anger again but also ranges into much quieter acoustic parts, ., some of the other bandsare Amber Inn, 1 Milhouse (not bad!), In/ humanity, Curll (excellent fucking ugly noise), and Merrimac. Musically, this record has hot spots and cool ones, but thematically, it is very well-done: it is a benefit towards abolishing the death penalty, and the insert not only lists everything you need to know but also goes into many pages of well-researched depth about the drawbacks and ultimate I uselessness of the death penalty. If only every hardcore record could be as directed, as well-done, as well-packaged, as wellmeaning as the records Mountain puts out! *-b >*

Mountain, address above •

A Means to an End 12" compilation: This is a benefit for the 1 in 12 club, an anarchist collective serving the community in Bradford, England: a worthwhile cause if there ever was one! And the detailed booklet gives you all the information you need about this, the bands, and more. Excellent. The music? First, Voorhees comes in with deceptively melodic guitars, before the gruff vocals begin, singing about how everything good turns to shit. Despite their quirky British name, most of Manfat's song sounds like typical chunky slow U.S.A, metallic hardcore, like old Earth Crisis might be an influence (back when Earth Crisis was a hardcore band, the first two 7"s). Next is fucking Hard to Swallow! Triple, speed, high throat cancer shrieking, crazy song structures you couldn't follow with a trained police bloodhound, strange guitar effects, mass chaos. Of course they do not disappoint. Unborn's vocalist sounds pretty into it as he screams over their simple, (Stalingrad-esque?) midpaced hardcore, you can hear a couple scraps of his throat banging against the microphone. Their lyrics are admirably abstract, disconnected single words. In Stalingrad fashion, though, I can't tell if the words on the lyric sheet really are the words he screams. Their production could be better. But, it's not as bad as Solanki, who play some kind of weird funk-guitar punk thing with bad yelling. Next, fucking Stalingrad. Weird electronic effects precede a simple midtempo assault of simple, forceful guitar/drum work, with that inhuman screaming. There are two breaks in their song filled with more electronics over their hardcore punk music, they seem to be experimenting more and more with that, and I'm interested, because I've never heard any other hardcore band (or any band, really, since the Who's "Baba O'Reilly") use that stuff. Their final lyrics (not that you can make any of them out, of course — maybe it's just the surly British accents?) are "you

will always adapt to the surroundings — *that is why you survive."* Four more bands: Tribute (singing, more rock'n'roll stuff — their song is an unnecessary ten minutes long), Schemafoof, overdramatic emo music, acoustic guitar stuff and bad poetry), Baby Harp Seal (emo, . again, but better played, still very gentle and moody, acoustic, quiet: they get points for their eloquent, poetic lyrics, and for quoting Foucault), and Bob Tilton (singing, annoying emoish rock and roll stuff). Unbearably beautiful green vinyl. Get this for the Stalingrad and Hard to Swallow songs, and maybe a couple of the others, and to support not only this cause but the release of intelligent, directed records in general, *-b '*

Armed With Anger, PO. Box 487, Bradford BD2 4YU United Kingdom _Capital Punishment comp, CD:_ This is the long-awaited Albany area hardcore comp., I say long awaited because this was supposed to come out a year ago. Still, the bands on this cd kick ass on most of the mediocre shit coming from the rest of the state, Western NY and Nyc included. Without kissing ass, it's been my long-standing belief that Albany has the best, strongest, most diverse hardcore scene in the state and this release only strengthens that belief. The one down-

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side to this cd is the shitty packaging. You can't beat the idea of giving each band their own page to include photos, lyrics, etc. Anyway, this comp, was compiled by Ryan Murphy, the singer for Cutthroat. And every band on the cd recorded at his studio, New Lab. Ok onto the bands. Execution Style starts things off with a redone version of a song off their demo, that is in the vein of updated Raw Deal, with lyrics about (you guessed it) revenge and violence. Take it from me, they live what they write about! Gruff vocals, tight, fast hardcore, with just the right amount of a streetwise feel to things. Next is Straight Jacket with a well-done, well-written metal song that starts off surprisingly melodic and switches to heaviness at an atypical point in the intro. Lots of power and originality, and catchiness, in the same vein as All Out War or Fury of V, but with more intelligence and hooks. Burning Human follow with another of their hardcore influenced death metal/grind numbers that had me hiding under my bed! Ok, that's a slight exaggeration, but they pounded in an enjoyable death style. Great drumming, catchy attention hojding riffs. In This Together, which has the 17 yr. old guitarist from Cutthroat on vocals, are next with a by-the-numbers fast hardcore song. Think Antidote, Youth Of Today, etc. A strong chorus was the best part of the'song for me, but I enjoyed this band less than most of the others on this. Still, I liked 'em somewhat. Next was Dying Breed with the best song, but the worst mix, on the whole cd. Now, if everyone recorded at the same studio, with the same engineer(s), why did these guys get such a shitty sound? We may never know. Anyway, DB have awesome

picked riffing, tough as nails 'I smoke and yell and fight a lot' vocals, and on the money drumming.This song is like being in a rowboat in the middle of a fuckin' typhoon. You try to get back to shore, but huge wave after huge wave of brutal pounding dance parts just crushes your will to live! Ok.Throwback are next, sounding quite a bit like Cutthroat. Great mix on this song, double bass drumming, good riffs, probably the best song I've heard yet from Throwback. Ah, next is the re-formed WarTime Manner with a song that I play and replay several times when I listen to this cd, seriously! The song is called 'Open Season' and it is phenomenal. If War-Time put out a full length of shit like this you fuckin' mediators wouldn't know whether to rip their shit off or just literally blow them. The drumming is so tight it sounds like a machine. The vocals go from crazy barking, growling, to throaty gruff harmonizing, as there are two singers (Tufts from Execution Style helping out).The song starts out blasting, and then flows into a rolling dance part with quick bursts of double bass, all with eerie keyboards in the background. The lyrics are great, realistically positive words about making the most of your life and the hardcore scene. Sure the guitar is mixed too low, but that's not really their fault. Next is Driven By Rage with a pretty standard sounding, mid-tempo, moshmetal number that works just fine. Two singers, one of whom is named Dog Balls. There's a hilarious vocal break in the song where Dogballs goes, "show me some respect, you fuck!" that was the best part of the song for me. After that End Of Line put forth an original sounding, slightly Alice In Chains influenced track that didn't really move me, but it was still ok. Tight, jazzy drumming, with sparse little breaks.Cutthroat are second to last with what, to me, is a sound all their own. People say Pantera, and this and that about 'em, but I know jealousy when I come across it. More noisy and abrasive this time around, but still with unusual timing, violent lyrics, gruff vocals, and tuned real low guitars. Last band on the cd is a 'mystery' band, with names like 'Will Fare', 'Bill Avoider', etc. oddly enough, this mystery band got the best mix on the whole cd. Simple Sheer Terror type hardcore, with lyrics comparing crack addiction to sex addiction, something about pussy also. Pretty catchy sounding, but it's missing something (or someone, right Stack!). Despite the recording inconsistencies, an excellent cd and a great way to get acquainted with a great hardcore scene, -e

(New Lab Productions, 222 Guideboard Rd. Suite 104, Ciifton Park, NY 12065)

*Nik* Creepy Crawly live CD-This is a compilation of live tracks from a generous amount of the most popular NYC hardcore bands, as well as some live songs by Murphy's Law. The CD opens with forgettable songs by Murphy's Law, H2O, Warzone, and Down Low. However, I

was amused by the singer's explanation of the title of the Down Low song, 'Slosh Victim'. He says, "This song is called Slosh Victim. If you don't know what a slosh victim is, look at your dad, that's a drunk motherfucker." The next song, 'Wise to da game', by 25 ta Life, has the usual energy and enthusiasm for unity in the scene that is typical of any 25 ta Life live show. I enjoyed this song much more than their studio recordings. It also has a much better sound quality than most of the other songs. I guess it's the difference between good and bad equipment. This song has made 25 ta

Life the exception to my distaste for singalong catchy tough guy hardcore. The 25 ta Life song is followed by songs by Crown of Thornz and Skarhead that are probably a lot better on their studio recordings. Next is a overall decent song by Ensign. Tight vocals, fast music, energetic, sort of Youth of Today-ish in it's overall feel. The next song is by Nine Lives which sounds sort of emo-ish. It's not as bad as I was trying to make myself believe that it was. Now, another H2O song which is actually an act of redemption for them from their previous song. Tightly played music. Vocals with conviction. Not bad. The crowd seems to really be into the Murphy's Law song, 'Panty Raid', that follows the H2O song, but I'm not. Murphy's Law effectively uses horns in.their song, which makes it stand out from the others in it's own way. A less than memorable Sub Zero song is next. Then comes the song that really really rocks hard. The Merauder song is filled with heavy, plodding, ultrathick guitars that are tuned super low, the double bass is pounding like crazy. These guys seem to know what they're doing in live situations. The vocals are a little too hip hoppy for me, however, an obvious attempt at the emulation of Rick Healey's patented style. The CD closes out with weakly performed songs by Killing Time, Cold Front, Maximum Penalty, and Rejuvenate, who I'm usually pretty fond of. I definitely don't think it's possible to capture the spirit and energy of a NYC hardcore show and put it on a CD and make it a sellable product. Most people probably won't be able to appreciate this, *-d Another Planet records .*

"Do It Yourself"?" compilation: More sincere, attractive, informative packaging from the Goodwill collective, with plenty of lyrics and writing by each band, all of whom seem intelligent and genuinely concerned, and none more genuine and concerned that Goodwill themselves, who again outline their goals in the liner notes. Eversor is first, their super-melodic, singing bubblegum punk is hard for me to swallow (yes, in fact, I *would* rather be listening to Hard To Swallow) This Side Up was smoother and more effective on their split with White Frogs, but I still like their lyrics, about the singers girlfriend's drug problem. NX A. Punx are melodic and sing like the other bands, although more obnoxious in their delivery; still, it doesn't do much for me. I Fichissimi have a little more bite in their simple (not screaming, not dirty) straightforward punk, and I enjoy

. them singing in Italian, Point of View is, again, very melodic, and their singer is far too overdramatic in his exaggerated singing vocals- he sounds like he's in Queen or something. But this is the kind of record that is exciting whether or not you like the music, because it is the manifestation of an underground that really represents an attempt by normal people to take control of their lives and music back into their own hands. I can sleep soundly knowing that no one involved in this record will ever consider making their artwork (or their lives) into a profitable, soulless product. ~*b*

Goodwill, Dario's address above

East Coast Assault 2- The Second Coming 2CD: This double cd is a decent mix of non-pc (except for Indecision), NYHC/metallic bands, most of whom have their own releases prior to the release of this comp. Like most compilations, theirs some terrible

shit on here. Unlike most comps, even the bad stuff isn't really that bad, it's only bad in comparison to the high standard set by the best of the bands on this. Comprende?This cd suffers from lousy, no big booklet-having packaging. At least there's band photos. I looked for the Dutch East logo and couldn't find it. If 2DH is no longer m&d'ed by them, a tip of the hat is in order. Fuck that subsidiary crap!If I went through each and every band on here it would literally take up several pages, as there are something like 18 or 19 bands on this. The best bands on the comp, were Enrage, Cutthroat, and Stigmata. As I said before, no one really sucked, ok maybe Fastbreak. You know what? I'm gonna go through each band on here. Fuck it! First up was Negative Male Child. Good heavy recording, slow and heavy Prong/Burn mix of musical styles with a little too much rock in it for me. Nice original beat to the second song, almost a salsa type feel to the drums! Next was All Out War, standard double bass moshmetal. Not bad, not earth-shat-

tering. Chances are you're already familiar with their style, so I'm gonna move on. I've always liked Enrage, and the three songs on this are their best recordings yet. Pounding, crushing, and catchy sounding with great gutteral vocals, this band sounds more like what I think Cro-Mags would or should sound like today if their way still together, than any other band. Fast at times with original, hard to describe songwriting, I can't understand why more kids don't like Enrage!?!! Like the singer says "I aint down with nobody". Next up is Fastbreak with generic, badly played fast hardcore, totally like Conerstone, Wide Awake, etc. look, when you strive to imitate bands that were striving to imitate bands ten fuckin' years ago, and on top of that, play sloppy, with horrible screechy Tm going through puberty' vocals, then you're gonna suck. Pure and simple. Sure, I like old-fashioned, simple hardcore, when its played well. Next is Struggle Within, who had too much of a rocknroll sound for me, with elements of Soundgarden and newer Slapshot. Nothing great.Cutthroat are next with a great job on these three songs, singing/growling, pounding thugmetal with lots of tempo changes. 'Split Your Face' is probably the best song on this comp. Tuned low guitars, double bass bursts, and a lot of hooks. Indecision are next, and they don't float my boat, mostly because of the vocals. They're too high-pitched for me. The music is decent, mid- tempo stuff with good skilled riffs and lots of changes.Man I'm getting burned out on reviewing this comp. Rainmen are next. Fast, melodic stuff with gruff vocals. Muffled recording, but I like it anyway. Commin Correct are the last band on cd #1 and I like this stuff better than 25talife, even though I wonder how Rick can sleep at night with such shameless imitation of Roger Miret's vocals. If you're gonna imitate anyone s vocals, it might as well be Roger's, I guess. Heavier music than 25 also, with more hooks. Better than I expected.

Ok, onto cd #2. Stigmata start things off with three pounding tracks that had even my cats jumping up on my bench and lifting! Over the years Stigmata has gotten way from their earlier more technical sound and moved towards something more rooted in a rawer, Cro-Mags type style.'Judgement Cruching Down" is probably my favorite of their three songs on this. Next is Step Aside who were a lot faster than I thought they'd

be, which I liked. Only a little bit like Sheer Terror, who they've been compared to before. More like Breakdown or Krakdown with gruff vocals.I liked 'em. Mushmouth were next, simple but heavy, kinda like Mayday. They didn't make a big impression on me, but then again, Mayday never did either. Next is Hatebreed, with three raw onesin the same vein as the songs on 'Under The Knife", but a little longer. My only complaint is that the vocals sound too forced. Inhuman are next with a good showing. I liked their demo, and they include one of the songs from their demo here. 'Crippled Inside' is a great song, fast as fuck with a great non-hiphop mosh part. Next are Train Of Thought, who sound a lot like Crown Of Thornz and Under Pressure vocally. Plenty of rock and roll, and slow tempos kept me from really getting into this, which is too bad because parts of these three songs I really liked. Too much melody and not enough brutality. Cease are next and they bored the fuck out of me. Deathcore with nothing interesting about them. Not many tempo changes, forced deathmetal vocals, I'm outta here. Wait, there's one more band. I never thought I'd see a band from my own hometown on here, but here they are. Innerface close out this comp, with three songs of interesting, original, but sloppy metalcore, with yowling, growling vocals that I like. Lots of changes, and weird, Starkweather type structure, with a perky female guitarist. Very hard to describe. The music I mean! Well, there you have it. You're probably familiar with most of the bands on this comp., and if you're not, you may still want to pick this up, as there is a wide variety of hardcore musical styles on here. But why does it say 'Keep it real in the 9–7, my niggaz!" on this comp.? 'My niggaz"?!?! -e *(Too Damn Hype)*

5.1g- Along Island Hard_core Compilation 2cd:_ 18 bands, each with two songs, makes for a hell of a lot of material to review. And since so few of the bands on here seem to really have developed theri own style, I'll just break things down into a couple catagories. But first, let me say that this is a commendable effort but NOTA records to assemble so many different bands, of such varying styles. I'll break the bands down into three catagories; ok: Betrayed, Cleanser, Motive, Outrage, Retribution, Silent Majority, Splinterface, Sub DK, 30:08, and Neglect.Very Good: EBD, Justice Unkown, Man Down Alone (good and original), Putdown, Some One's Eyes (good original vocal style), and Tension (raw fast hardcore with stomping mosh parts). And Very bad:Glassjaw, Headcase (hilarious Grover vocals), lnside(horrible indie rock), Leech lmplant(unforgivably sloppy), and Reach.-e

(NOTA, see address elsewhere)

V/A Number One Priority comp CD — First of all, let me say that this label must have spent all of their money getting the big names on this comp.(lgnite, Black Train Jack, etc.) and had none left over for the packaging. If I saw this in some kid's distro, I would skim right over

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this as the most repulsively disinteresting record I've ever seen. And this is a shame because the CD opens with a great song by a band that was really good while they were together, NJ's Backlash. Simplistic, old school hardcore, well done. The next song by Crossection, blends the styles of Into Another and Split Lip, and comes up with nothing new or terribly interesting. Line Drive's song is a macho, spoken vocal style heavy metal song with the same riff repeating itself over and over again. Lyrically impotent. Following that is Ignite. This is the best song on the comp. Good production, strong vocals, great old school music, super fast and melodic, definitely makes the comp, worthwhile. The next song is a live song by Black Train Jack. Their typical Down By Law-ish melody-laden punk rock style is well represented here. Okay, if you took the second side of the Catharsis demo tape from '92, and any Type O Negative song and mixed them together, you would get the song on here from Last Call. The song by Hankshaw is really well done. Female emo-ish vocals, beautiful guitars, . This song blows any Ashes song out of the water. The Deckard song has flat vocals and out of tune guitars. The Chapter song starts out with eerie vocals and breaks into the trademark "EVILLLLLL..." sound that just sounds like Slayer. You can't hear the vocals very well. The CD closes out with a song by Option, which is the second best song on here. A suitable end to this comp. Sing to scream to sing vocals and mid-paced metallic music with some anti-establishment straight-edge lyrics. This compilation proves that you shouldn't judge a record by it's cover, you should just do a better job next time.

Good music, *-d '*

Significant Records PO Box 642 Indian Rocks Beach, FL 33785 Psycho Civilized _Compilation CD:_ This came out roughly two years ago; since then many of the bands on here have either broken up or have gotten more popular, or in the case of SFA (my favorite band on here) gone nowhere. Quite a few of the bands on this cd aren't to my liking: Brace, Dissolve, Tyrant Trooper (hilarious loking band photo), Eventide, Shiv, and 25talife (really bad demo track. Horrible recording). Killing Time, SFA, and Stigmata crush the competition on this one. Decent packaging, lyrics, etc. makes for a decent compilation. It's tough to do a current review of a non-current release...The Killing Time song kicks ass and reminds me of why I never stopped liking this band, even when they put out 'Happy Hour'. I thought Happy Hour wasn't that bad, so fuck off. Stigmata's track is off the now rereleased 'Hymns For An Unknown God' that a lot of jealous fucks in other bands put down as being 'too metal'. No, that's not it at all. You're a .fuckin' wuss! SFA's track appears on 'Solace' I believe, and has their Motorhead paced, antisocial raw hardcore sound. Not a bad compilation, but far from necessary.

(Elevator Music, PO. Box 1502, New haven, Ct. 06505)

Rage Generation _"A New Hope" compilation CD:_ A few years ago the first "Straight Edge As Fuck" CD compilation came out in Sweden, documenting a growing local scene that was to send into the world many hardcore bands, including Refused, Abhinanda, Final Exit, and Doughnuts. This CD is pretty much the same thing for

the Singapore scene. As such, it's a little rough, but has good moments, and plenty of potential. Tools of Society has a NYC/modern hardcore sound (metallic guitars, midpaced danceable riffs, etc.), deep, slightly hiphoppish vocals, production not bad in fact. Nine One Six is faster, a little rougher in delivery, their singer's voice higher and raspier. Retribution starts with a decently-executed dramatic melodic metal intro, then goes into a modern, midtempo, metallic hardcore piece, with a little more Strife influence than Tools' perhaps, and even some lead guitar (the biggest drawback here is that sometimes it sounds like they are a bit out of tune). Stampede seems to have a fair bit in common with Tools', but their singer's voice is higher and his delivery less hiphop. Their production and playing might be a little rougher too. Jabs is pretty fast, high screaming, slower danceable choruses, a noisy part that is difficult to make out near the end of their first song. Recover sounds like they're really into late '80's straightedge music, really fast playing, etc., but the chorus of their first song is unfortunately almost identical with the beginning of Nirvana's "Smells Like Teen Spirit"! Actually,

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their second song features more of a Green rage chunky thing, with some pretty good lead guitar for spice, although I've heard at least three bands use the same chunky riff they use. Finally, Revolt sounds more like old-fashioned fast shouting punk, with terrible production (that flat, unbalanced production is actually a tradition with this kind of punk, of course), but a welcome dose of variety after so much hybrid late '80's/mid-'90's hardcore. The insert has a page of lyrics, photos, and information on every band, and a centerfold essay about working hard to keep hardcore alive in their community, *-b*

Rage generation, blk 225, Pasir Ris Street 21, #02-58, Singapore 510225

Roma Straight Edge "The New Season" compilation 7": Although this is packaged to resemble the old Schism/Revelation '80's hardcore records, and some of the music recalls that era as well (and in fact the cover features a Youth of Today-style photo of some guy wearing a Schism shirt), I get the feeling that this record has more in common with the first few Dischord releases. That is, it serves to document, in a low budget but sincere way, a young emerging hardcore scene — in Rome, in this case. This is evidenced by the idealism in the liner notes, the simple packaging, and the humble recordings of most of these bands. The first band, Strength Approach, definitely could be compared to Youth Of Today with their yelling vocals, fast simple hardcore, repeated chorus, and breakdown at the end of the song. Next, Redemption plays a more modern, metallic brand of hardcore, with deep screaming vocals, and some pretty bad production. Both of these bands are decent, but need to differentiate themselves from the other bands in their genres by developing a little individuality. Third, Dehumanize begins with some scary Timebomb-style samplework, before doing some fast, messy grind-influenced hardcore (bad production, still) that sounds, yes, Timebomb-influenced. Their song ends again with church bells tolling, it's actually an

effective, dramatic ending. Reinforced ends the record with simple, '80's style hardcore, singing about not conforming and staying true to the edge. This isn't a record I expect to find myself listening to much, but I'm already excited about some of the things going on in Italian hardcore, and I'.m glad other things are on the way. *-b*

*Surrounded, c/o Maurizio Ricci, Via Amico Bignami 12, 00152 Roma, *

DEMO REVIEWS

AMALGAMATION DEMO: First of all the recording is absolute shit. This aside it's a pretty good demo, but not a great demo. The vocalist does not necessarily sound good, a little on the high side for my taste, but does sound like he cares about what he is doing. Occasionally th$_{e}$y $_{are}$ very deep almost death metal back up vocals. The music sounds like a cross between grindcore (minus the blast beat) and like Frail was a big influence, though I believe Frail played this style better. Five songs with cheap yet innovative packaging. Musically this is kind of run of the mill punk, noisy, hardcore, yet narrowly escaping the title "garbage", *-t*

Amalgamation 4400 Massachusetts Ave. McDowell Hall T-17, Washington DC 20016

_Cold As Life- demo 1997:"_After nine years of existence, the murder of their singer, and the falling through of several record deals, Cold As life is still hanging in there, putting out their own shit and working harder than most rich kid bands do, with a lot less money to throw around. This demo has a definite improvement recording wise over their last demo, and the songs are much more complex and heavy this time around. Gone is the Oi! influence from songs like 'Addicted , now they have much more of a grooving, hell-raising double bass sound, but with more originality than most bands in the metallic NYHC vein. Great lyrics about overcoming childhood traumas (and not overcoming childhood traumas...) and the realities of our crime-infested streets, but once again, written in a totally intelligent, non-cliched way. Some of the lyrics are definitely sad, esp. 'What It Was', which also throws a catchy, melodic aspect into the mix. Not happy melodic, but more like moody melodic. Definitely the best band to come out of Detroit since you know who! Come on, do I gotta say it? Negative

Approach.-e

(Cold As Life, Jeff Gunnels, po box 27497, Detroit, Ml. 48227) _Dead Meat demo:_ Fucking great recording, this sounds better than many CD's these days. Fast as fuck!! Final Exit's influence has probably inspired this band to play this old-fashioned style of hyperspeed, simple hardcore that drips with sincerity. Four quick songs that seem to be gone as soon as they begin — that is, nothing drags. Swedish bands didn't used to be able to get good recordings, especially not on demos... I wonder what happened? Lyrics are included, they are decent, simple and honest, they match the music well. OK, this demo gets a clear thumbs up, now hurry up and do a 7" — unlike so many bands, you're ready! Good band name, also: sounds punk, *-b Niklas Rosencrantz, Karlav. 46, 114 49 Stockholm, Sweden* _ENRAGE DEMO:_ Enrage is metallic NYHC at its best. This is the best recording for a demo I have ever heard. The band plays really heavy and clear, groove heavy music. When I say groove I mean like giant pounding

heavy grooves not like Quicksand or something. The vocalist has a really strong voice that obviously comes very naturally to him. He enunciates every word in a manner that lets you know he means every word. He sometimes adds flourishes of screaming and occasionally almost sings (which actually works rather well for him). Mainly mid-tempo music comprised mainly of really heavy with grooves that I'm sure can motivate a crowd in a live setting. All in all a really good demo from a band I really expect great things from in the future.

-t

ENRAGE 308 byrne Ave. Staten Island, NY 10314

ESTER OF WOOD ROSIN DEMO: The recording and musicianship is excellent; that does not necessarily mean this demo is excellent. The first song starts out with some annoying indie rock crap but then it surprisingly picks up. When it picks up this band sounds reminiscent of old Split Lip and that is definitely a good thing. Unfortunately this band continuously goes back to their indie rock influences and that really annoys the crap out of me. I really can't recommend this

Ester of Wood Rosin 47 cypress avenue methuen, MA 01844 .

> _Execution Style demo:_ I don't know what's in the Hudson River in Troy, or wherever these hooligans get their water from, but this demo
>
> ing, and an almost perfect mix of fast, straight-up NYHC and enjoyable, hook-filled metalcore.Tight as hell, lyrically violent, working class kids who live the shit they sing about. CD quality production, this could
>
> who play hardcore because they love it. Nearly every song or at least half of them have to do with revenge and brotherhood type stuff. See
>
> the Troy scene report in this issue for more info.-e *(Dave Stack (518) 869–6835)*

HARKONEN DEMO: Noisy hardcore in the vein of Coalesce except slower and more structured songs. The recording is actually pretty good but the guitars are really fuzzy which gets really annoying. The song "Devotion" is really good . It begins with the bass and drums playing together as the guitar quietly creeps in until it all blows up together and ends with really chaotic guitars and great screamy back up vocals and the tempo doubles that of the rest of the song. The final song "Scarification" is Harkonen's finest work. A good mid paced beat with chaotic guitars and frantic screaming over it. The recording really takes away from this bands efforts. Sometimes Harkonen comes across as sometimes flat and boring and others impassioned and on the verge of out of control. When this band works out the bugs and hones their style I would look out for them, *-t*

Harkonen 9002 Zircon DR. SW. Tacoma, WA 98498

INTACT DEMO: Absolutely horrible production! This demo is mediocre at best. MedioCore! This band is really boring, typical new-school, old school garbage.

The vocalist sounds bored and the music has not a shred of originality. Give me Chain of Strength and take this shit away, *-t*

Intact 18955 W. 115 Terolathe, KS 66061

LOCKJAW DEMO: This demo is excellent! It starts out with my favorite of the four tracks "Resist". It opens really fast with really heavy guitars and goes to a hyper speed next with the singer screaming like a lunatic over it, really reminiscent of Coalesce (only this part). Next the song turns into a really heavy chunk chunk part, and basically this is what you get four songs of, not the same formula but a varied song with interesting changes and ah inspired vocalist. On top of all that the recording quality is excellent and the music is laden with harmonics and the occasional tribal drum breakdown and a vocalist who ranges from a very convincing tough voice to a hectic screaming voice and both work great. Watch out for this band, they are going to blow up. *-t*

LOCKJAW: 348 N. Pleasant PKWY. Buffalo NY 14206.

MANIFOLD PROMO '97: The recording on this is awesome. Manifold is an excellent band that uses slayer inspired riffs, with really heavy, clear guitars and the occasional harmonics a la Snapcase. The intro to this promo is the best part of the whole thing. It sounds like Bolt Thrower (a monstrous classic death metal riff) that works into a slow chunka chunka part with beautiful acoustic guitars working over it.- The only weak link in this band is the vocalist. He is not terrible but sometimes sounds a little forced. He has a nice deep voice that if he went with what came more naturally to him I could imagine him sounding a lot better, as opposed to trying to force out the deepest voice he can muster. All in all a really good promo, *-t Manifold Flore Benigni V. Calabresi 2 01100 Viterbo Italy 0761/340197* _NIGEL SIX "AMERICA'S FAVORITE T.V. FAMILY"_: If you like Green Day or Fat Records garbage you will go crazy for this! Personally this makes me want to puke. These guys obviously have zero common sense for sending shit like this to Inside Front hoping for a good review. I mean, the fucking title of the demo has "television" in it, and they're not even joking. Send all hate mail and pipe bombs to: *-t Sike Records PO Box 10504 Holyoke, MA 01040–2104.*

One Fine Day demo: The guitar sound has a rough edge that gives it some personality. Stylistically, this is very modern, very '90's metallic hardcore: midtempo, chunky, occasional high notes (like Snapcase or sometimes Earth Crisis) over the deep chunky notes, screaming vocals, etc. There's an acoustic part that comes off as particularly atmospheric and ephemeral, but it's very brief. The drumming and vocals on this are pretty flat, pretty standard, as of right now, but I do like those guitars. Like I said, they have some personality, and there's some variety in the playing here and there. Maybe it's because I'm a sucker for European bands, but I think this is altogether above average. Whimsical artwork in the liner notes leaves me confused, but they include a paragraph about themselves and their goals that is great to see (why they won't print band photos, etc.), *-b Stefano Bosso, v. S. Agata 4, 28064, Carpignano S. (NO) Italy* _PURIFICATION "ARKANGEL":_ I really liked this demo a lot.

The recording is really not very good, real muddy and does the band no service. If you get past that you have really good music. A lot of death metal influence especially in the drumming. There are lots of very tight double.bass parts which I really liked. The guitars take a more hardcore approach with a few riffs thrown in which were heavily influenced by metal. Lyrically the songs are really good but the vocals (possibly'due to the mix) leave a lot to be desired, a little too forced which ends up sounding sometimes like grunts. Overall I enjoyed it and expect that the next time around they should be doing something really incredible — that's my guess, *-t*

MAURIZIO RICCI via Amico Bignami, 12 0015e Roma Italy.

STORMCORE 96 PROMO TAPE: Metallic NYHC in the vein of 25 Ta Life, especially in the vocals. Heavy , monstrous guitar riffs that will

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have you stomping and punching everything in sight. The bassist and drummer really work together to create a really bottom heavy sound with the guitarist chugging away over it. Every song is well written and memorable. Stormcore really expand on the NYC sound by adding really metal influenced solos, harmonics, and the occasional acoustic guitars. The last song "Back Ta Beat Ya" is the best work on this recording, including acoustic guitars with chunka chunka guitars working over it which leads into a full on Slayeresque riff which sounds great. This band expands the boundaries of the genre they are working in without going overboard. Expect to hear more from Stormcore and expect it to be good, *-t*

Stormcore 22 Allee De Maurepas, 35700 Rennes France _Throwback- Pain And Suffering demo:_ Albany area metalcore outfit, with a decent demo. We reviewed their 'Pay Your Dues' demo a couple issues ago, and this shows marked improvement. Mostly mid-tempo, slightly hiphop influenced moshcore similar to other bands from Albany like Cutthroat, with intelligent lyrics about racism and personal relationships. Plenty of energy, with gruff vocals. The recording is slightly muffled which takes away from the over all power of this, but the material itself is good.

(Mike Tailman, 119 2nd Ave., Watervliet, NY. 12189)

TREPHINE DEMO: First off this is possibly the worst recording quality I have ever heard. That aside its not a bad demo. The first two songs are absolutely horrible garbage, I was ready to destroy this band after listening to them. Between the muddy recording and the just plain boring music I did not think I was going to make it out of this demo alive. As I am preparing to rip this tape out of the stereo and break it into a million pieces the third song starts and its great. The third song "Your Kind" is excellent a really heavy guitar riff with the guitars alternating back and forth and the three vocalists going crazy with hectic screams that sound like they all of the sudden, on song three, started to care about what they were doing. The fourth song "guilt is also pretty good as well, not as good as the last but good all the same. My advice

to this band would be to drop the first two songs and re-record the other two songs. I would also advise murdering the person who recorded this demo and burning down his/her studio, *-t Trephine 8615 Cherry Lawn Sterling Heights, Ml 48313*

UNIONSUIT DEMO: I really like this band a whole lot. A five song cassette with incredible recording quality. Unionsuit incorporates a range of styles and is very successful at what they do. Some parts are melodic and somber feelings, others slightly metal feeling and in the next second chaotic noise. The vocals range between really emoish sung vocals to the most impassioned screaming I have heard in a long time. Unionsuit through their music makes the listener run through a range of emotions from some of the most somber melodies to the most angry screaming hardcore. In everything this band does you can hear the anger, sadness, and frustration of five people venting their emotions. Get this at all costs. If great things do not happen for this band there is no fucking justice in the world at all. *-t Unionsuit 133 Peterborough ST. #8A Boston, MA 02115*

_Wrath- Anger In A Pretty Package demo: T_his band is definitely different from many of the other Albany bands, and I'll tell you why. They throw a lot of spoken parts into their Earth Crisis-like, crashing mid- tempo sound, with unbelivably shreiking vocals. Lyrics about child abuse, revenge, and other more subtle topics. I have to be in the right mood to hear this and like it. Reminds me quite a bit of Starkweather also. Not Bad at all. -e

(Wrath, po box 2523, Malta, NY 12020)

Zegote demo: No, Zygote is still broken up, this is Zegote. Their demo begins with a couple moments of Iron Maiden metal notes, before taking off for a second with some fast, screaming crazy punk hardcore that works just fine. Then it comes back down to this funk thing for a while, and alternates from there on. Mix: the bass is unusually high, and there needs to be more guitar. The vocals and drums work. I'd say in general when this band works it's the screaming vocals that do it. The faster parts are my favorites of course, The slower parts turn out OK when they sound like they might be descended from Fugazi and don't do much for me when they sound like funk music. Speaking

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of fucking Fugazi, it just struck me that the first part of the third song on here is Fugazi's "Waiting Room" with only a couple notes different; it has the same breaks and distorted parts and sung lines and even pauses, everything. Anyway — conscious lyrics about modern life and all the problems involved in that for all of us. It's that consciousness that comes through to make the vocals the best par of this; it's also clear in the well-done insert, which leaves no doubts as to whether or not they care about what they're doing. They do. *-b*

Z., RO. Box 9734, Greensboro, NC 27429

something really good, *-t* •
APOCALYPSE: 18955 W. 115th ter. Olathe KS 66061.

> _Blindsided #3_ — $3 — Decent vegan sXe zine from Indy featuring Refused, Endeavor and Falling Down. Writing is clear and concise, but I was turned off by two editorials in which the editor spews anger at his ex-partner in the zine, who he refuses to talk to because she lost the edge. Lots of talk of "betrayal" and "weakness." Whatever happened to straight edge as a personal choice, one that's not necessarily right for everybody? *-r*

(Neal Taflinger, 6256 Central Avenue, Indianapolis, IN 46220)

> _Burn it Clean #7_ — a stamp? — Star Wars, veganism, straightedge, interview with Ire. Good column by Greg Bennick, nice personal anecdote from editor. At eight pages, a very quick read, *-r (#2 1018 McClure Ct., Victoria, BC V8V 3E9)*

ButtRaqeous #1 — ? — The layout is the first thing you'll notice about in-depth interviews would be good, *-r*
(Bill Kennedy, 3 Marble Rd., E. Greenbush, NY 12061)

Cell 2187 #1 — $1? — Ooh, another Star Wars reference (they spell it out in the intro). Once I got past that, I enjoyed the interviews with Damnation AD, Bloodlet, and H2O. The record reviews were suspiciously positive — didn't anybody dislike anything? Still a promising zine, *-r* ‘
(225 South 39th St., Philadelphia, PA 19104)

Change Zine #8 - $5? -.Change is back, with fewer interviews than last issue, but there's stilT lots of attitude spewing from the editors and the fan's-eye analysis of pro basketball that Change is rightly famous for. I hardly even watch basketball and I still find the writing here fascinating. The Kiss it Goodbye interview was my favorite of this issue; Voorhees was pretty good too. The Christmas bonus: a free split 7 with Today is the Day and the Automatic Few. TITD are decent noise rock with a nice telephone-ringing sound effect in their song; Auto Few are sort of like Down by Law or something. Best part of the 7" is the fact that before and after each song they have excerpts of soundtrack music from movies like "The Usual Suspects" and "Unforgiven" and sound bites of members of each band discussing their music, *-r*
(9 Birchwood Lane, Westport, CT 06880)

Choose the Right #3: The computer layouts here still aren't quite working, sometimes they almost make it hard to read the text. The interviewer gets my respect for asserting himself in the Earth Crisis interview to make an argument to Karl that their straight edge (and thus their band) is now being marketed as a product, a trend, rather than a movement. Karl sure doesn't like that very much! In fact, it inspires him

to criticize bands that aren't well known and don't get good recordings... I guess he never listened to any hardcore punk bands, huh. I mean, come on: not well known, bad recordings — how many of your favorite bands does that describe, bands that paved the way for bands like his to become so well-known and well-recorded? I guess I'm being vindictive again.The other interviews (Hatebreed, Fastbreak, Harkonen, Sick Of It All — the last of which say that the Side By Side record was no good... what?) are less interesting. The reviews are decent. The other writing (animal liberation...) is fairly predictable. A couple extra bits here and there (funny letters section, etc.) provide a little personality, *-b*

5012 11th Avenue, NE, Apt. E, Seattle, WA 98105

Dogprint #8 — $2 — The bulk of this is interviews with big names like Shift, Norm Arenas, Ignite, Tilt, Trial, Automatic 7, and pop singer Brendan Benson. Outside of that, there are a few editorials, an Erie, PA scene report, and reviews that are too numerous and not very

Feast of Hate and Fear #6 — six $.32 stamps — I'm of two minds about this zine. Its editor, none other that Adel 156 of Inside Front column fame, looks at the world in fairly harsh terms; he describes himself as a "fascist anarchist, " and goes on to rant a great deal about hating weakness, the repulsiveness of society and religion, allegiance to "natural law, " admiration of serial killers, et cetera. This sort of attitude can be found in a lot of zines and it Just doesn't provoke or interest me very much. What is worthy about FOHAF, however, is the quality of the writing and reporting; Adel's opinion pieces are very well-thought- out and persuasive, even if one disagrees with his point of view. Also, the guy scores interviews with Rudy Ray Moore (Dolemite) and Richard Ramirez (the Night Stalker) — in the same issue! Another high point is his sense of humor — there are interesting articles here about pe- nises, the Marquis de Sade, the word "fuck" and a detailed list of stupid or bizarre crimes committed in the editor's home state of Florida. In all of these, his tongue-in-cheek approach to the topic makes him seem far more twisted than when he's in l-hate-everybody mode, *-r*

(PO Box 820407, South Florida, FL 33082–0407)

> _Fragments #1:_ This is like A.T.R. in that it addresses important issues, issues which we're all probably thinking a little about already just because of our involvement with hardcore. Its more accessable than A.T.R., in that it uses illustrations a great deal more. A picture can be worth a thousand words, you know. Plenty of discussion of American "values, " the decline and fall of Western civilization, the Spectacle (the illusions that are an intrincsic part of our modern lives),

and more. Fucking great magazine, I wish there were more like it and I pray for a second issue, *-b*

P.O. Box 5370–362, Santa Ana, CA 92704

H8000 'zine #4: H8Z is definitely a model for other "area coverage"'zines to follow: it looks attractive, it's well circulated (so that people from other regions are

informed about, in this case, a certain part of Belgium), and it's put together very effectively and thoroughly. Here we have letters, entertaining photos, interviews (Sektor and Vitality, which aren't really any more interesting than, say, a typical Inside Front interview, and Darkside NYC, who are probably the most negative band I have ever read an interview with), lots of show reviews that are written so melodramatically that they actually are interesting (if only to see just how absurd they will get...), fairly useful record reviews, and some general news from their area. There are a couple cases in here of kids using terms like faggot" and praising certain moronic US bands — there really doesn't seem to me to be any possible excuse for this, since they live in Europe and should know better. Come on! But the pieces written by the editors seem intelligent and mature, which makes it easy enough to ignore the foolishness of those other kids and enjoy this magazine... especially if you're curious about the home county of Congress, Liar, and all their brethren, *-b Jozef Demeesterstc 33, 8800 Rosefare, Belgium*

Hodgepodge #1 - Si — This zine's purpose is to cover the Long island scene, which the editors say is unjustly overshadowed by the rest of New York City. This zine, however, doesn't really leap out of the pack. It's got all the ingredients that every other medium-to-large-circula- tion hardcore zine has — interviews (Shift, Coalesce, Converge, Floorpunch), photos, and the usual bland record, zine and show reviews. To top it off, there are some really horribly scanned and Photoshopped pictures in here. If you're going to use fancy computer equipment rather than just gluing the picture to the page, learn how to use it well, please. Anyway, good things include a Long Island scene report, an advice column, and some funny writing about a brand of trendy clothing that the editor really hates that I've never heard of (apparently we don't have Jnco jeans in North Carolina) — the reason this stuff is good is because you don't find it in every other zine. Hopefully issue #2 will bring more diversification, *-r (983 Little Neck Ave., N. Bellmore, NY 11710)*

House B_roken Fanzine #3_ — ? — High point: a good interview with Toby from H2O. As many of you have noticed by now, this guy can tell a damn good story, whether you like his band or not. Low point: Paul Weinman poetry and positive reviews of the Cranberries and Alanis Morissette. Good God. *-r .*

(1547 Spring Rd., Carlisle, PA 17013)

In Effect #9 — ? — Another news-oriented magazine, this time about New York hardcore (God, it seems like all these zines are NYHC news magazines sometimes...) Lots of interviews (H2O, Both Worlds, Madball), lots of fancy ads, lots of fucking tattooed guys, *-r (119–16 8th Ave., College Point, NY 11356)*

International Straight-Edge Bulletin #20 — ? — Wow, this is an impressive thing indeed, whether you're sXe or not. A zine written by a whole crew of people in different countries sharing news and opinions. Here we've got Malaysia, France, Finland, New Zealand, Uruguay, Chile... the list goes on. My favorite article was from Uruguay and was about how futbol" (football to the English, soccer to the Americans)

distracts people from pressing issues in their lives and provides an excuse for violent behavior (sound familiar?) This whole zine was a very inspiring read, -*r*

(Yann Boisleve, BP 7523, 35 075 Rennes cedex 3, France... be sure to send this guy proper postage; he gets a lot of mail. Or email him at yann. boisle ve @ uhb. fr)

Interpol Times #10 — ? -1 like zines from outside the US because they cover music I'm not familiar with and help counteract the hegemony of US bands in hardcore. This zine isn't really anything earth-shattering but it's got interviews with Europe's Acheborn, Chopper, Funbug and Kneeldown as well as the USA's Bouncing Souls and Battery, -*r (Auf dem Stefansberg 58, 53340 Meckenheim, Germany)* _Juggernaut #3_ — $4 US — This zine's from Singapore. Very heavy on the standard animal rights info. I don't know to what extent animal rights is part of the public discourse over there; perhaps it's not as well-publicized.'Good to see these people supporting their scene. And yes, the Muslimcore debate continues (FYI: in Singapore there is an ongoing debate between some straightedgers and Muslims in the scene; some Muslims feel it is against Allah's will to be vegan, if I understand the debate correctly. Interesting position.) -*r*

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(Zahir, Blk 116 Toa Payoh, Lorong 1 #14-164, Singapore 310116) Meat and 3 Veg. #4 - $4 Australian?- An Australian zine. Interviews with 4 US bands (Battery, Ignite, Man Afraid, Civ). All the interviews are concise and fairly interesting. I would have liked to see more Australia-specific content here, although there's a little. A quote: "Busting caps and bouncing fruits (?) etc. can go the way of all the other macho wanker posturing, out the door. We are not America, and I don't want to be..." -*r*

(PO Box 509, Gladesville, NSW 2111, Australia)

Nat Rrain Comics #8 - $4 — This is a pretty disturbing comic book. Nat has a few things to work out regarding women — his drawings here are very much in the vein of Robert Crumb's fetishized super-females, and he calls one comic "the confessions of a lonely misogynist." He's fascinated with breasts, butts, extraterrestrials and his own death. Yikes. How did this end up at Inside Front? -*r*

(3419 VA Beach Blvd. Suite #217, VA Beach, VA 23452)

No Barcodes Necessary #3 — $3 — Lotsa writing about sXe, plus interviews with Euro bands Lifer (Scotland), Dive into the Extreme (Italy) and End in Sight (Sweden). Some zine reviews that are actually comprehensive and helpful, -*r*

(Mel Hughes, 83 Glebe Park, Chanterhill, Enniskillen BT74 4DB N. Ireland)

Nothing New #1 - ? — This is a pretty good first effort, most of which is interviews with Bloodletand Catharsis, plus some pictures of pro wrestling (which may replace

Star Wars and heavy metal as the newest nostalgic trend in hardcore). On the back cover there's a picture of a male wrestler aerial-slamming a female wrestler into a folding table... what the fuck? *-r*

(912 Dawnwood Dr., Parma, OH 44134)

Rust #4, #5 - $3? — Rust is another regional news-oriented zine with a large circulation. It focuses on the rather underrepresented Seattle scene while giving time to bands from all over the country. #4 has interviews with Today is the Day (why are they suddenly so popular?), Sensefield, Both Worlds and Kiss it Goodbye and an article about how to find the ultimate metal guitar (the BC Rich Warlock comes in first in their survey) which I found funny despite my burnout on articles about metal trivia. #5 has a cool cover featuring the heads of famous hardcore singers set atop the shoulders of the disciples at the Last Supper (with the zine editor as Jesus, now that I look at it more closely...) It also has interviews with Sick of it All, VOD, Botch, CR and Strain, a very good article about Christian hardcore that lets participants speak for themselves while still respectfully expressing a divergent viewpoint, and more metal fetishism, this time an article about metal clothes. Keep an eye on Rust; its high standards of appearance and content make it a consistently good read, *-r*

(PO Box 2293, Seattle, WA 98111)

Reminder #8 - ? — This is an interesting depiction of how widespread hardcore has become. Some of the content here is from Belgium, some from Germany, and some from the infamous Singapore scene (another article called "Muslimcore vs Straight Edge, " a debate I'm still not sure I understand). A fairly short zine whose contents were at times opaque to me — I have a feeling some things were lost in their translation to English. The most interesting thing here is an interview with a jailed murderer, *-r*

(Wim Vandekerckhove, Hogeweg 316, 8930 Menen, Belgium, email: wim. vandekerckhove @ rug. ac. be)

Selfworth #3 — ? — An odd little zine from the Netherlands. It contains some interviews, personal wiritings, a section of glowing reviews of American top 40 music (the editor describes Counting Crows as "really intense"), and an article that talks about how pornography is degrading, yet is illustrated with a pornographic drawing, somewhat defeating its own purpose. There's also a section in which people talk about losing their virginity, which surprised me because none of the stories were substantively different from what you might get from young Americans, *-r*

(Jannie Maes, Bosserveldlaan 32, 6191 SK Beek (L), Netherlands) _State of Grace #2:_ Hardcore 'zine from England, fairly promising. It begins with an in-depth Ignite interview (if you like Ignite, you'll learn

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things that interest you... if you don't, you can skip it), proceeds to an unfortunately predictable Withdrawn interview, wades through some second rate commentary on

straight edge, religion, and gun control, tosses in a few good photos and a flat interview with Good Life recordings, and concludes with a few (too few) well-done reviews. Keep $_{a}$t it — and, next time, include more about your local hardcore community, I'm curious about hardcore in the U.K. right now... *-b 29 Meadow Bank Avenue, Nether Edge, Sheffield, S7 1PB, UK* _Status Fanzine #2_ — $2 — Most of the space in this zine is taken up with pages and pages of large photos. Ordinarily I would object to this, but some of these photos are really good, and the reproduction is excellent. The writing doesn't grab my attention quite as solidly. Interviews with Far, Iceburn, and the Mighty Mighty Bosstones, *-r*

(PO Box 1500, Thousand Oaks, CA 91358)

Subversion #3 — $2 — This zine is heavy on the writing, which is a nice change. The most useful article here is "Beer World / Crop O' Slop, " which provides candid reviews of both expensive microbrews and cheap swill. Too many record reviews for such a short zine, though. — *r *

(PO Box 2881, Pullman, WA 99165–2881)

Suffer Age Zine #3 — $4 US — Another Southeast Asian zine, this time a Singapore/Malaysia tag-team. There's also a scene report from the Czech Republic. The most interesting things here are show reviews from Kuala Lumpur (where they're trying to have NYHC-style Sunday matinees) and an interview with Obstacle Upsurge, an all-girl HC band from Singapore. They don't say much in the interview, but consider the fact that some of these young women have to keep the band a

secret from their conservative parents... now that's hardcore. Other interesting stuff about local environmental issues, too. *-r*

(Man, 25, Jalan Suasa Satu, Kolam Air, 80100 Johor Bahru, Johor, Malaysia)

Tadpole #3 — ? — Pretty good English zine. Good interviews with Los Crudos and Avail, plus English bands marker & Iron Monkey. Photos and more. Big fucking photo of Bruce Dickinson on the back cover. Enough already! *-r*

(PO Box 2804, Brighton BN2 2AU, UK)

Tread the Path #1 — $1.50 — One may assume this zine is called "Straight Edge Tread the Path Vegan" since the words "Straight Edge" and "Vegan" are written bigger than the zine's name on the cover. There's not much content, some reprinted song lyrics, a Turmoil interview, etc. A short article about consumerism on the back cover is the most provocative thing here, *-r*

(Scott M., 36 Ramapo Ave., SI, NY 10309)

Trouble Shoot #3: European hardcore 'zine featuring interviews with nine bands (the notables are Rubbish Heap, Facedown, Kindred, 25 ta Life, and Right For Life) and a tape sampler with (previously released) songs from each of them. A good concept to inform people about new music and the ideas of the people who play it. The 'zine itself is pretty thick, has decent reviews, and bad printing quality here and there, *-b*

Alain, 1 rue de Dieupart, 4920 Aywaille, Belgium

War Crime #4 — $2 — A fairly political zine, with extensive articles about mahogany production and the Animal Liberation Front, plus a how-to about hijacking

electricity from streetlamps that's very interesting but could conceivably get you killed. Music coverage is mostly crust, with reviews and interviews of Disfear and Abuso Sonoro. Good stuff, *-r (Mike, PO Box 2741, Tucson, AZ 85702)*

Zips and Chains #10: Great European 'zine done by the same kids who did those Goodwill records I had so much respect for. There's no way I could tell you all the stuff that's in here, but suffice to say the interviews (Avail, Fugazi, White Frogs, Permanent Scar, about fifteen more) are in depth and usueful, the writings are all interesting and offer new perspectives (especially to American punk/hardcore kids curious about the community in Europe), and the whole thing is put together very effectively. It's easy to read, and worth reading. Broiaden your horizons and check it out. *-b*

Dario Adamic, C.P 15319, 00143 Roma laurentino, Italy

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Sincere Apologies, Issue 10

(written late September, 1997)

This issue is coming out much later than it should have. When I wrote the introdction, it was the middle of July, and I expected it to be done before we left for our U.S. tour. Unfortunately the individual who was going to do the layout that week had some sudden problems with his legal status and had to go underground for a while, so we were not able to get it put together until now. I feel really bad about this delay, since some of the material in this issue may now be out of date. But there was no way to avoid it.

The problem we are encountering more and more in working on projects like Inside Front is the C° i ^ b^ wccn on one band, llvin g a lifestyle outside of the system, and on the other, being productive and • r e m f' St 1 ruggl? against the system_ Many of us arc now distracted from our undertakings by the instability of our lives (having no homes, no transportation, no food or other resources, no permanent etC, °S by Pr?b 9ms Wlth tbe IeSal system. It's hard to get magazine layouts done when your friend who does graphics is hiding out from the police in a place without any computers; it's hard to keep up with distributors

when you have no phone number to be reached at and all your records are in storage; it's hard to pick up three thousand magazines from the printer when you don't have a car. This has been really trustrating for me, because I really do want to get things done — but *not* at the expense of opening an Inside Front office and bank account, purchasing an Inside Front car, and using bar codes and doubling our prices in order to afford all that bullshit.

But we have a solution that we're going to try. In Detroit, a group of friends of mine, whose lives [a] • t more stable than mine, have offered to take over some of the practical aspects of doing Inside [1I]l[gS] T T^5111001^ [and] efficiently. We will be transferring operations to them early in 1998. Nothing else should change about the magazine, and this should enable us to keep doing what we re doing for quite a while. The useful details about this will come in our next issue.

***Other news — ***

Te first installment of Harbinger, the CrimethInc. propaganda tabloid, is done now. If you're interested tn reading one, they re absolutely free, so just write to the CrimethInc. address and request one Donations for postage are certainly useful for not required. _Harbinger_ is basically a collection of commen- wnting [man lfe ‘n ∗◦day S W◦r d d◦ne m a m◦re lmPassioned and] lighthearted spirit than most political

Also — another disaster — there was a misunderstanding, and a number of copies of the Catharsis Samsara 12 on Good Life records were sold without inserts. The band was not at all aware of this and !L'[S certain]7 [co]n[trar]y to our wishes. As far as I'm concerned, personally, without the insert (which con- ^XP[01]!?? [y] t [y]?[CS]n[Ut a, s◦ s◦^e] writing about our intentions and motivations) the record is just CMhlrsk[h]m/^“^ [reC]S[d’ S0] — [lf] anyone did get a copy of the 12” without an insert, write to Catharsis at the Cnmethlnc. address and we 11 send you an insert ourselves. Sorry about this.

Anyway, that's it, Inside Front #10.1 hope you've found something useful or enjoyable in it. It was a lot of trouble for us, over a long period of time, but I expect it will be nice to finally have it finished 1 appreciate all of you beanng with us. Thanks again! ’

Paul F. Maul would like to apologize also for the layout of this issue. Because of time constraints (i.e. doing all the layout in three days in, how should we say, less than optimum conditions) many aspects of the layout were ignored, where as with more time the necessary tribute could have been paid to those forgotten, neglected details. *Long live Paul F. Maul, Long live his kingdom and his minions!* Andrea would like to add that this will be Brian's last project, he needs to get a job to pay for not only his own food and lodging, but to get his tattoos removed. Hey, love hurts.

Issue #11 (1998)

Date: May 1998
Source: <cdn.crimethinc.com/assets/journals/inside-front-11/inside-front-11_screen_single_pa
You can download the CD compilation that came with Inside Front #11 **here**.

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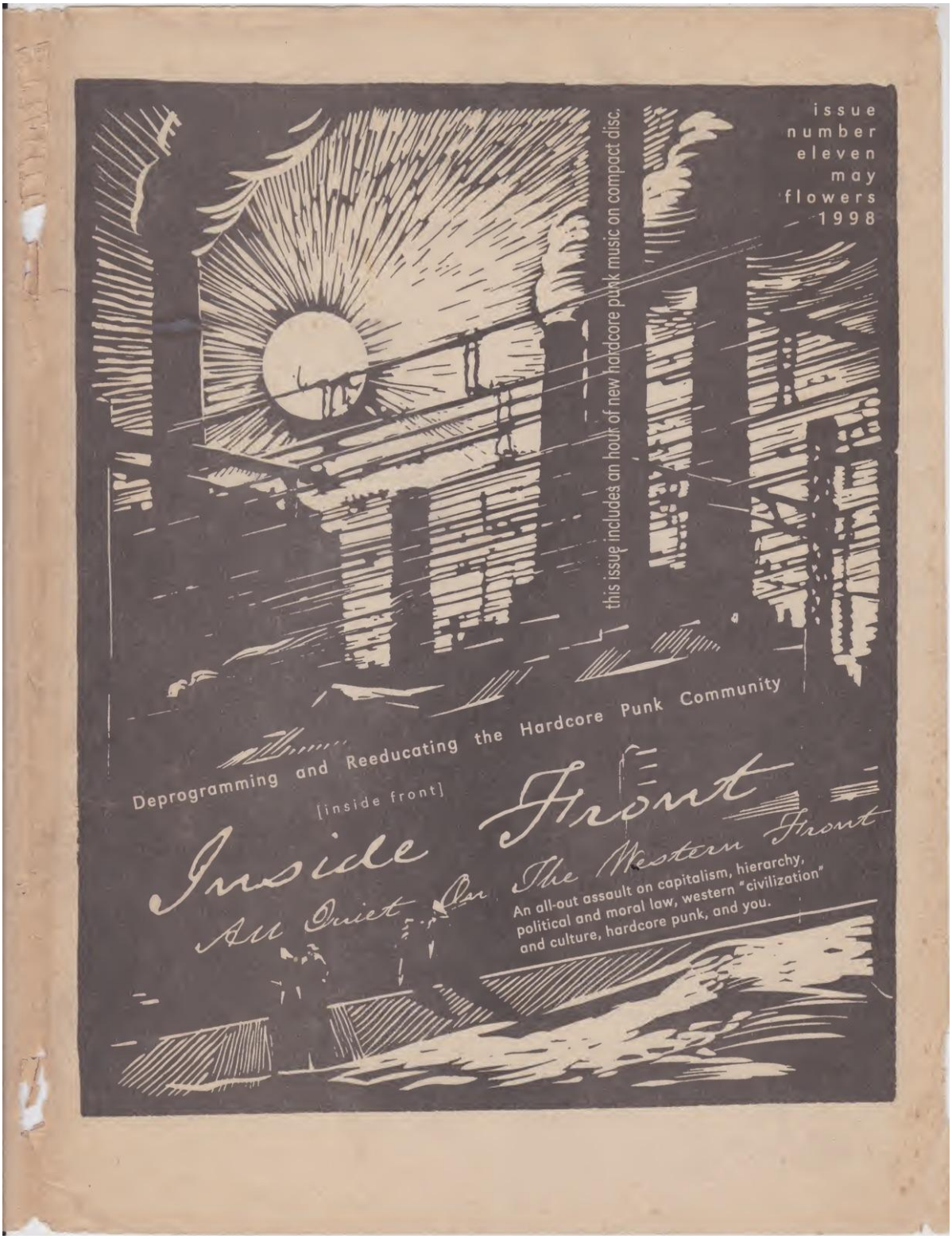
i^^duction^ * (begi r^experiment): t^mifesto for Inside Front
^iwRockers, One More Effort To Become Revolutionaries

Hardcore punk must not be a merely self-referential "youth culture" if it is to make any real difference in our lives, let alone our world. Over the past forty years, subculture after subculture has come and gone, over and over and over, and not one has been able to create permanent change in the lives we lead. If hardcore is to be just another subculture, in which young people participate for a few years, it will be powerless to do anything for us. These so-called youth "movements" never move anyone anywhere at all; there's nothing like a youth culture to quarantine you with your peers, give you. a prefabricated identity as an answer to the insecurities of growing up in a hostile world, waste your outrage and passion in ritualized (and very safe) gestures of rebellion, and send you back out into the world dazed, disillusioned, and neutralized... ready to begin your adult life as a cog in the wheel of mainstream society.

We come to hardcore in the first place because we can see early in life that mainstream society has little of value to offer us. But if hardcore is to offer us something genuinely better, it must be about more than itself: it must be a part of a wider, more long-standing struggle for freedom and happiness. Just talking about hardcore bands, hardcore magazines, and hardcore labels will get us nowhere... especially if those bands, magazines, and labels are only talking about "hardcore" themselves! The more our community refers only to itself, the less it refers to anything real at all; in the mouths of those who speak only of "hardcore music, " "hardcore unity, " and "the hardcore scene, " "hardcore" eventually becomes a mere nonsense word that means nothing at all. We must look beyond the very narrow limits of our community to see what it is we want, what it is we are working towards-assuming we want anything at all.

If we know what we want, if we decide what our lives and our world are lacking and use the hardcore community as a means of pursuing these things, it will no longer be just another powerless subculture; it will become a very powerful tool for the transformation of our lives. All of the energy and creativity within the hardcore community, all of the rebellious passion and social/political consciousness, all the vast personal networks, autonomous musical and artistic movements, and independent information distribution systems we have created could be used to really change our lives and our world. The means are in our hands; it is just a question of recognizing this and becoming focused enough to take full advantage of them!

I desire to live in a society different than the one around me. Like most people, I can live in this one and adapt myself to it-l am, anyway, existing in it. No matter how critically I look at myself, my ability to adapt does not seem to me to be below average.


issue
number
eleven
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1998
this issue includes an hour of new hardcore punk music on compact disc.
Deprogramming and Reeducating the Hardcore Punk Community
[inside front]
Inside Front
All Quiet On The Western Front
An all-out assault on capitalism, hierarchy,
political and moral law, western "civilization"
and culture, hardcore punk, and you.

I don't ask for immortality or omniscience. I don't ask that society give me happiness. I know that happiness isn't something that could be dished out at the local Social Security office, or by the local Workers Council. If such a thing exists, I alone can create it for myself, as has happened before and may happen again. But in everyday life, I find myself up against a mass of things I can't accept. I believe that these things are not inevitable, and that they depend upon the way society is organized.

Firstly, I want my work to have some meaning. I want to approve of its purpose and of how it is done. I want to genuinely be involved in it, to make use of my capabilities, to become a more complete person. I think that this would be possible, for me and for others, if society were organized differently. It would already be a big change in that direction if I were allowed to decide (along with everyone else) what I will do and (together with those I work with) how to do it.

I — all of us — want to know what is going on in society, to control the depth and quality of the information we are given. I want to take part, directly, in all social decisions which will affect my existence, or which help shape the world in which I live. I don't accept that my fate should be decided, day after day, by people whose plans are hostile (or simply unknown) to me, and for whom I and everyone else are but figures in a plan or pawns on a chessboard. I reject the idea that my life and my death should be in the hands of people I never see, let alone people who never see me.

I know that bringing about a new kind of social organization and making it work won't be easy. But I would rather get to work on real problems than accept the cynicism, double-talk, and manipulations of our leaders. Should we fail, I would prefer failure in a meaningful attempt to this state of inaction, of passive acceptance of a status quo which we all know holds nothing for us.

I want to meet other people as their equal, but not as a numbered object, not as a non-entity perched on another rung (whether higher or lower, it doesn't matter) in the hierarchy of status, income, and power. I want to see others, and for them to see me, as another human being; that our relationship not be a battleground of aggressions, that our rivalry remain friendly, that our conflicts (if they can't be resolved or surmounted) be about real problems and real stakes. I wish that others may be free, for my freedom begins where that of others begins. [For too long we have been taught that "our rights end where others' rights begin"!] Without other free individuals around me, I cannot learn or gain anything meaningful from my interactions with others. I don't count on people becoming angels, I don't expect their souls to be as pure as mountain lakes-which have always bored me stiff, anyway. But I know how much our system aggravates people's problems of existence-and of interacting with others-and how much it increases the obstacles to our freedom.

[Image not archived]

Manifesto Issue 11: punk rockers, one more effort to be revolutionaries!

**You Are Here, ** at the table of contents

**Editor's Corner, ** in which he quotes Friedrich Nietzsche!

**Letters, ** featuring discussions of commerce and capitalism, culture and capitalism, fascism and capitalism, veganism and capitalism, Mexican vacations and capitalism!

**Features, ** touching upon hierarchy and anarchy, moral law, and home decorating

Columns-dis/claimer: the opinions expressed by individual writers in Inside Front necessarily represent the ideas and beliefs of Inside Front in general and its staff in particular, down to the very last detail.

Interviews: with Motorhead, Zegota, and Shelter

Liner Notes Inside Front #11 **CD**

the Amebix — a retrospective of sorts

Reviews ... featuring Kilara live in Birmingham, the wonders of European English, and Spanish language 'zine reviews

I know for certain that this can't be fully realized today. But I will not, under that pretext, spend all my time glued to a TV set or playing video games. My task is not to start an instantaneous world revolution, but to make life worthwhile and exciting for myself and the ones around me. The rest will follow. I'm not interested in living my whole life in the service of some far-off day of universal transformation any more than I am in accepting the world as it is today. My undertaking must be, first and foremost, to liberate myself and my companions from whatever constraints we have been convinced to willingly accept: meaningless work, meaningless leisure.' empty relationships. After we have thrown those off, we can move on to fighting against external restraints such as policemen and urban sprawl. But we must first create our "better society" among ourselves.

Do my desires constitute a refusal of reality? But who defines "reality, " anyway? *Must* one work? *Must* work necessarily be deprived of meaning and embody exploitation? *Must* we look at each other as objects, in terms of our market value, rather than as human beings? Is that the reality for everyone in this world? It certainly is not, if you look at other societies and other cultures. Up to what point does our conception of reality reflect nature and where does it begin to reflect our society? Why should we accept the "reality" that this society has created, if it does not satisfy us and others are clearly possible?

Is it childish to wish to change society rather than adapting myself to it? No, it is childish to accept what is given without questioning it. In the infantile state, everything in life is given to you,

[Image not archived]

the law is prescribed for you from above. In the infantile situation you question nothing and accept everything, and if you refuse you are punished. No discussion is possible. What I want is the very opposite. It is to make my own life, and to give life if I can. I don't want laws handed down to me. I want to create them and to give them to myself. It is not the revolutionary who is childish. It is the conformist, the non-political person. It is those who accept the law without discussing it, without

wishing to take part in its creation. Those who live in society with no thoughts about how it functions, with no political will, have only replaced their personal father with an anonymous social one.

What is infantile is the state of affairs where one receives without giving. It is the state where one does things, where one exists, just in order to receive. I want to do things for myself and for others, not merely be acted upon by higher powers than myself. It is today's society which is constantly infantalizing everyone. I want, instead, that society be a network of relationships between autonomous adults.

Is this desire to overthrow the existing order a lust for power on my part? But what I want is to abolish power in the current sense of the word: I want power for everybody. Power in its present sense means hierarchy; it means thinking of other people as things higher or lower than oneself, it means treating other people as things. Everything I want runs contrary to this. I don't want to be a thing, either to myself or to others. I don't want to interact with others as if they were things: one doesn't gain anything from the companionship of things. I want power, yes, but power over myself, power for each of us over ourselves.

Am I pursuing an illusion, the illusion that it is possible to eliminate the tragic side of human existence? It seems to me, on the contrary, that I am seeking to eliminate the melodrama from life, the *false tragedy — where* unnecessary catastrophes occur, where all would have been different if only the actors had known this, or done that. It is a macabre farce that people should be dying of hunger in Africa, while in the U.S. the government pays farmers not to produce "too much." This is not tragedy, there is nothing inescapable about it. If one day humanity perishes under atomic bombs, I will refuse to call it tragedy; I will call it a monstrous mistake. I want to stop people being turned into nonentities by other nonentities who "govern" them. When a neurotic man treads for the hundredth time the same path of failure, recreating for himself and for those around him the same kind of misfortune, to help him get out of it is to eliminate the grotesque farce, not the tragedy, from his life. It should help him discern the *real* problems of his life (and any tragic element they may contain) which the neurosis may partly have expressed, but more massively served to mask, *-plagiarized by CrimethInc. winter commando*

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NEXT: At the end of 1998, we will release Inside Front #12 (with a 6" record by Finland's Umlaut) and a second Harbinger. In 1999, we hope to release the first CrimethInc. book, as well as Inside Front #13, a third Harbinger, and perhaps some more records (another Catharsis record? another compilation?)

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You should buy a CrimethInc. product like you would buy a bomb — to _use_ it, dangerously!

[Image not archived]

capital: wealth (money, property, or labor) ...which can be used to create more wealth, example: factory owners who profit-from selling goods created by the labor of workers in their factories are able to purchase more factories.

capitalising the "free exchange of goods and services" ...in which those who have capital are able to collect more, at the expense of those who do not.

[Image not archived]

Dear Inside Front.

I am on the D train right now, on my way to school, and I have been reading # 10. The article concerning "selling things" in punk is what has compelled me to write to you. I haven't finished the article yet, but I wanted to jot down some points while they were fresh in my head. I stopped right before the "How Buying Things Affects the Buyer" section, and I apologize in advance if any points I bring up are addressed in the remainder of the article.

Firstly, about the article's thesis — I agree. There is no circumventing the fact that D.I.Y. is capitalism. But the difference, in my eyes at least, is that since the people who produce the DIY products we consume are at the shows we see, or the zines we read, or even since they print their contact addresses, we can keep them accountable to the community they affect by calling their ethics into question, publicly and privately. In this manner we can ensure — an optimistic choice of words — that we DON'T become like the multinational who sells a product no one needs in a fashion that degrades the consumer and treats their workers unfairly and uses their profits to conduct odious practices which have a direct relationship with the problems of the day that the consumer tries to forget about when buying the product. Community-oriented markets are in my opinion, a step in the right direction, and they are a STEP to be taken. We should not stop there. While I also agree that you are right when you say the raw materials that DIY robber-barons use are under the thumb of big business, I see people inside HC who are organizing collectives to provide some of those services themselves, like Nova Screenprinting for t- shirts. By doing this, they are providing an ethical alternative for a product that a consumer would otherwise have to turn to a corporation (whose ethics they might take exception to) for. This is another step for DIY.

Whether they NEED those services is to be decided on a case-by-case level by the individual, but there is no denial that regardless of necessity, they might otherwise have to compromise their beliefs (potentially) and do business with the corporation. In a world where I believe the end result of capitalism in the current form is corporate nation-states, any outlet that is alternative to this is one I will embrace.

Secondly, as a rich record label exec, I think you place a lot of the advertising blame on the labels. And a lot of it is deservedly placed. But the thing is, while I agree that labels should describe the band/ zine, and the topics addressed in their ads, that can't

always be done for practical purposes. I'll explain: I don't have all the money I'd like to press records with. As such I must budget what I do have very tightly — and I'm one of the lucky few that still has a place to live with their parent (I haven't graduated high school yet — I don't advocate living with your parents forever). So to advertise in the greatest number of zines, which I want to support with my advertising bucks, I can only buy small 1/6 or % page ads. And I don't always have the space, physically, to give such a description. Plus factor in the way the ads are printed. Look at the Edison ad in #10. I can't read that. Small type becomes incomprehensible. So in order to get the message out, maaaan, I can't do this all the time. I am a strictly small time label whose releases are sporadic. If I gave a zine a text-heavy ad that no one could read, I couldn't get the records out to anyone, and that would be selling the bands short. Since I also have neither the right nor the desire to tell a zine to lower their ad rates or get their printing done elsewhere, I must compromise and try to make memorable ads until such a time as I don't have anymore, meaning I'll be able to afford larger ads.

Thank you for reading. All I ask of you and your readers is to

keep in mind that smaller labels are sometimes in positions where such ads that you find ethically lacking are the only way to sell records, get the message out and do right by the bands, ultimately. I think the article is important since we *are* dealing with the capitalist enemy here, and should watch out for its insidious incursions upon the way we do our business. Thank you for writing it, it is very timely. Now it's time for another mind numbing day in high school. At least I can finish reading Inside Front...

Spencer Ackerman 678 E 24th 1st floor Brooklyn, NY 11210

*Dear Spencer, *

Thanks for writing, you are a gentleman and a scholar and it is nice to get mail from people like you. By the way, you might have done well to have waited to write me until you had finished the article, since that might have given you a broader perspective on the positions taken in it. But Dm happy to have another chance to address the issue, regardless, since it is one of the most important ones facing our community right now..

The main point of the article is not to merely critique the way we do business in the hardcore community, or outside of it, for that matter. It is not intended to be a criticism of individuals who, like yourself, run small D. I. Y. record labels. It is, rather, to examine what the negative effects are of "doing business" AT ALL, and to make some suggestions based on that examination as to what we should be doing with ourselves in hardcore.

When things are bought and sold, the buyers and sellers themselves are affected by the buying and selling. The sellers have to concentrate on selling effectively in order to sell at all (that's how the competitive market economy works), and inevitably the most successful ones are the ones who care the most about selling things — at the expense of caring about anything else. That's what the article was pointing out about advertising: that often the most senseless and irresponsible advertising is the most effective, and so

it is an embarrassment to us in the hardcore community that we get so caught up in advertising in the first place. The fact that so much of what we do in our community depends on advertising means that, inevitably, there's going to be a lot of bullshit in what we do... and that the individuals and groups who are guilty of the most bullshit (Victory records, Lookout records, and other profit-hungry labels that we used to think cared about the same things we do) will become the most successful and gain the most control. Besides the ill effects of advertising, there are a thousand other inevitable results of selling things in a market economy that plague us in the hardcore community — many of which

and energy coming up with that money. In today's corporate-controlled world, this usually means working, directly or indirectly, for one of the businesses against which we are supposed to be struggling in hardcore punk. At the same time, the sellers must almost always purchase all of their raw materials from one of these companies — the funds that some of us "keep inside the community" by printing our own t-shirts are insignificant compared to all the money that still goes to the enormous companies that manufacture ink, fabric, vinyl for records, etc. And eventually, almost all of our money ends up back in their hands — when record labels pay rent on their warehouses, for example, if not before — and almost none of these companies are genuinely sympathetic to our interests. Thus, buying and selling products which are supposed to incite revolt against the economic system often Just constitutes participation in and support of that system. If we had a real chance of creating an entirely self-sufficient punk economy, with punk farmers, punk papermills, and punk land- lords(!?), the "accountability"-oriented D.I.Y. capitalism that you recommend would be at least worth considering (though I still see some built-in drawbacks to it); but that is not possible anyway, so it would make more sense for us to try to participate as little as possible in the market economy in the first place.

For these reasons and others, the article argues that we should try to shift the focus away from buying and selling things in our community. For buying and selling is, incontestably, one of the primary and most fundamental ways we interact with each other — we buy and sell 'zines, records, shirts, show admission, etc. etd. etc., and we spend more energy and time thinking about how to buy and sell things than we do actually working towards the goals we claim for ourselves. Right now our counterculture, like all youth subcultures, is Just another consumer subculture, not much different from the pseudo-rebellious youth subcultures invented by corporations to sell kids "rebellious" products like clothes and heavy metal records. [As the Situationists said, "culture" is the commodity they want us to buy into most of all: it is the product that makes us buy all the other products. The image of the "rebellious metal head" or Rage Against the Machine listener is created by the very companies that make up the system young people think they are rebelling against, so that these companies can even make a profit off of the attempts of young people to take a stand against them.] We should avoid participating in the same pernicious rituals of buying and selling that other "subcultures" do, so we will not reap the same harvest offutility and co-option that they have.

At the end, to make the theoretical concrete, the article suggests some non- "business" projects we could spend more time on in hardcore: projects like Food Hot Bombs, open art festivals, and labor union organizing that do not involve the exchange of goods and services but are

^br funbamental problem bulb capitalism is that under Ibis system, tbe mbibibuals anb groups that are toilling to go to tbe furthest lengths of exploitation anb bestruetion in their "exchange of goobs anb serbices" With others are the ones that are able to attain the greatest control ober human beings anb the enbironment...

are addressed in the article you 're responding to. So the question of how to advertise more or less ethically, for example, is not nearly as important as the more radical question of what we could be doing instead; since as long as we spend our energy doing things that involve advertising, we will be vulnerable to the same negative effects that advertising and capitalism in general have wrought in the mainstream. See how that works?

Similarly, buying things has negative effects upon the buyer, some of which were also discussed in that article. One of them is that in order to have money to spend upon products, the buyer has to spend time

at least as productive and "revolutionary" as selling any 'zine could be. That, I think, is the direction we should take in the future: away from punk rock, the "alternativeyouth market" that we have built in imitation of the mainstream economy of our parents, and towards hardcore punk, an environment in which we create entirely new ways of interacting.

[Towards this end, the staff of Inside Front have sworn to stop publishing magazines or pressing Crime thine, records... instead, from now on, we will spend all our time as street musicians, playing acoustic guitars on streetcorners and begging for beer money. Of course I'm Jok-

ing! It is true, unfortunately, that in a capitalist system there are some worthwhile things that are impossible to do without money (since few resources or services can be obtained legally without money in this kind of exchange economy); and in order to do them, we must either steal money or sell things to earn it. We steal as much (from corporations, not individuals!) as we possibly can here at CrimethInc. — our colleagues will attest to this; but we can 't steal enough to pay for everything we do. If we tried, we would certainly get caught, and that would be the end of our little attempt at revolution. In circumstances like this, it seems better to sell things rather than Just giving up on doing them at all. That's why there still is a place in hardcore for D.I. Y. "businesses" like yours and mine, right now. But as I said, we should be focused on working towards a day when human interaction doesn't revolve around buying and selling, and even now in the meantime we can try to focus less on it in the hardcore community. Above all, when we do sell and buy things because we must, let us remain focused on our goal: to do this only because it is necessary in working towards the end of the system which requires it! And when record labels and others show us that they have forgotten their greater goals and no longer care about anything besides buying and selling, let us

remember that this means they are no longer a part of our counterculture: they have Joined the forces offaceless capitalism against which our community is fighting for the very destiny of our world.] -vour loving and longwinded editor.

[Image not archived]

Dear Inside Front,

In the Culture interview (#10) you argue that *all* cultures are enemies of human happiness, and I can't agree with you. Culture is not the enemy of happiness, noM-culture is!!

In France I believe we're lucky to have a very deep and interesting history' of art and philosophy (and I know you'll agree with me) which As our culture. All this culture started with "les lumiere" in the 18th cen- turv and led to the French revolution and our tradition of human rights, but both this political and philosophical tradition are nowadays really endangered and will be lost if we don't react. Because most of us (even me sometimes...) waste our time watchin' TV and are playing video games instead of READING... reading is the key you-must know... but back to our problem: This culture makes us able to think by ourselves and at least gives us Freedom! Without culture no freedom can exist. Let's take an example in *1984* by Orwell, like in any other dictatorship, books are not allowed or are just cleaned of any real content, and became just silly stories, so how can you argue that culture is the enemy of freedom when the first thing a fascist government does is to destroy real culture.

It's sad. but to my mind if you think that culture is the (one of the) enemy it's because you confuse true culture, which is a history of art, philosophy, literature... and wow-culture, which unfortunately is now everywhere in the media. This, mostly American, non-culture must be destroyed, but not culture.

Jeremie Cauchois

P.S. Sorry for my English I hope I make this able to be understood... P.S.II: If anyone's interested, I run a zine (in French) called Aramcheck (look in P.K. Dick's Radio Free Albemuth) which will be out late '97 so write me at:

Aramcheck c/o J. Cauchois / 7, rue Jean Guerin / 33520 Bruges / France

*Dear Jeremie, *

What's going on here is a question of semantics. You are using the older, more aristocratic definition of "culture, " which used to be almost synonymous with "breeding": what you mean by culture is education, intellectual sophistication, the history of art and literature and phi

losophy, the human search for truth. This meaning of "culture " describes one of the many ways people interact with each other that would not be possible without customs and traditions. But when I spoke about "culture" in the Culture interview, I was using the more modern definition of "culture, " the one sociologists use to describe every kind of human interaction that is based upon custom and tradition, not just intellectual universityculture, prepackaged corporate product culture, or hardcore "youth culture. " To make my point clearer, I'll offer this quote from _ Icarus Was Right #3_ :

"_Culture_: a) the customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group, b) the set of shared attitudes, values, goals and practices that characterizes a defined group.

"Hopefully it is obvious after reading the above definition that a culture, any culture, is inherently evil and problematic. The fundamental error in defining one's actions and thoughts as part of a culture is that one ceases to be an individual and must instead conform, and force others to conform, to the predefined beliefs and values of a so-called "racial, religious, or social group" — eliminating the power of the individual."

What my friend was working on in this article is a critique of the way traditions shape our lives. "Culture" of any kind is made up of traditions, of patterns of action and interaction passed along from one person to the next. That is to say: culture itself consists of prescribed limitations upon the actions, interactions, and even thoughts of human beings. These limitations can be beneficial — for example, when they contain useful information for accomplishing practical tasks such as cooking — b$_u$t they can also be dangerous when they limit human beings in the wrong ways. Culture may be as benign as traditional Italian cuisine and as loathsome as the sexism and racism that is a fundamental part of many cultures. So it's easy to see how "culture, " by this definition, could be hostile to human happiness.

But culture is always a dangerous phenomenon, not Just when it teaches people sexism and racism. Because any given culture teaches certain values and ways of doing things, prescribing them as if they are right for everyone, but human beings are all different and have different needs. What is right for one person may not be right for the next, but each culture prescribes a certain set way of doing things. Any given culture may be right for some people at some point in their lives, but no culture is right for everyone, and, since people change, there is no guarantee that a particular culture will be right for a particular person for his or her entire life. Thus, any culture has the capability to interfere with human happiness by prescribing things for a person which are not right for them.

Of course it is impossible to eradicate culture from our lives. The idea itself is ridiculous — everything we are is a result of culture: without it, we wouldn 't even have language, wouldn 't be able to think about the world in the ways that we do. Besides, there are plenty of good things besides language and advanced tool-use that we could not have without the existence of culture: art movements, good cooking, literature, to name a few. The solution, instead, is to be wary of culture and tradition, to never accept them as given but to always choose what is right for you at the time and reject the rest. Keep a clear awareness of how your behavior, attitudes, and ideas are shaped by the culture or cultures around you. Perhaps you enjoy the more laid-back and romantic approach to life that is a part of Spanish culture, but you find their treatment of women despicable; or perhaps you appreciate the passionate music and social criticism of the punk "culture " but find that the dancing and funny clothing styles do nothing for you. Take what works for you and leave the rest — then there will be no danger that you

will be led astray by any culture. To quote the Situationists: "The supermarket of ideas, like any supermarket, is fit only for looting."

Today, when the United States, given world domination by its economic power, bulldozes over other cultures and replaces them with its own, there are many groups who oppose this angrily. They demand the freedom to choose their own culture and fight to protect their culture in the face of the encroachment of others. In doing this, they are fighting for the right to be restrained by their own traditions and customs: but what they should fight for is the right to be restrained by no traditions and

customs, to invent their ways of living and thinking according to their own needs and desires, and only take ideas and customs from any culture when those ideas and customs happen to be right for them. Culture has the capacity to play a positive, useful role in our lives, but first we must escape from its tyranny over us, which we have granted it with our blind acceptance of its constraints.

This is a really complicated topic, and deserves a great deal more discussion than this, but I appreciate you bringing it up, Jeremie. A more detailed analysis of this subject will appear in the second installment of _Harbinger, _ the free Crimethinc. propaganda tabloid, this sum

mer. A

-the editor

[Image not archived]

My Friends at Inside Front —

I received a copy of I.F. #10 (August 1997) from a friend. It is an excellent publication. A few comments regarding your columns:

I noticed that none of the columnists who wrote about prisons said anything about what has been called "the prison-industrial complex." By this is meant the drastic increase of prison construction, the privatization of prisons (more and more are built, managed, and maintained by private corporations with a private staff), the contracting out of prison labor to matter what one's mystical beliefs in yin-yang might say. Mussolini — as a good student of Machiavelli (and probably the Bolsheviks) — understood that a state must stand on the shoulders of the people ruled — and so must convince the people to do this. His method was to promote an ideology of a mystical dynamism of national imperialism — and a practice of precise mechanical control which made "the trains run on time." So we see that fascism is essentially: Statism, nationalism, imperialism, and efficient social control. The rhetorics of dynamism and naturism were devices to win people over — propaganda to convince people that fascism would make their lives more exciting. Anarchists have always opposed the state and imperialism, and have only occasionally slipped into the foolishness of nationalism. And, of course, efficient social control is the very opposite of the anarchist ideal. Nazism (national socialism) is a perfect example of the marriage of left-wing and right-wing authoritarianism. Claiming to be a workers' movement to abolish capitalism, it ingested all of Mussolini's fascism and added anti-Semitism and racism to the recipe. In this state only _one_ strong man was permitted and he was "alone" only because he stood on

the shoulders of the masses. And he was, in no sense, an individual — he was a role: the Fuhrer — the living incarnation of the German state... Again nature mysticism and an ideology of dynamism were used to win popular support — as was an ideology of the German people as victims of oppression (a very leftist, victimist ideology).

The practical history of fascism — the Italian fascists' devastation of North Africa and the Nazis' genocidal policies — are well known. The cliche about needing both wings to fly (which did not originate with an authoritarian cult leader, Manson) is all well and good, but you ain't

^M culture & the commodity they taunt us to buy into most of ull — it is the probuct thut makes us think toe neeb all the other probutts...

private corporations, and the consequent increase in the length of prison sentences, in the number of acts considered criminal, and in the number of acts considered felonious. By contracting prison labor out to private corporations, the government is providing another "third world" labor pool to corporate capitalism, one which allows the corporations to find cheap labor without leaving the first world. Of course, in the U.S., these corporations are supposed to pay the prisoners working for them minimum wage, but in practice this is paid to the prison institution and the prisoner usually only sees between seven cents and thirty five cents an hour of this. As more and more prisons are privatized, this becomes corporations paying themselves to maintain a cheap labor source... and it fits this trend to force prisoners to pay for their own prison stay because this would force them to work. Although the U.S. leads the way in this trend, it is to be found throughout Europe as well — Adidas, for example, has a contract with Hungary to use prisoners there to make sports equipment. I could go on to explain how this trend fits in with capitalism as it is developing in the cybernetic revolution, but that would take pages. Suffice it to say that I want the end of prisons, work, capitalism, and the technological system that created cybernetics — and _that_ requires a different sort of revolution.

On another matter altogether, Adel 156 is unquestionably intelligent and well-read, but his understanding of fascism is limited and smacks of artistic and mystical pretensions. What is utterly lacking in Adel's understanding is any historical understanding of fascism — including fascism s philosophical history. Most of the proto-fascist ideologies of the 19th century were reactionary monarchist movements. By the end of World War I such dreams no longer seemed possible, so it is no surprise that a leftwing revolutionary syndicalist would have to found the 20th century fascist movement. Mussolini — a socialist and syndicalist in the 1910's — moved to the right in an embrace of nationalism and Hegelian mysticism. His goal was to realize Hegel's ideal State in the Italian state — thus, statism is _the_ central factor in fascist philosophy — and, sorry Adel, there is no joining statism and total opposition to the state in a single praxis — no

gonna get off the ground when one wing is from a B-52 bomber and the other is from a raven...

There is a current of ideas, though, that opposes liberalism without embracing the disgusting authoritarianism of fascist ideology. This current runs through Sade, Stirner, Nietzsche, the Dadaists and Surrealists when they forgot to be leftists and artists, and the Situationists when they forgot to be Marxists. It begins with individuals and their desires and capabilities and, thus, opposes all states, all laws, and all leaders of the masses. It recognizes in every state — fascist or democratic or socialist — its enemy. It has neither right-wing nor left-wing because it is explicitly anti-political.

Fascism is *not* simply an artistic mystical, or philosophical idea — it is a real political movement aimed at creating the absolute State, and, as such, is always opposed to the individual freely creating his or her life in terms of his or her desires.

For free-spirited rebellion,

Wolfi Landstreicher

*Wolfi — *

Great letter. I can't add anything to that. Thanks!

-the editor

[Image not archived]

Dear Inside Front,

I like your magazine OK, you say some interesting stuff, but why don't you ever talk about veganism? I know you hate Earth Crisis, but don't you think that veganism has to be part of any revolution? Please tell me what you think about this.

-Scott, 1191 W. Oaks St., St. Louis, MO 63110

*Dear Scott, *

In Inside Front we talk much less about veganism per se than some other "hardcore 'zines " do because we see it as being neither a starting nor an ending point in any real critique of our society. Veganism is only one of many methods that an individual can choose to try to avoid participating in the violence of our capitalist economy; and frankly, it s not the most important one either.

What I find sorely lacking in most of the discussions of veganism I encounter in hardcore is any sense of economic context. Usually, the question of animal oppression is approached only in terms of compassion and prejudice: animals are exploited and destroyed, bands like Earth Crisis would have us believe, simply because we see them as subhuman and are willing to abuse them in order to satisfy our greed. I suspect that the problem runs much deeper than mere cruelty and avarice. Under capitalism, it's not just animals that are exploited — it's ev- ervone and everything from farmlands and forests to farmhands and grocery clerks. The oppression of animals is just a little more obvious to us because it involves the murder of living things; but it's not just animals that have been enslaved and transformed by our society, it's everything, ourselves included. Without an understanding of how and why our social/ economic system drives us to seek to dominate and exploit everything, we will not be able to alter the way animals are treated in any significant or long-lasting way.

Capitalism forces us to evaluate our environment and each other according to market value. Under the capitalist system, every man is encouraged to ask the question of

how useful the animals and people around him might be as economic resources in his competition with others. Everything becomes fair game for exploitation — because if you don t exploit something in the rush to gain the upper hand in the free market's "exchange of goods and services, " someone else will exploit it, and quite possibly use it to exploit you. Those who have realized this are not afraid to exploit animals or humans, to treat them as objects, because they believe that the alternative is to.be treated as objects and exploited by others themselves. In this way, capitalism divides us against each other and spurs on our destruction of the environment.

When I walk through the aisles at the supermarket, looking at all the products for sale around me, perhaps I can tell which ones are manufactured from the exploitation of animals, but I can't tell which ones — if $_{an}y__$ *are manufactured without exploiting anyone or anything. That is*

the conditions that have resulted in the widespread destruction and exploitation that characterize our world, we must work towards a complete overhauling of our economy — we must somehow escape from the vicious cycle of capitalism. The only way to fight capitalism is to undermine its assumptions: that happiness is having things ("the one who dies with the most toys wins 'j, that there is no realistic way to work with each other rather than competing against each other, that any other economic system means some kind of slavery (like the former communist U.S.S.R.). If these assumptions are untrue, which isn't hard to imagine; then it should be possible for us to create a different kind of economy and a different kind of world. If people start to conceive of happiness as the freedom to do things rather than have things, if they decide that they enjoy being generous more than being selfish, if they can imagine that it might be possible to create a society in which we work together for the good of everybody rather than against each other and the environment for (what advertisements claim is) our own good, then capitalism will ultimately fall.

In the meantime, rather than practising veganism, I practise "freeganism." I know that as long as I participate in the mainstream economy, whether I am buying vegan or non-vegan products, I am supporting the corporations which represent world capitalism. So rather than just buying animal-friendly products, I try to purchase as few products as possible. I've written about this in earlier issues of Inside Front: it is possible, through thrifty living, creative "urban hunting and gathering, " and projects like Food Not Bombs, to survive without contributing more than a minimal amount of money or labor to the mainstream economy. Anything I can get for free at the expense of the exploiting, oppressing capitalist system is a Strike against that system, while purchasing vegan food from Taco Bell (which is owned by Pepsi Co.) is still putting money into the hands of an oppressive, exploiting corporation. I live off of whatever resources I can scrounge or steal from our society, trying to avoid animal products when I can, but concentrating above all on keeping my money and labor out of of their hands. A willingness to pump money into the mainstream economy, which is responsible for the oppression of animals and humans and the destruction of the environment, through consumer spending (on fashionable athletic clothes, for example), is not compatible

with the professed goal of most people who follow a vegan diet, which is to end the exploitation of animals. That's why it strikes me as ridiculous that so many vegan activist bands like Earth

…£>o bo toe really town

to be a "poutl) culture?"

one of the biggest drawbacks about our modern mass-production/distri- bution/consumption economy: by the time the product has reached you, it is virtually impossible to tell who made it, how it was made, what it was made from, or where it has been. Toilet paper, canned kidney beans, and athletic shoes all sit on the shelves next to each other, as if they appeared out of the air, and it would be a long hard struggle to track down any real, sound information about the origins of any of them. But there are some things I do know, though, even if I can't research the life story of each individual packet of ramen noodles: there are migrant workers in this country who are underpaid and mistreated, there are corporations (like Pepsi) known for supporting totalitarian governments that mercilessly destroy human life, there are shoe manufacturers (like Nike) that underpay and mistreat foreign workers, there are companies (like Exxon) whose policies result in permanent damage to the environment. So the idea that you can be sure that your dollars are not financing anything inhumane or destructive just by examining the ingrediants of a product and ascertaining that it includes no animal products strikes me as absurd. There are a thousand other kinds of oppression, just as outrageous as animal oppression, that keep the wheels of our economy turning, and there is no reason to be less concerned about any of them than about animal oppression.

It seems to me that the long term solution to this problem is not just to buy vegan food and animal-friendly products. If we want to change

Crisis are willing to perpetuate fashion consciousness in hardcore by selling so much merchandise — and by speaking only about human cruelty rather than criticizing consumerism in general, they ignore the real causes of animal oppression.

There are some great things about veganism, by the way. First of all, if you can't bear to put anything into your body that was actually made from the corpse of another living being, veganism is a way to avoid that (although it DOES NOT magically confer the "innocence" of animal exploitation that hardline morons claim for themselves, as my discussion of capitalism and other forms of oppression should make clear). Also, it gives you a different relationship to the food you eat than most of us have: it makes you consider where it came from and what's in it, rather than just taking it for granted, and it also will probably make you a better cook! And finally, it brings up the issue for everybody. When you won't eat food unless you know what is in it, it forces the people around you to think for themselves about what is in the food and how it got there. In that way, veganism does more to change the world than writing lengthy political responses to letters ever could: it brings up important questions in everyday life and forces people think about questions that they wouldn't otherwise encounter.

-the editor

This last letter was not addressed to Inside Front. It is a personal letter front nty friend Axel, describing a trip to Mexico that I nearly took with hint. Ftn including it here because it embodies the spirit that Inside Front exists to promote: the desire to explore the world and experience everything it has to offer, the willingness to take risks and undergo hardship for a purpose, and the ability to learn about how our society works and think critically about it.

Brian —

It's the very end of my trip to Mejico. I crashed back into the first world yesterday. The part of me that was utterly confused with the chaos, litter, overflowing sewers, the language I only understood in fragments and the feeling of being an alien just by appearance, skin color, and lack of communication ability longed for the return while my conscience felt strangely sad. As if I was passing from a simpler working world into a mechanical robot world.

Hardcore punk. I missed it at times there but came to the conclusion that the Mejico I saw doesn't need it. I see it as a means for Western First World people to become culturally involved, beneath the shiny clean-brushed concrete advertising space. Most Mexican people seem to struggle with problems less abstract but more grave. You're thankful that your Spanish is quite bad if you can shrug your shoulders, saying •'No comprendre" to the malnourished, dirty six-year-old who's apparently begging for a Peso (about half a quarter).

Ironically, I only spent one day in San Cristobal de las Casas (the unofficial capital city of Chiapas). It's beautiful — ridden with tourists — and like most Mexican cities I've seen, located in a valley. Colorful houses and narrow cobblestone streets which are patrolled by heavily armed military in armored vehicles. EZLN graffiti is widespread. From the notso-pompous churches there which are built atop hills, the valley slopes are better visible, with shacks and hovels for the poor... mostly indigenous people who suffer from the feudalistic system of unfair property and landownership regulations. I'm sure you have heard about the massacre of the 22nd of December. Newspapers there barely reported it. Chiapas is the poorest state of Mejico, yet it has some of the richest assets (mainly good soils). Oh well.

Of course it has been insane. I spent about eight days traveling on some coaches — of a total of fourteen days... at least I managed to meet my friends. They praised the Cuban system in comparison with the widespread lumpen proletariat of Mejico, but [when they visited Cuba they] kind of escaped after spending about two months on the island without being able to buy stuff or travel around much.

So right now the culture shock is still freezing me. No more families with fifteen-year-old mothers with three kids, Indian traits, preHispanic ruins (and by the way, fuck the Spaniards — par un estupido ambicion), extreme Catholicism (I was appalled by the view of a cathedral in Oaxaca which was draped with a 2 mm. layer of gold inside — gringos filming the church with video cameras) — I was about to yell more than once at the people to bow down and seek refuge at the feet of a god who caused their misery, in whose name deeds were done that make you long for a Lucifer as an opposite

— and the obsession of the urban youth with Western trademarks (but why Tommy Hilfiger?? The true American patriot wear?) and heavy metal t-shirts. Oh, I got rid of the fever and the flu which got me in the south, pretty much spoiling my New Year's Eve (I lay in bed shivering and sweating in all my clothes feeling like I was having a bad trip). Anyway, I'm sitting here at Houston airport, stinking like somebody who didn't shower for six days, let alone having worn my clothes day and night for the last week. Think I'm going to return to see some more Latino American countries and probably Cuba, too.

Sorry this is a little chopped up and confused, but it's been a while since I saw (and lay in) a bed and had a decent meal. Just thought you'd like to hear what's on my mind about the trip. Greetings to Andrea and the Catharsis guys, too. There is no god!!*

Axel Orange

*Yeah, and fuck Abraxas, too.

Classified Ads

[Image not archived]

HERE AT CRIMETHINC. WE'RE STILL LOOKING FOR: the Diamanda Galas video or any other rare D. Galas recordings, old Amebix stuff or live tapes, the Trial 12" on Hipster (disappearing act) records, decent videos of Gehenna/Catharsis/Stalingrad/ Systral/Final Exit, information about or music (besides their 12"s) by Kriticka Situace or Headsman, Iron Horse root beer (or other obscure brands of independent soda), art- work/lyrics from G.I.S.M. records (I only have the discography bootleg) and the original Zygote record, and

FOR THAT MATTER — come to think of it, CrimethInc. always needs volunteers... if you're interested in contributing material or doing artwork, graphics, layout, production, etc., or you're willing to distribute any of our stuff/put up fliers/hand out pamphlets/hijack airplanes/etc., please get in touch with us and we'll share this undertaking with you.

"MAKE YOUR OWN" d.i.y. DISTRO — We're always looking for more stuff to distribute through our distro. Bands, zinemakers, distros, and labels are encouraged to communicate. Send us your wholesale rates and if possible a sample. We can pay upfront if your price is affordable for 3rd world punks and hardcore. Contact: M.Y.O. Zine & distro: c/o Gani & Adie, 146 A. Dela Cruz St., Tayabas 4327 Quezon, Philippines

NON-PROFIT T-SHIRTS: Septic Death, Spazz, Misfits, Circle Jerks. Six dollars post paid. Specify size. Sabrina, 1103 14th St. 31 A, Tuscaloosa, AL 35401.

The Di Visionaries "Breaking the Chains of Unity" demo, Monobrow Jones In The Spring "Flowers of Emo (a tribute to Charles Baudelaire)" 7", The Um-Louts "Punk in Finland" cassette, The Food Eaters "Bum Rush the Krishnas" picture disc 7" and "Subdued by Food" Lp, all available from E-vic-T Distribution, 101 W. Longview St., Chapel Hill, NC 27516, U$A.

FOR TRADE: Only the Strong 7", Breakdown 7", NFAA 7", Side by Side 7", Cro-Mags demo 10", Cro-Mags Euro tour shirts, Judge hooded sweat, Killing Time hooded

sweat. Wants: Integrity "Those Who" CD (Overkill), Integ/Mayday 7", Bloodbook color wax 7"s, Cro-Mags US tour shirts and loads more! Rich Camm, 36 Eden Vale, Sunderland, SR2 7NJ, ENGLAND.

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NO GODS

WHERE DOES THE IDEA OF "MORAL LAW" COME FROM?

Once upon a time, almost everyone believed in the existence of God. This God ruled over the world, He had absolute power over everything in it; and He had set down laws which all human beings had to obey. If they did not, they would suffer the most terrible of punishments at His hands. Naturally, most people obeyed the laws as well as

GOD IS DE AD-AND WITH HIM, MORAL LAW.

Without God, there is no longer any objective standard by which to judge good and evil. This realization was very troubling to philosophers a few decades ago, but it hasn't really had much of an effect in other circles. Most people still seem to think that a universal morality can be grounded in something other than God's laws: in what is good for people, in what is good for society, in what we feel called upon to do. But explanations of why these standards necessarily con-

they could, their fear of eternal suffering being stronger than their desire for anything forbidden. Because everyone lived according to the same laws, they could agree upon what "morality" was: it was the set of values decreed by God's laws. Thus, good and evil, right and wrong, were decided by the authority of God, which everyone accepted out of fear.

One day, people began to wake up and realize that there was no such thing as God after all. There was no scientific evidence to demonstrate his existence, and few people could see any point in having faith in the irrational any longer. God pretty much disappeared from the world; nobody feared him or his punishments anymore.

But a strange thing happened. Though these people had the courage to question God's existence, and even deny it to the ones who still believed in it, they didn't dare to question the morality that His laws had mandated. Perhaps it just didn't occur to them; everyone had been raised to hold the same beliefs about what was moral, and had come to speak about right and wrong in the same way, so maybe they just assumed it was obvious what was good and what was evil whether God was there to enforce it or not. Or perhaps people had become to used to living under these laws that they were afraid to even consider the possibility that the laws didn't exist any more than God did.

This left humanity in an unusual position: though there was no longer an authority to decree certain things absolutely right or wrong, they still accepted the idea that some things were right or wrong by nature. Though they no longer had faith in a deity, they still had faith in a universal moral code that everyone had to follow. Though they no longer believed in God, they were not yet courageous enough to stop obeying His orders;

they had abolished the idea of a divine ruler, but not the divinity of His code of ethics. This unquestioning submission to the laws of a long-departed heavenly master has been a long nigh mare from which the human race is only just now beginning to awaken.

tute "universal moral law" are hard to come by. Usually, the arguments for the existence of moral law are emotional rather than rational: "But don't you think rape is wrong?" moralists ask, as if a shared opinion were a proof of universal truth. "But don't you think people need to believe in something greater than themselves?" they appeal, as if needing to believe in something can make it true. Occasionally, they even resort to threats: "but what would happen if everyone decided that there is no good or evil? Wouldn't we all kill each other?"

The real problem with the idea of universal moral law is that it asserts the existence of something that we have no way to know anything about. Believers in good and evil would have us believe that there are "moral truths"-that is, there are things that are morally true of this world, in the same way that it is true that the sky is blue. They claim that it is true of this world that murder is morally wrong just as it is true that water freezes at thirty two degrees. But we can investigate the freezing temperature of water scientifically: we can measure it and agree together that we have arrived at some kind of objective truth.* On the other hand, what do we observe if we want to investigate whether it is true that murder is evil? There is no tablet of moral law on a mountaintop for us to consult, there are no commandments carved into the sky above us; all we have to go on are our own instincts and the words of a bunch ot priests and other self-appointed moral experts, many of whom don't even agree. As for the words of the priests and moralists, if they can't offer any hard evidence from this world, why should we believe their claims? And regarding our instincts-if we feel that something is right or wrong, that may make it right or wrong for us, but that's not proof that it is *universally* good or evil. Thus, the idea that there are universal moral laws is mere superstition, it is a claim that things exist in this world which we can never actually experience or learn anything about. And we would do well not to waste our time wondering about things we can never know anything about. When two people fundamentally disagree over what is right or wrong, there is no way to resolve the debate. There is nothing in this world to which they can refer to see which one is correct-because there really are no universal moral laws, just personal eva — uations. So the only important question is where your val

☒That is, insofar as it is possible to speak of objective truth, for you post-modernist motherfuckers!

ues come from: do you create them yourself, according to your own k desires, or do you accept them from someone else...someone else who has disguised their opinions as "universal truths"?

Haven't you always been a little suspicious of the idea of universal moral truths, anyway? This world is filled with groups and individuals who want to convert you to

their religions, their dogmas, their political agendas, their opinions. Of course they will tell you that one W set of values is true for everybody, and of course they will tell you that their values are the correct ones. Once you're convinced that there is only one standard of right and wrong, they're only a step away from convincing you that their standard is the right one. How carefully we should *K* approach those who would sell us the idea of "universal moral law, " then! > Their claim that morality is a matter of universal law is probably just a sneaky # way to get us to accept their values rather than forging our own, which might » conflict with theirs.

So, to protect ourselves from the superstitions of the moralists and the trickery of the evangelists, let us be done with the idea of moral law. Let us step forward into a new era, in which we will make values of our own rather than accepting moral

i laws out of I fear and | o b e d i — I ence. Let ' this be our

new creed:

BUT IF THERE'S NO GOOD OR EVIL, IF NOTHING HAS ANY INTRINSIC MORAL VALUE, HOW DO WE KNOW WHAT TO DO?

Make your own good and evil. If there is no moral law standing over us, that means we're free-free to do whatever we want, free to be whatever we want, free to pursue our desires without feeling any guilt or shame about them. Figure out what it is you want in your life, and go for it; create whatever values are right for you, and live by them. It won't be easy, by any means; desires pull in different directions, they come and go without warning, so keeping up with them and choosing among them is a difficult task-of course obeying instructions is easier, less complicated. But if we just live our lives as we have been instructed to, the chances are very slim that we will get what we want out of life: each of us is different and has different needs, so how could one set of "moral truths" work for each of us? If we take responsibility for ourselves and each carve our own table of values, then we will have a fighting chance of attaining some measure of happiness. The old moral laws are left over from days when we lived in fearful submission to a nonexistent God, anyway; with their departure, we can rid ourselves of all the cowardice, submission, and superstition that has characterized our past.

Some misunderstand the claim that we should pursue our own desires to be mere hedonism. But it is not the fleeting, insubstantial desires of the typical libertine that we are speaking about here. It is the strongest, deepest, most lasting desires and inclinations of the individual: it is her most fundamental loves and hates that should shape her values. And the fact that there is no God to demand that we love one another or act virtuously does not mean that we should not do these things for our own sake, if we find them

rewarding, which almost all of us do. But let us do what we do for our own sake, not out of obedience to some deity or moral code!

BUT HOW CAN WE JUSTIFY ACTING ON OUR ETHICS, IF WE CAN'T BASE THEM ON UNIVERSAL MORAL TRUTHS?

Morality has been something justified externally for so long that today we hardly know how to conceive of it in any other way. We have always had to claim that our values proceeded from something external to us, because basing values on our own desires was (not surprisingly!) branded evil by the preachers of moral law. Today we still feel instinctively that our actions must be justified by something outside of ourselves, something "greater" than ourselves-if not by God, then by moral law, state law, public opinion, justice, "love of man, " etc. We have been so conditioned by centuries of asking permission to feel things and do things, of being forbidden to base any decisions on our own needs, that we still want to think we are obeying some higher power even when we act on our own desires and beliefs; somehow, it seems more defensible to act out of submission to some kind of authority than in the service of our own inclinations. We feel so ashamed of our own aspirations and desires that we would rather attribute our actions to something "higher" than them. But what could be greater than our own desires, what could possibly provide better justification for our actions? Should we be serving something external without consulting our desires, perhaps even *against* our desires?

This question of justification is where so many hardcore bands have gone wrong. They attack what they see as injustice not on the grounds that they don't want to see such things happen, but on the grounds that it is "morally wrong." By doing so, they seek the support of everyone who still believes in the fable of moral law, and they get to see themselves as servants of the Truth. These hardcore bands should not be taking advantage of popular delusions to make their points, but should be challenging assumptions and questioning traditions in everything they do. An improvement in, for example, animal fights, which is achieved in the name of justice and morality, is a step forward at the cost of two steps back: it solves one problem while reproducing and reinforcing another. Certainly such improvements could be fought for and attained on the grounds that they are *desirable* (nobody who truly considered it would really *want* to needlessly slaughter and mistreat animals, would they?), rather than with tactics leftover from Christian superstition. Unfortunately, because of centuries of conditioning, it feels so good to feel justified by some "higher force, " to be obeying "moral law, " to be enforcing "justice" and fighting "evil" that these bands get caught up in their role as moral enforcers and forget to question whether

the idea of moral law makes sense in the first place. There is a sensation of power that comes from believing that one is serving a higher authority, the same one that attracts people to fascism. It's always tempting to paint any struggle as good against evil, right against wrong; but that is not just an oversimplification, it is a falsification: for no such things exist. We can act compassionately towards each other because we *want* to, not just because "morality dictates, " you know! We don't need any justification from above to care about animals and humans, or to act to protect them. We need only to feel in our hearts that it is right, that it is right for *us, * to have all the reason we need. Thus we can justify acting on our ethics without basing them on moral truths simply by not being ashamed of our desires: by

being proud enough of them to accept them for what they are, as the forces that drive us as individuals. And our own values might not be right for everyone, it's true; but they are all each of us has to go on, so we should dare to act on them rather than wishing for some impossible greater justification.

BUT WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF EVERYONE DECIDED THAT THERE IS NO GOOD OR EVIL? WOULDN'T WE ALL KILL EACH OTHER?

This question presupposes that people refrain from killing each other only because they have been taught that it is evil to do so. Is humanity really so absolutely bloodthirsty and vicious that we would all rape and kill each other if we weren't restrained by superstition? It seems more likely to me that we desire to get along with each other at least as much as we desire to be destructive-don't you usually enjoy helping others more than you enjoy hurting them? Today, most people claim to believe that compassion and fairness are morally right, but this has done little to make the world into a compassionate and fair place. Might it not be true that we would act upon our natural inclinations to human decency more, rather than less, if we did not feel that charity and justice were obligatory? What would it really be worth, anyway, if we did all fulfill our "duty" to be good to each other, if it was only because we were obeying moral imperatives? Wouldn't it mean a lot more for us to treat each other with consideration because we *want* to, rather than because we feel required to?

And if the abolition of the myth of moral law somehow causes more strife between human beings, won't that still be better than living as slaves to superstitions? If we make our own minds up about what our values are and how we will live according to them, we at least will have the chance to pursue our desires and perhaps enjoy life, even if we have to struggle against each other. But if we choose to live according to rules set for us

by others, we sacrifice the chance to choose our destinies and pursue our dreams. No matter how smoothly we might get along in the shackles of moral law, is it worth the abdication of our self determination? I wouldn't have the heart to lie to a fellow human being and tell him he had to conform to some ethical mandate whether it was in his best interest or not, even if that lie would prevent a conflict between us. Because I care about human beings, I want them to be free to do what is right for them. Isn't that more important than mere peace on earth? Isn't fre dom, even dangerous freedom, preferable to the safest slavery, to peace bought with ignorance, cowardice, and submission?

Besides, look back at our history. So much bloodshed, deception, and oppression has already been perpetrated ir) the name of right and wrong. The bloodiest wars have been fought between opponents who each thought they were fighting on the side of moral truth. The idea of moral law doesn't help us get along, it turns us against each other, to contend over whose moral law is the "true" one. There can be no real progress in human relations until everyone's perspectives on ethics and values are acknowledged; then we can finally begin to work out our differences and learn to live together, without fighting over the absolutely stupid question of whose values and desires are "right." For your own sake, for the sake of humanity, cast away the antiquated notions of good and evil and create your values for yourself!

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If you liked school, you'll love work. The cruel, absurd abuses of power, the self-satisfied authority that the teachers and principals lorded over you, the intimidation and ridicule of your classmates don't end at graduation. Those things are all present in the adult world, only more so. If you thought you lacked freedom before, wait until you have to answer to shift leaders, managers, owners, landlords, creditors, tax collectors, city councils, draft boards, law courts, and police. When you get out of school you may escape the jurisdiction of some authorities, but you enter the control of even more domineering ones. Do you enjoy being controlled by others who don't understand or care about your wants and needs? Do you get anything out of obeying the instructions of employers, the restrictions of landlords, the laws of magistrates, people who have powers over you that you would never have given them willingly? And how is it that they get all this power? The answer is hierarchy.

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Hierarchy is a value system in which your worth measured by the number of people and things you control, and how well you obey those above you. Weight is exerted downward through the power structure: everyone is forced to accept and conform to this system by everyone else. You're afraid to disobey those above you because they can bring to bear against you the power of everyone and everything under them. You're afraid to abdicate your power over those below you because they might end up above

you. In our hierarchal system, we're all so busy trying to protect ourselves from each other that we never have a chance to stop and think if this is really the best way our society could be organized. If we could think

probably agree that it isn't; for we all know happiness comes from control over our own lives, not other people's lives. And as long as we're busy competing for control over others, we're bound to be the victims of control ourselves. Even the ones at the very top of the ladder are controlled by their position: they have to work around the clock to maintain it. One false move, and they could end up at the bottom.

It is our hierarchal system that teaches us from childhood to accept the power of any authority figure, regardless of whether it is in our best interest or not. We learn to bow instinctively before anyone who claims to be more important than we are. It is hierarchy that makes homophobia common among poor people in the U.S.A.- they're desperate to feel more valuable, more significant than somebody. It is hierarchy at work when two hundred hardcore kids go to a rock club (already a mistake, but that's a subject for another article) to see a band, and for some stupid reason the clubowner won't let them perform: there are two hundred and six people at the club, two hundred and five of whom want the band to play, but they all accept the decision of the clubowner just because he is older and owns the place (i.e. has more financial clout, and thus more legal clout). It is hierarchal values that are responsible for racism ("white people are better than black people"), classism ("rich people are better than poor people"), sexism ("men are better than women"), and a thousand other prejudices that are deeply ingrained in our society. It is hierarchy that makes rich people look at poor people as if they aren't even human, and vice versa. It pits employer against employee, manager against worker, teacher against student, making people struggle against each other rather than work together to help each other; separated this way, they can't benefit from each other's skills and ideas and abilities, but must live in jealousy and fear of them. It is hierarchy at work when your boss insults you or

> you can't do anything about it, just as it is when police flaunt their power over you. For power does make people cruel and heartless, and submission does make people cowardly and stupid: and most people in a hierarchal system partake in both. Hierarchal values are responsible for our destruction of the natural environment and the exploitation of animals: led by the capitalist West, our species seeks control over anything we can get our claws on, at any cost to ourself or others. And it is hierarchal values that send us to war, fighting for power over each other, inventing more and more powerful weapons until finally the whole world teeters on the edge of nuclear annihiliation.
>
> But what can we do about hierarchy? Isn't that just the way the world works? Or are there other ways that people could interact, other values we could live by?

HIERARCHY... AND ANARCHY.

Resurrecting anarchism as a personal approach to life.

Stop thinking of anarchism as just another "world order, " just another social system. From where we all stand, in this very dominated, very controlled world, it is impossible to imagine living without any authorities, without laws or governments. No wonder anarchism isn't usually taken seriously as a large- scale political or social program: no one can imagine what it would really be like, let alone how to achieve it-not even the anarchists themselves.

Instead, think of anarchism as an individual orientation to yourself and others, as a personal approach to life. That isn't impossible to imagine. Conceived in these terms, what would anarchism be? It would be a decision to think for yourself rather than following blindly. It would be a rejection of hierarchy, a refusal to accept the "god given" authority of any nation, law, or other force as being more significant than your own authority over yourself. It would be an instinctive distrust of those who claim to have some sort of rank or status above the others around them, and an unwillingness to claim such status over others for yourself. Most of all, it would be a refusal to place responsibility for yourself in the hands of others: it would be the demand that each of us be able to choose our own destiny.

According to this definition, there are a great deal more anarchists than it seemed, though most wouldn't refer to themselves as such. For most people, when they think about it, want to have the right to live their own lives, to think and act as they see fit. Most people trust themelves to figure out what they should do more than they trust any authority to dictate it to them. Almost everyone is frustrated when they find themselves pushing against faceless, impersonal power.

You don't want to be at the mercy of governments, bureaucracies, police, or other outside forces, do you? Surely you don't let them dictate your entire life. Don't you do what you want to, what you believe in, at least whenever you can get away with it? In our everyday lives, we all are anarchists.

Whenever we make decisions for ourselves, whenever we take responsibility for our own actions rather than deferring to some higher

power, we are putting anarchism into practise.

So if we are all anarchists by nature, why do we always end up accepting the domination of others, even creating forces to rule over us? Wouldn't you rather figure out how to coexist with your fellow human beings by working it out directly between yoursleves, rather than depending on some external

set of rules? Remember, the system they accept is the one you must live under: if you want your freedom, you can't afford to not be concerned about whether those around you demand control of their lives or not.

Do we really need masters to command and control us?

In the West, for thousands of years, we have been sold centralized state power and hierarchy in general on the premise that we do. We've all been taught that without police, we would all kill each other; that without bosses, no work would ever get done; that without governments, civilization itself would fall to pieces. Is all this true?

Certainly, it's true that today little work gets done when the boss isn't watching, chaos ensues when governments fall, and violence sometimes occurs when the police aren't around. But are these really indications that there is no other way we could organize society?

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Isn't it possible that workers won't get anything done unless they are under observation because they are used to not doing anything without being prodded-more than that, because they resent being inspected, instructed, condescended to by their managers, and don't want to do anything for them that they don't have to? Perhaps if they were working together for a common goal, rather than being paid to take orders, working towards objectives that they have no say in and that don't interest them much, they would be more proactive. Not to say that everyone is ready or able to do such a thing today; but our laziness is conditioned rather than natural, and in a different environment, we might find that people don't need bosses to get

won't discuss the ways in which the role of "law enforcer" brings out the most brutal aspects of human beings, and how police brutality doesn't exactly contribute to peace. How about the effects on civilians living in a police-protected state? Once the police are no longer a difect manifestation of the desires of the community they serve (and that happens quickly, whenever a police force is established: they become a force external to the rest of society, an outside authority), they are a force acting coercively on the people of that society. Violence isn't just limited to physical harm: any relationship that is established by force, such as the one between police and civilians, is a violent relationship. When you are acted upon violently, you learn to act violently back. Isn't it possible, then, that the implicit threat of police on every street corner-of the near omnipresence of uniformed, impersonal representatives of state power-contributes to tension and violence, rather than dispelling them? If that doesn't seem likely to you, and you

are middle class and/or white, ask a poor black or hispanic man how the presence of police makes him feel.

When the standard forms of human interaction all revolve around hierarchal power, when human intercourse so often comes down to giving and receiving orders (at work, at school, in the family, in legal courts), how can we expect to have no violence in our system? People are used to using force against each other in their daily lives, the force of authoritarian power; of course using physical force cannot be far behind in such a system. Perhaps if we were more used to treating each other as equals, to creating relationships based upon equal concern for each other's needs, we wouldn't see so many people resort to physical violence against each other.

And what about government control? Without it, would our society fall into pieces, and our lives with it? Certainly, things would be a great deal different without governments than they are now-but is that necessarily a bad thing? Is our modern society really the best of all possible worlds? Is it worth it to grant masters and rulers so much control over our lives, out of fear of trying anything different?

Besides, we can't claim that we need government control to prevent mass bloodshed, because it is governments that have perpetrated the greatest slaughters of all: in wars, in holocausts, in the centrally organized enslaving and obliteration of entire peoples and cultures. And it may be that when governments break down, many people lose their lives in the resulting chaos and infighting. But this fighting is almost always between other power-hungry hierarchal groups, other would-be governors and rulers. If we were to reject hierarchy absolutely, and refuse to serve any force above ourselves, there would no longer be any large scale wars or holocausts. That would be a responsibility each of us would have to take on equally, to collectively refuse to recognize any power as worth serving, to swear allegiance to nothing but ourselves and our fellow human beings. But if we all were to do it, we would never see another world war again.

• Of course, even if a world entirely without hierarchy is possible, we should not have any illusions that any of us will live to see it realized. That should not even be our concern: for it is foolish to arrange your life so that it revolves around something that you will never be able to experience. We should; rather, recognize the patterns of submission and domination in our own lives, and, to the best of our ability, break free of them. We should put the anarchist ideal (no masters, no slaves) into effect in our daily lives however we can. Every time one of us remembers not to accept the authority of the powers that be at face value, each time one of us is able to escape the system of domination for a moment (whether it is by getting away

with something forbidden by a teacher or boss, relating to a member of a different social stratum as an equal, etc.), that is a victory for the individual and a blow against hierarchy.

Do you still believe that a hierarchy-free society is impossible?

There are plenty of examples throughout human history: the bushmen of the Kalahari desert still live together without authorities, never trying to force or command each other to do things, but working together and granting each other freedom

and autonomy. Sure, their society is being destroyed by our more warlike one-but that isn't to say that an egalitarian society could not exist that was extremely hostile to, and well- defended against, the encroachments of external power! William Burroughs writes about an anarchist pirates' stronghold a hundred years ago that was just that.

If you need an example closer to your daily life, remember the last time you gathered with your friends to relax on a Friday night. Some of you brought food, some of you brought entertainment, some provided other things, but nobody kept track of who owed what to whom. You did things as a group and enjoyed yourselves; things actually got done, but nobody was forced to do anything, and nobody assumed the position of chief. We have these moments of non-capitalist, non-coer- cive, non-hierarchal interaction in our lives constantly, and these are the times when we most enjoy the company of others, when we get the most out

of other people; but somehow it doesn't occur to us to demand that our society work this way, as well as our friendships and love affairs. Sure, it's a lofty goal to ask that it does-but let's dare to reach for high goals, let's not fucking settle for anything less than the best in our lives! Each of us only gets a few years on this planet to enjoy life; let's try to work together to do it, rather than fighting amongst each other for miserable prizes like status and power.

"Anarchism " is the revolutionary idea that no one is more qualified than you are to decide what your life will be.

— It means trying to figure out how to work *together* to meet our individual needs, how to work *with* each other rather than "for" or against each other. And when this is impossible, it means preferring strife to submission and domination.

— It means not valuing any system or ideology above the people it purports to serve, not valuing anything theoretical above the *real things* in this World.

It means being faithful to real jiuman beings (and animals, etc.}, fighting for ourselves and for each other, not out of "responsibility, " not for "causes" or other intangible concepts.

— It means not forcing your desires into a hierarchal order, either, but accepting and embracing all of them, accepting yourself. It means not trying to force the self to abide by any external laws, not trying to restrict your emotions to the predictable or the practical, not pushing your instincts and desires into boxes: for there is no cage large enough to accomodate the human soul in all its flights, all its heights and depths.

— It means refusing to put the responsibility for your happiness in anyone else's hands, whether that be parents, lovers, employers, or society itself. It means taking the pursuit of meaning and joy in your own life upon your own shoulders.

For what else should we pursue, if not happiness? If something isn't valuable because we find meaning and joy in it, then what could possibly make it important? How dould abstractions like "responsibility. " "order, " or "propriety" possibly be more important than the real needs of the people who invented them? Should we serve employers, parents, the State, God, capitalism, moral law before ourselves? Who was it that taught you we should, anyway?

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Reinventing our Surroundings/ Reinventing our lives

Greg Bennick

KABINDA, ZAIRE — In a move IBM offices are hailing as a major step in the company's ongoing worldwide telecommunications revolution, M'wana Ndeti, a member of Zaire's Bantu tribe, used an IBM global uplink network modem yesterday to crush a nut. Ndeti, who spent 20 minutes trying to open the nut by hand, easily cracked it open while smashing it repeatedly with the powerful modem.

"I could not crush the nut by myself said the 47-year-old Ndeti, who added the savory' nut to a thick, peanut-based soup minutes later. "With IBM's help, I was able to break it." Ndeti discovered the nut-breaking 56K V.34 modem yesterday, when IBM was shooting a commercial in his southwestern Zaire village. During a break in shooting, which shows African villagers eagerly teleconferencing via computer with Japanese school children, Ndeti snuck onto the set and took the modem, which he believed would serve well as a "smashing" utensil.

IBM officials were not surprised the longtime computer giant was able to provide Ndeti with practical solutions to his everyday problems. "Our telecommunications systems offer people all over the world global networking solutions to fit their spe- Herbert Ross, IBM's director of marketing. " Whether you 're a j *nun cloistered in an Italian abbey, or an Aborigine in Australia's Great Sandy Desert, * V* IBM has the ideas to get you where you want to go today."

*According to Ndeti, * B* of the modem's many powerful features, most impressive was its hard plastic casing, which easily sustained several minutes of vigorous pounding against a large stone. "I put the nut on a rock, and I hit it with the modem, " Ndeti said. "The modem did not break. It is a good modem." Ndeti was so impressed with the modem that he purchased a new state-of-the-art IBM workstation, complete with a Pentium processor, a 24X CD-ROM drive and three 16 bit ethernet working connectors. The tribesman has already made good use of the computer system, fashioning a gazelle trap out of its wires, a boat anchor out of the monitor and a crude but effective weapon from its mouse.

"This is a good computer, " said Ndeti, carving up a just-captured gazelle with the computer's flat, sharp internal processing device. "I am using every part of it. I will cook this gazelle on the keyboard." Hours later, Ndeti capped off his delicious gazelle dinner by smoking the computer's 200-page owner's manual.

IBM spokespeople praised Ndeti's choice of computers. "We are pleased that the Bantu people are turning to IBM for their business needs, " said company CEO William Allaire. "From Kansas City' to Kinshasa, IBM is bringing the world closer together. Our cutting edge technology is truly creating a global village."

This column is intended for readers who are willing to take risks. It is aimed at those who are excited by the idea of looking beyond their immediate surroundings in order to expand their modes of thought, and in turn, their depth of life experience. If, dear reader, you are of the sort who does not enjoy taking risks or feeling more thoroughly fulfilled in this life, then, aside from asking you why you are reading Inside Front in the first place, I will ask that you skip this

column and go straight to the ads. Examine the ads without conscious thought. Look at the eye-catching photos and graphics. Purchase and consume the products advertised there. Continue "living" as you have been, by others rules, and for God's sake, please have a nice day.

For the rest of you, thanks for taking a chance with these words...

I die regularly. I have moments of total terror which are so overwhelming that I can do nothing except endure the nothingness until movement and feeling return to me. These moments often come at night, when there is no escape. To realize that some aspect of my life has stagnated, and that I have been wasting time which needed to be spent more effectively or intensely is what brings the episodes on. The moments of fear are a combination of physical and emotional negation... of total paralysis. These are moments rooted in the fear of death, the recognition and acceptance of death, and the related identification of the value and experience of life. They are moments of rebirth, and as terrifying and uncomfortable as they are, they hold the promise of renewed hope for the future.

My friend Kevin used to call this a "paradigm shift, " a term which I have come to learn is actually used relatively often, but one which I always attribute to Kevin's own wisdom whenever it appears before me. I respect that wisdom because Kevin knew the value of life and what it meant to have life slowly slip away. I met Kevin when I was

going to school at Syracuse University in New York. Syracuse and I were definitely not meant for one another and I knew that right from the start. The social scene there didn't interest me... the students there were alien to me... the living situation (a twenty story dorm building with little cubicle enclosures to live in) was boring to me. It wasn't a good situation. On the first night of school, after a day of orientations and other idiotic pleasantries, I found myself on the top floor of the sky-rise dorm I was made to live in, in the midst of a large group meeting at which all of the resident advisors for the dorm were explaining to all of us freshmen the rules and regulations of college life. The speeches went on and on and eventually I thought I was really going to lose my mind, when one of the speakers made reference to growing up in a two car garage family. Nothing strange there, but a new student raised his hand and asked something odd (but with serious intent) about whether or not the speaker actually lived in a two car garage, or if the family just had a two car garage. An unusual question, enough to break me out of my temporary snooze to look up in confusion. My eyes met a kid's across the room who had looked up with the same puzzled look on his face, and we shared a smile and a shrug. The kid was Kevin Costello. Our friendship just rolled from there.

We spent a lot of time hanging out throughout that year at school (our first and only Syracuse University year) and the entire time was spent questioning the patterns applied to us endlessly by the school and its inhabitants. We both struggled to maintain a degree of independence. Throughout that year, I realized that Kevin's outlook on life was forged by the fact that he had been living with cancer since his high school years. It never beat him psychologically, and the physical elements of it only served to strengthen his mind and his overall resolve. He died in New Hampshire on September 20 1996 at the age of 25 after his decade-long battle. We used to talk about health issues and the effect a sudden change in health has on your outlook on life. Kevin's terming of the psychological/physical temporary death as a paradigm shift was a reference to the sudden awareness that the rules by which the world regularly exists didn't apply any longer... the realization that you had to work from that point onward to redefine the world as it is rather than as you had assumed it was. It is exactly the moment of terror I described earlier. A combined sad acknowledgment of an end point and a frightened, reluctant recognition of a beginning at the same time. Why is it that it takes moments of despair like these for us to recognize the inherent patterns in our own lives? Why does it take the potential loss of life for us to see that life has value and that it is not only worth living, but that to live to full potential is the only option? I no longer feel that the forces to change the paradigm always need to be external, like they were for us that year at Syracuse.

Taking control of your life means making active choices. Making active choices means taking risks, and taking risks through confronting challenges is the end point of an internal rather than external process. The issue is one of actually initiating

situations, rather than waiting for them to happen. We are surrounded by traditional forms: days of

the week occurring in sequence; day jobs which make each day exactly the same as the one before and the one after; homes and places to live which make it easy to be static and boring in terms of movement or discovery of new territory. I could list the examples for another ten pages. Just look around the room you are sitting in right now. How do you view the surroundings encasing you? How do you view the tools at your disposal? Are you even seeing the items around you as tools? Or have you just always assumed them to be baggage, weight, surplus, non-functional items? Taking the time and making the effort to see with new .eyes, so to speak, is a risk in and of itself, and since what might be a risk for one person might be standard and commonplace to another, only the individual knows what his/her limits are and what boundaries need to be pushed in order to move past the accepted norms. What are determination and commitment, or conviction and dedication other than fuel for risk-taking and motivators for continual personal change and development? They are not to be taken for granted. The moment itself, and the potential value of a life fully lived are the only forces necessary to inspire a paradigm shift. Every moment brings new conditions and influences into play. As the forms of the past are continually reexamined and redefined, there comes a flow of development which builds upon any new realizations. Ideas lead to new ideas and so on, like an inverse pyramid. The newly found perspectives last longer within this process than if they were simple momentary glimpses to be forgotten as the seconds roll by. Each moment now influences the next rather than only being remembered as individual failure much later on into the future in the midst of an episode of late-night terror-eternity.

Here is an example which describes the use of new.

perspectives on old forms (and is also an excuse for me to tell another story about my travels in India! — check Inside Front # 9 and #10 for the entire story). I thought of including this after typing out the story of Ndeti above, who took a physical creation, the computer, and used his own initiative to adapt it to his own needs. If there is a point to this article as a whole, it is that our lives are just as tangible an object as that computer in their ability to be adapted and transformed into something greater than what we have come to decide they are.

When I was traveling in India, I had a few basic first aid essentials in my backpack — you know, the type of things you throw into a pack because you are supposed to even though you never end up using them along the way. Well, the same was true for my time in India: no injuries involving blood or gore, and the first aid gear was just added baggage for the trip. When I reached Northern India (MacLeod Ganj) and situated myself for a few weeks rather than rushing around to new places every day, I forgot about the first aid equipment entirely.

One day, while walking with my new monk friend Mi Pam, I saw a Hindi woman standing by the side of the path, begging for food or for the rupees she could use to buy food. She looked like countless other people in India in that she was dressed in

scraps of cloth, with a small metal bowl resting in one hand, a small stick for a cane, and the other hand out- stretched, palm up. She looked very old

and seemed to be speaking in a quiet whimpering voice.

Most of those searching for alms in India let you know for sure that they are needing your generosity, but this woman didn't seem to have that same intensity. I tossed about ten rupees into the bowl and was going to just walk on away from the woman, having achieved what I felt to be the end of a simple interaction, when my eyes happened to meet hers. I realized that she was crying, and that the timid voice I was hearing actually was her making tiny whimpering noises alternating with bits of Hindi spoken between breaths.

I asked Mi Pam if he could ask her why she was crying. He translated (though his Hindi was not very good) that she had just been bitten by a dog! As she talked, she lifted her saree (dress/wrap around garment) to reveal a fresh wound on her leg at shin level about the size of a dime with blood trickling down to her ankle. I looked back up to her face and saw that the look in her eyes registered fear more than anything else. I noticed that the hand which held her bowl was shaking, and I suddenly began to think that the woman might be going into shock or something.

I turned to Mi Pam in confusion, asking him what to do: was there a clinic nearby? He told me no, that since it was Saturday, that there was no medical attention available anywhere. I freaked. Here in front of me on one side was a woman who was getting increasingly upset and frightened as she sensed my confusion, on the other side was Mi Pam, standing peaceful and monk-like, also not sure of what to do, and all around us, a little crowd was beginning to form of Tibetan, Indian and Western onlookers, wondering why this ancient woman was crying at the hands of the frantic white western tourist (me!).

That is when I remembered the first aid kit in my backpack! I turned to the woman and gently asked her to move over to this big rock on the side of the path and sit down for a moment. I motioned to her that I would be back in one minute, and I hoped that the translation in pantomime reached her because she looked so very afraid, with tears now streaming down her face. As I started to run back to my

[Image not archived]

guest-house room, I ask called back to Mi Pam to try and find a fluent interpreter. I was back to the woman in about three minutes, having run up three Hights of stairs in order to tear through my pack for the first aid supplies.

The translator Mi Pam found was a fat Indian man, a rich man — evidenced by the fact that, aside from having money enough to at more than his share, he had a home of his own along side of the path where we were sitting. He stood by with a disinterested look on his face as I started to tell him that the woman had been bitten by a dog a few minutes before. He cut me off after that much, saying "I know...I know...I saw it happen." He saw it happen?' He did nothing because the woman was a beggar and he

was wealthy. I turned away from him and back to the woman who was trembling and looking around, overwhelmed by all the people who had surrounded her by this point. I knelt down in front of her and without much of a clue as to what the proper thing was to do, began to inspect the wound. Aside from my surprise at how deep the bite was, I was also hit by the smell of the woman's long unclean skin. I take cleanliness for granted as a Westerner. It is a supposed need for us all. To this woman of course, to be clean would have been a luxury she would worry about after being fed and having a place to live for the night. I told the Indian rich guy to tell the woman that the cleaning I was doing to the bite area might sting a little bit, but that it would disinfect the wound and that she'd be fine. He started asking me questions about the first aid kit and about training, trying to establish contact between us as privileged rather j than accepting that we were tending to the "untouchable." I ignored him, and told him to please tell her what I had asked fl him to. He reluctantly did. I had the man tell her to go to the local dispensary as soon as she could in case the dog was rabid. He responded that "Yes... I know the dog that did this. It is a bitch and should be shot." Again, I had to redirect him to the issue at hand.

After I had cleaned and put a bandage on the wound, the man told me that the woman "would be all right" because he had told her to go to the local clinic as soon as she could. I dismissed him, and helped the woman stand up. She had stopped crying and was noticeably calmer.

Mi Pam and I walked her slowly down to the center of town where she repeated the word "namaste" (nah-mah-STAY) a half a dozen times as we said our goodbye and slowly walked away.

The next morning, I was walking down the street, when I heard a call of "Namaste...namaste!" again. I turned to see the woman smiling at me from about twenty feet away. She had lifted her saree a bit and was pointing down to the bandage which I had placed on her wound. There was nothing wrong with it...she was just saying thanks. I smiled and waved as she continued to praise me. All I did was slap on a bandage! I thought a lot about that afterwards...

I had taken the first aid equipment for granted. I had taken my skills, though limited by western standards, for granted. But most importantly, I had taken my to adapt to the situation for granted. Both the Band-Aid's value and my own value had been compromised, up until the point they were challenged and explored, by my own self-imposed limitations. The outside influence here made me think about the possibilities available to me if I thought beyond what was comfortable or usual to me. I recognized limitless potential. This is not to say that I should have then gone around to every woman I met on the streets of MacLeod Ganj and asked through an interpreter if she had been bitten by

anything and if she needed my help! Rather, to be aware of my surroundings and confident in my ability to create.

Create what? That depends on the situations as they arise and the limitations in place in each individual mind.

Yesterday I was in my backyard here in Seattle practicing juggling when a woman who lives across the driveway from my apartment came over to the fence which divides the two properties. We talked, small-talk, for a few minutes, and then she headed back to her apartment, saying that she'd come out and watch me again in a while. I mentioned that I might not be practicing after a few more minutes had passed. She responded with "It's OK...I have nothing to do...I am just going to sit in here on the couch and rot in front of the TV."

Her words are going to be the epitaph of our generation. Granted, she might love sitting on her couch. She might love TV. But, to look at the day as having nothing to do, to sit and rot, is to be completely defined and consumed by the parameters enforced by the outside world and established in our own minds. We can't let our existence be that way. We have to live.

We must constantly work to reinvent the present.

For further discussion, juggling lessons, or tips on first aid for 90-year-olds, write to: Greg Bennick/427 Eleventh Avenue East/ Seattle WA 98 J 02/USA

the 5th column

Your Body fucken Matters. Desire and Bodies as Revolutionary.

Eric Boehme

(This article is dedicated to the memory of my friend, my ally, and one of my original revolutionary^ inspirations, Tim Yohannan. Although we often disagreed about tactics, we never lost sight of the ultimate goal-the complete and total overthrow of the economics, politics, and ideology of the capitalist system. You will be missed Tim.)

This is a manifesto about the importance of bodies. This is a call to re-affirm the value of desire. This is about the revolution that is and will occur not just in our minds but in and through our bodies. This is about pleasure and fun, feelings and sensations, the rhythms of our own and others' bodies. This is about how life and revolution can never be separate from desire and pleasure. Most importantly, this is about how our minds can never be separate from our bodies.

At Detroit Fest this year, during an otherwise stellar set by Bane, the singer gets on the mike and said something that kinda bothered me. "Don't let your body control you." I had to stop and think for a minute. I know this is common enough rhetoric in str8edge, but I wondered how much we are ultimately damaging ourselves by thinking this way. In a place where everyone is distinctly aware of their bodies, moshing and stage-diving, affirming the rhythms of their

bodies by dancing in unison to music, we are told to control our bodies, to repress and stifle ourselves in favor of our minds. What's going on here? Are we advocating a revolution only of our minds? Where does that leave our bodies?

(As if we could ever get rid of them) Are we trying to change the minds of a sick society without attending to its varied and different bodies? Why are we separating the mind from the body at all? And finally, what role does str8edge philosophy play in all of this?

1. **Separating the Mind and Body**

Culture in the West and particularly in the late-capitalist society in which we live, has been all about separating the body from the mind. Beginning with Plato, western philosophy posits a hierarchy with mind over and distinct from the body, while Christianity advocates the spiritual salvation of the soul, the mind, at the expense of repressing and limiting the body. Our history consists of a constant attention to the differences and the boundaries between the mind and the body. Indeed it is in the interests of the system to reinforce these strict boundaries and separations.

We grow up in a society that pays very close attention to the body. Yet it is a body that is seen as clearly separate from the mind, distinct and unconnected, a tool to be molded, manipulated, sold and used. The idealized bodies of men and women parade before us in mass advertising and

entertainment. It is not that bodies are invisible, it is that bodies are too visible as bodies, separate from any kind of mind. We also separate the labor of our bodies to sell in the marketplace, to exchange for wages.

We go to therapists to heal our minds, medical doctors to heal our bodies. There is an implicit assumption behind all of this that we are minds reflecting and acting upon our bodies. Our bodies are seen as tools-for us to use, to develop, to suppress, to workout with, to hide, to show off, to obsess over, to destroy, to cleanse or to purify. Fitness and workout crazes, the techno-medical profession, and cultural and religious norms all serve to make us think that our bodies are distinct from our minds.

1. **2. Priority of Mind: Repression and Control of the Body**

Yet separation also serves to reinforce the idea that our mind does and should control our body. Separation begins the process that seeks to replace the chaos of bodily desire for the orderliness of the analytical mind. The emotional upheavals of pleasure and bodily sensations make us lose control, a control that is essential to the power and legitimation of the system. Thus the mind comes to take control of the errant, evil and erratic body-the cool, detached, and objective mind masters and controls the heated, involved madness of the body. This allows capitalism to get us into the workplace-they control our bodies (in an environment that our bodies naturally rebel against) so that we can sell our labor for the capitalist's profit. As a cultural idea, the repression and control of the body also sustains racist and sexist world views-mind has traditionally been associated

with white males, while body (and all the attendant evils and the subsequent restrictions) has been associated with people of color and women.

2. **Suppression of Desire and the Body in the Interests of Capitalism**

There are two interconnected ways that reinforce the priority of the mind over the body and kill any revolutionary potential we could have from reintegrating the

mind and body through pursuing pleasure and desire. Capitalist ideology either forces direct and coercive repression onto the body or perhaps more insidiously, funnels and channels desire and pleasure into acceptable consumerism.

Direct repression and subjugation of the body by the capitalist system comes in two forms: incarceration and wage labor. The staggering amount of people incarcerated, the fact that the prison-system is one of the fastest growing sectors of the economy, and the general cultural and ideological apparatus of discipline as the threat of potential punishment all attest to the prevalence of capitalism's direct repression of bodies. In spite of Foucault's claims that the prison-system tends to discipline one's mind rather than punish one's body, the simple fact is that there are millions of bodies imprisoned-millions of bodies directly and forcefully locked down. Capitalism also stretches its

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of the body into our daily lives through the institution of wage-labor. As labor is alienated from the person, the body becomes a machine, a cog in the mechanisms of the factory. The rhythms of the body (which previously in our history may have been attuned to sunrises or sunsets) are now set to the watch of the

k nine-to-five workday. Bodies are directly transformed into appendages of the capitalist system-even the health of one's

body is seen in terms of worker productivity. Global capitalism ever increasingly remakes indigenous cultures in its own image by putting people to work in labor markets making your shoes, your clothes, and your hi-tech stereo systems. Yet instead of any kind of minimum or livable wage, global capitalism subjugates and represses the bodies of so-called Third World peoples for pennies a day. Everywhere in the world, capitalism owns the bodies of her wage-laborers.

For those with the privilege to choose the type and amount of wage-slavery to which they will be subjected, capitalism adds the bonus of channeling the desires and pleasures of the body into consumerism. We are given false pleasures through the media of television, movies, and entertainment that take the very real needs and desires of our bodies and transform them into substantial profits for the culture industry. Our life energies that come from the pleasures, the desires, and the sensations of our bodies are funneled into the only acceptable means of interaction between capitalist victims-shopping during the day, amusing ourselves to death at night. Drugs, alcohol, and entertainment become the palliative for the yearnings of the body. Any real pleasure or desire is quickly channeled into a new product, a new form of entertainment until we can no longer tell the difference between what our body wants and what the capitalist system wants us to buy.

2. **2 Disconnection of Sex at the Expense of Eros**

Capitalism also channels the very real and broad desires of the holistic erotic body into the controlled and repressed

channels of sex. Capitalism does not repress sex, indeed it encourages the proliferation of sex-bodies, sex, and lust are everywhere, on display, on sale, available at.the

blink of an eye or the touch of a button. Sex becomes disconnected from the body and life energy. Just as the mind is separated from the body, the body is now separated from the whole of its eros, its life energies, and its ability to interact meaningfully with other bodies. Sex becomes a commodity to be bought and sold, an image to accompany any product, the overwhelming display of flesh all in the interests of what Marcuse calls "repressive desublimation." Our erotic desires, our desires for passion, emotionality, play, and pleasure are directed into the one-dimensional and sterile commodities that is offered to us through sex in the capitalist system. Instead of interacting directly with other bodies and minds, we are isolated as individuals, viewing sex from afar, repressing our deeply erotic life energies to be redirected into the "acceptable" modes of interaction-work, school, television, and a maybe a little Internet porn on the side.

2. **3 Isolated Individualism**

The separation of the mind from the body, the subsequent priority of the mind, and the suppression of the body by capitalism all ultimately push us into thinking that we are individuals, isolated and unconnected from each other. Yet our bodies can never be separate from other bodies. The actions and reactions of bodies to- surrounding are what constitute us as human. We are not separate or isolated from one other. Our 1 bodies are a social whole, J working together or against each other, our actions have consequences and effects on others. It is in the interests of the capitalist system to construct us as isolated fl * individuals. In capitalist ideology, we are minds that are separate and distinct and we believe that the actions of our bodies have no consequences upon others. We are individuals that can alienate our labor, exploit each other, or see each other as sexual objects. We think that we can separate our theory and our practice and we think that selfishness should be a priority while accumulation of profit should come before the existence, indeed even at the expense of others. Yet this is the way our society makes and creates our bodies.

3. **Bodies as Social Constructs**

It should be clear in what I have been arguing that the problems that arise from an ideology that separates and prioritizes the mind over the body are culturally specific. Every society and every culture has a different take on the way the body is constructed. Many of us agree that gender, as a category, is constructed specific to the society in which we live. Ideas about what constitutes "masculinity" or "femininity" are derived from our history and culture. Yet some theorists have even argued that things we normally take for granted as "natural, " like the specific difference between the sexes, the difference between man and woman, are also socially constructed. Foucault and Butler argue that our bodies are created by the cultures in which we live. Our bodies are maps and landscapes where culture has written its norms and values. The very movements of our bodies, the very pleasures and desires that we think are part of our

bodies, are lived experiences of our society. If this indeed is the case, is there any way that we can make our bodies part of a revolutionary experience? How can we resist the values of capitalist society if they are written on and into our very bodies?

4. **Resistance**

Resistance first takes the form of re-integrating our minds and our bodies. Any action that maintains a separation between the mind and the body, affirming one at the expense of the other is doomed to failure. This is not a call to prioritize the body over the mind. Yet part of re-integrating the mind and the body comes through listening to your body, listening to your desires, your pleasures, and your passions.

4. **1 Str8edge Philosophies**

At the outset, str8edge was about revolution and change. It was about listening to your body. By not putting drugs or alcohol into your body, it was argued that your mind and body together could be better able to make and create change. The mind and body, free of the poisons with which society tries to mark our bodies, could act together in a revolutionary way. Str8edge was about choice, it was not about coercion- you had the opportunity to choose what you wanted to put into your body, indeed it was that very choice that was part of the pleasure. There was passion in this choice, this was a desire and a pleasure, that by not partaking of drugs or alcohol we could use our minds and bodies to feel the real sensations of our world. Yeah, drugs were a part of our world, but like anything else that gave us pleasure, we could choose what we wanted, we could desire things other than those our society gives us, and we could pursue our

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passions. We still pursue intoxication, we still pursue pleasure. We just pursue it in ways that do not separate our bodies and our minds.

Str8edge has now become a new religion, a form of coercion and a set of ideologies that separate our minds from our bodies while punishing and repressing our bodies. We have, under the guise of continued vigilance and revolution, completely replicated the capitalist notions of priority of mind and repression of the body. Rather than a positive take on affirming your life, your body and mind free of the poisons of society, working together for positive change, str8edge has become a negative religion. We have replicated all the "thou shalt nots" of our guilty Christian heritage. We have substituted our attempts to find new forms of intoxication and play for the monk's attitude toward life. We think that through suffering, in punishing our body by not allowing ourselves pleasure, by not "giving in" to our desires, and through denying our bodies, we can make a revolution called str8edge. Rather than finding different ways to be intoxicated, different ways to pursue pleasure, we have given up on pleasure and intoxication all together.

This is fucked. I don't want to be a monk. I don't want to live my life always holding myself back from something I find pleasurable, meaningful, or desirous. I want to indulge myself and my desires while celebrating my body and the bodies of others. I do recognize that desires are created by culture-I don't give in to every desire I have-I pick and choose based upon listening to my body and listening to the bodies of other living beings. Yeah, that includes the bodies of animals and the bodies of my sex partners as well. I don't

want to live my life by a series of things that I don't do, living by repression, by denial, or by guilt.

5. **2 The Ascetic Ideal**

NOSTRUM FOB BN UNPBEBICnBlE FUTUBE

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Nietzsche called this the "ascetic ideal." Basically, it means that we think that our minds can and should control our bodies. We think we can achieve, through our suffering and denial of our bodies, some kind of higher place. He calls the ascetic ideal the fundamental weakness of any culture that cannot handle the chaos of desire, the unknown of the body, and the solidarity of people intoxicated together. Instead of denying our bodies through the ascetic ideal, Nietzsche calls for us to use our will, our will to power. To him, the will is fundamentally and inherently a part of the body, a part of desires, and a part of pleasure. Any culture that thinks the will of mind can be separate from the body (as str8edge does when we talk about using our mind to control our body) is a culture that is based upon weakness masquerading as power, oppression masked by the rationality of the mind.

6. **Indulgence as Revolutionary: Pursuing Passions and Desires**

Why do we echo the long-dead yearnings of medieval monks, praying away our bulging erections? Why do we imitate the corseted culture of Victoria, the repressed and disciplined attempts to hide our bodies beneath fitness,

fashionable clothes, makeup, or hygiene products? Why do we fear the primal, bodily pleasure of intoxication, the ecstatic oneness of mountain maenads dancing the rhythmic sociality of bodies and desire? We do we deny our pleasures and repress our desires, to "not let our bodies control us?" Our bodies are the place, the site where everything happens-culture is written on our bodies, why can't we rewrite ourselves?

I will pursue my passions and desires as revolutionary. I will listen to my body. I will never separate my mind from the workings, the sensations, and the pleasures of my body. I will resist the ideologies of capitalism and the maps it has created on my body. I will resist through purposeful play, through laziness or activity, through pleasure, through my five senses. I will love my body. I will love the bodies of others, human and animal alike. I will respect the choices others make with their bodies, yet

I will remind them that they are bodies too, not just minds. I will live and affirm life through my body, my emotions, and my desires. And I will change the world with you, if you choose to change it as well.

Further Reading:

Judith Butler, Bodies that Matter

Michel Foucault, The History of Sexuality Vol. 1

Elizabeth Grosz, Volatile Bodies

Hebert Marcuse, Eros and Civilization

Fredrich Nietzsche, The Will to Power and On the Genealogy of Morals

Eric Boehtne/ATR 'zine/ 118 Raritan Ave./ Highland Park NJ 08904/ USA

text provided by Unapack Spring Commando

I. OH CYBERSPACE, WHAT BIG EYES AND EARS YOU HAVE!

When action is impossible "Communication" is consolation.

Freedom is a sensation.

We only have "choice."

It is said, "the map is not the terrain." The comment is meant to point to the limits of human abstraction in friction with full reality. But we are now being herded with electronic prods from the terrain to the map, from the real to the virtual-soon there will be no friction! Simulated electronic space is a map, merely a map: the better to simplify, rationalize, describe, monitor, predict, propagandize, contain, and control you with. Cyberspace is a closed playpen, where everything is permitted, but nothing is possible. Use cyberspace to get information? When you use cyberspace, you get *in formation.*

Interactive communication enhances central control.

Cyberspace integrates us into a neural network; together, we extended brain of the technological

system. The more interconnected the population, the faster propaganda J diffuses. Yesterday's control by communication: politicians polled the public, processed the results, and adjusted their rhetoric to correct image problems. Today's control by communication: the outfitting of employees with pagers, and voice mail. It is interesting to notice that the current theme of

propaganda is that consumers need more information, and therefore must not only plug themselves into the system, but must also carry an array of communication devices with them wherever they go. And the future?

The days of the Spectacle are over. The audience storms the stage. Propaganda is obsolete.

That is to say: in the future, we will no longer be misled and distracted from reality by the media and other forces. We ourselves become the distractions, interacting with each other in a medium in which no reality is possible. We remove ourselves from reality into Cyberspace.

A new design for relationships, Relationships of distance.

Relationships which don't require meeting, Relationships which require never meeting.

(ever had an internet relationship?)

IL SAFETY. TOOLS AND MASTERS. FREEDOM.

Safety? Though we depend on the technological system due to coerced adaptation which reduced our ability to live independently, that dependency does not mean we are SAFE. The system cannot be reformed or redirected; but the more complex, unified, and centralized it is, the more vulnerable it is to catastrophic breakdown (death). A slight change in an important factor could be amplified throughout the system causing instantaneous collapse. The predictable, warm and fuzzy catastrophe we all predict is that we will overwhelm the earth's capacity as a host: we

[Image not archived]

imagine a gradual death by overcrowding, starvation and territorial violence– perhaps not in our lifetime! But this is only the obvious possibility, and maybe the most gentle. Any number of occurrences could upset the pseudo-equilibrium of the system. Think of the overuse of antibiotics and the mutation of viruses; think of the unthinkable. The system only works until it fails. It is delusional to think that there is security in not rocking the boat. And besides, safety-is it your highest value, your ultimate goal? What do you want? And what are you working for?

In this system, we work for the sake of organization. And organization increases, which increases work. The harder and faster we work, the more work there will be to do. Humans-originally carefree and free-ranging — have been tied down, first to the farm, then to the city factory, then to the office, and now to the computer monitor's virtual glo-grid. Thirty years ago offices didn't have PCs or cubes. How many of us today are forced to sit solitary under fluorescent bulbs in windowless gray cubes most of our waking hours (most of our LIFE) immobilized in front of a computer monitor staring at flickering blue nothing, listening to high-pitched machine hum, making tiny movements with our fingers to manipulate symbols that have no vital meaning to us, all the while subconsciously panicked by pervasive surveillance? Forget the whole dynamic complex of simultaneous coercion, persuasion, socialization, sticks, carrots and credit that condemn us to the console. Would we do this if instead we could just live _ our lives, foraging in one way or another, eating, socializing, fucking, fantasizing, sleeping, drawing, singing, dancing, just being human, unemployed, not in use, free, free of fabricated goals?

Subsistence would be such a , luxury, compared to the "luxuries" we have, the J

luxuries we have paid for. A Paid with what? W

Human minds are transformed into information-processors. (At least with physical labor your mind is free to fantasize.) We are degraded into serving machines — processing raw reality into computer logic data (scanning products at a cash register, data entry). We are used more and more as either physical robots or translators, that is, as *interfaces* between computerized systems. In the service industry, the food chain

gang must wear uniforms and logos, spout scripts, weigh scoops of ice cream while wearing plastic gloves. *Machines cast us in their images.*

Technology uses men, men do not use technology. Technology is not any single isolated object, it is a unified *system* of relationships between elements and systems. Those who claim that technology is a "neutral tool" or that it is an accumulation of independent "things" to be picked through selectively for keepers, fail to realize that technology is a metaphysical whole, that it is an expression of organization, and therefore can only direct itself toward higher order, increased centralized control, and the inevitable degradation of its human components. The metabolic flow must speed faster in pursuit of total productivity. We can always be more efficient, but we can never be efficient enough.

The electronic fist comes in molded beige plastic, beeping. Suddenly we all do Windows, and he who will not compute will not eat. And as our work, so our play: Both are communication. To be silent or un-in-formed is to be anti-social. Evermore we will be engulfed in the electronic, starved of light, fresh air, fresh food, spontaneous movement, friendly face-to-face human company, human warmth, human smell, human touch, animals no more. We struggle: depression, agoraphobia, addiction, bulimia, panic, obsession-compulsion, suicides. And doctors medicate.

Our pre-pacification ancestor the cavewoman would never have sat still for this. Nor our four year old selves. But cyberspace disperses the crowd, and clears the streets. We are living in the post-riot era, inside our cubicles (office blocks, suburban blocks, cell blocks), staring at the screens, being entertained.

Universal Aliens/TPONS Don't worry, we will help you escape- PO Box 120494/ Boston MA 0211/ USA

The Punk Rock Contradiction

a hardcore critique by Demian of famous rock band Culture

For the most part, the straight edge scene is composed of individuals who end their efforts at just that: SXE. Occasionally veganism is brought to light, although the motives may be questionable there. Nonetheless, many of those persons indisputably have a tendency to limit their thinking to those two decisions, while boasting about how they are saving the world through those choices. But honestly, those decisions are not always the great acts of will that those making them would like to think they are. It is (for most) easy to be straight edge and, yes, vegan too. These choices really require very little resistance or dietary sacrifice, and are by no means the tests of strength and

the 5th column

determination that we'd like to believe.

This is not an attempt to refute straight edge or veganism, as I will proudly confess to both myself. It is, however, an acknowledgment that (unfortunately) the scene in question has become a rather unthinking one. A facile subculture. Stagnant.

But a greater concern is that from that subculture has spawned a sect of self-righteous more- politically- correct-than-you people, who, although for the most part they *are* more informed than the aforementioned group, will probably do less good.

These people, who have made many significant social, political, and consumer connections, seem to feel that it is more beneficial to the pressing and urgent global issues that they are concerned with to only share that knowledge with members of their own select scene, through select music, and select association. And it seems that in their attempt to disengage from the SXE scene because of that scene's tendency to "preach to the preached" and to act as an elite, they opt instead to preach "different" information to a "different" scene that already possesses that information, in the process becoming merely an elite within an elite. I would think it'd be more effective if those intellectually superior punk rockers would come grace us with their god-sent smarts. Come frolic with the lessors at, heaven forbid, an Earth Crisis show, rather than distributing pamphlets at a Dickie's and sweater-vest fashion show to the same people that made the fucking pamphlets in the first place. A lot of you have a lot to say. A lot of you don't say it.

So how about, considering how concerned you are with improving our social and political conditions, coming down off your high horses and sharing those social remedies with that same "closed-minded" SXE scene that you so

condemn. Why confine the solutions to one room, when the entire house is aching?

It's O.K. corduroy boys n' girls... come mingle with the Jenco kids. Realize that mainstreaming your positive views is the only way to aggravate change on a massive scale. Hitching your wanna-be blue Collar pantaloons up to expose your little ankles is *not* revolutionary. It's a clique, just like ours.

I admit, the SXE and vegan hardcore scene of which (through my band) I partake *can* be a very stupid one. But also understand that there are a handful of us that are not completely ignorant, and are trying to wisen folk 'round here up. Hell, we may even be able to teach your blessed ass a thing or two. If so inclined, you're more than welcome to help out at any time. It's only logical, wouldn't you say?

Oh, and we remember your running shoe days, baby.

Be sure to write to Demian (at 116 N.W. 12 St., Gainesville, FL 32601, last time we checked) and encourage him to publish the embryonic 'zine from which this article was taken. We're sure it will win him a lot of friends!

a NEW DISTRIBUTION ETHIC

Tirnojhen Mark

Somehow Brian and I ended up discussing record distribution recently, which is where the idea for this article came from. For what it's worth, and to diffuse any misconceptions, this is entirely about how I think things should work. The reality, as it can often be, is that this would be an article about the ideals, not the practice. I felt somewhat strange about writing this, knowing I don't live up to it, but hell, might as well talk about it.

First, the basics. Most people understand the record/CD food chain, but I'll run through it regardless. Label person hears a band they like who'd they'd like to release. Generally speaking, the label would contact the band(s), arrange for some mutually beneficial cooperation. Assuming the label and band want to work together, the ex-

penscs^begin. Labels often pay for a band's recording costs for the release in question. Sometimes cheap, sometimes not. It's a gamble at points for the label — if things don't go well, and the band's in the studio longer than expected... the costs are mounting. Let's assume everything goes well.

Next step — production. Depending on the label's situation, this would be all of the layout/artwork etc. etc. More costs, somewhat dependent on the attitude of the label. It's obvious that some labels spend almost no money on this step. Ha.

Assuming you've got a recording and artwork, you move into manufacturing. Mastering, pressing, printing, so

on and so forth. For most labels, this would be a C.O.D. arrangement. You're paying the printer as the plates are made, you're paying the pressing plant as the records are pressed. You get the general idea. While it's true some labels are in the financial position to get credit/terms from pressing plants or printers, this is often after they've established themselves.

Whoa. Final product has arrived. (Assuming the label has.paid for the shipping!) Now there's a stack of records sitting in your garage. Gotta get rid of the damn things — sick of this project already. Best send out promos — distros, radio, promoters. Pack those suckers in boxes, get em to the post office, and get em off. More expenses, obviously.

Depending on the quality of your release, you're going to get differing reactions. I'm sure it's pretty safe to say that everyone has some measure of fallout — radio stations who don't care, distros that don't respond, whatever. Total waste of cash, but somewhat unavoidable, as it's tough to tell beforehand how things will develop. Sit back and wait.

My point with all of this — the labels pay, and pay, and pay. And perhaps pay again if there's not sufficient interest in the title, and there's still hundreds laying about.

Check the distro side of things though. You get a promo in the mail, and it seems like a reasonable release. Not terribly exceptional, but y'know, not bad. *"Sure... LU take 25."* Done deal. The label pays to send 'em out to you, and you promptly use the unopened box as a coffee table for a couple months. *"Hey — just wanted to check on those records I sent you." "Yeah, we still have a hunch, we'll get in contact when they sell."*

Here's the gist of all this. Labels take the risk — front the money, and do the work. Most distros work on some kind of terms — net or consignment. Net means

[Image not archived]

they pay after a certain amount of time (net 30 day, net 60, whatever), consignment means they pay as they sell (I've sold two, here's 4 dollars. There's still 98 here.) It seems to me that the investment doesn't ever really even out. There's nothing preventing me (except the eventual bad reputation) from committing to distributing far more records than I could ever do responsibly, or committing to distributing records that I'm not terribly excited about. It's easy to overextend yourself (I know — I've done it plenty!).

What if distros were paying C.O.D.? Think they'd be more selective if they ended up with their own cash tied up in product? Hell yeah — when you own a 100 of that record, you know you're going to bust ass to get rid of them. Or not survive financially. Either way, you're invested. Think you'd be as likely to take some ridiculous amount of that record you thought was 'okay'? I'd hope not — although natural selection would play a part as well — too many overbuys of those 'okay' records, and even your day job won't help you.

Also on the 'effect' side of the fence — think that label would keep investing in mediocre releases if they're not selling? I'm not sure — hope not though. It's got to be tough to be a label nowadays though — there's a lot of people releasing records, and a lot of records floating around with no real audience. I'd consider it a safe statement that some people shouldn't be releasing records. I mean seriously, there's a limited amount of landfill available, right ? Perhaps natural selection could figure in to the current record glut. We can only hope! ,

Before you get the wrong impression — I've not been able to practice this as I would like. It's tough to put into action — for any number of reasons, usually between over

commitment and under funding. But thinking about this in terms of running my own distro has helped — I'm taking less of the 'okay record, good label', 'okay record, nice people', 'bad record, nice people' etc. etc. It's like many of my ideals — progress rather than perfection. It's always a bit frightening to me when I hear of distros that are in heavy debt — punk rock seems to be particularly forgiving with the financials. Doubt many corner stores would be able to stay afloat if they were run anything like some punk distros! I don't know hope many times I've seen someone start a distro, and three weeks later, be carrying 300 titles. Unless you're independently wealthy, it's not a sound business plan. While some would call things like planning 'unpunk' -I'd venture that ripping people off, especially the ones who trusted you with their cash, very 'unpunk'. Most people wouldn't lend money to someone they considered 'irresponsible' — often a difficult judgment to make when dealing with someone you've never met!

Damn — now I've done it — just imagining all my labels demanding payment up font! Arrghhh...

Timojhen/Vacuum/ POB 460324/ San Francisco CA 94146/ USA/ Fax 415.826.0797/ www.vacuiunsf.com

[Image not archived]

TWEIVEBOXES

Disco Dave

Some months ago the UPS lady brought to my door the twelve boxes that encased the publishing juggernaut that is Slave Magazine. I signed my name on her digital clipboard _J_ and she asked what the content of the boxes were.. I told her it was a maga- M zine. She asked about what.

I told her punk rock, hardcore, politics, and art. She kind of raised both eyebrows with a somewhat impressed look on her face and then turned to begin unloading the twelve boxes onto my front porch. I helped her carry the boxes in and asked her if

she knew Jack. Jack was a Teamster I had interviewed for the alternative community newspaper I also write for, the Greensboro Gazette, during the recent strike. She stopped loading boxes and her face brightened up. "I know Jack, he's my shop steward!". I asked her if she had seen the Gazette before and she had not. I went to my car, where the Gazette archives are stored, and pulled out a small stack of papers and gave them to her. She took a look at the cover, nodded in approval with a smile and said she would read it. She thanked me, turned, and sprinted back to her big brown truck and was gone.

So here were these twelve boxes in my living room. Twelve boxes in which the contents cost me more than an entire months rent-over $250. The cost roughly translates into about a week and a half of labor for me. Twelve boxes that I still owe money to my zine cohorts on...

There are times that I question whether or not the contents of those boxes are worth it to me. I question if it is worth the hours I put in under the heel of the time clock at my deli job. I question the amount of time I spend reviewing shitty records that I will never listen to again. I question if my gnergy and resources are directed at where I really want them to be. Essentially the question is whether or not I want to involve myself actively in the punk scene any longer. The energy and enthusiasm I once held so consistently is no longer there. Talking with Jack about the UPS strike and the struggle against the company excites, inspires, and is generally more interesting to me than the new issue of MRR

or the new Converge album. I would rather sit down and have that conversation than interview some band and talk about what happened at this show or the production on that album. Granted, Slave is much more than all those things but it is a publication within the punk and hardcore scene and as such my dad or Jack are not going to read the articles about the Cuban revolution or the case of Kwame Cannon and those are the people who need to be reading those things most. I feel as if I am stuck somewhere in the middle of being a punk kid and devoting all my time, resources, and energy to a greater struggle. I do not know at which point these two ideas began to run in contradiction (or if the even have to), but more and more I feel that way. There is a difference between being a part of a subculture and part of a counterculture. A subculture, like punk and hardcore, can, and usually does, mirror the mountain of problems that are present in the culture at large that it stepped out of. A counterculture stands in direct opposition to those things. Being politically active only within the scene is ineffective because that activism is doomed to become just another aspect of the subculture. And as such it is isolated and alienated from the rest of the world and challenges nothing.

So here I stand at a crossroads of sorts, staring down the path that I have been on for some time wondering how I can even think of abandoning it. I look at all, the things that I have learned and the ethics that I have embraced and I see how they are not as clearly present anymore. These lessons and ethics are what brought me to the conclusions

that I find myself at now that call into question my part in the punk community.

With all the things I criticize and what little patience I tend to have with "the punx" these days I know that the lessons and the connections with people I have made will stick with me long after I have put away my Filth records for good. People like my roommates John and Jeff, who work on Slave with me, inspire me and make me remember the positive things about this whole scene. Zines like Betterdays and Doris help create that counterculture that I want so badly to exist here within punk and hardcore. Sincere bands like Zegota, Sharkskill and Encyclopedia of American Traitors are what keep me involved and energized just to the point that I do not throw up my hands and quit going to shows altogether.

A *friend of mine once told me punk was only as revolutionary' as you made it. Essentially I guess it all comes down to the contents of your twelve boxes and how you use them...*

Dave Coker/ PO Box 10093/ Greensboro NC 27404/ USA

Sexual Politics

Al Burian

Sexual politics! In the early eighties I was obsessed with a book entitled *Sexual Politics* by Kate Millet. I was intrigued by the fact that the book had the word "sexual" in the title. Pilfering the book from my dad's shelf, I retreated frequently to the attic of my parent's house to leer over the

on-ramp decade to the Apocalypse, have seen much frantic regurgitation of styles and crazes. Sadly, I have noticed a sharp increase in Reynoldsism in both myself and others.

The other night I had to kick a guy out of my friends' house because he was drunk and harassing one of the girls who lived there. After the incident there was a discussion in the kitchen about it, where I worried (because I am, after all, such a swell, sensitive guy) that my own behavior might, at times, not be much different from that guy's. ,

. "Oh, no, " the woman on whose behalf I'd ejected the offending dude assured me. "Not you. You'd never invade someone's personal space."

That's a nice premise, but unfortunately untrue. Sitting in a coffee shop about a week ago with a female friend of mine, I was asked, "Hey, do you remember the first time we met?"

I tried to recall. "Um, not really, no. Why, did I do something embarrassing?" „

"Yes, " she said. "You put your hand in my shirt." "What?!?" I said.

"Yeah, you touched my back under my shirt. It was kind of weird."

"Man... that's uh " I didn't know what to say. "That's not very cool, huh. I honestly do not remember doing that. I'm really sorry."

"We were both pretty drunk, " she recalled. "I'm not mad about it, really. I was just wondering why you do that sort of thing. -You seem like an OK guy. You have

pretty good ideas about things."

Most everyone, when it comes to
their sexuality, is a hypocrite, unhappy
with themselves, reacts in ways which
don't conform to what they believe

I abstractly. I'm certainly no excep- **y** tion, and, though arguably not the the 5^{th} column the 5^{th} column the 5^{th} column the 5^{th} column the 5^{th} column **B W** worst offender in the misogyny

" sweepstakes, I definitely have

' ^{m}y ^{11101110018} °f sucking really

bad. It is difficult to talk about these sorts of issues in a non

them limo rides to the Grammys when they 'make it.'"

Brian, being a good sport and a lover of cogent analogies, nodded in agreement. "Yes, it is an unfortunate situation Onp man's molotov cocktail is another man's *Appetite for Destruction, * and the limo ride looming on the horizon, is, perhaps, as phantasmal as the impending revolution of daily life. Nonetheless, what can I do? I've got a girlfriend and she has a nice apartment."

" "Until now, I never noticed that fascism has many disguises, " sang D. Boon in an old Minutemen song. "Every woman adores a fascist, " wrote Sylvia Plath. I am sympathetic to Brian's situation. What can I do? I have this girlfriend and she adores fascists.

Once, while very drunk, a good friend of mine postulated his theory of the nineties man as the man who is so sensitive to the ladies that he actually accommodates their desire for insensitivity. He is so nineties that he is seventies. "I'm so sensitive that I'm insensitive!" my friend proclaimed. I thought that this was a fairly profound summation, and of course he denied having said anything of the sort the next day.

In the film *The Man Who Loved Women, * Burt Reynolds portrays the archetypal "seventies man": a man who really loves women, all kinds of women. Unfortunately, it's the seventies and so there's lots of women catching on to his thing and calling him out on it. Burt has a lot of trouble with the ladies in that film. The problem with this whole "nineties man" construct is that once you articulate it, you're / immediately going to have a bunch of nineties women articulating their paradigm, which is basically going to boil down to "fu-uu-uu-uck you."

The nineties, being the universally acknowledged

Rather than just interviewing another well-known band that every reader of Inside Front already knows, I decided that the best use of the interview section would be to talk to a newer, less recognized band that deserves the attention. Zegota was the first one that came to mind. In my eyes, they have really set an example for young bands starting out: they began with sincerity and passion, set specific goals for themselves

both in their music and political/social message, and have worked tirelessly to reach them. They have involved themselves in the punk community by setting up shows, traveling tirelessly, and distributing reading material (they have a pretty sizable free literature table which they take with them everywhere), and they have become equally active in the larger community around them through a variety of political activities and attempts to raise social consciousness. Even their music is challenging in its unusually eclectic mix of musical traditions. I've seen Zegota play a number of times now, and I've been struck each time by how much energy and thought go into each of their performances: not only do they push themselves hard to express emotion when they play their songs, but in between songs each one of them will speak about the subjects the songs address. At this point, they've only released a demo; but unlike so many new bands, who are flighty and unfocused and disappear in a matter of months, I expect to see Zegota working hard for years to come.

"Zegota"?

John (guitar): "Zegota" was the code name for a group of Polish Catholics who worked as an underground railroad for Jews during the Holocaust.

Brian (bass): The significance of this is that they were Christians helping out Jews, and they had no material gain in sight. They were doing this simply out of the good will of their hearts.

Moe (vocals): How this pertains to us is a question commonly asked. We're not trying to say that we're revolutionary to the point that we're hiding people out who are under siege-but getting down to it, what Zegota did was they carried out selfless acts of good will. That's how we try to perform in our daily lives.

I.F.: You guys are a punk band that speaks a lot between songs-you try to bring up issues to get people to talk about them and think about them. A lot of punk musicians try to talk about social issuesand a question that's been bothering me lately is: why should we necessarily look to musicians for social and political ideas? Just because they play music doesn't mean that their ideas will be good ones. Or, if they consider themselves political activists/social thinkers first, then why should we listen to their music? It seems that playing good music and having good ideas have become inseparable in the minds of many in the punk scene, but it isn't necessarily a connection that makes sense.

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Brian: Well, people shouldn't necessarily listen to us more than to anyone else-but since we have the opportunity to get up there and express our opinions and what we believe, then we do it. And I wouldn't encourage anybody to listen to us more than to anyone else, whether they're in a band or not; that's why we have that song that we play as a speaker forum when we offer up the microphone for anybody to speak about

any issue or any burning desire that they have at that moment. They don't have to be in a band. A lot of the time I feel like my ideas might not make as much sense as someone else's, but I can still try to present what's going on in my head, and it might make somebody else think. We're not trying to say we're right, we're just trying to help get people motivated to think about things...

I.F.: So do you consider yourselves musicians first or activists first?

Moe: I don't feel like I'm that much of a musician- I'm a vocalist, and I scream, to put it bluntly. At the same time, I don't consider myself that much of an activist-what I portray in my lyrics are my own thoughts and feelings about an issue. It doesn't necessarily mean that I'm right, it doesn't mean that I've lived what another person has lived. Their living experience might have shown them things I haven't seen.

I.F.: Tell me what has happened in your living experience that led you here, then, to playing in Zegota. **Moe:** I came from a white, middle class family. I've had a lot of things that other people have been deprived of, and a lot of these things I've decided are completely unnecessary. My parents live a much more luxurious life than a lot of the people throughout this world, and now they can't relate to a lot of people outside of their social class... I don't want to restrict myself to only being able to socialize with a certain class. The social class my parents are in, I don't want to be a part of. I see no value in materialism, in my father working until he's sixty years old to attain this dream of his, of living on a golf course. Not wanting those ultra-materialistic dreams of America molded me into a lot of what I am today.

I.F.: Do you think that dream is right for your parents?

Brian (mumbling): Maybe now it is...

Moe: Well, I've talked to them about it. My parents are happy with their lives, as far as they portray to me. My father comes home from work every night and it's the news, dinner, sitcoms, and that makes up his evening... and on weekends, it's escape to the golf course, and then escape to the TV to watch the latest sports event. That's not where I want to be, but if that's his dream, then (spoken with some perplexed resignation) go for it...

John: Especially if he doesn't have a problem obtaining that at the expense of others.

I.F.: Do you think that if your father knew the people who are suffering so he can have the lifestyle that he has, assuming of course that such a middle class lifestyle does depend upon the exploitation of others, do you think he would still live that way?

Moe: He's gotta be aware of it. I mean, like I said, every day he comes home and turns on the news, and all over the world you see suffering, countries starving, civil war in countries throughout the world, people pushing carts down the street. He sees it-he just ignores it.

> **John:** It's hard to see the direct cause of all that they show on TV-it looks so far off, like you had nothing to do with it, and you don't realize how much you actually affect the rest of the world with your purchasing

power, when you're sitting there behind your big TV. People don't make the connection of how the balance is so far out of whack-and it's not easy to do that because we're very far away from Nigeria. We're very far away from the rainforest, where the things are actually happening.

Moe: My father grew up poor. Being successful has always meant wealth to him. I guess that's how it was portrayed to him as a child, so as for wealth, he just didn't stop attaining it.

I.F.: Let's talk about how you guys address that stuff. Everyone in Zegota sings-except, I guess for **unit Will**

Will (drums): I used to, but I can't do it and play drums anymore...

I.F.: And, pretty much except for you, everyone talks between songs. Is this a conscious attempt to break down specialization in the band, to break down hierarchy, in which one person speaks for all the others?

Moe: I don't feel like I can totally represent the { opinions of anyone in this band by myself. With Brian and John speaking with me, they can add a lot that I couldn't.

Brian: And if we all 90 or 95% agree on everything, it only makes sense for all of us to have the opportunity to talk.

I.F.: Are there any drawbacks?

Brian: Sometimes we might start feeding off of each other and end up talking for a bit too long, which can decrease the intensity of a show.

I.F.: How do you guys decide what literature you're going to distribute and what topics you're going to address between songs?

John: The way we do literature is a lot different than the way we do speaking. With literature, when we encounter something new that we think could be a good thing to distribute, everybody reads it and we see if anybody has any real objections. As far as speaking between songs, for me it's all been about what I'm feeling at the moment. I've tried to remember things to say, but it doesn't feel as sincere and it doesn't come across as well.

I.F.: Outside of the band, what other projects do you participate in that relate to the issues Zegota addresses? —

John: We're all involved to some degree in different causes, showing up for demonstrations and rallies, critical mass [a pro-bicycle, anti-car rally that takes place across the U.S.A.], and one thing I'm working on now is trying to do some education about what is going on in Iraq. I'm putting together a panel discussion of people, a college professor, somebody from the Anti Arab-Discrimination League, a few people from around the area who know what they're talking about, to come and speak and let some people in on what is going on in Iraq. Somebody set something like that up at G.C. [a local college] and I went over to that, and some of the stuff I heard just blew my mind.

Moe: There are numerous events in which we participate, but when it comes down to band politics and practicing what we preach, to actually use that in my daily life, I

ride a bike to places I need to go, and... It's like, you can just as easily go to a big chain supermarket and buy a stick of deodorant where.an animal was killed for it or they dumped a lot of shit in the river... it's easy to do that. But you sort of have to**wreck your life** and start going out of your way to start living differently, to start getting the products that you feel are consciously acceptable. A lot of times in my life I can't just go the convenient way, because I can't be at peace like that. That's basically it-as far as living my politics every day, I try to avoid being hypocritical.

> **Brian:** "You've got to wreck your life..."
>
> **Moe:** Exactly. Wreck your life so you're not supporting the things your conscience is not at peace with.
>
> **John:** What you've got to do is wreck your life the way you knew it before you became conscious, in order to feel good about what you actually do. It's like wrecking the fake life we think we have, in order to build a new life that we can be at peace with. ,
>
> **I.F.:** Give me some more concrete examples of what you guys are doing...
>
> **Brian:** This weekend, we're giving up our home to twenty three people, in order for them to be able to attend this "Students Unite" conference that we had this show tonight for [that night Zegota had played a free show in the middle of a weekend conference on organizing and activism]. Food Not Bombs has served three meals a day here, so people who come can get free food and lodging for the weekend.

Moe: We're doing a march April 1 to 4 to free

Kwame Cannon-we're all going to be walking from Greensboro to Raleigh, which is an hour and a half by car, just like the path that protesters marched when Martin Luther King was assassinated. Kwame Cannon has a racially biased court sentence against him, just as it was a racist when Martin Luther King was shot. And we'll protest on the governor's lawn at the end of the march to let the governor know that we want Kwame Cannon out of jail, because he's unjustly in there... Other things we're into: the Environmental Awareness Foundation, they help out in being active at the High Point furniture market, one of the biggest furniture markets in the world, that happens twice a year. They use a lot of mahogany and teak woods, which are rainforest woods-they're chopping down the rainforest, and at the same time big business comes in and kills indigenous people. We protest the hell out of that, try to discourage the furniture buyers from purchasing more of it, to hopefully reduce the market for these products.

I.F.: Anything else you want to mention? **Moe:** That's just a lot of name dropping...

I.F.: You've been talking about a lot of political action groups, a lot of meetings, and the fact is that a lot of people, even punk kids, are bored to death with politics. Why do you think this is?

John: I think media has a lot to do with it-the decreasing of people's attention spans. You watch the news and every six to twelve seconds they're going to bring up a new topic. Media's original purpose was to provide a link between government and the people, to make information more accessible to the average American. The media has become as consumer oriented as everything else, and what they're after is not to be a link, to keep open lines of communication; they're there to make you want to watch them so they can sell advertising time. The more technology grew, and the more television operators were allowed to and able to set up shop, the more narrowly focused each channel has become-thirteen years ago there wasn't a golf channel, a music channel, a bowling channel, a history channel, a comedy channel, there were thirteen channels for everybody...

I.F.: You think that the specialization of the media is preventing information from being as widely disseminated as it was before?

John: And it used to be a law that you had to give equal time to opposing sides of an issue-like, if you gave Newt Gingrich thirty minutes, you would have to give his opposite, say Jesse Jackson, thirty minutes of time, but now that has all gone away. The theory now is that the more channels there are, the more they'll be competing to be the best they can be; but really they're competing not to be the best information channel, but to be the highest earning, the most popular.

I.F.: So you think that television channels, in their quest to earn more money, have destroyed the attention spans of Americans by showing them nothing but soundbytes... if that's the case, then should political activists make their points in soundbytes too, to not lose the attention of the public? How do you deal with how bored with politics people are today, with how disinterested in it they are? **John:** The thing that helped me the most in becoming politically aware was my own experience. And the best thing I can think of to help people come to that is to encourage them to live their lives in a manner that is not sedate-in spending your time doing things that are going to get you experience, like going out and accomplishing a goal, and stuff like that, as opposed to sitting at home watching South Park [the latest moronic American TV show]. **I.F.:** So how do we bring firsthand experience into people's lives?

> **Brian:** I don't know if there's one sure way to do that, but I think one key element that helps, is to remember how to have fun and remember how to interact with and relate to people who are different from you, so you can keep their interest.

zegota live together at 2312 princess ann street, greensboro, nc 27408, the u.s.a.

get your money and buy your american dream,
you'll find out it's not what it seems

[Image not archived]

> I first came across Ire when we received their 7" for review last issue. After reviewing about forty almost indistinguishable records that day, I took theirs out of the review box and was amazed to discover that I was holding something in my hands that I had never before encountered: a trilingual 7". And as it turned out, the songs were all about important topics, and were written with creativity and played with passion.

I mailed Ire a letter, telling them how excited I was about their record, and Radwan eventually called me back. We talked for a little while and it turned out that he was a really nice, intelligen guy, with an interesting perspective on a lot of things. We agreed to arrange an interview for this issue of Inside Front. Unfortunately, a short time later I was forced to abandon the phone number and address I had given Radwan, at the end of a long struggle with

the, uh, property holding class. Eventually, I found another place to live, and we got in touch again just in time for this interview to make it into this issue. Present for the interview were Patrick, Jeff, Eric (French lover and 6thircan) and Radwan. Keith and Alex were lost somewhere.

Inside Front: Why does Ire exist? What is it you are trying to accomplish, and how does the name "Ire" relate to this?

Jeff: I'm not using music as a medium to get across an agenda or message, but rather music is what I love and political and personal opinions are just some of the things that can be expressed by it.

Patrick: Music is definitely a big part of it, because if it wasn't for the music, the five of us wouldn't be together trying to express our ideas and views. And to me the music is my expression.

Radwan: To me, this band is the single part of my life that I feel responsible to. Everything we do in our everyday lives seems like it's part of someone else's plan or game. It's just something I can belong to and feel comfortable and creative, without restrictions and use it as a vice for me to express what I feel. We really underestimate the power music has. If it wasn't for that I don't know where I'd direct all my stronger emotions at. As for the name, it relates to a feeling that every person can relate to. I wouldn't say that we play a style of music that you'd associate to happie feelings, and I think the name to an extent reflects that.

1..F.: Incidentally, what are we going to do when there are no more

looked over because of a lack of "talent", a great opportunity to enjoy music and create it and get their message/feelings out to others. However, if your goal is to reach a certain audience you can be limited in the different styles you incorporate into your music (but the same could be said about jazz).

Eric: Firstly, it is difficult to identify a universal formula by which bands abide in the process of choosing a name. As an example, bands that form for the purpose of advancing a political cause will choose a name that specifically represents the political ideology or opinion that such bands seek to disseminate. In contrast, bands who

exist for the sole purpose of providing entertainment will choose a name that avoids any association to a particular school of political thought or a name that represents the collective for its entertainment value. As for the pros and cons of the punk rock system, it can be somewhat intimidating for audiences to be subjected to the preachy amplified ramblings of punk rock bands in turn impairing the free exchange of ideas between audience and band, especially for "new scene members". It can be extremely disconcerting for a person attending her/his first punk rock show and be labeled a blood thirsty genocidal

music: how does Ire go about constructing songs? Why does it take you so long to write them? And how do you make sure that each one will be musically fresh, creative, and original?

Patrick: We just get together and write stuff, no real plans I guess: what comes out, comes out.

1..F.: Ire contains people from many different cultural backgrounds- please give a brief summary of where each member is coming from. How does this diversity affect your interactions as bandmates and the views that Ire expresses?

Radwan: Alex and Patrick both come from a French Quebecois background, Jeff is American (Boston) and has been living here for 3 years, Keith is from Brockville (Anglophone town), Ontario, and moved here 3 years ago, Eric was born in Quebec but moved to Toronto when he was 8 and is now back in Montreal, and I moved here from Oman 7 years ago. I think that this is not something unusual for the area where we live, where cultural diversity is a lot more accepted than in the parts of the U.S. that I've been in. Montreal has a very diverse ethnic and cultural dem graphic, therefore people are "forced" to interact with each other. I think this is probably the main reason that makes me like Montreal and living

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words left to use as band names? What do you think the pros and cons are of the present system by which punk rock music is made-in which three to five people get together, give themselves an often arbitrary group name, and limit their music-making to this group- compared to other music making systems, such as the more free-form association of musicians in the jazz community?

Jeff: The punk scene offers so many people, who would otherwise be

capitalist for the act of drinking Pepsi or wearing Nike shoes. The advantage the punk rock scene poses is that the media and forms of communication other than music are deemed legitimate. If Joe Average punk rock scenester wishes to publish a zine or distribute a flyer to express his opinions or difference in opinion with a prominent scenester or band member, he can do so. To a large extent, the punk rock scene is an open forum!

1..E: Speaking of ways of making

ra^SflBs^'LX ** ☒ •

in it so much, I feel safe! I also think that cultural backgrounds do have a strong impact on how people view certain things but for us, our views are more or less along

the same lines regardless of backgrounds. What you feel is what you feel, even if your approach to it differs.

1..F.: For example-there has been quite some controversy about whether French-speaking Canada and English-speaking Canada should split up. Ire has members from both backgrounds. What do

you think about this question?

Jeff: I am not a Canadian citizen and won't be voting if another referendum happens but living in Montreal you can get an interesting feel for both sides. The feeling of being a second-class citizen for Francophone Canadians and the economic ruin that could occur here if Quebec did separate. However, what seems to be heading the debate among people on both sides are emotions and animosity. When the last referendum occurred the streets were filled with chants and insults rather than discussions of the possibilities. I think everyone needs to rethink exactly what it is they are voting for, because nationalism (whether it's Canadian or Quebecois) is a dangerous thing.

Patrick: I think that the problem is that the whole debate is more politically driven rather than factually. The politicians let you hear what they want you to hear, and what backs up their views, but not the flipside of the coin.

Radwan: It's all bullshit. People have no idea what the fuck they are voting for. Politicians have done an amazing job at making Quebecers feel this insecurity about their heritage and how Anglophones are slowly taking over. The whole idea of separation is absurd, because it would create a massive economic

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disaster. And this isn't just random speculation, because Quebec has been in very unstable economic shape because of this ongoing debate, and companies are relocating to Ontario. It is next to impossible to sell your house here, because nobody wants to get rooted in an unstable economy. It took my father 3 years to sell his house at a big loss! And the politicians still insist that separation would create more jobs and give the economy a boost more than under the present

federal system. I just can't believe people can be so blind!

I-R: Radwan, you come from a Lebanese background, from an immigrant family. Hardcore is largely white and middle class in most of the United States and Canada. How did you come to be involved in this community? How did you decide that it had potential as a place for you to be creative and address political and social issues?

Radwan: I got into punk rock like everyone else I guess, just by accident. I started a band with my friends in high school without any musical background or talent. You know, the same story you've heard a hundred times before. I guess I found a freedom to be a little more expressive, because I come from a very strict religious family. My parents tried their best to stop me from getting too involved with it but you know the whole rebellious teenager thing. I think that's what made me like it more and more. As for deciding whether it was a place for me or not, well, I don't really see it that way. The 3 guys I did the band with were my only friends. I wasn't allowed to go out and hang out on weekends because my parents were so paranoid. So finding a place

to belong wasn't a concern because I was having a blast with my friends and didn't really care who didn't

like it. I definitely think that it's a healthy scene on the whole because nobodys like us get, to say something and people sometimes listen. That's the beauty of it and that's what attracts me to it.

1..R: Have you felt completely at home in the hardcore community as a member of a cultural minority group?

Radwan: Like I said before, Montreal is just such a mixture of cultures, that people don't even see it any more. You're Canadian, not

Arab Canadian, or Indian Canadian, or Asian Canadian, you're just Canadian! It never was and I don't ever expect it to be an issue. People here are really tolerant. I don't really know what it's like in the U.S. because I never lived there.

I-R: As a first generation immigrant to Canada from Lebanon and Oman, how is your relationship with your parents? Do you see the world differently than they do, having spent the final years of your youth in the West?

Radwan: To my parents, I'm an Americanized person who doesn't recognize his roots. That's natural because they don't know what I think or what I am. I always had a problem ever since I was little mainly because I had a hard time adapting to Islam. I try to take what's best from both worlds and use my own judgment. There are a lot of Arab cultural aspects that I hold on to dearly, but at the same time, there are Western cultural phenomena that I adopt, like hardcore and whatnot. I visited Lebanon last summer and I had a real hard time enjoying myself. People over there are much more intense, and don't take things for granted, like I've come to learn here in the West. I guess it's all perspective. I'm definitely not close to my parents because of our differences, but to a

certain extent, my parents and I share a lot of basic morals and principles. To me, my father is a great man, even though I can't be around him and not feel uncomfortable.

2..R: The occupation of Palestine and the oppression of its citizens is one of the most glaring examples of the atrocities of Western imperialism in this century. Ire addresses this subject in the first song on the Schema records 7". Why has this issue attracted so little attention in the West, even in the hardcore community? What do you think the solution to the conflict between the Palestinians and Israelis could be, if there could be one at all?

Radwan: Well, the reason why this issue has gotten very little attention in the West is because those who control the media sadly control our opinions. It's gotten to the situation where nothing you hear or read is unbiased journalism, and I don't mean just reporter opinion, I mean bureaucrats and old men playing god deciding what gets printed and published. No wonder alternative media is so scarce and expensive, comparatively. We all hold one opinion, even though we like to think otherwise. The simple fact is that it isn't in the US's interest to grant the public access to information that they don't want us to know. That's the beauty of living in a system where power is measured in currency, and those who have no power, have no say, as cliched as that

sounds. Israel is an economic ally of the U.S., where the U.S. stands to make arms sales with, whereas Palestinians, because of their background, are a people with a very angry attitude towards the West. And the fact that they are a poor "nation" puts them in a weak situation. This goes not just for Palestine, but the West doesn't realize that there is a whole developing

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world with a lot of hatred for the West, because they have to starve, slave and die, so that we can get our Bic razors and Nike shoes conveniently. And I don't want to be around when they've just about had enough of us and come for their revenge. I know to most it's an unlikely situation, but fuck, is it ever around the corner. People are only willing to take so much shit. Sorry, I'm getting off topic but it all goes hand'in hand, and we don't realize how fucked up the world is

and how unknowledgable we are. As for why is the hardcore scene not conscious of shit like this? Well, if it's not in HeartattaCk then it's not worth knowing. Nothing against HeartattaCk, they are a great zine, but I just mean that people just don't care. And to a certain extent, if something doesn't affect you directly, you're probably not going to be too passionate about it. Sorry.

1..F.: Explain the meaning of the song on the split 12" addressing abortion, and why it has been misunderstood.

Patrick: Hardcore has a vary narrow mind when it comes to issues like this. Hardcore + Abortion = Pro Choice. No ifs, ands or buts. People don't generally even want to hear what others have to say, and that's what the song is about. And this is where people get confused. Abortion is the right of the mother. The problem is that we have all those "enraged" discussions about the fetus and its rights, but everyone seems to overlook the person whom this affects more than anyone, the mother. Abortion should be legal and accessible to everyone, it just makes sense. No matter how illegal it becomes, it's going to happen.

I.F.: What kind of "life" is it that the people who describe themselves as

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"pro-life" are talking about? What do you think they mean by "life"? Jeff: It's my understanding that the people who describe themselves as pro-life feel that "life" begins with conception, and any termination of a pregnancy after that point is taking away a life, but ifs important to remember that someone could be pro-choice and still hold this view of "life". [Editor's note: Is "life" just a question of having a beating heart and functioning kidneys? The "prolife" movement consists largely of

people who think that life is just a question of eating, breathing, and excreting, and perhaps obeying the will of God. Is that "life" that they claim to be defending all that you think life is, or do you think it has some greater meaning and value that can't be defined merely biologically? Should we let these people define life itself for us with their slogans?]

I.F.: In reference to another song on your 12"-people often look down upon criminals, the homeless, and the poor. But one of the reasons they do this is because our

hierarchical system teaches that your value is determined by how many people are below you on the social ladder. (This is probably why, for example, homophobia is so common in poor black communities in the U.S.A.) Given that so many people today believe that they are worthless if they are not considered superior to others, how do we go about building a less prejudiced, more open-minded society?

Radwan: Building an open minded society is just something that isn't going to happen, and you can't convince me otherwise. But I'm not just going to accept that, I do what I can and try to communicate what I think is right to me. That's all that it is. What a person views others as. The problem stems way too deep in

the evolution of things. I think that if we can teach our kids our morals and ethics (not force, TEACH!) things just might get a little better. Patrick: We are convinced of what we know and what our ideals are because, to a certain extent, it touches us everyday, but the average person's life doesn't touch on this topic. And it won't as long as they don't get exposed to it. You know, a question like this, is being asked to people like us by a magazine like yours... of course it is only

going to be contained in our community.

I.E: Speaking of contempt for criminals and prisoners, tell about what is going on in Canada right now with prison privatization and the exploitation of prison labor.

Radwan: Prison privatization is an American phenomenon that is trying to creep into Canada. In Ontario, there are talks of privatizing 3 to 5 prisons, as an experiment. I really don't know all that much about the issue factually because it's not public knowledge. YET! I guess this seems to work out just fine in the US. It's like one of the biggest growing sectors, and that is a very scary thing , to think that it is more beneficial to kee government sectors that are privately operated. That means more efficiency for the job, and a less hassle for the government, other than that they have to pick up the tab, which taxpayers end up paying, In essence, we are paying to put ourselves behind bars.

I.E: You told me there will be a song on your new . record about what happens to people when they become too old to be "productive machines" in the economy. What do you think the way we treat older people in our society (hiding them away in "rest homes, " etc.) says about our society itself?

grams, but it still doesn't change the fact. Once you're too old, what the fuck are you supposed to do? I don't know, but know I don't want to be around when I'm 70 and all alone, in a rest home watching TV, rotting away,

I.E: And after old age comes death. We seem to hide death from view in our society even more than we hide old age-as if we want to deny our own mortality. Why do you think this is? What role do funerals play in our society these days, and what do you think might be a better role for them to play?

Radwan: Well, I don't think people really realize what death is and how it affects us directly. I'm 22, and I honestly don't know how I'd deal with death, if it happened to someone close. I don't see it happening anytime soon, but that's just how I deal with it, and that's bad. The problem I have with it is that people don't understand

that death is a natural part of life, and letting go is so hard for them. A lot of people in Lebanon, and other Arab cultures dress only in black at funerals, and women dress in black for the rest of their lives. If I was to show up to a funeral in jeans, it would be considered a disrespect to the dead. Another point is the fact that Western Christians makeup the dead and try to make them look as

Radwan: That is what our system (and lives) is based upon. You get paid to work, and produce so you can go out and purchase what someone else got paid to produce, and hope they do the same so you keep getting paid. All of us live lives that revolve around consumerism and materialism. I don't think anyone can get around that, but you can deal with it better. I think that we all get attached to objects in our lives, but it is important to keep the fact that they are objects in perspective. My parents always tried to teach me to learn the value of money, and they failed. I can't save money because I don't understand its value, which explains why I'm so fuckin broke all the time. I can't just sit here and say all sorts of idealist statements about how we should rid ourselves of this, but I try my best not to think about money, as much as I can. Of course you have to at times, but it's nice sometimes to just say fuck it, and not feel chained to colored paper with numbers on it.

I.E: Please list all the music, etc. Ire has released, and your future plans. IRE: Split 12" with Seized on Spineless/Fetus Records; 7" on Schema Records; upcoming 12'7CD on Mountain Records (out early Summer); 1998 August tour with Cave In across the U.S.

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Patrick: The question answers itself. This shows how we view people, as machines and not as people. Radwan: I guess before it was people like to grow with their company, and I still think that people have this loyalty thing to their employers, especially if they have been working there for a while. It's sad that to the corporation, an employee ranks at the same level as a machine. I guess they try to fluff it up by offering all the fringe benefits and pension & insurance pre

alive as possible before they bury them. I don't really know what people get out of that. I've never been to a funeral, and I really don't know how I'd deal with it.

I.E: In your song "Dead Among the Dead" on the 7", you speak about the deadening effects of participating in the worker/consumer system. Is there a way out of this? What do the members of Ire do in their daily lives and lifestyles to try to free themselves from the chains of the

capitalist economic system?

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Most ads, even in our sacred hardcore scene, use a +/- Distribution offers lots of combination of false promises and exaggeration to convince great stuff at really low you to buy one product over another. Whether it is prices (since we trade our own scantily-clad women, a message of revolution, or even releases for these items). All photographs of the big show, the implication is that there is prices are 1st class ppd in the an experience you will be a part of once you buy the US. ve also carry the fun range

of crimethinc. pjodTcO O?|Su^ w| all |no^fu11y well that you won't merchandise and will have it while Herr Dingeldein I g£^e£^JL>yilUa JaxJs^ [the] capitalist system is gallivanting about Europe this summer. I

will not fall when you buy ®l punk album, and you're Abnegation/Chapter 7' $3

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^SeMOlWsW' Jif mlM.JLTI^efQXel fnia^ Bird Of Ill Omen 'Self... CD 37

maintain some sense of integrity and perhaps to motivate Culture 'Heteronome' CD 36

you to look at things a little more closely to decide if they 'Definitely Not The Majors'CD ...38

really are something that will make your life more Earthmover 'Themes...' CD 38

worthwhile, we propose to present our advertisements more Earthraover/Facedown 7' 33

as announcements than as tools of coercion. Only you can Eighteen visions CD 37

decide what's best for you... so in that spirit, here is a Fall Silent '1997' CD $5

little bit on what we are about and what we have available. Int. SxE bulletin #22 or 23 32

I know that was a lot of words, you can turn your tv back on anytime you like. Morning Again 'Matyr' Or 'Hand' CD ...36

coming in June 1998 Nations on Fire 'Death of...' CD ...39

> Dead Eyes Under 'cursed be the deceiver' 10'/CD Terrorzone 'self-Realization' *cd* ...36 Cold As Life 'born to land hard' CD — Trephine 'Reprogram...' 7' S3

Extinction 10' t ('We May Fight A Battle...' CD ...39

Earthmover 'death carved in every word' 12'/CD send a stamp for the comepiete list

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>
> Catharsis is currently receiving applications for the position of • lead guitarist. Our former lead guitarist, Dan Young, has departed in the midst of unfortunate circumstances. His replacement may come from any area or background, but must bring these qualities

the band:

Musical talent and skill — high ability both in performing and composing music. Creativity, emotional expression, etc.

Ideology — an interest in wreaking havoc on the status quo, in setting high goals and refusing to compromise (D.I.Y.)

Lifestyle — a willingness to subject oneself to any degree of suffering or personal difficulties to reach said goals.

Being easy to get along with (especially under pressure) is also a plus. If you're looking for a really serious undertaking, this might be it for you. Write us and we'll discuss...

CrimethInc•/Catharsis, 2695 Rangewood Drive, Atlanta, GA 30345

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"Scene Reports, " like columns, show up in almost every hardcore magazine, almost as predictable as reviews and advertisements; it's unusual to come across a unique one. As a result, most of us are pretty damn bored with them. And yet, magazines keep printing them, without trying to push the limits of the format, without trying to exceed anyone's low expectations. We'd like to change that in Inside Front, if we can... because it should be interesting and important to all of us what our comrades are working on in faraway countries or nearby cities, but nobody is going to learn from dull, repetitive accounts. $_t$

We have a few ideas of what "scene reports " could evolve into that might be better. It's worth noting that the best scene reports we've seen so far have been the ones that tell the history of a certain hardcore community and try to convey an idea of its atmosphere. Often, scene reports from places like Greece and Slovenia are able to follow the evolution of hardcore punk in their nation from its beginnings, telling stories about their bands and the ways that hardcore punk worked within or against their cultural climate, in a way that proves really interesting. We should all learn from their example: when you 're compiling a scene report, don't just list bands and information-tell interesting stories, recount tales of yesteryear, describe the kind ofpeople who are involved in punk in your area and what it is that makes the whole thing exciting to you. If you don't tell about the things that are exciting to you, how is your report going to be exciting to us?

So experiment a little. Try talking about more than just bands-describe the hilarious guy you see at every show, describe the atmosphere of the dirty ghetto warehouse squat where the shows are held, tell about what punk kids in your area are doing to "fight the evil system " besides just forming bands and screening patches. Tell the myth of the punk rocker that was killed by the cops at a Bad Brains show in your town twelve years ago, and relate that to things that are happening today. Entertain us as you educate us.

I really don't want us to discontinue this section; because I want to keep up to date with Japanese hardcore at least as much as any of you do. But we 're going to have to make some changes if we can keep printing "scene reports " with our consciences clean. If any of you think you can offer some new life to this section, please get in touch with us-we 're dying for your help. Eventually we'd like to hire a travel correspondant on

full salerv, whom we would fly from one city to another, staying in each location long enough to provide a detailed story on its hardcore scene before moving on to the next.

Brooklyn

by Michael Scondotto

Since my last report in issue #9 of Inside Front, Brooklyn lost two of the five bands we have. In 1997, both Step Aside and Muddlehead called it a day. However, Step Aside drummer Pete has been in No Redeeming Social Value, and guitarist Joe has joined Inhuman. Muddlehead bassist Dion went on to join Shutdown. As you can see, we Brooklynites stick together. Here's some info on the "Big Three":

SHUTDOWN: Are now part of the Victory' Records family! After 3 yrs+ of hard work, Shutdown unleash their debut CD on Victory[7] in late March/ April 1998. Not sure of the title. Their CD EP Turning the Tide is still available through Striving for Togetherness. Look for full tour in spring/ summer 1998.

INDECISION: Spent tw'o whole months in Europe in late 97 and come home to a full house, twice, at NYC's CBGB's. Indecision have added second guitarist Rachel to the fold. She also plays bass in noise-core outfit Milhouse. Guitarist Justin also plays 2nd guitar for Milhouse. The guys and gal have new songs on NY'S Hardest Vol. II, and a not so new split 7" with Sons of Abraham out now. There will be a new full length for Indecision in 98 on Wreckage Records.

INHUMAN: By the time you are reading this, a split 7" with Belgium's Out For Blood should be out on France's Inner Rage Records. Inhuman covers the Sheer Terror classic "Ashes, Ashes" on this one, with a new song called "Fearless" as well. The band's full-length debut CD, Evolver, is out on

NYC's Eyeball Records, and has gotten tons of good reviews. Look for an East Coast tour in the spring/summer of 1998, and possibly Europe in the summer.

I urge all to check out Brooklyn's only true hardcore bands. Thanks again to Inside Front for the support. Keep hardcore true and "in the streets where it belongs." R.I.P. Raybeez — Never Forgotten...

INDECISION: P.O. Box 09–581, Brooklyn, NY 11209 USA INHUMAN: 2668 East 21st, Brooklyn, NY 11235 USA SHUTDOWN: 2668 East 21st, Brooklyn, NY 1123 5 USA EYEBALL RECORDS: P.O. Box 1653 Peter Stuyvesant Sta., New York, NY 10009 USA

WRECKAGE/EXIT RECORDS: P.O. Box 263, New York, NY 10012 USA

Pittsburgh, W-

by Justin Straw

Although the Pittsburgh hardcore-punk "scene" has never been huge (as far as I can remember) and probably never will be, there are a handful of impressive bands who deserve as much recognition as they can get.

Of course, some of them may already be familiar to you, such as Anti-Flag and Aus Rotten. While I don't generally get off on the sort of predictable, anthemic, sing-along, simplistic, melodic hc-punk that A-F specialize in on their Die For Your Government

CD (New Red Archive), their songs are simply too goddamn catchy, memorable and well-written

soon, but if you'd like to write me for some reason, my address is Progres- sion/ Aggression, c/o Justin Straw, Pittsburgh, PA 15228.

Hi! My name is Renaud and I'm from Geneva, the French speaking part of Switzerland (CH). As you may know, Switzerland is a small country in the middle of Europe. It's a country with four official languages, German, French, Italian and Romanch. Well, let's stop about geography and let's start with what you are expecting from this report, the hXc/Punk movement in CH..

First of all you have to know that the scene here is growing every day. I'll also speak about what's up in each part. In this scene report I'll only speak about the people with whom I have gotten in touch and about what/who those people told me. For sure, there are plenty of other people | who are involved in the scene, but I don't know them.

The German speaking part is the biggest scene in CH. It has existed for a long time now. The first name that comes to my mind is Prawda (scholastikastr. 24, 9400 Rorschach, Switzerland). Peter, the guy who runs Prawda, started Prawda zine in 1987, then it also became a mail order, and since 1996 it's been a label, too. It released a 7" V/A with four Swiss bands. The second record is a CD/LP from the band Cwill (see Prawda address), one of the best bands around. They play a new school hXc with old school influences. Now Peter has opened up a shop in Zurich. Another band, which was very cool, is called Mine, but the band split up and a new band called Damage ID (Simon Fullemann, Trichtenhausenstr. 47, 8053 Zurich, Switzerland) was born from the ashes. This band plays very great music influenced by bands such as Breakdown or Killing Time with a new school groove; they have a demo tape available and a split 7 with German band Elision on Fat for Life Rec. Pray Silent (Attila Varga, Gen-Guisanstr. 34, 6300 Zug, Switzerland) is one of the most promising bands; they play a powerful newschool hXc. Their first release is a 7 on the Belgian label Genet Rec. Check them out, you won't be disappointed. George (Kupferweg 6, 6430 Schwytz, Switzerland) is one of my favorite bands. They play a cross between hXc/crust with some Deadguy influence, and their demo is available. Curb Dogs (Jose Venegas, Nordstr. 227, 8037 Zurich, Switzerland) is a band from Zurich. They play NYHC-style music and they have a demo, too. And the last band I know is Crooked Cops (anarcho/punk) (Mike Kessler, Burghalde 8, 6110 Wolhuen, Switzerland). They recorded a 7" which is pretty good, and a political booklet is sold with the vinyl.

About the fanzines. XSober PrideX (Ricki, Haupstrasse 14, 9556

Everson, PA 19631) ☒ Box ^J? L *sujo* zAincn, dwiucnanu ui vman — •/, —

> Which brings me to zines, the ‘ $_{\text{is pretty}}$ f_{unny}. Besides Prawda, there is another small mail order called

of which unfortunately being Eric from Endless Da core. **r j** .. ^ , .. , n **n^nn n** — **˜u«˜k Q^Mi^rionJA Pat fnr**

I say unfortunately because the zine doesn't shift too far in scope from popular hardcore and metal and always features multiple phone sex ads!?! In spite of this, it is free, and is a good place to send your music for review (if your music falls within their realm), as it seems to be well-distributed along much of the East Coast, (see Endless ad-

dress) — —

As far as booking shows here you.- best bet ˆ'qˆcˆ My" Eyes (Chris Paracchini, Via della Salina 3, 6600 would be to get in contact with the bands listed above, or it „ .. ˆ «•_«. ☒ — ˜ ˜„ *1, ˆ *v/a t*[11] ˆn **Prawda and a**

you're more on the punk than metal side of hardcore (although he did do the last Neurosis show), possibly Manny Theiner (412-422-8864). Manny also does Pop Bus Records and distro (5883 Darlington Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15217) while the rest of us just sit on our asses. Actually, I do a newsletter/ mini-zine, but I think I'm going to end it

[Image not archived]

Japan

by Yoshinori

What's up?! Yoshinori here from Out Ta Bomb Distro/Fanzine, Natsuo and Suguru here from Numb! The scene in Tokyo is really great! We have lotsa bands and shows every week. Here's what's goin on in Tokyo.

TOKYO

E.S.I.P. (Oyakata 3-2-20-103 Jindaiji Mitakaku Tokyo) I don't like to compete for who's better than who, but they're probably the best hardcore band around here, musically and lyrically for me. They play straight-forward hardcore with a touch of Jap-core influences. Sounds like Agnostic Front. They have been around since 1989 and got 4 demos out so far and a 3-way split 7' with Comin Correct from USA and Stormcore from France out now on Back Ta Basics Records. I'm glad they're gonna be known by the people in other countries. Thanks to Rick! Unfortunately, they have broken up and the singer started a new band called No One Rules. You can check them out on Nothing But A Hardway compilation CD. NUMB (Natsuo Kawase 2-27-4-302 Nakai Shinjukuku Tokyo) They play heavy, brutal and aggressive hardcore with lots of breakdowns. Sounds not unlike 25 Ta Life or Sub Zero. They've got an MCD called Roar 365 out on Slam Records and a split 7" with T.J. Maxx out now on Radical East Records. They are also appearing on Hardcore Ball 2 comp CD and Nothing But A Hard way CD. Keep your eyes and ears open for these mutha fuckas! They make your lousy ass off! They are talking to Time Served Records for their next release now. State Craft (Hiroyuki Kohama 2-45-21 Izumi Suginamiku Tokyo) play heavy and mean metal. They got

a MCD called Never Forget, a split 7" with Standing Point out on Slar Records, and a MCD coming out on XLife SentenceX Records from US^ It's awesome, get it when it's out.

Protect (c/o Kohki Shinohara 2-17-2-521 Shinsayama Sayamashi Saitama 350–13) play fast, energetic, powerful and youthful old school styled hardcore. Youth of Today meets Shutdown and they still carry on the spirit. They got a demo out and a 1st full length CD coming out soon on Straight Up Records. Switch Style (You X Suck 2-10-28 Kamagaya Kamagayashi Chiba 273–01) are a big band and probably best known Japanese band ii other countries. They play intense emotional hardcore like Strife or Re fused. They got a 7" out on HG Fact and a MCD out on Win Records Offside Trap (Sinsaku 2-12-3-205 Kamiishiki Edogawa-ku 133 Tokyo play fast, raw, aggressive and brutal hardcore with lotsa mosh parts, lik< Madball, Sheer Terror, Killing Time, or Confront. Stinger (Kazuo Hariyi 5-9-3 Adachiku Tokyo 121) features ex-members of ESIP, Divided W(Fall and Offside Trap. They got some demos and a 7" out on Handa anc Company (Hideki Handa 3-71-8-102 Ikebukuro Toshima-ku Tokyo 171) They've got a very original sound. Divided We Fall from Tokyo have a 7' out on Tribal War Records and a split 7" with 25 Ta Life out on Radical East records. They have broken up. Up Hold from Tokyo play new school styled hardcore cross Strife and Earth Crisis. They've got a 7" Answer and a CD Water out on Slam Records.

There are lots of up and coming newer bands in Tokyo. Down 4 Life (Tatsuya Masaki 6-10-10 Funabashi Setagaya-ku Tokyo 156) Features member of Numb for drummer. They've got a demo out. Metalcore! Hybrid (Nakamura 2-28-12-202 Nakai Shinjuku-ku Tokyo 161) Play NYHC like Madball, Sick Of It All. They've got a demo. Release Field (Tatsuo Hitomi 163 Iwasaki Kuroiso-City Tochigi 325–01) Got two demos out. Rebirth (Issay Hada 6-49-7-106 Tokumaru Itabashi-ku Tokyo 175) They are from the ashes of Strong Bones who have two demos out. They play brutal metallic hardcore with strong death metal influences. New demo out by now.

Eternal Brotherhood (Kenichi Karasawa 1-3-21-202 Sakurajyosui Setagaya-ku Tokyo 156–0045) They play fast and aggressive hardcore with lots of breakdowns. Sounds like Madball. New demo out now.

Zone Zero (Masatoshi Saitou 7-25-15 Azuma-cho Iruma-City Saitama 358) They play brutal metalcore cross between All Out War and 25 Ta Life. Birthplace (Kaoro Fujii 1-30-15 Shimorenjyaku Mitaka-City Tokyo 181) They are influenced by State Craft. They've got a demo out. It's really great! Check it out! At One Stroke (Jun Suwa 8-1-208 Yahata-cho Hachiouji-City Tokyo) They play heavy as hell hardcore. Reminds me of Hatebreed. They've got a four song demo out! Down Fall (Takahiro Kawata 2-1-4-202 Higashinakanobu Shinagawa-ku Tokyo) They are influenced by Sub Zero and Madball.

Clinch (Kentarou Kaneko 1-1-21-101 Honcho Meguro-ku Tokyo 1520002) are old school hardcore, and have two demos out. Garpike (Sakio 234-5-102 Kohenjikita Suginami-ku Tokyo) are representing the old school spirit. One of them is SXE. Sounds like Floorpunch.

Enlink (Yuji Yokoyama 156–3 Nitta Ooyamato Yachiyo-city Chiba 276) are metallic emotional hardcore. Suns Owl (XXX Records 3-3-8-B1 Takatanobaba Shinjuku-ku Tokyo 169) play very mean metal like Sepultura and Machinehead. They have a split 7" and a 7" out now and a full-length CD out soon! Bench Warmer (3-20-14 Sekihara Adachi-ku Tokyo) have a very melodic sound. They will have their 1st CD out on Start Today Records, which is run by YouXSuck of Switch Style.

There are tons of bands in Tokyo but it's hard to follow all of them. If we forgot anyone, sorry-it doesn't mean we don't like you.

NAGOYA

Wits End (Tsuzuki 205 Sansala-A 5–15 Honen-cho Chikusa-ku Nagoya Aichi 464) They are from the ashes of Take Tha Lead. They are one of the great Nagoya hardcore bands. They play raw, brutal, and heavy hardcore. Check out their powerful live performance. Sounds like Darkside NYC. They've got a 7" out on Radical East. It's out of press. They are also on the Nothing But A Hardway comp.

Fragment (Hideyuki Kamata 7–403 Mizukusa-Danchi 2-20-2 Mizukusa- cho Kita-ku Nagoya-City Aichi) play fast, emotional and intense hardcore. If you like Integrity, Structure or Eolution stuff, it's for you. Inner Unit (Atsushi Hashimoto 5–8 Nakata-cho Atsuta-ku Nagoya-City Aichi 456) play emotional metallic hardcore with some singing vocals. They've got a demo, and are also on Nothing But A Hardway. Not A Thing (Kanta Kinoshita 1-25-8-304 Haruoka Chikusa-ku Nagoya-City 464) play energetic postive youthful old school styled hardcore. Sounds like Side By Side and Wide Awake. They are the only straight edge band in Japan (in my opinion). They've got two demos out and also appeared on Nothing But A Hardway.

Maniac High Sense (Ippay Matsui 3–51 Yahata-cho Okazaki-City Aichi 444) from Okazaki play fast, youthful early 80s hardcore. They are a well-known band in Nagoya. They have a 7" on'Answer Records and are on Nothing But... Device Change (Motoki Morita 5–36 Hanyugaoka Kani-City Gifu 509–02) play evil as fuck deathcore! They have a demo and a split 7" with One Last Sin from NY out now on Answer Records and another split with Comin Correct out soon on Answer. They are great! Check em out! Swing Arm (Kohta Sasano 3-17-1 Nakaiwata Toyohashi- City Aichi 440) from Toyohashi play metallic, fast, youthful hardcore with a lot of Strife influences. Their local scene is very nice. They are on Nothing But A Hardway.

There are some more bands in Nagoya. Elemental, SDS, Dive, Knockout Puncher, Stab 4 Reason, Tomorrow, Power Dive, Out of Touch, Result, Nice View, Without Limit, etc.

SENDAI

Strength play heavy brutal metalcore with negative lyrics. They are influenced by metal and hardcore. They have a demo and a split 7" with Comin Correct and No Compromise out now on Back Ta Basics. They are also on Hardcore Ball 2 and Nothing But A Hardway. Sounds like Merauder and Aftershock. Half Life (Inazuma 106-53-7-3 Miymachi Aoba-ku Sendai-City Miyagi 980) play emotional metallic hardcore. They have many releases so far. They have just put a CD Down Right out on HG Fact and are also on Hardcore Ball 2 and Nothing But a Hardway. There are some more bands in Sendai: Spike Shoes, Ability, Consumed, But-Scream, etc.

SAPPORO

Slang (Straight Up Recs-Kowa Bld2F Minami-2 Nishi-1 Chuou-ku Sapporo-City 060) play very fast and typical Japanese style band with Japanese lyrics. They have been around for 10 years! They are very active guys in the scene. They run Straight Up recsords, Club Counter Action and record shop. Straight Up Records has put out Face of Change CD (fast, strong, and youthful hardcore like YOT, 7 Seconds, and Uniform Choice. German pressing is done by Lost and Found) and Nex Style MCD (one of the great emotional hardcore bands), Hardcore Ball 2 compilation CD, Protect CD coming out soon, and lots of other great stuff!! If you are interested in their stuff, get in touch with them!

OTHERS

be out soon on SIH Records. I run Out Ta Bomb distribution and fanzine. Just send us US$1 or IRC for our recent mailorder catalog.

(Yoshinori Oe c/o Out Ta Bomb 1236–20 Shimotomi Tokorozawa Saitama 359 JAPAN)

Hi. I'm Gun from T.J. Maxx. I'll report on the western Japanese hardcore scene as much as I know. My town is Osaka (it's the second largest city in Japan) and there is a rather large hardcore scene here, but it is very divided into smaller ones. This time I'm only reporting the bands strongly influenced by the East Coast U.S. hardcore bands.

OSAKA

T.J.Maxx (Kohhei Gun Iwata 7-10-10 Habikigaoka Habikino-City Osaka 583) This is my band. It was formed in 1994. Strongly influenced by late 80s NY hardcore bands like Breakdown, Killing Time, Sheer Terror, Cro- Mags, Agnostic Front, etc. Our sound is old metallic hardcore, but it also includes the various NY hardcore types like the bands mentioned. Some songs are very heavy, and the others are a bit Oi tuned recently.

Second to None (Hiroyoshi Shoji 104 Doi Yawata Yawata-City Kyoto 614) Consisted of fucking heavy and slow guitar riffs along with satanic gruff vocals (ha ha ha). The mosh part of their son is very slow and nice to dance to. Sounds like All Out War, Next Step Up and Hatebreed.

Dug Revenge (Keiichi Kabeta 3–39 Ogura-Cho Hirakata-City Osaka 573) At first their sound was kind of alternative, such as bands like Prong, but now their sound is changing more to a brutal hardcore. 'Sounds like Merauder, Dmize, etc.

Reason of Hate (Hiroki Inoue 6-36-401 Asahigaoka Toyonaka-City Osaka 560) At the beginning, their sound was Integrity type-heavy, hate, brutal, angry-but since some members changed, their sound is now against these negative words (message) I guess. They changed to a more melodic, emotional type band. I don't know much about these type hardcore bands, but I think they are greatly influenced by Ebullition bands such as Born Against.

KOBE

John Holmez (Kohsei Hashimoto 4-3-205 Matsukaze-cho Suma-ku Kobe-City Hyogo 654) This is one of the oldest bands playing this type of sound. They are highly skilled, so they might sound more like thrash metal with a bit of hip-hop flavor. About their songs, recently the vocalist sang a "song" and so it sometimes reminds me of V.O.D. This is a very good band.

Dying Race (Tomoki Nishimura 3-3-11 Koutoucho Nagata-ku Kobe- City Hyogo 653) They were formerly Age Limit 20. The vocalist changed, so the band changed their name. I only know one of their songs, but it's very nicely done and fucking brutal like Hatebreed, Fury of V. Age Limit 20 was also known as a brutal band, but Dying Race will probably become a more brutal band.

HIMEJI

Meaning of Life (Takashige Okada 2–120 Shimizu Shikama-ku Himeji- City Hyogo 672) They are the only hardcore band having a taste of the late 80s NY and NJ SXE bands' sound. Their sound is very emotional, and sounds like Vision, Up Front. In Japan, it's very hard to find this type of band. Very cool.

One final lost little classified ad:

TWO-FACE SETS THE PACE! Get in touch and send $ 1 /1.10 DM for mailorder list. Write to: Andre Hoppe, Donnersbergstege 69, 465 69 Hunxe, Germany. Nerds: TWFACE@aol.com

These classifieds are free in Inside Front, you know... why are none of you taking advantage of that?

[Image not archived]

th cnntpihtinu:

Inside Front #11

1. *"Stupid Me" -Botch*

2.
<quote> *"Boia Nazista" -Society of Jesus*
3.
<quote> *"Atfal al-hejara" -Ire*

4. “I *Believe” -Earthmover*

5.
<quote> *“Money” -Earthmover*
6.
<quote> *“Nothing But Regret” -lockjaw*

7. “ “ *-Zegota*

8. *“Mourning...: -Headway*

9.
<quote> *“Eleven Years of Virginity” -Stickfigurecarousel*
10.
<quote> *“Year By Year” -Opposite Force*
11.
<quote> *“Never Again” -Kriticka Situace*

12. *“The Darkest Hour” -Amebix*

13. *“Chain Reaction” -Amebix*

£££

Athough each of the first nine bands on this compilation arrived here from a different route, they all have a few things in common: they’re all bands from the grass roots of the D.I.Y. hardcore scene, they’re all bands that give a fuck about something, and each is, in its own way, an innovator. We’re proud to be able to associate ourselves with bands like these, because they are the life’s blood of hardcore music today. It’s also exciting for us how much territory these nine bands cover: they hail from places as distant from each other as Rome and Seattle, Canada and North Carolina. We urge you to communicate with them-you can reach them through the Inside Front address, if no other way.

The final three tracks were recorded long before the other songs on this CD, by bands that have since broken up. We’ve included these here to introduce Inside Front readers to two older bands they may not have heard of before, bands that have meant quite a lot to us. It also gives us the opportunity to look back upon some of their records and discuss what it was that made them so important. Anyway, enjoy the music!

*it *5 just another selfish game, but i won’t participate in this way of conquest, rite of passage, strive for stature, exploit the passive, point-rank system, joint-rape project, count me out i’m not submitting, your score proves nothing to me not your masculinity*

stupid ng OTCH

I haven't been around long enough to label myself "old school, " but Fve seen enough bands, heart! enough speeches, read enough zines, and read enou^tyricslo identify the standard •hardcore issues." Veganism is goad, big business is bad, fuck tbe government, organized religion is evil, blah blah blab. I've heard those words before and i.ue heard them stated more articulately and eloquently, i hate the cynicism and the increasing disgust i feel towards what is typically referred to as "hardcore potties, yet i can't buy into bMsim. now much of it is the simple regurgitation of the ideas espoused by intelligent bands like Crass, Dead Kennedy?, and Downcast, and how much of it involves real independent thinking. Sadly, a great portion o f it falls under the former, if took me two years just to find someone who could explain to me why all the D1Y bids had such a bug up their asses about Dut>b East. So many slogans. So many empty beliefs adopted simply to be harder-core-than-thou. i also recall asking a handful of sxe kids why cigar smoking isn't straight edge, and the responses always ended up being along the lines of "that's just the way it is" or 'Just look at the lyrics to 'out of step.' it says don't smoke.[1]" yeah, it also says "don't fuck"andi know a lot of sxe kids that break that rule, more importantly, that song says "at least i can fucking think, " but all too often it appears that that little line is ignored too. aid before any sxe kids start gettmg all pissy about my criticisms, ! must state that icontider myself straight edge, but my concept of sxe is bused on a principle, mt on a

*band, think, goddammit, think, anyway, despite all these gripes i have concerning issues within our community, i also realize that as human beings we al share common experiences, and these experiences often manifest themselves in hardcore lyrics that sometimes seem a bit cliche, but if its honest, then that's all that matters, if it comes from the heart and net from your record collection, then it's fucking awesome, the broken friendship, the lies we've been told, the alienation we leek these are things we can all identify with, aid often tan^ the subject matter is much more specific and much more politically or socially significant, songs about sexism and rape are a good example, this topic can fat into the some trap of recycM formulas, but it tends to have more thought and emotion involved in its creative process, why? because it's something that touches at of our Eves at some point, a lot of bands write about political issues that they really dont know jack slut about, but you don't need to have degree m sociology or political science to understand the impact sexism has on our society, even as a male, i've felt the weight of this problem, hearing the stories of my female friends who are victims of sexual assault, or my male friends that smfer from repressed memories^*

god, where do i begin? or the talk i had with someone i'd known for several years regarding accusations of date rape against them, the emotions mroW m ttese encoders car *never be fully articulated through words or musk, but they should never be cheapened throat vacuous repetition of catch phrases and slogans stupid me detris with the topic ot sexism and it is based on a very specific inddent from my high school years, it's honest end from the heart, and tha sal icon say about itc*

v ; vC . J iis - *correspondence: botchrock@hotmail.com or suite 11364 2522 N. Proctor; TacomuJM98406^*

Society of jesus

[Image not archived]

B0IAMA2IS1A

L'unlco nazlsta buono e quello mono
t*umco fasclsta buono e quello mono
L'unlco nazlsta buono b quello mono
L'unlco fasclsta buono e quello mono
Per quello che hanno fatto,
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Percibcbeteorlzzano
le loro teste dlcazzo
Isonoi ooia bola tutu I fascist!
(sonol Bola, bola tuffi I nazisti

... ABOUT MIRACLES

You're waiting that from above, from something you support and agree with, something comes to you. Something you didn't want to fight for, preferring to delegate someone else. A miracle: a wordly or a superior entity is what you're waiting for. It's not difficult to understand why you prefer waiting than fighting: fighting is expansive in terms of engagement, thinking and sometimes even personal freedom. That's why it's easier to wait and just say "You can't change the way things are!" Is it possible to think, for example, that the fascist dlctature would have been defeated without the partisans' action, only by a divine will? We dare to dissent. Somebody preferred to risk his own life and personal freedom to make his dreams come true. It's a metter of choices. Wilful choices. It's not enough to complaint, you musn't be an accomplice. Create dissens in your mind. *"Ever since the alienated man waits in vain his liberation from a provvidential messiah as well as immaginary. The moral of the slaves, moulded by their masters, beats every revolt done in the name of God. The most efficient weapon of the tyranny is ofpshycological kind.*" (Al bert Joel) ""

DIY MUSIC AND GRAFIX BY SOCIETY OF JESUS

SOJ are: Ringo-vocals/Melo-bass/Matteo+Gallo-guitars/Adn-drums.

This song also appears on "..dei miracoli" 7"EP on SOA recs.

Contact us: Matteo Verri, C.P. 6, 41100 Modena succ. 7, Italy

Massimo Meloni, C.P. 8, 41100 Modena succ. 7, Italy

[Image not archived]

record is so derivative that I'm afraid that soon there will be generic "Firestorm"-revival bands the same way there are terrible "spirit of '88" revival bands today. I'm sure that Absence is smarter and more D.I.Y. in focus than their forerunners Earth Crisis (how could they possibly not be?), but I wish they would establish an identity of their own. Also, the writing about "Innocent Life" and "paying for your sins" in the liner notes smacks of the kind of superstitious Christian morality that I thought we had all left behind, especially in hardcore. I'm sorry, I'd like to say nicer things about this band, since they are from Italy, but I have to be honest about the way I feel. — b *Cycle, address below*

ACREDINE "" 10": The absence of a lyric sheet or insert of any kind makes

it hard for me to know how to approach this record. The music is fast, simple, straightforward punk music, punk as in grittier, older Bad Religion, perhaps, not as in Discharge. Not that they sound at all like Bad Religion, but they come from that side of the punk family tree: straightforward fast music, singing vocals, simple approach. There's definitely nothing apocalyptic, filthy, or violent here. The singer's voice is unaffected, which is good, but it's a little nasally, and his melodic singing doesn't ultimately do much for me. It's not catchy, either, which is what this kind of music needs to work, in my opinion. At least the music is fast and has a little energy. I think the lyrics are in Italian, so I really can't tell what 'they're talking about here. So, that's it. 10" records are kind of cool, I'll give them credit for that. — b *Vacation House, Via San Michele 56, 13069 Vigliano B.SE (Bl) Italy*

ALL ELSE FAILED "A Most Bitter Season" CD: Dynamic, tense, fast hardcore, with guitars that alternate chunky parts with discordant open strumming. This kind of music usually works better with a heavier, more polished recording than this has, but it's certainly good enough, and I appreciate that they went to the trouble of making the bass sound so gritty and distorted on the fourth song (that is a bass, isn't it?). It's just the guitars that need more weight and force. The two vocalists both alternate screaming and talking, and they do their work fine when they sing separately, but when they scream together they occasionally create an indistinguishable mess. The fifth song begins with an acoustic part, and they do some singing together; they carry it off better than I expected them to, for the most part. The general atmosphere is one of ugliness, self-hatred, angst, all-encompassing disgust, as reflected in the lyrics (about suicide, for example) and packaging (gut-wrenching paintings that tell the

same story). The climax of the CD comes after almost ten minutes of broken guitar noise near the end: an apparently improvised, distorted, agonized, interminable ode to desperate loneliness and despair. There's some heart here. Let's hope they stick it out long enough to make a record that will really kick us in the teeth. — b

Tied Down, see address below

ANOTHER PROBLEM "" 12": The guy from this band gave me this record to review in Germany, but it turned out it didn't have any lyrics, so the next day I shoplifted a lyric sheet out of a copy I found in a record store. That just goes to show

there are no limits to the lengths we will go to give a useful review in Inside Front. By the way, if the poor soul who bought the record I stole the

lyrics out of is reading this, write me and I'll send you the lyric sheet back- sorry! The music here is fast and straightforward hardcore, very old-fashioned, complete with deep yelling vocals. I imagine when these guys think of hardcore they think of old Sick Of It All, Confront, old Slapshot, earlier Judge, Raw Deal, Outburst, the faster mid- to late-'80's NYC hardcore bands. They don't really have the immediate energy of most of those bands I just listed, although they don't exactly sound bored, either. The songwriting is fairly tight, and the performance is decent, although it takes a fucking excellent performance to make this kind of music interesting, let alone fresh, these days. And what about the lyrics, since I went to such trouble to obtain them? Well, most of them are pretty predictable, too: "I live my life just the way I like, listening to

noone, for me that's all right" "won't hear your excuses, won't believe your words — it makes me sick!" ...but occasionally their shaky grasp of the English language results in some unusual combinations of words: "not again, don't suck up to me, my ass is closed to people like you!" — b *Acrid Production, Oppenhoffallee 53, D 52066 Aachen, Germany*

BALLROOM "The Race With the Devil" CD: Melodic, melodramatic rock and roll/indie rock stuff. The vocalist has a sort of whiny singing voice, and the first line he sings is "swimming in a sea of emotions." I'd say a lot of the melodrama comes from him, although the music itself isn't far behind, with major key rock chords and super-clear rock and roll production. The layout is fancy — it features gold ink, photos of fancy antique cars, and quite a few pictures of the band members dressed up in really fancy clothes. I don't mean to be a jerk, I think that it's important to explore the emotional themes this band seems to be reaching for with their lyrics and music (that is, angst, romantic turmoil, etc.), but these guys will have to work harder to blast through the artifice and predictability of this genre and actually move me. The only moment they strike a chord in me is when the singer admits: "I am so afraid to miss my life, I am so afraid not to really be in love..." — b *Pateline, Vogelsbergstrasse, 29, 75031 Eppingen, Germany*

CAPTION "Emotions to Sever" CD: I was surprised how well-performed and well- constructed these songs are. Not because I didn't think anything good could come out of Alabama, but just because... well, I just didn't expect it. The music depends on a fair bit of acoustic work, which works itself up into more powerful electric melodies, before taking off into full-strength screaming chunky hardcore. The guitars offer some layering at the right moments, going

, off in different directions before rejoining

to give the chunky parts the necessary punch. The playing is tight and the recording is excellent, clear and powerful without being overproduced (except, perhaps, a little of that reverb on the drums). This is more atmospheric than most hardcore, in that

the songs are extremely long and don't vary in tempo much at all — that means that a mood is created rather than a blow being delivered. The lyrics touch on lost loves, among other things. I think this band still has plenty of room for improvement, since they aren't making the most unique music in the world yet (you know, screaming vocals, shouted backups, danceable chunky parts, acoustic and electric guitar melodies, etc.), but this is just fine for the first thing I've heard from them. — b *These Trying Days, P.O. Box 1125, Decatur, AL 35602*

SO

never

LOCK-JAW

Nothing But Regret

Everything I feel exposed/ Yon can see right through my stares / Never a word shared/Someone I will never know / Still I know you well / You could never understand / Regret / Left here impaled by my actions / Condemned by my lack of action / Someone I wtll know /Still I know you so well / You could never understand / Now I'm left with nothing but my regret

Recorded February 24. 1998 ar Watchmen Studios, engineered by Doug White Information Lockjaw c/o Bill Page. 348 N. Pleasant Pkwy.. _Buffalo, NY I42O6USA(7I6)897.1$_{\text{I}}$6<1_

/*zegqta*/

How we choose to live our daily lives greatly affects our environment. Driving automobiles contributes to air and water pollution, acid rain, global warming, ozone depletion, solid waste, and problems to the health and safety of all animals. When we drive, we are forced to support companies that have neither our environment, nor our best interests in mind. Profits come first to these

eight

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pedal away from global decay

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people. We choose not to support this industry and destruction whenever possible. ^hat Finding alternative forms of mah^{y} transportation is a solution. We do realize that neither you nor I are perfect and that we

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way [1]

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Path

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all end up in cars from time to time. This society is based upon the automobile, so it is nearly impossible to banish it from our lives. Reduce your driving. Find other ways to get to your destination when you can. Free yourself from inCARceration!!!

2312 PRINCESS ANN St. GREENSBORO, NC 27408 usa

|viooaz|

[Image not archived]

father's eyes are bleeding love, blinded by this love for me
he leaves me to die out. so alone in this ocean of tenderness
i feel dirty, ugly and cold, does not shock you. dad?

i don't feet so good you love, you don't comprehend my weariness
i look for my soul, i look to fill in this void.

mum. the more time passes by. the harder it is to bare this cross.
i can't take on my evolution and my mourning,
dad. help me. all is not well, fm not strong
i feel my shell crumble away

i'll leave with the first gust of wind...

music is a way to express ourselves... this song represents something really personaland emotional for us... it will not change the world... in a way. it has changed ours...

headway is against the current political system and the established economy, neocapitalism and its rationalization of minds, that places profit as the main objective; everything that concerns the well-being of humanity and the state of nature has been put aside, if hot ignored... we transmit these feelings as well as our passion, our emotions by means of our music... we attach a great importance to the opening and the independance of the mind, to tolerance and respect.. recorded and mixed by tint. Christophe and sylvain at meantime studio. tohlouse Jiaijce. January 1998... lyrics by julien. music by headway... thanks to brian and inside frontcriemthiuc. collective. loic lepillet christophe. tim and syl-

vain. our families.our friendsand everyone who has helped us in a way or another...headway is:

guitar, vocals-xaviercombres 12. allee du puymorens. 31770 coloniiers(trance)
bass-olivier argagnon 8. impasse des sillons. 31170 touniefeuille (france)
dnims-mathieu duh *uh* Vallee du var. 31770 colomiers{fiance)
guitar-amaud brissonnet/6. rue des chanterelles. 31820 pibrac (fiance)
v(Kals-julien boutonnier/ 260. rue henri desbals. 31300 toulouse (france)

...please don't hesitate to write us tor more ' informations 'or for anything else . thank you for taking the time to listen to this song... our music, our feelings, our hemps... thaiix.- headway...

[Image not archived]

their lives hiding out from anny scouts in die wilderness. I'm ashamed of how petty and trivial the subjects we address in our Western hardcore are. That is what hardcore should do. I say to myself: it should demand nothing less from us than risking everything for what we believe, putting our lives on the line, playing for the highest and most noble stakes-it should shine with passion and intelligence, it should stand as a glorious part of the history ofoUr species' struggle to make something more Worthy of itself, it should draw upon that history to learn from human heroism past and look forward towards the future. Kriticka Situace does all those things on this recon!

Tire poetic, urgent lyrics, taken individually, are pieces of human life and expert* ence-of fear, faith. despair, and desire: together they add up toa mournful yet far from hopeless reflecti on upon the hum an condition. Some of them tell stories that we comfortable, complacent Westerners can barely imagine taking place upon this earth-they tell of slaughteringarmies, of innocent men being executed, of forced military conscription. of the terrifying brutal ity that always results from the State having too much power. But here the issues become relevant to us all; tor eveiywhere across the world, we have let ourselves become secondary in powerand importance to the institutions we have created: human beings everywhere are very small next to the governments, religions, bureaucracies, and wars they have created. Kriticka Situace lament this situation and the inexcusable loss and oppression of life it causes, but they refuse to give up hope; their most touching lyrics occur near the end of the record, in a song called Perhaps Somewhere Beyond Piava." These arc taken from a poem written during the first world war. in which the writer wonders if. on the other side of the trenches, there might be a young man like himself, who also wants peace and brotherhood.

In this moment they celebrate the occasions throughout history when men and women have been able to rise above hate, cowardice, and violence and hint that perhaps the future could be brighter. And the music-this music is comparable to classical music in its dramatic power and diversity, and yet somehow retains the earthy resonance of traditional folk music. Every transition, every pulse-racing drumroll, every heart-stoppingly beautiful guitarmelody, every majestic swoop and sudden plunge of each song is perfect. It is so caretirlly crafted, so complex and so proficiently played, that it is dear that this was a band that took their mission very seriously and spent years perfecting then skills to accomplish it. that they would do this, knowing full well that as an Eastern European band they would almost, certainly receive no widespread recognition, fills me with a deep gratitude tor their generoshy-they gave this beautiful music to the world, made from the very blood of their hearts, not expecting to get anything back from it, not even knowing how many people it would reach. Nothing is more tragic than records and other works of art lost like this one, forgotten by time, unable to touch the human beings for whom they were made, unable to provide the beauty and hope those people sorely need. Let its not overlook Kriticka Situace.

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Live in Newcastle, 26-4-87

These two barely decipherable live tracks (recorded very near the end of their decade-long existence) are hardly a starting place for a new Amebix listener. They are a final resting place, if anything: the grim, exhausted determination in the vocals and the fearful frenzy with which the instruments are played both betray the fact that after carrying on for so long, the Amebix were finally approaching the end of their path-these two songs were recorded in the last few months of their existence. But I wanted to include these two songs here, not only so

cassette breaks, but also to dig up the long-buried Amebix and made music or written lyrics that had such an effect on my life, the Amebix in the "crusty" punk scene right now (that seems to day live and demo rereleases, and most of all, around their the Amebix never really got their due, never were taken seri- they traveled. So before we forget them ...

> [Image not archived]
>
> I first heard the Amebix made me a tape of their final two and put it away somewhere: to me it
>
> noise, with a terrible recording, and a real'lack of musicianship too. A number of months later, after my life had become somewhat more difficult (sleeping on floors, going without food, getting dirtier...) I put the tape back on, and it sounded a little better to me; still, afterwards I forgot about it again. More time passed-more sleepless nights, more hungry days, more dirt-and when I put it back on I really liked it. I even took it with me on my band's first tour-and there, two and a half weeks into a four week tour in the back of a pickup truck, with six guys and all the equipment crowded together like animals in a slaughterhouse, the night Dan had slipped a disc in his spine, all of us covered in filth, at six in the morning after a sleepless all-night trip, torn-throated and beaten, I realized what fucking beautiful, heart-rending music this was.
>
> For the Amebix made the definitive music of exhaustion, of bitter suffering and impossible struggle. To make their music and pursue their dreams they lived for years and years without jobs or homes, eating out of garbage cans, completely cast out of society, with no hope of things getting better. These were men who existed on the very edge of humanity, barely surviving from day to day: sick and starving and freezing, some of them drug-addicted, all of them looking death in the face. Early in their existence a middle class kid let them stay in his family's house while his parents were away, and when the parents returned they sent their kid to a mental hospital just for associating with such vermin. But the Amebix didn't make music of *hopelessness* — in their songs is a dreadful, desperate willingness to fight to the bitter end, to carry on fighting for their dreams long after hope seems lost and destruction inevitable. For this is also the music of desire: of furious anger and touching sorrow for lost horizons, of courage in the face of impossible odds, of a will to freedom at any cost. And in this, they transcended their own personal struggles to speak for us all in this ruined world. They sang what are to me the ultimate songs of defiance and revolt-they never forgot the freedom and passion they were fighting for, they never lost a drop of their disgust for the absurdities around them, and they held tight to their dreams right up to and over the brink of annihilation. I find

> a deeper beauty in the courage of this music than I have felt anywhere else: this is the stuff of ragged glory, of threadbare, broken dreams, of human heroism in the face of all-devouring fate.
>
> [Image not archived]
>
> The music of the Amebix has an atmosphere of impending doom; apocalypse hangs always over it, filling the sky, casting its ominous shadow on the foul, polluted earth below. The ever-present threat of nuclear war, the ever-increasing control of governments and corporations over human life, the ever-worsening environmental devastation of the industrial system

Excerpted from the Pus head interview in M.R R. #13, 1984:

Pushead: Give us some background information on band members, lifestyle, etc. _Jenghiz:_ Having spent some time in an asylum where one of Europe's top psychologists refused to certify me sane, *[he accused me of trying to]* take over his hospital, which I did find insulting, since if I was going to be in command it would be the world. My upbringing was working class. In the U.S. I would have been classed as white trash. I don't consider myself a musician. My lifestyle is very frugal and simple. I live by my convictions refusing to be carried away by the stream* of commercialism.

Pushead: You stated that you have lived in quite a few squats. Could you explain what that is like, and whether it makes you happy to live in this manner? What is the alternative for Amebix? I've heard stories about Disorder being so poor, they dig through garbage cans for food. Is this the same with Amebix, or is "life" better for you? Now most people shun the thought of looking for food in garbage cans, but if you hit the grocery store dumspters there are plenty of good vegetables and other edible items which just aren't proper for sale for procedures of looks or date, so this food is wasted while millions starve, and rich phonie movie stars get on TV begging for your money to feed the poor. But to some this is their survival, whether they have money or not, the food is there and free. What do you think of this? Any personal experiences?

Aphid: Yes, we've been squatting *[unreadable]* one bedsit (room, cooker, fridge etc.) which 3 of us rented and lived in for a while. Squatting's OK in the summer, but unless you have electricity and heating in the winter it can be very uncomfortable. We lived in Hampton Road two winters back and the roof was caving in and the windows were smashed, and on top of this there was no electricity and it was snowing-we nearly froze, it was really bad[1] . Most of the places we've squatted have been OK though; some exceptional ones were St. Andrews Road, Cotham Side, and Oakland Road. Cotham Side even had a cooker, fridge, furniture, carpets and TV! It was a dream come true, a squatters paradise. When we first came to Bristol we had no money for ages, so we used to go raid the skips behind Littlewoods and get bags of doughnuts and cakes which were out of date. Sometimes we'd find nothing, which would mean Disorder had got there before us. Some good bread fights used to ensue as well. I don't know

how the fuck we managed to stay alive on such a sickly diet but we did. Apparently that food gets given to the Salvation Army, who charge people all their gyros (social security cheques) to stay in their hostels and eat shitty food. I agree with you that a lot of good food is to be found in skips. At Oakland Road we used to get vegetables down the road as people won't buy ones with even little blemishes on them, and that's bad news. I think the people who have lived this sort of lifestyle would be far better acquainted with surviving any major catastrophe, whereas the rich slobs would starve. It definitely makes you sharper.

> *from the liner notes to the "No Sanctuary" 12":* Politics means simply, way of life, not political parties with manifestos to be strictly adhered to. To vote for party politics is to vote for state or government control and the abolition of independent expression. The obscenity that is now the British "way of life, " Victorian empiristic

I Americanisation that all parties now seem to advocate condemns the individual to the role of passive supporter and puppet, depriving them of freedom of will to express themselves and develop as individuals, to follow blindly a creed or philosophy regardless of whether it's political, apolitical, religious or atheist. To follow blindly an ideology is to deny yourself free will and condone the actions of those who would be leaders and masters.

. Do you really want your freedom? Well do
you?
We are made to feel that our potential is
limited, we cannot be free. Lies'
| There are very few forms of free expres-
I sion left open to us, but music is an internationally recognized language, so it is a logical conclusion
I that music should be the catalyst to spark off a reaction in people. Many people find it convenient | to be led by a band: it is so easy to sit back and live by that band's "manifesto" instead of using
I your own initiative to analyze the lyrics and your
I freedom to dispute the arguments presented by a band.
Will they never understand that the future
I is in man?

> No two people think in the same way. But many "individuals" are desperately trying to mold their attitude into the right shape so that they "fit in" with the "movements'" common philosophy.

I Freedom can only be obtained by the individual
I going his/her own way on their own terms, so consequently you find that the prospect of being

I "on your own" is not too attractive to the leech who prefers to latch on to a group of people and nod

I their head at the right time, in turn being patted on

I the head and congratulated for their blind faith in

I that group, the principle on which the church and

I other political organizations have thrived in the past. Your destiny is in your hands, nobody else's, and if you can't come to terms with that, you might

I as well retreat back into society's cozy little slot as there's always a place for the lost sheep amongst

I the blind flock. Security.

NO GODS NO MASTERS.

[Image not archived]

This was the final Amebix recording, the masterpiece of their career. They had worked for years to be ready to make this record, and they put everything they had into it. And they had finally found what they must have thought was a good label to release it... but, as they discovered too late, there were born-again Christians on the label's board of directors, who refused to even print the lyric sheets when they saw the anti-religious sentiments in them. They let the record go out of press after only 3000 copies sold, and the Amebix, in complete despair and exhaustion, broke up. [Some of them went on the form Zygote, their drummer now plays in Muckspreader, and their singer lives in isolation on the Isle of Skye, as a blacksmith forging medieval weapons- no joke!] The label insisted for years that the master tapes had been destroyed, and that was that-the Amebix' greatest achievement, their reason to be, was lost to the world, only available to a few obsessive collectors. But recently, amazingly enough, the label (Heavy Metal Records) has rereleased the "Monolith" LP on CD- apparently they were lying about the master tapes just so the band would leave them alone. So now this long-lost record is available again.

These songs are performed with absolute abandon, with complete disregard for anything that has come before. You can hear the drums and amplifiers shaking and the fragments of guitar pick flying from the frantically struck strings, you can almost see the sweat pouring from their emaciated bodies, you can feel each musician bent unflinchingly into every chord. When the time comes for a guitar solo, the guitarist doesn't even try to play notes-he just turns his pick sideways and scrapes it back and forth against the strings as hard as he can, straining and bending them, grinding out a terrifying screeching noise like the death cries of a flock of vultures. The drummer never stops to get his balance, and in some places he doesn't even seem concerned with keeping time-he is always beating the drums and cymbals as hard as he can, as much as he can, making as much clamor and chaos as he can, and all else be damned. At the climax of each song, the Amebix pull out all the stops and push their sound into unexplored territory, into total noise and disorder; yet the music comes together where it must, into bitter anthems and broken rhapsodies.

In the brief moments of stillness, such as the haunting instrumental at the beginning of the record, the silent, cold beauty of dusk is evoked; waves crash at the shores of a world not yet dominated by iron and smog, stars glow gently overhead, a prehistoric peace hangs in the air. When the first chord of the discordant, distorted guitars crashes in, it brings with it all the ugliness and awesome, ignoble splendor of the industrial world. The music speeds up with a revving of corroded engines, and the band charge forward, careening and swerving dangerously like a motorcycle out of control, the singer intoning in a spiteful growl[11] *we're swimming in the lunar sea, drowning in insanity* rising to an angry snarl *"your leaders were lying. ..*" and to a roar: *"nobody's driving?'* as the whole industrial system lurches forward, smokestacks spewing filth, factories pouring out poison into rivers and oceans, scientists building bigger and bigger bombs, towards our technologically designed, garbage-choked demise.

Even more apocalyptic is the sixth song, "I.C.B.M."[2] It begins with a stratospheric whir and hiss: the whisper of morning winds across the enormous belly of a nuclear warhead in flight. As the guitars strike their first notes and the drummer begins a tense count on the highhat, the missile coasts low over vast landscapes, passing over fields of crosses planted by earlier, less conclusive wars, headed for the heart of civilization. And the singer, his voice hardened with a contempt that still betrays sorrowful regret, pronounces *"meatwagon come... borne on the rays of the morning sun ... thy kingdom come, *

*thy will be done", * consigning our species in its stupidity to the mass grave we have prepared for ourselves. "A* silver express through the valley of death, a cruise overland to turn the fertile soil to sand." *Surveying the wasteland obscured by radioactive smoke, choking on ash and cinder, he cries out into the void, the guitars and drums behind him marching forward like the masses of vaporized humanity in the final roll call before the angel of death. As the last word is sung, the music turns up and away from the ruined earth, passing through the mushroom clouds and sailing into the inhuman beauty of the sky... to the regions of space that man had not yet been able to pollute and destroy.*

*Annihilation is upon us, * the Amebix proclaimed with this record.* Let us accept it, come to terms with it. *Death appears again and again in their music, both the meaningless, man-made death of war, pollution, and famine, and the inevitable mortality imposed upon our race by nature and destiny itself. In their finest, most courageous moments, they can accept and*

embrace the latter. The song "Last Will and Testament" begins with a final whispered benediction: *"The parchment of my flesh doth break, the winter winds my soul doth take, and all beneath the heavens lies in peace. The world will dawn and fade away, the crystal dawn of the final day breaks upon the shores of death's release?* For an instant, they are able to let this world go in good faith, to pry the clinging fingers of human cowardice away from the frustrating, miserable difficulties of this existence, and accept what must be. I shiver when I hear the beaten resolution in the singer's voice, accepting this when he could accept so little else in this world: that if he could not realize his desires, at least he will be released from them (and all the torment

that unsatisfied desires hold) upon his deathbed. The rest of the song is a dirge for our species, which has brought itself to the end of its lifespan as well. *"We made the deserts from the gardens of our youth, spewed our blackened hearts into the sea — through darkened skies and poisoned clouds we blindly groped for truth, we couldn't see the forest for the trees?* Faced with the ruined experiment that was Man, the Amebix are ready to witness our self destruction, to see us rid the planet of all the carnage and corruption that our short rule has brought.

"To my wretched son, I leave this gun, to slaughter all your race-for this, the beast you have become, I have no longer taste? And yet there is a sadness in all this bile, a barely suppressed grief that it had to end like this.

Close to the end of this record, in the midst of all this despair and destruction, the Amebix leave us with their timeless celebration of selfdetermination and aspiration: "Chain Reaction." The title is more than a play on words demanding that we react to our oppression and cast off our chains; it is a prayer that if one of us were to dare to do this that perhaps it would spread from one to another until humanity itself demanded freedom from its self-imposed bonds. *"Rise into the light and set aflame to the night-we must destroy the institution of fear?* their singer charges us: we have created this world, our species has constructed it; why then should we not choose to remake it again if we are not satisfied, take our destinies into our own hands and refuse to be led around like cattle to the slaughter? Take to the streets, recognize your fellow human beings as your brothers and sisters, tear down the system that keeps you

fighting against each other-it is a desperate, near-hopeless dream, but he declares it boldly, daring to demand his wildest dreams, to demand that we recognize our potential rather than letting life pass us by, to demand that we refuse to be crushed beneath the wheels of uncontested fate. As he sang years earlier on the "Arise" LP, *"the kingdom of heaven must be taken by storm?*

When I hear the first bare drumroll that begins this song, my jaws clench, my eyes narrow, my resolve strengthens and deepens. This is music of courage-of more than courage, of the grim will to fight at any cost. In it I hear the merciless determination of men who have already lost everything in pursuit of their destiny, men looking up from the very bottom of the black pit of failure at the unreachable world of beauty they strove for, and yet still refusing to accept defeat. Exhausted, emaciated, their hope and idealism entirely spent, told in no uncertain terms by the entire world that they are worthless filth, they march forward, driven by a superhuman force of desire to struggle to the very death. I have listened to this song in the bleakest days of

[Image not archived]

my own life, starved and sleepless myself, having lost all reason to hope for the future, and it gave me the strength to push forward through night after night of weariness and humiliation. *"We swear allegiance to none-be, not become?* shouts the singer at the end: Never give in! No matter what the odds, accept no lords or limits! Bow to no gods or dogmas! Don't sacrifice yourself, don't settle for anything, never allow them

to force you into some narrow definition of humanity or ideology-embrace what it is to be a human being, in all its

terrifying complexity and contradiction, and demand it for yourself. ᵘ*We are straining at the leash?* he roars at the climax of the LP, embodying the immortal spirit of the human quest for freedom.

On this late live recording, battered by so many years of tribulation, he no longer even has the spirit to roar those words. You can hear him, eyes shut and stinging with sweat, nearly unconscious, lean into the microphone and breath them out as if from his deathbed, still unwilling to be silent, still issuing a challenge to would-be rulers everywhere who count on us valuing comfort and safety more than liberty.

And at their final show, at the end of their last song, he struck his final chord, spat ᵘ*No Gods, No Masters* into the microphone, and put down his guitar foreverafter ten long years of starving, freezing, and stealing, ten years of not working, not paying for food or rent or tax, ten years of never bowing to anyone-ten years which say to me now, another decade later, that *I* need not bow before anyone or anything, either.

This was the Amebix' penultimate record, and it is still available on CD from Alternative Tentacles; although it is not as perfect as the "Monolith" LP (how could it be?), it has some unforgettable moments. It begins with the most unearthly music ever recorded, Gyorgy Ligeti's "Requiem, " which also appeared in Stanley Kubrick's movie _2001_: out of the grinding of distant machines, ghostly voices rise and gather, reaching a wailing pitch of possession by the time the first chords of the song are played. The Amebix' instruments sound even more battered and dysfunctional on this earlier record (maybe they were

finally able to afford new equipment before they recorded "Monolith"?): it sounds like they must have stolen the guitars from a pawnshop and found the drums in a dumpster; but the rough, broken sound works for these rough, broken songs.

"Drink and be merry, for tomorrow we may die? they proclaim in the fifth song, trying hard to celebrate the beautiful things that life has to offer in the shadow of so much suffering, menaced by so many dangers. The song begins softly, the

bassist and guitarist singing back and forth to each other in tired, mournful voices, reaching inside themselves in search of a forgotten wellspring of joy but finding only sadness and painful memories. ᵘ*l took a walk on the beach"* recalls the singer, but ᵘ*the air smelt like Dachau today."* Our species can hardly forget the bloodsoaked paths we have wandered up to this point; it is a burden that follows each of us everywhere, always upon us whether we choose to admit it or not, along with the burden of the knowledge of our mortality and of the fleeting nature of all happiness. What miserable, despairing farces so many of our modern attempts to seek pleasure seem! ᵘ*Down in the square, the party goes on", * the singer intones.* "The doomed sit down to their last feast. They gorge themselves on the recently deceased-the heat of the day, the foul smell of decay, as they wait for the inferno to be unleashed" *When I hear these lines, I always think of the heartbreaking scene in Werner Herzog's _Nosferatu_ when the heroine realizes the cause of the plague that has wrought so much misery and death upon*

her village. She runs to the central square to tell everyone, but she finds that no one there will even acknowledge her. They have all gathered, knowing that their last days are upon them, to spend these final hours dancing, making love, gorging themselves on gourmet food, in an infinitely melancholy mock celebration. She runs from one person to the next, in absolute, frozen silence, but their faces, each lost in a desperate, tragic attempt to forget, will not turn towards hers. She screams, cries out, but her voice echoes unheard through a world from which their hearts have already departed, and the only answer is the dreadful sound of their absurdly merry music.

The final song on "Arise" is probably the most moving one the Amebix ever wrote. In this song, "The Darkest Hour, " they explore the no-man's-land between desire and hopelessness, between passion and capitulation, life and death. It begins as a farewell, a letting go, bittersweet and disconsolate; the music is a quiet requiem, as tender as the fingers of the exterminating angel herself, gently cutting each lifeline. It is a terrifying tenderness, a final, smothering tenderness: not a tenderness that rubs balm in wounds, but that severs each nerve one by one, solving the problem of pain and misery in one merciful blow, whispering softly into the ear of the dying man to quiet his anxiety. It is a gentle music for weary, bloodied ears too worn for anything else; it is a lullaby to soothe a beaten man, to lower him into his final

sleep.

"I'm not scared of dying, and I don't really care-if it's peace you find in dying, then let my time draw near." This is an exorcism on the part of the singer, an exorcism of fear: *death must come, it will come, it is coming; it will do no good to fight it. Lie down and accept it. All the pain in this world, all the things I wanted and never achieved, all the things I never will have, now, will fade away; if I never got to feel the happiness I so desperately sought, at least now I shall not feel the lack of it. All my life I have suffered, have wanted peace; well now here it is.* It is a rejection of the world and all desire, a surrender-but a false one, as the pain and furious bitterness in his voice reveals. It hurts him incredibly to say it, to release all his dreams into the void and accept the end of everything. He says it only because there is nothing else left to say, but if he must say it, he will say it with vicious spite, he will spit in the face of everything he had wanted and fought for just to show how attached to it all he was, how much he did love life, even in its most agonizing extremes, even when it gave him nothing but heartache, pain, and unfulfill- able dreams.

[Image not archived]

And as the Amebix always do, the private struggle of the individual confronting exhaustion and death is now broadened to include our human struggle: *"Some say our fate is sealed, and help to tie the knot; some say that this may be the lull before the storm; but there's one piece of nature everyone's forgot, that the darkest hour is always before the dawn!'* And he screams it out, over and over: *"Before the dawn!'* Desperate, torn between accepting what seems like certain defeat and holding on for one instant more: *Before the dawn! And* as the music builds to a fearsome climax-Before

the dawn! Let it be so! Surrounded by all this stupidity and squalor, scraping and stealing to barely survive, grant me this one thing in a life of suffering, that this darkest hour come Before the dawn! What are we living for, if not for this: that things can only get better from here? Before the dawn! What worth has all this world, all this wasted life and beauty, this vast universe, if it only ends like this? Before the dawn! Before the dawn! And the dawn does not come, and it does not come. And finally, he cries out *"when the candle burns low, when there's no more to say, dig me a hole where my body might lay"* and the song is over, ending in the final capitulation that all our lives must. But still lingering in the silence afterwards is an echo-the echo of a voice screaming: *"Before the dawn!'*

1. *"Wrap up warm, you'll catcth your death — don't let your death catch you; the winter tears the earth apart... let's hope we see it through."* -from the "Winter" 7" they recorded in the year he is speaking about here.

2. InterContinental Ballistic Missile, for those of you who don't remember the 1980's and the spector of nuclear war hanging over our heads.

Hi guys, this piece of paper contains "some of the best creative and innovative layout" but I'm gonna tell you what is the purpose of it: here we have everything from the driving power of a band like WOOD with their brand of

post-hc to the manic craziness of HARKONEN right from Seattle. USA. If you like impassionate. raw. chaotic hardcore, you find it in ONEFINEDAY. or you can choose the double atttack from CREED and REPRISAL. The more traditionalist will be floored down by Turin's own version of Syracuse-core ABSENCE. You can be the trendiest one by wearing our SHIRTS (2 brand new ones are coming!), or you can change the look of your car with our several STICKERS. You can feed your mind with our fine publications OUTLET and CYCLE (next printed on offset). Finally you can spend all of your hard-gained bucks by buying stuff at our huge mailorder distro that counts more than 250 items: italian. european and american stuff for every taste from old school through punk to emo. from crust through new school to tearing indie pop. AU P art $ Z50. stickers $1x3, t-shirts $ 7 and fanzines $ 2 Add some $$$ for postage and be HONEST, pleasel Call for wholesale rates.

•– Slefaw ^<u - v. S.P

(if?') *Ca^anS. (W)-JTALU.*

P\HFi *W u Muratori ' ^2X060* **x re c or 0$ x** *KALU. t-wail: MgHstodwscrf*

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Music is at the center of our counterculture. Everything else in hardcore punk revolves around it or originates in it.

What does this mean for us? Some would say that it will prevent us from ever posing a serious threat to the establishment. They would have us believe that our music itself is just another form of entertainment for the adolescent years and the leisure time of

the workers who keep the wheels of our system turning, and that the fact that it is a "rebellious" form of entertainment makes it more appealing without making it any more dangerous. According to this line of thinking, we punk rockers and hardcore kids waste all our rebellious energy making and selling music when we could be using it to accomplish far more challenging goals; that is, we have neutralized ourselves by basing our counterculture upon something

frivolous.

I don't think that's true. I don't think music is frivolous unless we settle for frivolous music. Music and the arts in general are significant because they speak to people on an emotional level. Music can articulate and clarify emotions that would otherwise be formless, vague, confusing; it can force us to enter

chambers of the heart that we would otherwise never acknowledge, and it can whip us'out of a passive stupor into a frenzy of emotion. The most powerful music is able to completely transform the world for the listener: it invests things which were once meaningless with an emotional significance that they did not possess before. If we want to transform this world, then, isn't music the most useful tool we could employ?

If we want to change ourselves and the ways we act and interact, nothing could be better than music. Mere weapons won't do it: we've seen violent insurrections fail time and again, and besides, the governments have more firepower than we could ever stock up. Mere theory won't do it: we've seen how overly theoretical discussion not only tends to exclude the very people it seeks to address, but also ends up bogged down in inaction, inertia, and infighting. Obviously no amount of money will do it: nothing that can be bought with money can change people unless the people already desire change. But if we could make music so moving that it brought people to life, filled them with passion and desire, made them unwilling to settle for unsatisfying lives, then we would have accomplished the first and most difficult step towards real change:

> Editor D-Ablo's top ten reasons why hardcore *is* still dangerous: 1. Catharsis "Ex-Members of the Human Race" 3-month world tour*

2. Gehenna live in Dilsen, Belgium
3. Mormons 7'7Kilara 7"
4. Seein' Red live in Amsterdam/Trial live in New Jersey
5. His Hero Is Gone "Monuments to Thieves" CD
6. Profane Existence "Making Punk a Threat Again" book
7. MORSER "Two Hours to Doom" CD
8. Society of Jesus "...Dei Miracoli" 7"
9. Burn Collector #7

10. Fireball #6 (and anything else from Fort Thunder, Providence)

we would have awakened people and made them demand more than they have today.

Not to say that just any music could do this. And not to say that that alone would be enough, by any means... but what could be more important than that? Hardcore music has actually accomplished this already for a lot of us. Most of you who are reading this magazine right now would never have come to it if it were not for the excitement you felt the first time you heard a hardcore band. We've all been significantly shaped by the music we love, each of us is living proof that this music can have a real effect on human life, that it isn't just frivolous. And no, hardcore music isn't for everyone, but music is, and we must sec ourselves as part of a wider struggle to reach people, to inspire and ignite them. We can do this with our music if we try hard enough.

I'll share with you a drcam I have about music and revolution. Many years ago I read a book by Kurt Vonnegut called _Cat's_

Cradle. In the book, there is a fictitious substance called "Ice- 9." Ice-9 is a different configuration of water molecules that allows water to harden into ice at much higher temperatures. Normal ice, "Ice-1, " let's call it, is formed at 32 degrees fahrenheit; but Ice-9, once water molecules have been "taught" how to arrange them

selves in that pattern, can freeze at 100 degrees fahrenheit. If a cube of Icc-9 touches a body of water that would normally only form Ice-1, it makes them configure themselves into Ice-9 as well: it "teaches" them how to arrange themselves so that they freeze at 100 degrees too. So if you drop a cube of Icc-9 into a normal cup of water at room temperature, all of the water is changed into Ice-9. At the end of the book, someone drops a tiny piece of Ice- 9 into the ocean, and the entire world is changed. The oceans freeze from the poles to the equator, and everything they touch freezes: rivers, clouds, animals and people too. The world undergoes a complete metamorphosis in a matter of minutes.

I can't help thinking that there must be some magical combination of musical notes, of sounds and words, of ideas and emotions that could do the same thing to us. The reason that many people can be affected in the same way by one song is that there are, obviously, certain similarities between us; might there not, then, be some song waiting to be discovered that would reach something fundamental to all of us, a song that would act as a universal catalyst? A song or novel or painting that would move every person who experienced it one thousand times more than any other work of art had

Honorable Mention: Hand to Mouth 12" & 72 page booklet, "Limited Options" 10" compilation & 'zine, "We May Fight a Battle..." compilation CD, Gocce nel Mare demo & 90-page booklet (Italy), Radikalna Promjena demo (Croatia!)

**that is to say: abandoned insane asylums and three mile long train tunnels, black eyes swollen shut, all night drives through the deserts of the wild West, stolen food, riots, guitar smashings, stabbings, Spanish art galleries, New York movie theaters, Italian squats, standing before the Isenheim Altarpiece in Colmar, walking under the*

star-filled sky outside of Rennes, being followed by homicide detectives, being showered with newspaper in Germany, sharing life with a thousand new and exciting people. Vm not trying to glorify my own adventures, just celebrating how much living is possible in this world!

ever moved them, that would drive them out into the world, possessed with a brand new, all-surpassing passion, a passion that would spread like wildfire from continent to continent, consuming everything in its path and leaving behind a changed world...

I told my dream to a friend of mine who studies classical music. It reminded him of a story he had heard about an obscure Russian classical composer who was apparently possessed by genius. Once, one of his symphonies was performed at the Sunday public concert that all the bored, middle class men and women attended for the sake of seeming "cultured." When they heard the music, which was unlike anything they had ever experienced, they were suddenly filled with a fury they had never felt before. The entire audience erupted in unison into an enormous riot that spread through the City, absolutely uncontrollable, unprecedented. Imagine the fat bankers and lazy housewives screaming, running through the streets, beating each other with their folding chairs! In an instant they were overwhelmed by wild emotions and instincts they had never even been able to admit they felt.

I imagine it must have been something like that when slamdancing happened

for the first time at a punk show. Until that night, people had danced in place or hopped up and down to the music, never imagining that there was anything else they could do. But when the band struck their first chord that evening, some unknown punk kid was moved by an irresistible force and leaped into the people next to him — and suddenly everyone was running around, crashing into each other, doing something they had never imagined before, and the world was a wilder and more exciting place for all of them.

It's true that both the examples I've given are violent ones, but I think this theory holds true more broadly: perhaps every new dance, every new idea, is inspired by a burst of emotion — by, for example, a brand new musical expression. And it's true that slamdancing, like everything else, has largely become just another ritual that people participate in without really being challenged or

Andy Dempz's Records and Events Making Hardcore Punk Again

1.
<quote> Extinction 7", live, and in debates
2.
<quote> Creation is Crucifixion live and written work
3.
<quote> Inept 12"
4.
<quote> Absolution "(in)Complete Discography"

5.

<quote> Devoid of Faith "Discography"

6.

<quote> successfully functioning collective

7.

<quote> bloated institutions collapsing under their own weight

8.

<quote> being able to tour for $20–100 a night *and embarrassing every band with a $400 guarantee*

9.

<quote> the reorganization of the international hardcore scene into independent, unique local communities

transformed. But musicians and artists must keep two steps ahead of the sterilizing, deadening forces of ritual and culture: to fill us with passion and life they must keep inventing new means of expression, keep pushing the limits of art and music, keep creating new ways to break the spells of boredom and inertia that hold us. We human beings depend on artists and musicians to keep us free in our hearts, to keep us alive, to keep us excited about life; they must not rest, but always push harder to expand the territory of the human heart.

What does this have to do with the review section, you ask? It should be obvious! Bands, musicians, don't be content to just imitate the music of your predecessors; bring something new into the world. When I'm writing the reviews and I put your record on the turntable, I want to be moved, I want to be shocked and amazed, I want my insides torn into a thousand pieces and put back together in a completely new order. We've all heard too many bands going through the same rituals — make it count, somehow! Aren't you a little desperate too, a little impatient with all the predictable and mediocre shit around and inside us every day? Don't you want to start some trouble, to make a mark upon the world, just a little bit? You have a pretty serious responsibility, mak

ing music for the rest of us: we depend on you to break us out of our ruts, to inspire us in our lives.

And magazine writers, the same goes for you! Your writing should do the same thing that their music should. If it won't touch people, if it won't do something to us or at least for us, what is it good for? I spend so much time here waiting for something exciting to happen, for something to *really happen;* doing my best myself to make it happen, yes, but waiting also for fresh air from outside, for fresh inspiration. When I receive your record or magazine for review, I want to be affected deeply, I want the earth to shake! Or are we completely satisfied with how much excitement and challenge we already have in our lives? Music and art in general should be a carefree game, yes, like all of life; but a game that you play *hard, * since it is played for the highest stakes!

Eric Warner's Top 10 for Lifting and Losing Reviews:

1. Backstabbers CDep
2. Deformity “Misanthrope” CDep
3. Kickback “Forever War” CD
4. Kill Your Idols 12”
5. Inhuman “Evolver” CD
6. Politics of Contraband “Politics Sucks” 7”
7. Regression half of split CD with Breach
8. Shodokan demo
9. Stigmata “Troy Blood Unbeaten” double CD 10. Visual Discrimination “Serial Killer” 7”

[Image not archived]

reviewer key

jug — pot of glue greg bennick d — mental patient dan young j — college essayist jim walkley @ — poet laureate gloria cubana b.a. — roommate to the stars brian avery (responsible for a whopping one review!)

b — petty thief editor d.

APOLOGY: All the reviews written by our longtime reviewer Eric Charles Warner were maliciously lost by the postal system the week that this magazine was put together. He spent a great deal of time and effort working on them, only to have them disappear after he mailed them to us. Among the CDs he reviewed were the Inhuman “Evolver CD, a number of Good Life releases, and the Nine Shocks Terror 7”.

A more sordid disaster occurred with Dan Young’s reviews. In the course of the weeks leading up to this issue’s release, Dan suffered a full-scale mental and psychological breakdown, which, whether real or self-induced (probably the latter), left him completely delusional and unable to interact with others. He has since left his band and become almost unrecognizable to many of his friends. He wrote his re**views** for this issue while this breakdown was taking place. Consequently, while a few of the earlier reviews were usable and have been printed here, the rest were not. The reviews Dan turned in read like the book _Flowers for Algernon_: as they progress, they become less and less coherent and contain less and less reference to reality. After about fifteen of them, he began leaving off the addresses, and by the end he was making up his, own titles to the CD’s (he listed the title of Liar’s CD as “Invitation to my tea party”). His reviews began to get off base when he reached the Everything Went Black demo *(“overtly mindless lyrics with plenty of less than subtle references to their own small genitals”), * became progressively worse as he wrote about the Boy Sets Fire CD*

("...I think this is actually an all-girl band with ex-members of the Runaways in it... to be enjoyed with a glass of warm electronic milk and a polyester cookie"), * and finally hit dementia in his description of the Atom and his Package CD: *"This is really a piece of hair. Noise is for broken toys. What a jive talker man"* Dan's final review, of the Liar "Invictus" CD, reads: *"I'm drowning in possum blood and I see the bloodbrown sea of sky ask that I stay and speak volumes on this peice of music that screams and guitars and drums and basses itself around and around on my walls and tucks me in until lamina black metal coma of european device, and candy is for demonsuckers so go and be a good boy you fucking ignorant whore."*

Watching one of your friends lose his grip is never fun, and I didn't think it was appropriate to print those reviews here. [If you think I'm making this stuff up, you're obviously not aware of the sort of things **that go** on here at Inside Front.] To everyone who sent something in **that** isn't reviewed here, I offer our sincerest apologies. We really are doing our best, and hopefully we'll be able to avoid similar problems next issue.

ABHINANDA "" new 12": I loved Abhinanda a few years ago. Of all the metallic mid-'90s hardcore bands, their sincerety, their positivity, and their energy really came through in the music as well as their lyrics, to really move me. Time has passed, and I've heard less from them, for some reason; I think they are one of those bands that is really popular in Europe but always overlooked in the U.S.A. This record displays the same technical skill that their last recordings had (in fact, even more technical skill), and the same irrepressible hope and human feeling in the lyrics, but it has a much more rock feel than their "Senseless" LP (which is now available on fancy colorful vinyl from Genet, by the way) did. When they cover — fuck, did I say "cover"??!! — their song "All of Us" from an older "SXE as Fuck" Swedish hardcore compilation, it doesn't sound like fast hardcore the way it used to, it sounds more like rock music. The fancy guitar flourishes, grooving guitar riffs, super-fancy production, slower tempos, etc. all say "rock" to me more than they say "hardcore, " in this context. I mean, it's great rock and roll, better than old Helmet, or Rage Against the Machine, even, but I find myself reacting emotionally to this record in the way that I react to rock bands that I like (read as: find a guilty pleasure in), not in the way that I react to Final Exit. In the song I mentioned, the backing vocals, speed, and dramatic glory near the end remind me of what Strife almost achieved at their peak a few years ago, but that's about as close as this record comes to traditional hardcore, and Strife was well on their way to becoming a fucking pseudohardcore rock band themselves at that point. I don't doubt Abhinanda's sincerety at all, and I'm not at all opposed to going in new directions with our music; I'm just trying to express to you the way I feel about this record as it compares to Abhinanda's older stuff. It's not that much different in style, it's just that they crossed a line somewhere for me... Anyway, I'll briefly recapitulate the ingredients here: uptempo, energetic rock drumming that often ventures into a punk rock doubletime, intricate guitarwork with plenty of flourishes to dress up the anthemic riffs, singing/yelling bleeding-heart vocals, slick yet sincere, with lyrics about

fighting to find hope, meaning and happiness in life, fighting bigotry and cruel power (and one song attacking the nihilism implicit in the black metal scene — right on!), major-label quality production. — b *Genet, address above*

ABSENCE "From the Bloodshed" 7": The 7" reads "VEGAN POWER, " one word on each side... you know, I've never liked that "(fill in the blank] power" thing, it reminds me too much of white power and similar things. I thought we were trying to get away from "power" and towards equality and consideration, isn't that what veganism is about? Anyway. Earth Crisis had one decent record, the "Firestorm" one (I'm talking about their music, not lyrics or anything else), and Absence has pretty much used that record as the blueprint for this one. The singer, and the guitar players, for that matter, have the same monotone approach that Karl and his string section did, and often Absence's singer will come in with exactly the same rhythm and (lack of) inflection that Karl patented on that record. The guitarists play the same metal shrieks to ornament their simple chunky riffs, and the same moments of metal melody appear to make the otherwise monotone music beautiful for brief moments. The lyrics even have the obligatory militant vegan reference to firearms ("one shot, one life is taken") — come on guys, it's been a decade now since Vegan Reich started talking about that shit and not one fucking animal oppressor has been shot down by a hardcore band. Seriously, this

Greg Bennick's Ten Favorite Juggling Tricks, Movies, Thai Entrees, and Live Bands
10. Five ball force bounce

10. Three club single spin backcrosses

8. *The Sweet Hereafter*

9. Seven ball cascade

6. Three clubs while riding a 6" unicycle

5. *Dawn of the Dead*

4. Five club cascade

3. Catharsis

2. Cashew Nut With Tofu

3. Rush

Gloria's Top 10 Things that Make the Heart Beat Faster
1. *Sexing the Cherry'* by Jeanette Winterson

2. The Magnetic Fields

3. warm days in January
4. *Waterland* by Graham Swift
5. Catharsis live
6. vintage Russian limousines
7. “All Mine, ” Portishead
8. Madredeus
9. Dover — *Devil Came to Me* CD
10. *Athena* by John Banville

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Atful ul-hejara
Childen of the Stone
jjJAbwJI C[1]^ Je^W! ^^*f* ^ JxaU f3 ^^-*j* O^uJI ji Ji ^ 0»$ ^ ^f^yf J’ J^ ^*3* -*J*^^^ J^^ oe^^«>J’ p*M o^^ c˜x>^ 1^5^^ 6**^ ^^ ^ r^s y>o J^s <^’ *a*^^*u:*

And it was once said, that the kinds were without exsitence. And it was once said that the dead are mute. The blood of the dead, is within the defenders, endless singing, endless chanting, their revolution has been written by the raped, the tortured and the dead, written by the blood of the holy warriors and by the just, and it was once said...

Although never attainable, the common demand of the people will always be fought for. A war for freedom was waged in the late 40’s when Palestine, or Israel to common society, was declared as ownership by the Zionists from Great Britain. And since the Arab-Israeli war in the 60’s, the uprising struggle has been met with the harshest wrath of Israel. Uprising after uprising, the Palestinian people were determined to regain what was stolen from them, to uphold and reclaim Palestine. Most recently, since 1987. the strongest of all revolutions, the Intifada, has threatened the sole existence of settlers and murderers alike. People united and aimed with[1] rocks and determination fought fortheir freedom. The Intifada was brushed off as a mere riot of people causing minimum damage. But their persistence proved them as one ofthe strongest uprisings. Full artillery and tanks lined up against men, women, and children aimed

with stones, and still the Israeli government could not stop them. The Intifada could not be suppressed, and still cannot. To this moment, day after day. the people’s struggle in Palestine goes on. Genocide is being committed against these people, yet the world will not do anything but present peace accords fulI ..

of unfulfilled promises. This ethnological movement shall never rest until justice prevails. The deaths of all the freedom fighters will not be in vain, and the power of the people will prevail.

Recorded December 1996 at Signal to Noise. Ire was Radwan. Jeff. Eric. Christian.. and Patrick when this music was first released.

Ire: P.O. Box 902. Station C. Montreal.

Quebec. 112 L 4V2 Canada.

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Carved in Every Word'. Therefore, they II .eloriw s as iansritsO erit bns $_{t}$nu$_{2}$ a neritom airi bns eini3 are more of a document of a work in $^{\wedge 5V\ 9,\ 1}$ Y^d^ Jlits bnsta yerit TI .bensoa ei yerit $_{f}$nun yerit progress as opposed to the final ansey emoa bnsauorit eenriT .benisnt interpretation. The album will be

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COALESCE "Give Them Rope" CD: Absolutely monotonous. I'm sure if I were to see this band live right now, they would be really impressive (more so than they were when I did see them a few years ago), because there's definitely some power and electricity in this music; but listening to this here, I feel as if I might as well be listening to radio static.The vocalist's delivery is one of the problems: he enunciates each syllable with the same (lack of) emphasis, which makes him sound like a screaming robot — in this respect he reminds me of Karl from Earth Crisis, and, in fact, at one point in the first song the music pauses and his voice comes in with a rush of backwards echo, just like Karl used to do. I fucking HATE vocals like this — when you scream without emphasizing any of the words, it sounds like you're just trying to make ugly noises, not like you actually care about the words! If you cared about the words, you would emphasize certain ones, just like you do when you get into a screaming argument in real life. Down with fake, ritualized hardcore screaming. Anyway, the production is another problem: it's powerful and heavy as fuck, but it tends to make everything sound the same. Everything is so compressed that there's no room for any sound dynamics. And finally, the songwriting is also a little monotonous: chunk chunk chunk, bang bang bang, groove groove groove, the whole record long.The packaging is cool (restrained and aesthetically pleasing, with a streak of dirty paint across the front and back), except the lyrics are printed so small and in such long strips that it's nearly impossible to read them. They seem to deal largely with abuse, which is an important and always relevant topic, and I get the impression that the writer is talking about things from real life, not just lifeless generalizations, so there's some spirit there at least. I don't want to give the impression that this isn't a perfectly executed record, that there's anything sloppy or second rate about it — there's not. It's just that, for the reasons I've mentioned, it barely touches me emotionally at all. This band clearly has plenty of skill and dedication, I just wish they were using it in a different direction. — b *Edison, at the address of Very distribution* _CLOSURE CD:_ Moody, emo/hardcore crossover music, I'd say. They do the theatrical open-chord thing in places, with the screaming vocals, and (as we all expected) go from that into the acoustic part with quiet melodic singing in the background. The lyrics are pretty vague, addressing personal issues (a friend-who seems to have stopped taking the time to "smell the roses") and social

issues (how work gobbles up your life). At their best moments, their music is pretty yet melancholy: it's atmospheric rather than intense, even when they are playing at their hardest. Mountain amazes us with beautiful (silver-on-purple cardboard fold-in) packaging, as usual. If only other labels had so much fun experimenting with packaging. My only complaint of the packaging is that the place where it says "available for $6 postpaid" is covered up when the CD container is closed, thwarting the original purpose of printing information like that, which was to encourage kids who saw the records in overpriced stores to mailorder them. — b

Mountain, address below

CLOUDED "Inheritance" CD: This CD instantly begins with a high shriek, rather than fucking around with intros — good for them. I wish they hadn't ever backed down after that, just pushed the intensity level higher and higher, but that's hard to do, and they don't try it; instead, they break up the faster, shrieking parts with slower, less high-octane parts. The singer doesn't stop shrieking much, except for some speaking parts in the first song (and boy does his English have a funny accent!! What I would give for one of these

Belgian bands to sing in French or Flemish). His voice is distinctive, at least: it's higher and more rough-edged than most bands in this genre. Indeed, Clouded doesn't sound as much like Liar as Spineless, Sektor, and so many other Belgian hardcore bands do, so good for them. They still show some metal influence, but it isn't as geared towards dancing and "evil stuff." The band includes a little writing in the liner notes, which is a welcome sign of sincerety, but it is partly obscured by the photos of breathtaking clouds in that make up the bulk of the layout artwork. — b *Genet, address below*

COLLAPSE CD: Self-released 7-song CD with minimal packaging (well, they printed the lyrics, at least, so it's better than some rock star CDs...) by a newer band. Their music is mostly mid- tempo, possibly danceable straightforward hardcore, with ragged, screaming (occasionally gargling a bit... and, at one ill-advised juncture, attempting to sing) vocals. The songwriting isn't quite smooth yet: some of the transitions between parts are choppy, but there are some moments (the beginning of the sixth song, for example) when the music becomes more complex and it works. The lyricist hasn't really arrived at a voice of his own yet (he sings "society keeps us gagged and bound" at one point). It's cool that these guys were proactive enough to take things into their own hands and release their music on CD, but in the old days this would have been a demo. *(Maybe it should be a demo — there are too many CDs around these days, as this review section should demonstrate.)* Anyway, it's unfair to judge a band by their demo, so don't write them off for this effort; I'm sure they're going to make plenty of progress. — b

605 New York Avenue, Ogdensburg, NY 13669

CONVERGE 5": Converge's original song begins with those strange, out-of-tune guitar chords they use, the ride cymbal going in the background, and then they leap into the chaotic complexities of the song proper, jerking forward in fits and starts,

in typical Converge style. The music breaks into acoustic shards for a moment, the vocalist speaking normally rather than shrieking in his usual high, possessed screech, before the distortion comes back and the song is over. I must say, Converge is notable for having been able to reinvent themselves quite a few times over the last few years, each time reasserting their place at the cutting edge of hardcore music, but this song reminds me too much of their other work to seem important or special to me. At least the lyrics (about the way the pain of every shattered faith and every failed relationship hangs in the air around us, making it more and more difficult to commit ourselves to anything emotionally) are poetic and touching, as before.The b-side, a Vio-lence thrash metal cover, is much more exciting for me musically. There, Converge seem to be in their element, doing what they're best at this month, having fun with energetic heavy metal thrash music. It's funny how, in 1998, when I hear a hardcore band covering a thrash song I can't even tell that it's a cover. Does that mean we've lost our identity, musically? — b

Ellington, 112 King Street, Northhampton, MA 01060

DANCE OF DAYS "6 First Hits" CD: Brazilian hardcore VERY MUCH in the vein of Embrace. Do I smell a coincidence. Ambiguous emo lyrics in their native tongue as well as in American, so we don't have to so much as lift a finger to figure out what these guys are talking about. The music is enjoyable in a "my lover has gone away and I want to die" sort of way. Easily digestible. Blah blah. — d

Teenager in a Box, address nearby

DAWNBREED "Aroma" CD: Quirky, genre-bending hardcore/punk/jazz-in- fluenced stuff with quirky sentimental (1950's) packaging to match.The singer goes back and forth between the German, English, and a little Spanish,

ground-breaking: silver ink on black fold-out cardstock paper. — b *Mountain records, the address must be in here somewhere*

DY_SPHORIA "Hope Without Reason" CD:_ Super moshy hatecore a la

which is cool, as he alternately whispers, yells, screams with a breaking voice, and sings in a somewhat whiny voice. I can't understand most of the lyrics, but I get the feeling that they're quirky, too, without being mere giddiness and nonsense. The music varies between blurry, sleepy acoustic jazz parts, emo-influenced hardcore/ rock parts, and even more weirdly eclectic sections. The fifth song even comes in with a distinctly surf guitar intro. They incorporate a trumpet from time to time, which doesn't sound out of place to me, especially since I'm having a hard time getting my bearings with this anyway. At their best moments (the beginning of the third song, for example: a high trumpet shriek over deep, crunchy guitar chunk, punctuated by nervous drums that sound almost like a hip hop track) they have drama and amazing originality; at the other times, which come more frequently, I'm not sure what to make of them or how to feel about them — you know what it's like to hear something that definitely makes an interesting experiment, but isn't exactly good music, don't you? OK, if only I could make more sense out of this, I could speak highly of it, but I think Dawnbreed was trying to evade comprehension with this record anyway. At least there are bands

out there fucking around with new stuff, something great is bound to come of that. — b

Trans Solar, see Acheborn/Systral split 7" review for their address

DEVOLA "Playing the game of Revenge and winning every time" CD: I had to get the first Nations on Fire record out to doublecheck, but now I'm sure of it: remember the singer's high, slightly annoying voice on that record? (You may not, but bear with me here...) This guy's screaming voice is an entire fucking octave above his! The guy sounds like a fucking chipmunk caught in a blender! I'm amazed he can even hit these notes — and not only does he hit them, but he never stops hitting them, which leads me to believe that perhaps he couldn't do anything else if he tried. Not to be jerk *[oh, no, Brian, we know that no Inside Front reviewer would EVER be a Jerk!!]* but if my voice sounded like that, I'd seek medical attention. Anyway, it sets them apart from other bands more than their music, which is speedy, energetic hardcore punk, with enough dynamics but not too much variety or innovation. You know, there are open-chord doubletime parts, more rhythmic chunky parts, time-signature changes, but nothing really brand new. Of course, that stuff works for Seein' Red, and it works well enough here too, so OK. This hardly even needs mentioning for this label, but the packaging is fucking gorgeous and

HAND TO MOUTH (and DWGSHT 'zine) "Your Ticket to the New Jerusalem) 12": This record comes with 72 pages of writing related to the music, in which the Dwgsht people, the members of the band, and their friends address a variety of subjects, including how and why to live "low-impact lifestyles," life in prison, some historical pieces on radical political struggle, past attempts at anarchist/"utopian" communal living, why Texaco and Mitsubishi are evil corporations, and what punk itself is good for. The writing is all highly intelligent and well-researched without being off-puttingly academic. My only complaint is about the first essay, which seeks to ground political and social activism in general on "morality" and moral imperatives, without stopping to ask (as we recommend people do in the essay at the beginning of this issue) what exactly gives a "moral imperative" its holy status as such. As for the music, one FUCKING MORON reviewer (I think it was Change 'zine, or maybe Second Nature or something) somehow thought this was a compilation LP called "Hand to Mouth," and [although STUPID AS FUCK and representative of exactly how out of touch today's reviewers often are] that's sort of an understandable mistake when It comes to the music itself: it goes back and forth between a amateurly performed mid- '90's chunk-chunk and metal-guitar-riff thing with screaming vocals, and a more cheerful, more confidently performed melodic, pop-

punk-type thing with singing vocals. Neither of them are exactly phenomenal, but Hand to Mouth's music has personality, and this weird split-personality disorder thing makes them original. They have a good explanation of it in the insert, too, explaining why they refuse to limit their music to one emotion any more than they would limit themselves or punk rock in general. The mix is fine (the vocals are a tiny bit low, perhaps), the production and recording a little rough, and not as powerful as they could be. But all the audio stuff here is good enough to be enjoyed and appreciated. Even if you only get this record for the packaging, you'll probably find yourself listening to it as well. A+ for effort, A for delivery on the insert, B for the music itself, giving this record a solid thumbs up as a perfect example of how to do a punk record today. — b

Dwgsht 'zine, address below

Hatebreed with streetwise lyrics and danceable guitars and drums. Super aggro vocals as well. Nothing groundbreaking here, just a lot of that Northeastern pent up aggression type thing going on. Decent cover art completely obscured by typical show photo on the back cover. — d

Dysphoria, P.O. Box590, Buckingham, PA 18912

ECLIPSE "the bona fide" 7": I'm convinced. Eclipse brings this record in with a super- dramatic melody, all the instruments playing together, that sounds like military parade music for Vlad Drakul's arrival. Then, though they were already playing faster than half the bands today dare to, they double the pace, and the singer starts screaming. Before yoy can get your bearings they sweep up into a sky of melodic, broken beauty, and then plow back into a molten sea of adrenaline. The vocalist isn't afraid to hit high, screeching notes that set him apart from other screamy hardcore singers this decade. The second side opens with a low chunky riff that carries the same drama it would have had if Metallica had played it at their peak. This song is a little more straightforward, midtempo mosh in construction and style, although it's still perfectly executed — they depart from that style at the end to do a grooving piece that sounds like, say, Abhinanda covering a slow riff from a Systral song. Excellent 7" — I'm impressed, considering how young these kids look in the record insert photo, -b

Premonition, Lodjursvagen 50, 906 42 Umea, Sweden

_ENDEAVOR "Constructive Semantics" CD:_This band certainly seems to be genuine in its approach to music, but the music is infected with the typified sound of the noisy hardcore emo genre. At times this stands head and shoulders above the rest, and they include an encouraging invitation to contact some organizations they must feel some convictions about. The lyrics are powerful and effective and the vocals stand up well to the chaotic music. A diamond in the rough. — d

Trustkill, 23 Farm Edge Lane, Tinton Falls, NJ 07724

ERADICATE "broken" 7": This record comes in suddenly, almost as if the record skipped, with some fast, slightly sloppy hardcore, the mix a little bass-heavy, the players sounding like they are pushing themselves but not quite reaching their aims. Their singer has a slightly hoarse yelling voice that, like the music, sounds like it took an effort, but doesn't quite make magic. The slow parts are actually a bit more interesting, a little less genre-predictable. The music isn't bad, don't get me wrong, and there is some variety in it (mosh

[Image not archived]

parts, oi/punk fast parts, faster simple hardcore parts); and there are some great qualities to this 7": it boasts nine fucking songs, in alternating, German and English (the last of which is called "Nintendo Youth, " which, in old-fashioned straight edge style challenges "break this connection or stay the fuck away!"), and it comes with a nice fold-out insert that includes skeletal x-ray photos and other cool stuff. So the attitude and approach are exactly what I want to see in a hardcore punk record, and the music's pretty good as well. Thus, the verdict: if you have fifteen punk records in your collection, you will really like this. If you have forty, you'll be satisfied enough. If you have one hundred, and you're hoping for something that will take you somewhere new and exciting, try another one. — b

Bad Influence, address below

GAUZE "" 7": I'd heard a lot about this legendary Japanese hardcore band, but the first time I put this on, I didn't really get much out of it: it just sounded like a mess, a sort of lackluster mess. That's probably because I put on the second side first, which starts with an uncharacteristically slow part. I'm definitely enjoying it more this time — although I have to admit it sounded more threatening and intense before I changed it to the correct r.p.m. of 45. There's definitely no pretensions or wasted time here; Gauze charges forward at a hundred miles an hour, filled with energy, the slightly- mistuned guitars grinding away at simple punk chord progressions and the singer spitting out throaty, incomprehensible (to undereducated American ears, at least), spiteful syllables. Once you get acclimated to the noisy punk of their sound you can easily pick out parts that are catchy, though not exactly anthemic. I didn't get a lyric sheet — maybe there is none — and most of the song titles are in Japanese, which is kind of cool but makes it hard to tell what Gauze is on about. They do get plenty of punk points for their logo (reminiscent of Crass, Conflict, etc.), in which the letters G-A-U-Z-E form an anarchy symbol, and I'd also like to mention that their drummer is one of the most gorgeous, perfectly cut, muscular individuals I have ever seen in my life. A good record, but for maximum effect I listen to it at 33 r.p.m. so the vocalist sounds like a prehistoric beast and the music is a terrifying, sludgy mess, -b *Prank, P.O. Box 410892, San Francisco, CA 94141–0892*

GRADE "Separate the Magnets" CD: This CD begins with screaming, tightly wound modern hardcore, like a less intense Converge; but it quickly changes to a singing, melodic approach, and I swear they're trying their fucking hardest to sound like Sunny Day Real Estate. That's pretty much the formula for the rest of the CD:

they go back and forth between the two. You know, I really liked these guys when they were a younger band, back when they played their unique brand of highly charged melodic metal and sang about aliens. Back then, their guitar leads and sweet singing parts were original... this really isn't. The lyrics leave something to be desired, too — in one song, which seems to be nothing more than a request for a kiss from'some special someone, he croons: "my lips are well, it's my heart

that's recovering... your sweet saliva I prescribe." Did they stop trying, did they lose their drive to be creative and push the limits of music, or did they think this would be a good way to win money and fame? Or, am I just missing the point here? But — as the cute but vacant packaging, lyrics, and music indicate — *what* point? -b

Second Nature, address just a few reviews away

HALLRAKER "The Methods of..." CD: This reminds me of Inquisition. Lite pop sensibility with a straightforward mid eighties hardcore appeal. The CD artwork looks like something John Yates would have done in kindergarten. Perceptive lyrics and rugged music make this appropriate on a smaller scale to a confined number of people. — d

Sike, 553 Cooly Street, Springfiled, MA 01128 .

HUMANS BEING "My Demons Disagree" CD: I think this is actually a hardcore workout record. A completely predictable and typically bland record from start to finish. If there was a learner's tape for how to start a generic hardcore band, it wouldn't be much different than this. Is it really possible for there to be a watered down version of Earth Crisis out there. Maybe. — d *Pressure Point, P.O. Box 907, Colchester, VT 05446*

INDIGESTI "Osservati Dall'lnganno" 12": After the last couple issues of Inside Front, it should be no real secret that I like this band, although I still know nothing about them. I believe this is a repress of an old LP from the mid-'80's. The music begins with a smokescreen of wailing feedback, then charges headfirst into some old fashioned (Bad Brains "Rock for Light"!) hyperspeed hardcore punk. The first two songs stick to this approach, the drummer beating on the snare and cymbals as fast as he can, the guitarists bloodying their knuckles desperately double-picking the strings with him. The third song is slower: the beat has more oi in it... it's reminiscent of the Negative Approach "Tied Down" LP, only less tough. The fourth song has parts as fast as the first two, and a slower part in which the guitars play one particularly high, spooky note — it's the little departures from formula like these that keep this record (or any good record, for that matter) interesting and immediate from the first song to the twelfth. The lead guitarist is actually responsible for a lot of creative stuff here — he has one trick he uses a few times in which he plays a lead and then leaves the last note hanging provocatively in the air as the verse comes back in again, and every once in a while (just as on "Rock for Light") he'll throw in an instant of metal lead or a Jimi Hendrix-esque flourish.The drummer never lets up for one second, and the singer is completely pretentionless, yelling and singing and muttering and shouting with no regard for anything but trying to get the lyrics out before the band can outstrip him.

The lyrics themselves (which are translated from the Italian on the lyric sheet) are enigmatic, interesting but difficult to pin down — they were probably more clear in the original. But even without being sure what Indigesti is talking about, I enjoyed this record a lot. It's energetic, fresh, and unpredict-

GEHENNA "The war of the sons of light and the suns of darkness" CD: This is a discography CD, with Gehenna's demo, split 7", and 7" all (drastically) remastered and collected here. I'm part of the record label collective that released this, so I don't get to review it in any normal fashion: that would be pretty frivolous. But I will tell the story of a show I saw Gehenna play in Belgium, which was possibly the most intense performance I have ever seen in my life.

At the end of their set, they played the two songs from their split 7". The band struck one muted chord in unison, the guitarists beating their instruments as if to hammer home a nail, one of them led off with a riff, and they burst into the most vicious aural mess I have ever heard. Mike Cheese immediately charged into the crowd, not pausing at the edge like any other singer would but barreling through it, sending kids sprawling across each other like dominos, all pushing and shoving to escape before he flew off in a different direction, hurling his hulking, massive body against anyone in range. From where I stood atop a wheeled speaker cabinet to the left of the stage I watched a wave of fear and confusion wash through the audience, crashing at the cabinet and shoving it across the floor as I struggled to maintain my balance. The bassist followed Cheese off the stage, frantically striking the strings with his left hand, his other arm hanging limply at his side, not fretting the strings at all, as he swung his body about, the head of the bass first, like a horn, his face slack in an expression of inhuman disinterest in the consequences of any of his actions. Cheese pulled back and roared once, long and guttural, into the microphone, the first time he had deliberately held it to his lips, one guitarist went flying through the air off of the bass drum, and the band left one chord hanging in the air, suddenly slouching into ominous stillness for a moment, long enough for feedback to ring out and the audience draw its breath in terror — before the last song began, Cheese and the bassist crashing against the audience, the guitarists running, falling, staggering across the stage, all swinging their instruments wildly, striking them with one arm and throwing them across their shoulders with no regard for what happened to them or anyone in their path, the grim, fearsome music somehow still ringing out of their battered equipment^ the tangible threat of injury thick in the air around every person in the room. There was a final pause, and the second guitarist sounded the last alarm, everyone frozen in place for that instant before the final explosion, guitars fucking flying through the air into crowds of people, Gehenna members chasing after them, striking them as they threw them again at anyone unfortunate enough to be in range, finally not trying to play at all, Cheese leaping onto masses of fleeing, stumbling hardcore kids, the dark air crackling with electricity, fear, and adrenaline, smelling like blood, like nightmares, like murder, like the blackest corners of the human id. Cheese turned and rammed into the body of the crowd, carving a path from the front of it all the way to the back, it parting before

and beneath him like the Red Sea, the band hit the final, broken note, and he said into the microphone with an understated sarcasm: “are ya scared?”

And it wasn’t just them we were scared of, it was ourselves. Gehennas performance that night and their recorded music in general bring us into much more than mere physical danger. Their music breathes with spite and malice, with the raw lust for power and destruction that hides somewhere, undeniable, in each of us. They lay bare the contradictions in our moralizing, they tear our skeletons out of the closet, they make it terrifying to be a human being again in a way that it hasn’t been since we pushed our unacceptable desires under the rug in childhood. Gehenna tear open the door to the furnace of the human soul and push our heads into the flames. It’s a bitter medicine they make, for those who have tried love, tried striving for better things, tried life in this world, and found all to be lacking, all to be imperfect, all unsatisfying and petty. It is the Insensitive music of the most sensitive, of those who suffer most from this world: those who cannot accept its shortcomings, its failures, who would rather bring everything to an end (for destruction is easier, we all know) than settle for this. It is the final outcry of life before total despair sets in, before the moment when nothing means anything — when out of bitterness the sufferer rejects everything, regrets and despises all existence, feels no greater wish than that everything be destroyed, that this flawed, humiliating, pathetic world never have existed. For these are still feelings of value, emotions of disgust that refer to something better, something that would be meaningful and valuable If it could exist in this world, something that only through its absence renders the cosmos entirely desolate of worth. In this cruel world, everywhere there once was something

beautiful there now is something ugly. Where the most beauty was, now the most ugliness is to be found; for the most fragile, sensitive things break first, and are replaced with the most callous. When I feel that, when I am absolutely exhausted and disgusted with life, but still too much alive to accept everything and not want anything any more or any less than anything else, I listen to Gehenna: for this Is the ugliest, most monstrous music in the world. — b

CrimethInc. recordings, shamelessly promoting ourselves at any expense

H_IS HERO IS GONE “Monuments to Thieves” CD:_ This CD has been hyped and hyped and hyped from every corner of the punk world, so there’s no reason for me to just write about how good it is. It’s good, it’s very good. So instead, I’ll try to speak, unlike the other reviewers, on why it’s so good. First: the production. His Hero has had top notch production on all of their releases, almost the same top notch production on each one(l would argue, in fact, that they need to experiment a bit next time, so their records don’t start to sound too similar): perhaps the heaviest, most aggressive production the punk world has yet heard, and yet with an amazing clarity that permits us to appreciate what the (very proficient) Individual musicians are doing. Second, the songwriting: their songs are perfectly constructed, nothing extraneous, taking each musical idea to the furthest limits It can be pushed. They are, of course, drawing upon a tradition of bands from Discharge to Doom that have paved the way

for them with this kind of gruff, filthy punk, but they take that heritage and push it to an unprecedented level of Impact. Their fast qarts have all the energy and drive of the fastest grindcore bands, and their slow parts have the hypnotizing groove of Systral's best moments (although the seventh song ends with a riff more reminiscent of the Misfits "London Dungeon"). The vocals betray all the resentment and grim determination that a life of physical suffering breeds, all the vehemence that comes of cold nights, empty stomachs, and open wounds. The only elements here that could be improved are the lyrics (which are anthemic at some points, but occasionally a little cliche: "when will the madness end?") and the packaging (the restraint in the simple images Increases their force, but we only get a couple of them, and the lyrics, whereas with their last record we got a little painting to go with each song). And — be wary, His Hero: you have now made the very best record possible with the equation you Invented. It is time now to dare to take new risks and challenges with your music, or else your future records will only be second rate imitations of this one.

Technicalities aside, let me finish this review with the first song. It begins with a desperate wail of suffering guitar, and the music crashes upon the listener like a mine caving in, the hiss of approaching annihilation drawing closer and closer until... Suddenly everything cuts out and there is only one solitary guitar, like a lonely chirping cricket in the sad morning, singing a little song to itself. Bang A short round of machine gun fire from the drums and the song tears across the landscape like a derailed freight train, destroying everything in its path, ripping up the soil, crashing to a flaming halt In a flaming wreck, and *bang* a four-count on the drum sticks and the verse begins. What is absolutely agonizing about this song, and all the best moments of this CD, is the contrast between the low notes and high notes in the guitars. The guitars play the deep riffs with the drums and bass, together creating an engine of destruction, a thirty ton monster that leaves nothing but sawdust In Its wake and violence in the listener's heart. But In between each deep chord, the guitarists pull up two octaves to play these desperate, pleading high notes that cry out over the devastation like a Greek chorus of brokenhearted angels, forcing me to remember in every instant of this hate-choked, blood- soaked holocaust of a CD just how much we have all lost in this world, just how much forfeited beauty is missing in every Instant of our suffering, ' in every moment of my impossible war against the forces of inhuman power and cruel fate. And when they reach the chorus, I'm almost crying, teeth clenched, wanting to strike out at anything, myself first of all for becoming so beaten and twisted that destruction seems more natural than creation to me, too, now. That chorus will sing in my head for the rest of my tormented life, until I die or kill the very heart In my chest. And at the end, when the singer roars out *"Like weeds we will growl", * it's a bitter vindication of our hate-infected, vicious lives, that we who can no longer love with pure hearts will at least fight to our deaths against the hate- Infected, vile world that bore and bred us. — b

Prank, address above

able in ways that very little punk music has been since the mid-'80's. — b

Vacation House, Via San Michele, 56, 13069 Vigliano Biellese (Biella)

ISOLATION "" 7": The singer of this band died before this record came out, and it is sort of a tribute to him, but I have to review it according to what it is, all the same. It starts with a silly sample about getting beat up in Wisconsin, which sets a different mood than the one I think this very serious (straight edge, I believe) hardcore band wanted to create. The music is textbook mid-'90's hardcore, with the danceable midtempo riffs with snare drum fills, the Snapcase harmonic high notes, the slow, crunchy parts, and screaming vocals. The vocalist wasn't bad, he sounded like he cared about what he was doing, even if he doesn't sound too much different from the next guy... his voice reminds me of the vocalists in Jesuit. The first song is about dedicating your life to vindictively pursuing someone who went wrong (not usually the most positive use of a life), and the second is about being stabbed in the back (although it doesn't use those words). There's a third song, for which the lyrics have been lost, as a result of his untimely death. The music has some energy in it, it's not absolutely lifeless; but there are a number of records I would recommend before this one, even a couple in this genre. — b *Underestimated, P.O. Box 13274, Chicago, IL 60613*

The JABS "Time of Negligence" CD; This is probably the second record I've heard from Singapore, ever, but I get the impression that it is a sign of a quickly growing hardcore scene there. This begins with a long, slow intro, reminiscent of the days of Judge and Point Blank. When the vocals come in, they're not bad — the guy is definitely screaming, definitely into it, pushing himself, and the backing vocal chorus doesn't sound as cliched as it does in New Jersey these days. Think Side By Side, Straight Ahead, etc.The vocals are a little quiet in the mix (better than too loud!), and the drum sound isn't very effective, but I'm not really looking for fancy production here. If they get the drums just a little more powerful (and quieter in the mix) next time, they'll have an effective old-fashioned rugged sound. The lyrics are pretty standard late-'80's straight edge fare, but they work just fine. Anyway, they got me to compare them to Side By Side, so they didn't do too badly! — b

Straits, Blk225, #02-58, Pasir Ris, St. 21, Singapore, 510225

KILL SADIE "" 7": Kilara actually named themselves after a girl (Lara) they didn't like, so I guess the same sort of thing is going on here. The music has a refreshingTack of pretensions, it's rough and gritty,

MAYDAY "Staplegun" 10": Mayday was one of the most important bands of the early 1990's — their innovations in lyrics, vocals, and music completely transformed hardcore as we know it and paved the way for bands like Bloodlet, Disembodied, and even Catharsis and Gehenna. Before their "Underdark" 7", only Integrity had successfully experimented with applying abstract metal noise, inhuman screaming, and dark poetry in a hardcore context. Since those days, Mayday has become more and more

difficult to track down, playing fewer and fewer shows, waiting longer and longer between records, rearing their heads less and less often... so it is probably appropriate that this record come out on the equally evasive Stormstrike label. As they've become less and less active, they seem to have lost some of their focus and inspiration as well, although even the rotting carcass of a band like Mayday holds more interest than any band like Disembodied could in the pink of health. On this record they walk a thin line between recapturing their past glory and falling sloppily short, and I'm not sure on which side they finally end up. The guitars sometimes sound like they're out of tune, the delivery of the growling vocals is less solid than it once was, and the lyrics are less compelling. But there are moments when Mayday manages to transcend these flaws and shake the listener free of any awareness that this is just music being [imperfectly] played by human beings. In these moments they can still create the alien, haunted atmosphere of their older work. Then, the most important elements of the music are the invisible ones — the tortured souls caught in the bent guitar chords, the black, poisonous clouds rolling in from the horizon, the roaring beasts and buzzing flies that, at times, can practically be made out behind the music. The packaging of this record is fucking perfect in every respect, even down to the thick paper record sleeve and the fact that the jacket is black *inside.* Speaking of the jacket, it's embossed with the name of the band on the front, and the lyrics on the back, over the rotten, pockmarked flesh of Grunewald's christ (from the Isenheim altarpiece, near the Stormstrike secret bunker). The vinyl is black and fog blue, swiried, beautiful and alien like Mayday's best work was. — b

the ever elusive Stormstrike, Kollmarsreuterstr. 12, 79312 Emmendingen, Germany

L

has fast parts, sudden changes to much

more melodic, slower parts that still maintain some attitude, ragged vocals

that (at the highest-energy moments) scream back and forth at each other or (at the other end of the spectrum) sing along with the music in a more pop punk style (although this is too rough-hewn to sound like pop punk)... the lyrics are also pretentionless and witty ("we kill spies traitorwatch your back name dropping lies that won't be read all over when you discover that we kill spies..."), and their little essay about why they sometimes sing about resentful breakups and other relationship stuff instead of hard politics is convincing enough. I don't think any of the songs are classics, but if you like the irrepressible way bands like Cave In go about their business of enjoying making music, and think you could handle something less metal but with the same attitude, I'm sure you could find yourself listening to this. Gorgeous, gorgeous packaging,

too: embossed front cover, color photos on matte finish on the back, fancy foldaround cover. — b

One Percent, P.O. Box 141048, Minneapolis, MN 55414

KING FOR A DAY "" 7": This band sounds like Seaweed [major label corporate rock whores]... only even worse, in the words of a Seaweed fan present right now. The music is fairly fast melodic pop, with high rock singing over it — the singer actually begins the chorus of the first song by singing "here I go again." I'm not impressed, it's weak in every respect — no energy and no emotional content either. In fact, we just put on Seaweed, it sounds good compared to this 7". Inane, clumsy lyrics, no worthy intentions as far as I can tell, no, nothing good about this at all, except the cute cut-out picture on the packaging. Sorry guys, -b *Initial, P.O. Box 17131, Louisville, KY 40217*

KOS J ER D "" 12": The homemade-looking record folder (rugged cardboard with white and brown screenprinting) is gorgeous: it's not just a refreshing departure from slick, glossy, professional-style record packaging, it's near the top of it's class, as nice as any D.I.Y./emo packaging I've seen. If only there was some insert material: the lyrics are printed on the back of the sleeve, but you know how greedy I am when it comes to packaging. I opened up the cardboard flap, held the sleeve upside down, and shook, hoping to find a little explanation/artwork booklet, a propaganda pamphlet raving against Belgian gasoline prices, a lock of the singer's hair, something. All that fell out was a simple piece of black'plastic. I put it on the turntable, and this is what I got: very well-done emo/indie rock stuff. Pretty soft and gentle, slow tempo throughout, complex guitar work that makes use of open and muted chords, occasional single notes, a distinctively indie rock (quiet, near-acoustic) guitar sound, skillful slow drumming with plenty

of fills (in a jazz sense), lengthy songs (at this tempo they're bound to take a

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leave behind the banalities of mundane everyday life and tap into fundamental forces, to become a force of nature, an act of god, a juggernaut of primordial rhythms that have always been and always will be. ~~Sam:~~ Their bassist is a huge, corpulent guy, who lumbers and bounces across the stage like an engine of destruction, belly swinging like a wrecking ball in time with his floor-shaking grooves, long matted hair curling and uncurling, swinging in frenzied circles around his head. His biker-blues basslines construct the low-end platform upon which thb torn, trebly Kilara guitars perform their cacaphonic dance.

CB: The guitarist looks like he wandered out of a flower-child commune and into a steroid shop, with his perfect complexion and long, perfectly straight, pretty hair, big teenage-fantasy farmer-boy muscles on his tanned arms and chest, dazed lost dreamy eyes, confused slow surfer voice like he's not entirely with us, slightly cro-magnon good looks. He waves his guitar around like an enormous phallus, leaps off of speakers over the other musicians, stamps around like he's doing a rain dance.

~~Brandon:~~ As crucial an element of Kilara as Erik, this little lost blond boy plays (loosely speaking) the other guitar. He has a perpetual vulnerable, frightened, sensitive, manic look in his piercing blue eyes. Peeking out through his long, thin, stringy blond hair, Brandon looks like a smaller, thinner, more adolescent Kurt Cobaine, both in his facial features and his spare build, in his nervous bearing and his worn clothes. Nothing he says makes any sense, and he's always looking around at the world with these expressions on his face that make you wonder what he's thinking about. When he smiles, he looks so childlike, mischievous and maniacal that you want to try to locate the institution he escaped from, if only to discover how long he's been without his medication. When he plays guitar he shakes himself around wildly, thrashing about until he drops his pick and falls on the floor, where he continues to bang his guitar with his fingers and shake epileptically until he breaks a string — upon which he always looks heartbroken, which is amazing, considering that he does this at least every other song. Between songs he picks himself up sheepishly and tries to repair and reorganize his equipment, only to destroy everything again a few seconds later when the next song starts. Whenever it is his turn to sing with his high, breaking bab/s shriek, he crashes into the microphone, knocking it over as soon as he opens his mouth, and then does the same thing to the other microphones, until everyone in Kilara must just scream into the air. His veins stick up off of his body like nightcrawlers the whole time, as if ready to crawl off of his body and set off in search of tranquilizer needles.

At an earlier show, the first one we played with Kilara, I accosted Brandon afterwards to tell him I enjoyed his band, especially the drummer — that there were no words to express how excited I was about his playing. He: "Oh yes, I'll tell him you didn't like it." I: "No, I *did* like it, he was great. I couldn't even begin to express..."He: "OK, good, III tell him you thought he was awful." b (seeing Erik walking up, carrying his equipment) "No, I mean..." He: "/think he's awful, too, really. Quite awful." k (getting my bearings) "OK, you tell him that." _He:_ "You know, you and I have talked now. Next time I see you, I'm going to come up to you and talk to you... I mean, is that OK? Is it all right if I talk to you next time I see you? You won't mind?" k "No, of course not..." He: "Or how about we just eat. Won't talk, just eat together, every time we see each other. It'll be like we're married." k "Sounds great, if you bring the food."

You would think that with the entire string section leaping, stamping, falling all across the stage, 'Brandon's broken strings whipping through the air past flying shards of Erik's cymbals, that Kilara wouldn't be able to make much more than an aggressive audio mess, and it's true that there are moments of that. But when it counts, as I've said, they come together like a machine (probably a machine manufactured by Harley-Davidson) to beat the audience between the hammer and anvil of the most blistering, gritty blues rock you can imagine. And they'll break into some great fast parts (one song is constructed like a grindcore-punk version of "Wipeout!", if you use your imagination) to spice up their set.

So, the evening was far from a complete disaster, compared to the next night in New Orleans ..."

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while) that don't become boring insofar as they manage to create a mood and benefit from unpredictable, abstract songwriting. It's the music of rainy autumn loneliness, of forgiving regret. The vocalist sings, usually in a mild, soothing voice, occasionally with a little less restraint, and sometimes speaks a bit. His lyrics are what makes this record work; they are mature, sensitive, informed by literature and poetry here and there, and full of feeling. Usually he sings about the gaps between people trying to reach each other (or themselves) in relationships, occasionally touching on the human search for meaning in a vast, threatening world. — b *Genet records, address elsewhere*

KRITICKA SITUACE "Forgiveness" 7": This is the departed Kriticka Situace's final release, no less heartfelt or refined than their full length was. The recording is as clear and strong as the LP recording, although the drums seem to be a little louder in the mix.The music is a little more restrained, a little more melancholy beauty and a little less rage and velocity: the acoustic parts last longer, and the vocals have more melody in them. The band doesn't seem tired on this record, just older, a little more patient and mature, a little more world-weary. While they captured outrage, fear, and tension best on the last record, this one is strongest in its quietest moments, above all the last song: in which the singer begs forgiveness for the same hurtful tendencies within himself that he has always criticized in the world around him. The rest of the lyrics, which are still in Czech with English translations; deal with the military and the lust for power, in the same touchingly human way that characterized the lyrics on their last record. I do keep mentioning their LP in this review, but that record was really significant to me, and this one isn't enough of a departure from it to stand as an entirely separate entity. Still, that one was good enough that even a mere afterward to it would be welcome, and this is far more than that, — b

Day After, Horska 20, 352 01 As, Czech Republic _LEBENSREFORM "Retor" 7":_ Take some Acme, some Rorschach, and some Fugazi, and mix them together, if you can imagine that, to create Lebensreform. This is still music, unlike Acme, which transcended music to become sheer abrasive power incarnate. Still, the sound is more full and even more frenzied than most of Rorschach's music was, so to stop with that comparison would be insufficient. When they really get going, torn-out-throated screaming, snare-drum-pummeling, guitars-turning-into-just-noise-being, they approach maximum electric band intensity. And at the edges of this music, rather than weaker versions of the same musical idea, are more subtle constructions, more melody, more texture. That's where the Fugazi comparison comes in. So this is hardly a one-dimensional band; indeed, Lebensreform is the thinking man's crazy brutal hardcore band, as their multi-faceted music and irreverent-to-hardcore-tradition lyrics indicate. There's an experimental noise song at the end, for you arty Europeans. I have to say it's too bad this band has apparently broken up, since this music was at its best being performed in person by four German guys, their maniacal performances seeming teutonicly pro-

grammed, their disorder almost regimented, led by tall, hooknosed, black-haired Sven, his one white-streaked eyebrow raised. — b *Per Koro, Markus Haas, Fehrfeld 26, 28203 Bremen, Germany*

MAYA "Biocide" CD: This is an interesting phenomenon: it's apparently a collective project between a number of musicians from different musical backgrounds. As such, the music wanders far and wide between different styles, genres, and instruments across the course of the CD. There are breakbeat parts, experimental industrial noise parts, horn solos, and then slightly more conventional, Neurosis-esque parts with guitars/drums/yelling vocals/etc., indiscriminately at different points. It's like most musical experiments: when it works, it's really interesting, but much of the time it falls just short of working. In this case, the general problem is that actively listening to this CD, waiting for them to stumble onto another exciting moment, can get boring. That doesn't mean this isn't a good CD to have, though, since it makes for excellent atmospheric background music (perhaps that's more what it's designed for?). The variety of the music helps make it a good CD to play in the background because it will be doing something new and unusual at any moment you turn your attention to it. I'm also a sucker for old-fashioned political punk collage covers like this one has with images of guns, politicians, skulls, Christ on the cross, etc. These all relate indirectly to the political theme of Maya, which is our destruction of the environment. — b *Conspiracy, Lange Leemstraat 388, 2018 Antwerp, Belgium*

MILEMARKER "" 7": I saw these guys play, and at times they managed to push through the thick veneer of the predictable and habitual that stands between any band and genuine emotional expression. Gloria pointed out the unusual amount of emotion poured out with no apparent regard for efficiency: screams into air, almost wasted, gestures of strain and pain directed away from the audience, almost invisible to them. On this 7", however, they don't quite capture that. The emo/indie rock notes and chord progressions they play sound suitably mournful and angsty, as do the lyrics: angsty angsty. But that moment when the rest of the band stopped playing and the bassist, for the first and only time during the show, looked directly into the eyes of the audience, striking one note over and over on his instrument, making all the emotion of their performance suddenly, confrontationally personal, isn't to be found here. The two songs on the first side have more energy and life than the one on the second side, which seems to be meant as a lament. Those first two songs do work well enough as heartsick emo rock songs, so maybe I'm asking too much of this record that it hold, trapped in

> vinyl grooves, all the invisible, intangible power of a good live performance. Still, it has been accomplished before, -b
>
> *Clocked Out, 3817 Sweeten Creek Road, Chapel Hill, NC 27514* _MISKATONIC UNIVERSITY "There will be only one" CD:_ This is a hardcore record. It comes from Italy, a place where hardcore is still new and fresh

and exciting and it really pushes its ugly head through on this record. I liken this to Trial here in America, very energetic and very genuine in their approach. Very elaborate packaging, with fearsome comic-book-like artwork on the cover. Still a bit limited in dynamics, but a much better than a lot of lazy, spoiled American hardcore bands. — d *Boundless, RO. Box 1, 48020 Savio (ra), Italy*

_MOURN 7":_This record is packaged with images that recall the brutality and suffering of the Jewish holocaust during the second world war, and the lyrics address that issue and similar ones. They're printed in English and Italian,

The MO_RMONS "" 7":_ I wonder if Inside Front can singlehandedly make a record collectable. This record is *the* defining record of the obnoxious punk rock genre, as far as I'm concerned, but I don't think anybody else has even noticed it. So good fucking luck tracking it down, if you trust my taste!

This is the kind of music that you could *never* explain to your parents why you like it, probably not even to your friends. It sounds like it was recorded on a boom box left in a garbage can outside their practice space on which someone had accidentally pushed the "record" button, and when the band found the tape after practice they decided to release it. The songwriting epitomizes the simple, British drunken oi/punk style, with twenty second open chord and tom drumming intros, leading to three chord riffs that go through only a couple changes before the song is over. Everything is played as sloppily as possible, the band members yelling out p'rofanity and nonsense in the background; the bargain-bin guitar amps sound more like static than anything else, and the drummer sounds like he's beating on soggy cardboard boxes with his fists. What could possibly be good about this, you ask? Trust me, it's fucking great. It has all the obnoxious energy, all the repulsive, repugnant, offensive glory that attracted most of us to bands like the Exploited in the first place. There's more attitude on this little piece of garbage-brown vinyl than there has been in the last six years of hardcore records. The vocalist screams, rants, howls, leaves English, sobriety, propriety and sanity behind him, bellowing and screeching at the top of his lungs, with zero regard for precedents or intelligence or anything else, and, along with the upstart "musicians" around him, manages to bring an irresistible, undeniable spirit to this music. When everyone is shouting along at the oi- pub singalong parts, shouting the wrong words or no words at all, this record is more fun than any fucking pop punk record; and when they're smashing shit, making terrible out-of-tune noises, and the singer is yelling the same meaningless, insulting phrase until his voice blurs into a mess of broken microphones and bloody vocal cords, I want to smash everything in my reach too, in the sheer joy of mindless, senseless destruction.

My band once played with these guys in Cleveland. The show was in the basement of a punk record store in the center of the worst neighborhood in the city, and was attended entirely by G.G. Allin kids. Before any bands had played, these kids found a

trash can filled with glass bottles for recycling, dragged it to the stairs and kicked it over, covering the floor with broken glass. In between bands, a drunken fourteen year old runaway grabbed the microphone and started shouting G.G. lyrics into it, upon which some other shit-covered, half-naked drunk punks began taunting him, yelling something to the effect that G.G. Allin was a sissy. By the end of the night, the runaway kid and the other scum were in the back of the room, screaming incoherently and spitting at each other: the kid had pulled down his pants and was challenging the others to kick him in the balls (apparently to

demonstrate that neither he nor his dead idol G.G. was a "pansy"), and they were obliging him. That night, at the beginning of the Mormons performance, the singer ran out of the bathroom, his face painted black, and threw his cigarette directly into the eye of a punk kid in the front row before grabbing the microphone and launching into an indecipherable song. They didn't actually get through it or any other song that night: their bassist's amplifier broke on the first one, and after that they began songs over and over, playing them for only a few measures before one member of the band stopped playing, started playing another song, or threw his instrument off and started yelling obscenities and shoving people. All this may sound sordid to you, and it is: it's as sordid as human life fucking gets, it's sordid, base, degrading, shameful, stupid, ugly, coarse, worthless music. But, for all of you righteous, upright citizens: if the things a "positive" band like Youth of Today sang about are true of humanity, this stuff is equally true of humanity. If you're going to tell any of the truth and have it mean something, you have to tell the whole truth. I listen to this record at least as much as I listen to Kriticka Situace or Trial. — b *"Gristmilling Records, " P.O. Box 771402, Lakewood OH 44107*

MORSER "Two Hours to Doom" CD: Evil, evil black metal artwork and a back cover that reads only "Twenty Two Songs" are not enough to prepare any listener for this. This is Systral's depoliticized, amphetamine-riddled, Carcass and Slayer-addicted, even-better-recorded younger brother. With four singers, ranging from nuclear-blast deep to blow-torch high, and apparently two bassists to their one guitarist, they destroy every preconception left in the world of metal/hardcore/noise that Acme created. Their songs dash back and forth maniacally between bursts of triple time dementia, grooves that pound like cannonfire across slaughter-strewn battlegrounds, and moments of musical carnage that are absolutely beyond description. At their best moments (the ninth song, which begins with a Carcass version of Carmena Burana, the monks shrieking their invocations over the ringing ride cymbal as swords fall upon bodies in the background, and the first song, which concludes with what sounds like the end of the world itself), they transcend music itself and enter a new realm altogether. I know I'm not giving a clear idea of exactly what it is they do, but that's impossible under the circumstances. The recording has the same monumental weight and force that carried the Systral 10" to such incredible nightmarescapes, and the music has the same deranged originality, with more metal and similar precision. I wouldn't say this is quite as spectacular, all told, as the Systral record was (it lacks the reference to real-world emotions

and tragedies that made that one unforgettably compelling), but it's something that must be heard: it takes music to new places, to scary, unthinkable places, and we must follow, if we are not too afraid. — b

Per Koro, address above

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and are eloquent enough to make it clear that this band is serious about what they're doing. The music, however, is a little less solid. It comes in with some horribly executed melodic emo music, which alternates for about a minute with lackluster bursts of fast hardcore. But just when you think this

record will be entirely mediocre, everything becomes more chaotic, and, in fact, a few measures later, there's a great part with a chunky guitar line that is complimented by guitar shrieks. That part doesn't last too long, but, aside from a very short return to that horrible acoustic emo stuff, the song closes well enough. The second song on this side is much quicker and shorter, and sticks to the more abrasive hardcore that saved the first song. The singer's voice is scratchy, and he screams the same way everybody does these days (Acme-influenced), convincing enough but hot really better or worse than the next guy.

The song on the second side is better than either of the songs on the first side, it seems more confident musically, more heartfelt, and takes more risks (for example, a sample of a woman's voice in the background during a screaming part in the middle of the song). It's also generally slower. There's some good stuff in it near the end where they pull out the structure, leaving just noise and dramatic pounding on the toms that finally build to a speedy, chaotic crescendo. — b

Insociale, Mario Luppi, via DAvia Nord n.54, 41100 Modena, Italy

NIPPER "Psalms of Purification" CD: Melodic, fairly fast, punk rock music with singing vocals that derive some bite from their clear annunciation. At the best moments, the guitars add layers of melody that can be beautiful. At the worst moments (like the distorted vocals at the beginning of the fourth song) this manages to be pretty nondescript.-They should push harder: play faster, play harder, pour more emotion into everything until it bleeds from the vocals and guitar lines like only does occasionally right now. It's clear they can do it, but they have to do it to an unprecedented degree if they want to stick out in the ocean of bands that exists today. It's so easy to play this kind of melodic punk rock, but so hard to play it well, that you have to have real guts to take on the challenge of being a band in this genre that does more than tread water. Give it a shot, Nipper. Their live track at the end sounds impassioned enough. I'd like to conclude by mentioning that this label is cool for clearly expressing their goals in the liner notes, so we don't have to wonder if they're another would- be Victory... — b

Bad Influence, Stefan Fuchs, Ludwig Thoma Str. 14, D-93051 Regensburg, Germany

ONE FINE DAY "vladimir ilich ulianov's failure" 7": This record sits at the border between being a really exciting, forward-looking, progressive record in the genre exemplified by bands like Acme, and just being another decent record in that style. The

riffs are catchy and the playing is confident, and the shredded vocals are convincing too, but I just can't bring myself to embrace this record wholeheartedly. I think what this band needs to do to reach the mark is to tighten up their songs — the songs sprawl a bit, and with more focus, perhaps brevity, they might hit harder. Hey, if they played faster, that might help too! The midtempo, pounding drum thing can get tiresome after a whole record. There are some creative moments of noise or unusual transition where they really shine, and most of the music is well-constructed, but there's just something missing. The lyrics are in English with explanations in

both English and Italian. Sometimes they are a little confusing — I'd say the most off-putting lines are the first ones: "Sugarcoated by the snazzy one, nothing but excellent, great melange with sparkling eyes to take sureness." If I remember my Russian history right, the title of this 7" is a reference to the fellow who tried to kill Rasputin, but I'm not sure. It's not explained anywhere in the liner notes. — b

Cycle, Stefano Bosso, V. S.ta Agata 4, 28064 Carpignano S. (NO) Italy _OVERCAST "Fight Ambition to Kill" CD:_ I hadn't really been impressed with this band's earlier music: emotionless, sterile, highly technical metal, it seemed to me, and not too compelling as such. So when I put on this CD, I was amazed by how excited I was about what I heard. The Slayer-esque metal assaults are actually catchy enough that I found my neck twitching, the complicated transitions increased my interest rather than losing it, the metal flourishes and gratuitous displays of musical proficiency made my heart beat faster. Every time I thought I had a grip on what Overcast was up to, they twisted out from under me, amazing me again with another completely unpredictable change in direction. Sudden tempo changes, pounding metal grooves, hallucinatory acoustic breaks, guitar solos and noise, superhuman drumwork, all followed in head-spinning succession. I decided that this is one of the most thrilling, perfectly constructed metal records I'd heard in a while. There's one catch: I was listening to it on a piece of shit CD player through $2 headphones. That seems to be the optimal way to experience this CD: it gives the otherwise predictably clean production the dirty, distorted force it needs to really inspire fear, it gives the otherwise too perfect (that is, sterile and inhuman) music some gruff personality, it obscures the weaker parts of the vocals (their singer actually does some good growling and roaring here, but his more melodic singing still annoys me a little). And, it distracts from the lyrics. Not to say that the lyrics are bad; they're well-crafted, multisyllabic metal lyrics, but metal lyrics have always been somewhat silly in their artificial drama, their adolescent fantasies of power, their embarrassingly stupid self-importance. By the way, the multi-layered, heavily textured layout is quite a masterpiece, too: the band members and scarrrrrrry, evvvvvvvil images really look like they're wrapped in medical gauze. — b *Edison recordings*

RAIN CD: This CD begins with a backwards track (an unusual choice for an opener), but it's gorgeous: among all the hisses of the bass plucks and the sucking sound of drums playing backwards, which create a high-energy atmosphere, there is a sort of sad beauty in the melodies that lies beneath the aggressive exterior of the music. After that, the CD proper begins: it's modern metallic European hardcore, clearly from the

Belgian tradition, but with more a more unique personality than most of those bands have. The mix is a little sharp and unbalanced (the drums have too much prominence, for example), but doesn't hold them back at all. Rain's strength, which we glimpsed in the tragic beauty hidden in the first track, is the melodies they use in their hardcore: though they are playing belligerent music, there is a drama and touching sweetness in some of their guitar lines that involves me emotionally. The singer has a good enough screaming voice: it doesn't do anything unusual, but he sounds sincere enough to reach me the way the music does, and his lyrics are moving in their simplicity. They speak regretfully of the unlivable capitalist/authoritar-

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ian society we have made for ourselves, and, without overreaching themselves, incorporate enough poetry to give these subjects the emotional weight they need: the lyrics to their song "Rise" implore the masses to "rise like lions after slumber, movements in unvanquishable number, rise, like lions, rise. Rise." Their inclusion of an "intermetzo" (a sample of politician motherfuckers talking over classical music) as an intermission in the middle of the full length, and the backwards track at the beginning, demonstrate the necessary willingness to take risks and play with cliched formats. Hey — good work, guys. — b *Redeem the monsters and kill the beast, Mark van Immerseels, Hendriklei 161, 2660 Hoboken, Belgium*

REDEMPTION "" 7": This is fairly fast, simple hardcore in the tradition of the bands that appeared a couple years after the late '80's U.S. straight edge bands. There are some breakdowns, and they sometimes bring a little more interest to the music. The vocalist has one of those late-'80's revival yelling voices where it sounds like he's trying to sound a little more deep-voiced than is natural for him and it's hampering his delivery. I'm trying to find more descriptive words for this, or at least to think of a particular band to compare this to, but I can't. That's probably because all the bands that this reminds me of are the derivative bands, the bands that are imitating others and can't quite get their music to come out well enough to make themselves memorable. This isn't completely old-fashioned, it has a bit of a metallic quality to it, like many bands at the beginning of this decade. I guess the Diehard LP is the best comparison I can think of, but who the fuck remembers that anymore? They experiment a bit more on the last song, with plenty of acoustic guitars, I a more atmospheric approach, and spoken words behind the screaming, but it still doesn't quite work. There are a number of great hardcore bands in Italy right now, so these guys are in an environment where it I shouldn't be hard for them to progress and improve. — b

Surrounded, Via Oderisi da Gubbio, 67/69, \ 00146

RENDER _USELESS 7":_ I love Mountain I records; their packaging, "business" prac- I tices, and general D.I.Y. sincerity are a I relief these days. That doesn't mean I have I to like everything they release, of course. I So I don't feel too bad about admitting that I this music doesn't do much for me by it- I self. The first note on the 7", a grating I drone, sounded like it might foreshadow I great things, but the midtempo, slightly I groovy, rock emo-influenced music doesn't I move me, and the

singer's voice, which I ranges between breaking, squeaking I melodrama (remember Atlas Shrugged?) I and snotty singing, doesn't really touch me L

either. It's not too bad, but, if you've read Inside Front before, you'll remember that I like to be violently affected.by the music I listen to, whatever emotions it is expressing. What is exemplary about this record is the insert — they go into pages of detail about the lyrics to every song, and after reading it I not only have a better feel for their goals and personality, I even have learned a few interesting facts from their statistical analysis of the present conditions of living for people across the world. So if you're looking for music, I can't really recommend this to you, but if you're in a band, pick up this record and see if it gives you any ideas of how to put together the insert for your next release, -b

Mountain, P.O. Box 220320, Greenpoint Post Office, Brooklyn, NY 11222 _SCALPLOCK "Broken History" CD:_ This band seems more specifically and politically focused than almost any other written about in this issue. The entire CD, from the explicit liner notes to every line of the lyrics, is an attack on the destruction wrought on indigenous peoples and their cultures by Western capitalist imperialism. The music is played with a fair bit of anger and intensity: the slower parts have a simple, old-fashioned sound (oi-influenced: mid-tempo, open chords being strummed in major key progressions) and are broken up with grindcore blasts. I feel like the blastbeat parts aren't really integrated into the songs perfectly; that's my one complaint about the songwriting. The vocalist has a deep, gritty roaring voice that goes well with the music, although he sometimes sounds a little forced as he tries to make his way through words like "ameliorate" and "commensurate obligation." Again, this record is most significant for the educated, eloquent, and uncompromising focus on cultural genocide: they have a song called "Shining Path, " for christ's sake! And the music goes well with this theme. I am a little put off by their song against miscegenation (I'll fall in love with and reproduce with anyone, of any culture, if it pleases us, thank you!) but in general this is a good fucking example of politicized, first rate hardcore punk. I definitely get the impression that these guys are for real, -b

Eastview, Bridge Street, Writtie, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 3EX England _SEKTOR "Human Spots of Rust'CD:_This CD starts with a long, long atmospheric sound effects piece, which consists of distant thumps, grumbles, and scratches. I'm glad bands are experimenting a bit, but they could have accomplished the same thing in twenty seconds: waiting four minutes for the hardcore music to begin just doesn't seem justified, especially since I can't really figure out what the connection between the sound effects and their music is. OK, what we have here is more

[Image not archived]

Belgian metal, mid-tempo, some double bass, lots of chunky guitar parts, nothing really unpredictable. They lack the top-notch recording and moments of brilliance that I heard on the Spineless CD, but their lyrics are more interesting (if equally overdone): "let me hang over the abyss so my punctured heart becomes weightless..." I hear a lot of Liar influence in the third song ("baptized in a new born fire, " I want to sing

along), especially in the transition in the verse. The fourth song starts more originally than the others, with a drum roll and a high, eerie guitar line — oh no, that's black metal influence I hear! I guess it was inevitable... Similarly, the insert features pictures of scary castles, etc., including the band members themselves standing around in an abandoned, broken down building. For an instant, I wish I was reviewing some dirty punk record; then, the band would be squatting in a smashed up old building like this, not just visiting one for the photo shoot. (If Sektor actually do squat in the building pictured, I apologize profusely for underestimating them.) — b

Sober Mind, P.O. Box 206, 8500 Kortrijk, Belgium

SEVENTY EIGHT DAYS "Canvas" CD: Furious noise and well orchestrated music make this a flower in a field of weeds somehow. But I'm also wondering if these noisy bands have somehow figured out how to forgo talent in light of just beating the shit out of their instruments in crazy timing. Oh well, whatever it is, it works. I can't tell if the cover art is supposed to be graffiti or a real piece of artwork. Nevertheless no matter what this is like fifty records before it so make of it what you will. — d

Goodfellow, 762 Upper James Street, Suite 275, Hamilton, ON L9C 3A2 Canada

SNOWFALL "" 7": I'm a sucker for nice packaging, and this record comes in a green sleeve embossed with a white snowflake that reminds me of children's books I would have read around Christmastime as a child about two decades ago, so I have to mention that. I can't say I'm really a big fan of emo/ rock music, but for the genre, this doesn't sound too bad. The vocalist sings melodically, although not without any bite in his voice, and the guitars play melodic lines, although, again, not without any bite.The song on the second side comes in with a guitar riff that I think Rage Against the Machine actually used on their first record, although it's not too recognizable. [I guess there are only so many possible ways to combine notes on a guitar, so it's not really fair for me to point out every familiar riff on these records, but I can't resist sometimes.] There's not much variation in the midtempo speed, and the songwriting provides only a small degree of dynamics in the atmosphere and intensity. The lyrics express the autumnal angst of fragile, moody adolescence. I think that's about the extent of what we have here. I might enjoy watching them perform, if I hadn't seen any bands play for a while, but I probably won't listen to this again. You might enjoy it more if you go for this moody emo/rock stuff, though there are probably some bands in that genre better than Snowfall. — b

Twilight, MBE 120, V. Della Grada, 4/F 40122 Bologna, Italy

SONS OF ABRAHAM "Termites in His Smile" CD: The first song on this CD is a different version of their song on the "Definitely Not the Majors" CD, and that was a better version — this one just doesn't have the maniacal abandon, and somehow the mix doesn't sound as forceful either (the double bass drumming, so prevalent on this record, sounds a little like a team of monkeys hammering away at typewriters). Suffice to say my attention could wander from this version, but I couldn't ignore a moment of the recording on that CD compilation if I tried with both hands over my ears. Anyway, not to say that this CD lacks intensity, it's got enough of that: hyperdynamic songs,

technically adept performances, high shrieking vocals, chunky guitar parts, squeaky guitar leads, metal metal metal! But, just as the first song does in comparison to the other version, after a while it does sound a tiny bit monotonous. The lyrics, and, more notably, the song titles and quotes that accompany them (for example: "the revolutionary idea of living at home with your parents" "some of us may never see Paris") are playful and show that they're not just trying to push themselves into a mold. And, their friendly and personable little essay about meeting new friends, which comprises most of the liner notes, makes them seem like nice kids. One question — what is this about termites, and what do all the little pictures of them and skulls in the artwork mean? — b

Exit, address nearby

SPINELESS "Painfields" CD: This CD comes in with irresistible metal dramatics: *thump thump thump, * go the bass and toms together.* Thump thump

thump — and the lead guitar strikes a single note of lonely splendor, like a hawk crying out overhead.The rhythm guitars join the bass and drums, and another lead comes in, singing back to the first one, alternating with it. This kind of stuff makes my heart soar. That was the highest point of the CD for me, though there are many other high points: this is musically one of the very best CDs I've heard from Belgium this year. Drawbacks: the vocalist's scary growls sound a little overdone, and the transitions in the songwriting aren't always the most sensible. Both these characteristics strike me as being common to the latest generation of Belgian metal/hardcore bands; at least Spineless also benefits from the excellent recordings bands in that area often get. In places, the lyrics are as overdramatic as the vocals themselves, so that's another place for improvement. There are some more great moments on the rest of the CD (the hanging single notes the lead guitar plays to complement the other instruments in the second song, for example, and the Slayer ripoff in that same song), although, as I said, it is a metal CD, above all, in that it lacks the grip on reality that hardcore music usually has. Spineless, the highest points of this CD demonstrate that you're capable of great things... turn out a CD of nothing but high points, and you'll be the next Carcass. But work on those vocals and lyrics, work on that songwriting, so we'll be able to take you seriously! — b

Sober Mind, at the Genet address

STRENGTH APPROACH "" 7": The vocals are too loud in the mix, and the drums are louder than the guitars, too, so you can barely hear the string section here. But plenty of good records have had bad mixes before, and in fact it doesn't hold this band back here either — because they have a good singer and good songwriting. Their singer has a great fucking yelling voice, just like the guy from Side By Side: the kind of voice that made those late '80's straightedge bands so much more exciting than most of their would-be imitators today. Listening to him yell, it's hard not to picture this guy leaping about, waving his arms, really getting into the music. The music itself is worthy, too: catchy, fresh old-fashioned guitar lines in a major key, fast, hyperactive drumming, and nice short, tight song structures. This is actually one of the better

European "old-school" records to come my way in the last year... I'd compare them to Mainstrike, they do the same Youth of Todaystyle breakdowns and backing vocals, and with the same uncanny ability to keep it convincing a decade later. Fuck, even the singalong choruses sound like fun, rather than just overplayed. The lyrics, on the other hand, I have to admit, are nothing but overplayed: some song titles should give you an idea of what to expect: "Still Remain, " "Looking Back, "*"True Friends, " and... "Can't Close My Eyes"! That's OK, I don't mind, the music makes up for it. One more note before we go... on the back cover, it reads "Roma Hardcore 1997"_ove r the same crossed baseball bat logo that, a decade ago, was invented by the Cleveland hardcore scene as an imitation of Judge's crossed hammers. — b

Surrounded, Via Oderisi Da Gubbio 67/69, 00147 Roma, Italy

TEAR ME DOWN "Piu' sbirri morti" 7": The music here doesn't do much for me — at worst, it's badly recorded early Circle Jerks-era punk, complete with snotty speaking/singing vocals, and at best, it sounds a bit like Operation Ivy without the ska (the song "Jaded, " perhaps). The moments when the backing vocals go "aaaaaah" work, but the songwriting isn't too smooth or interesting, and there's not too much else here to draw me in. The last song on the first side is different, it has deeper vocals and an oi music sound, and they experiment a tiny bit more with other genre cliches on the second side, but it still doesn't do much for me. Most of the liner notes are in Italian, which leaves me confused, but there is enough English for me to tell that they are anti-music business, anti-copyright and anti-cop. At least if I can't enjoy their music, I can agree with them about some things. — b

Applequince, Via di Mezzo, 12, 01100, Viterbo, Italy

TREPAN NATION "sxe" 7": This record begins like a badly mixed Earth Crisis imitation, with a second-rate metal lead and some e-crunch on the gui- t ars_but then the vocals (which are mixed too high, by the way) come in, and it becomes something more interesting. Much more interesting. The music becomes fast and simple, reminiscent of older punk/hardcore (late '80's stuff, pre-metal), and vocalist is singing over it with a rough, gruff voice that still carries a little melody. And the lyrics — the lyrics are fucking right on, some of the most straight up, honest, pretentionless and insightful lyrics I've seen in years.The singer explains in the first song why he's still willing to call himself straight edge in his mid-20's, and there's exactly the same mix of

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determination, troubled regret, and pride in both the words and his voice that I used to feel when I was trying to work through the same difficult question. The second song is fast and short, and in it the singer asserts that he has enough confidence in his ideas to be, well, assertive about them. The third song is the most interesting: he talks about bisexuality, and the way that it is demonized by both the oppressive "heterosexual" mainstream and the gay community. I think he's dead on right about that — sexuality isn't something that can or should be boxed up and labeled, and both the "straight" and gay subcultures are guilty of this. It is time for everybody to grow up and stop trying to restrict themselves and each other to preconceived notions

of sex and self, as Trepan Nation's singer suggests. I'd be fucking happy to never hear the terms "straight' or "gay" again. Anyway, it's the lyrics and vocals that make this a great fucking record, one that recaptures the same relevance and sincerity that made Operation Ivy and Minor Threat so fucking good. Clear out all the singers from all the other bands in this review section (most of them couldn't write good, relevant lyrics to save their lives, let alone the world, which some of them have the audacity to claim they're going to do) and replace them with talented lyricists and heartfelt singers like this guy. — b

Thug Life (???!), 49 Circle Avenue, Forest Park, IL 60130

TREPHINE "Reprogram.., Recondition" 7": The morbid burgundy and black marbled vinyl caught my eye before I got to the turntable, as did the nearly unreadably dark packaging (one side of the insert, pitch black, reads only, in tiny black-red letters at the center, "a threat to your society") and artwork. The music is midtempo, really crispy guitars concentrating on a couple notes of crunch punctuated by a punchy bass drum and popping snare. The three singers shriek, roar, and grunt together (or against each other, it's hard to tell), and occasionally join forces to create some real aural chaos. The second side begins with more power than the first side: where the first side was monotonous at points (since the songwriting isn't broken up by too much variety), this song opens with alternating high notes and all-out guitar crunch, which makes the crunch more aggressive by providing a counterpoint. If there was more contrast in the songs, more variety, that would help... the last song has more of this than the others (it features more tempo changes and an unusual squeaking guitar lead) and works better as a result. But I think the focus here is above all on dancing, leaping about, and breaking equipment against the ceiling, not on trying to make history with the songwriting... and this music is just fine for that. — b *plus minus, RO. Box 7096, Ann Arbor, Ml 48107*

TRIBES OF NEUROT "God of the Center" 10": This is the souhdtrack to a slow, spooky, subtly terrifying movie: a movie like Eraserhead, in brittle, otherworldly black and white, with nightmare scenes that come in and out of focus, leaving you unsure of what is real or where you stand in relation to fiction and fact. The broad spectrum of sounds, from entrail-shuddering rumbles to barely audible dog-whistles, creates a vast space in which beasts of the unconscious can spread their prehistoric wings and embark on flights of chilling fancy. The best movie-soundtrack CD I have is "Passion, " which really was the soundtrack to The Last Temptation of Christ; that CD could be played in a thousand different contexts (sex, fear, violence, beauty, solitude) and lend a solemn drama to each one. This record doesn't have the power that one did to effortlessly suffuse any scene with its haunted horror and wonder, but in the right situation it would probably be perfect. Appropriately beautiful, hallucinatory packaging, too. — b

Conspiracy, Lange Leemstraat 388, 2018 Antwerp, Belgium

UNDERGROUND SOCIETY "The other side" 7": I just reviewed the Society Of Jesus 7", and I guess I was hoping to have the same amazing luck here, but this falls a

little short. The music is straightforward, older fashioned hardcore, clearly influenced by older NYC hardcore, in the vein of the stuff descended from the old Breakdown. The speed is just above midtempo, with dance-breakdowns, and a couple moments of double-time drumming too to throw in (not quite enough) variety. The vocals are notable for being particularly deep, the singer does have a strong voice; there are backing vocals here and there that don't stick out as being bad but also don't stray enough from the NYC tradition to be interesting. Hold on, the second side just came in with three times as much energy as any of the lackluster first side. What a relief. Here there's more influence from metallic bands like, say, Congress from Belgium, and it definitely makes this more interesting. They're using more texturing and layering with the guitar sounds and ar

rangements here too... in fact, a lead guitar just came in! My advice to this band is to evolve in the direction of this last song, as fast as they can, so they can escape from the doldrums of predictable backward-looking NYC- style hardcore. — b

Hardside, Le Patis des Friches, 35310 Chavagne, France

UPS_ET "Second Try to Burn the System" 7":_ The title is hilarious: yes, indeed, haven't we punk kids claimed to be trying to burn down the system a thousand times before? And it still hasn't worked, but at least we're still trying, I guess. This little attempt on Upset's part may not succeed either, but at least it sounds fucking good — plenty of fast parts, powerful screaming vocals, skilled guitarwork. Sure, there are lots of records that sound like this, but this is confidant and competent enough to be worth noticing, even in the midst of the sea of excellent bands of this style that seems to exist in Germany today. The first few seconds of the record, a hyperspeed punch of doubletime drumming and screaming, are probably the best — they warrant comparison with Acme at that point. And later, the guitars throw in some high notes and jarring melody, as Acme would have. The mix and production are clear and bright, which helps. The second side begins sounding a little like Earth Crisis (deep vocals, slower music, chunky guitars)... it manages to escape being derivative, though I'd say the first side is much better. I think this is a repress of a record released by another label; that's fine, but they should have included the lyrics with it!! Anyway, it's good music. Perhaps it will inspire others to keep trying to "burn down the system" (ha ha), and if that doesn't work, at least we'll have another decent record to keep us inspired in our resistance. — b

Smith and nephew company, Daniel Mueller, grosse diesdorfer str. 64, 39110 magdeburg, germany

WISE UP "On the Brink of Ruin" 7": Combined with the title, the cover picture, an image of construction cranes on a city horizon, presents the irony of the fate of modern man: destruction by construction. Damn, these kids look young in their band photos. The record starts with feedback and tom drumming, then a pickslide down the guitar strings — of course it works, it's been tried, tested and perfected a million times before. From there, they introduce some more variety. The singer has an unusually high, sort of crying/scream- ing voice, which is original enough. The music is typical enough

of modern European hardcore, with metal riffs, fast and slow parts, and occasional high notes on the lead guitar, but it incorporates dynamics between acoustic and electric parts more than would ^e expected, which gives it some personality. The moments (third song) when Wise Up tries to do what every other band does are actually their weakest and least interesting ones. The most interesting part of this 7" is the second song, which incorporates a woman's singing vocals with the boy's screaming ones: at first, when she sings by herself, she lacks the confidence to completely pull it off, but as the song goes on, she does some backing humming behind the vocalist that works, and then begins singing as he screams, which also works well. They should ask to her to become a full time member of the band, work out all the wrinkles in their sound, wait for her confidence as a singer to improve with experience, and record another record. That might be something special, or at least original. And, the lyrics: it's good they're concerned about materialism and, more uniquely, about the fate of child soldiers in wars, but they still have room to improve there, as well: less simplicity, more evocation of emotion, less predictability, less cliches! — b

RPP c/o Alain, Av. V. Olivier 10A/67, 1070 Brussels, Belgium

WORD-SALAD "" 7": Completely dismembered, epileptic, hyperkinetic, frantic, disorienting, nauseating, mental-patient hardcore punk. OK, it's not so unpredictable that no guitar line or rhythms ever repeats itself, but between the sudden changes of pace and direction, the vocals (which sound like they are sung by a tongue which has been twisted on a stick and cooked over a fire), and the complete lack of regard for order that the musicians demonstrate in their delivery, you've got some pretty sickening music here. I guess I'm paying them a compliment. I will say, though, that while I love many bands who do this kind of stuff effectively (I just reviewed the Botch split 7", and that was a good example), there's something missing from this for me in an emotional sense. It makes me feel battered about and confused the same way those other bands do, but this time, my heart is just sitting in my chest waiting to actually feel some emotion, and it's not happening. Still, if I was stuck on a desert island, and couldn't take any records by Rorschach or Acme, this would probably work well enough as a substitute. In fact, I'm in

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the middle of the second side now, and I'm starting to appreciate the music more... it might be a little more straightforward in this part, and that makes it easier to sink my teeth into it. The packaging is fucking exemplary, a great big fold out four color double sided poster with appropriately discomforting artwork on one side and lyrics, etc. on the other — every 7" should be packaged with this effort and creativity. The lyrics strike me as being on the melodramatic side, along the lines of "oppression — exploitation — slaughter and knife-stabbing cretins run through the streets — death, death, deatlT. b

Prank, address somewhere else in here, go look for it if you want, you foolish and unfortunate victims of Inside Front laziness! (jerks, aren't we) _YOU AND I "" 7":_ This record really surprised me. It's packaged in a little square of envelope with cursive

writing on it, and I was afraid that it was going to be unbearably pretentious emo shit. So when, after the first three acoustic chords, a hyperspeed assault of distortion and shrieking ensued, I thought that something must be wrong with the record player. But no, this is their music: remorselessly discordant, nearly incomprehensible through the rough distortion, shot through with brief flashes of melodic metal beauty, their first song swerves and shakes, speeding fast enough to be out of control but not quite fast enough to crash. There's a gorgeous, transcendent moment when one guitar plays a single high note over and over, like a siren, above the rest of the instruments, that really fucking got me. The singer spends enough of his time screaming in a pretentionless, impassioned voice that the melodic singing he throws in (which, incidentally, is more confidant and effective than most melodic singing I hear in hardcore and related music) doesn't bother me at all. When they get going, the band beat away at their instruments like they are hammering out iron, and yet, their gentler parts work just as well. The second song has more acoustic parts and a little less speed, but it still works to cement their place at the forefront of this genre for me. The best thing I can think of to compare this to was the Grade/ Believe CD (which was fucking incredible, a really undercredited classic) with more chaos in the music and more noise in the production. The lyrics are the one shortcoming, they fall into the predictable pitfalls of talking about "personal" relationship stuff without offering anything new on the subject. By the way, the label included a little insert about their intentions — I really appreciate that sort of thing, it helps me to know that they are focused on the ideas and artwork they are presenting, not just on making money and "moving units." — b

Sage, 55 Waker Avenue, Allentown, NJ 08501

BOTCH/NinelronSpitFire split 7": NinelronSpitFire has gone to great lengths to make it difficult to tell that they're on this record at all — their name doesn't even appear on the sleeve, and is barely scribbled on the lyric sheet (maybe they wanted everyone to think this was just a Botch record?). So, out of typical Inside Front malice, we'll talk about their side of the record first. Their music has more abrasive parts, where they play the kind of groove-based hardcore stuff that some would say is descended from Deadguy (throw in some Acme too, maybe?), and during these parts their singer yells in a sort of torn voice that isn't extremely powerful but isn't unconvincing either; this stuff is a little harsh but doesn't exactly bite the listener like the music made by some of the better bands of this persuasion can. There are also parts, where their music becomes more abstract, quieting down to an acoustic whisper or losing all rhythm entirely to become a mess of jazz drumming. Those parts don't really do much for me emotionally but they do bring a little originality to these songs, and perhaps that shows that NinelronEtc.Etc. has promise. BUT — stop being so fucking emo with the insert and give us some fucking lyrics next time, if you have any! OK, now Botch. Their side comes in with a fucking blast, what a relief — they knock you about, battering you with their unpredictable brand of post-Deadguy/Acme assault, disorienting you by changing gears every few seconds so you can never quite catch up to pin down what they're doing. Their songs are really exciting, too, in their use of dynamics: they go

all over the place, dragging you into a moment of threatening calm, kicking you back into chaos, coming together tight and hard to deliver a stiff punch and then backing off again to rub balm in your wounds with a moment of unexpected beauty. Good for them. This band has taken the (fairly recent) musical tradition they draw from in a new direction, and for this they should be commended. They lyrics are pretty vague, they don't do much for me, but if they can enable Botch's singer to sound like he means it when he screams, which they do, then that's good enough for me this time. *(Next* time, though, I'm counting on lyrics that outdo T.S. Eliot, so they will

live up to the music!) -b

Indecision, RO. Box 5781, Huntington Beach, CA 92615

CAROL/STACK split 7": Carol's side is a ripoff of the old Venom logo ("welcome to Bremen, " it reads — clever considering how Bremen has become famous for this kind of metallic music) while Stack opts for a Slayer ripoff ("South of Hessen"). You know, this obsession with metal is starting to make us hardcore kids, look pathetic; stealing artwork like this no longer constitutes parody or even creative appropriation, it just makes us seem like we wish we could be real metal bands but cannot. Stack's side comes in with a long sample in German, and then plunges into some very contemporary German hardcore — fast parts with chaotic drumming, grooving slower parts, shredded Acme-influenced vocals which sit low in the mix, disorienting guitar riffs. Near the end of that song there's a good part where the guitars cut out for a second to come in and out with bursts of incoherent noise before the music begins again in earnest. The second song is a Hirax (?) cover that is particularly short (grindcore, almost) and to the point.Their lyrics are printed in German and English, but the English is clumsy enough that it fails to communicate their point (which is something about people who get behind a political cause for reasons of self-aggrandization). Carol brings their side in with some muted, high guitar chords which adequately set the stage for the burst of chaos that follows. They come off as being much more qualified to play this kind of hardcore (German late '90's Acme-influenced stuff) than Stack is at this point — their chaotic, haphazard, furious parts really are chaotic, haphazard, and furious, and when they're not doing that, their droning groove parts are effectively droning and, uh, groovy. Their vocalist has a stronger voice, too, and seems genuinely worked up. They have some weird sudden pauses near the end of their (only) song. Carol's lyrics seem to be absolutely meaningless in their pseudo-heavy metal melodrama. As for the label, this seems to have been released (or at least distributed) by Summersault, a radical books and 'zines mailorder... that's definitely good to see. I wonder what radical books have to do with heavy metal. — b *Summersault St. Paul Str. 10–12, D-28203 Bremen, Germany* _COALESCE/GET UP KIDS split 7":_ Another of those cute, clever records where two dissimilar bands cover each other's songs.The Get Up Kids make a convincing pop ditty out of Coalesce's "harvest of maturity, " it actually sounds pretty, cute, catchy, and radio-friendly, nothing like the original. Their singer delivers it with typical pop melodrama in the sung vocals, etc. and I doubt I'll be listening to it again. Coalesce has a slightly more difficult time bending the Get Up

Kids' music to their own ends... there are spots where you can tell that this song must have been written by a more melodic, polite band, although they definitely make it into something uglier, more pounding, more repugnant that the Get Uppers could imagine in their worst nightmares. The vocals sound a little weaker than I expected from Coalesce, as if the singer had a cold when they recorded or something. There's a good moment on their side where the entire band is just hitting one note, three times, over and over; that sounds like it could inspire a little craziness. But that part, and their side of the record itself, are both over before they can really go anywhere. The packaging for this 7" is glossy and professional as fuck, but doesn't include lyrics, much information, or even clever photos of Coalesce and the Get Upsters dressing up in each others' clothes or something. That's all there is to be said, I guess, -b

Second Nature, address in your general vicinity, probably even in this magazine somewhere

GREED/REPRISAL split 7": After long, painstaking consideration, I decided (without all that much help from the packaging) that this was a split 7". I should have just played it first, since the two bands are different enough. Reprisal is really metal, with Slayer riffs over tight mid-tempo drumming, a sharp trebly guitar sound, and deep deathmetal vocals that come in two varieties: deep (which still has some force, and so isn't impossible to take seriously), and, occasionally, super-deep (which just sounds so fake that it is impossible to take seriously). I've been listening to their side for a while now, and their songs seem to go on forever: the guitar chunk and steady- paced drums just drag on. It's possible for something to be well played (which this certainly is), and boring. The deep *(not* the super-deep) vocals have more heart than most deathmetal-sounding vocals, and the band clearly consists of accomplished musicians, so let's see them use these attributes better next time. Greed has all the energy and excitement Reprisal lacked: screaming, shrieking vocals, music that uses a few different tempos and

approaches (droning groove, mostly, but flashes of speed as well) to maintain interest, and a good, grainy, organic recording. Just when they've done the same groove thing for too long, they cut it off, leaving the drums sounding surprisingly powerful in the void, and bring the music back in with a high, simple guitar line played on one string. And the way the singer's voice breaks

for effort, for trying to expand our agoraphobic hardcore horizons a little. Plus, the writing on their side of the insert (about living life to the fullest rather than accepting traditional standards of achievement) is articulate and relevant. To sum up, I'm surprised and impressed with Indecision's work here, and I look forward to borrowing their equipment all over Europe on our

on the last note/scream makes them sound real. — b

Stefano Bosso, v. S. Agata, '4, 28064 Carpignano S. (NO) Italy

HELLKRUSHER/PRAPARATION H split 7": I really get a kick out of the covers of the split 7" series Wicked Witch does: they always have a name like "Cincinnati meets Newcastle" (this one's title) above an image of two cartoon skeletons, each

bearing distinctive marks of the featured cities. Hellkrusher has the textbook dirty punk sound: gruff vocals (I swear the guy actually says "fuck authority" at one point), simple, straightforward guitar lines played on roughed up old guitars, occasional '80's blues-punk solos, fast and simple (basssnare-bass-snare) drumming, short, tight song structure (at the important transitions, everything else stops and the guitar or drums lead in with the next part). They're good enough at this stuff that it doesn't seem fake or derivative, but I'd still rather listen to Extreme Noise Terror, Discharge, or the "Troops of Tomorrow" LP. Praparation H is obnoxious as hell, professional wrestling art for their insert page, attitude out of L.A. in the early '80's or something, genuinely puerile and reprobate. The samples between their songs (disco music, drunk people sputtering nonsense about sex and Michael Jackson, etc.) are enough to make it clear what we're dealing wittViere. Their music isn't quite as retro as I expected — the deep, grunting vocals wouldn't have been paired with this approach in the early '80's — but it's nothing too complex, either. Punk rock. — b *Wicked Witch, P.O. Box 3835, 1001 AP Amsterdam, Netherlands*

INDECISION/SONS OF ABRAHAM split

This is Indecision's best work that I've heard yet. Their simple, modern NYC hardcore has energy, enough speed, and punch; the melodic guitar line in the chorus is not really well-integrated, it sounds too happy in the middle of such a serious, aggressive sound, but other than that, everything's great. Even the traditional "mosh" part in the middle of the song works, despite having been done a thousand times before, because of their flawless and straight-faced delivery. The singer sounds better here than he has before; his yelling voice is still high and thin, but it doesn't sound like he's struggling so much. The decision to rip off the lyrics from Siouxsie and the Banshees was a wise one, too: it shows that Indecision is willing to break hardcore rules, defy expectations, and go to any lengths to make music how-

> **_SYSTRAL/ACHEBORN split 7":_ Systral had a *LOT* to live up to with this new song, and they haven't really let us down... although I'm not entirely satisfied either, this being Systral, and I hoping to have my expectations far exceeded. Their song opens with a motorcycle being revved up, and blasts into one of those completely overloaded, Systral fast parts, which attains maximum velocity before crashing into a slow grind. They pause, leaving a hanging note, and enter one of the catchiest, most haunting melodies I've ever heard — nightmare music. Missing here is the high vocalist; we only have the earth-shaking deep roaring guy, and although he carries the day by himself, it was the double-vocalist assault that put Systral over the top. Missing also are lyrics — their side of the insert reads only: "save gas, burn nitro — diesel dust and tons of bullets." Systral's lyrics really did something for me, and it's a shame they list none here (that's also a telltale sign that a band is becoming washed up...). Acheborn play fairly fast, fairly straightforward post-Unbroken metallic hardcore. [I

> mention Unbroken mostly because when I saw them play in Germany, it was clear to me from their hipster clothes and the affected way they threw themselves about that they draw a fair bit influence from those San Diego bands.]Their singer's voice doesn't quite work for me, it sounds like he's trying to yell a little deeper than is natural for him. The drumming is energetic and unconventional enough to set them apart; there is some immediacy, even a little willingness to take risks, in their music, but I'd like to hearthem push a little harder at the limits of the predictable modern hardcore formula. It sounds like they have what it takes to do it. Towards the end of their second song they build enough energy and tension to rise to the challenge for a moment, and for that moment they're great. They do give lyrics; nothing earthshattering, in my humble opinion. The packaging and graphics for this split 7" are so fancy that it seems almost as if the label was trying to parody major label layouts. — b *trans solar, bismarckstrasse 6, 56068 koblenz, Germany***

next tour too. [Just checking to see if they're reading this..!] Sons of Abraham have a lot to live up to, what with their incredible song on the "Definitely Not the Majors" CD compilation, and they don't do badly. Plenty of metal complexity, random metal flourishes, tight double bass bursts, a guitar line in the verse that sounds like Snapcase on steroids (harmonics and guitar chunks, etc., but actually *good...), * and convincingly angry vocals work together to make this a good song, though not as good as the one on that CD compilation. And hey, the lyrics and explanation are fucking great — they argue that the modern American celebration of Christmas is just a capitalist catalyst for consumerism, and accuse corporate America of trying to seduce everyone into joining in this "spirit of giving" (i.e. spirit of *buying), * destroying the cultural heritage of non-Christians along the way by inundating everyone with advertising propaganda. According to them, Christianity has become the religion of the marketplace, and its efforts to make others feel welcome to join in should be seen as insidious attempts to replace their religious/spiritual values with merely financial ones. I can see where they're coming from. — b

Exit records put this out, so it's probably better distributed than Inside Front, and out of resentment for that I won't print the address. I'm joking, relax. It's in this issue somewhere!

PINK COLLAR JOBS/RUSTWEILER split 72;The mastering on this 7" seems to have made the volume low on it. I guess most of you have volume knobs on your stereos, though, so that's not a real concern. Pink Collar Jobs is a great live band, they make their sort of pop punk thing really compelling by putting plenty of energy and abandon into it. Some of that comes across here, which helps them to overcome their snare drum sound, which sounds sort of like a bad record skip. Another thing they have going for them, especially in the first song, is that their songs are catchy as fuck, perfectly written, the kind of songs that seem like they've always existed, just

waiting for a band like P.C.J.'s to come along and discover them. They do a sort of Hellbender melodic indie rock thing most of the time, but also have parts where they let loose, screaming and raging.That gives them the emotional depth and variety they need to make really memorable music; and the sadly beautiful high notes they play near the end of their second song (very, very indie rock, by the way) add another

ever they want. Plus, stealing Siouxsie's lyrics guarantees that this song will emotional dimension. Their squeaky, impassioned voices and rough-edged, have better lyrics than 95% of other hardcore songs! So they get ten points impassioned playing also count in their favor, as do the simple, provocative

[Image not archived]

lyrics of their first song, about sexist men. Rustweiler has energy too, and they take advantage of the already-thoroughly-explored genre of indie rock/ punk stuff to make some well-crafted songs, but they ultimately don't have enough going for them to set them apart from the three million other bands that have played this stuff before. They get points for having lyrics against bad poetry, but their lyrics are hardly more than a step above. — b *P.C.J., P.O. Box 611-DTS, Boone, NC 28607–0611*

PURITAN/OFFICER DOWN split 7": Puritan's singer does the Acme screaming thing, but he sounds like his voice is genuinely fucked up, which I guess is to his credit... although I am a little concerned about him. He sounds like he needs a throat transplant at some points. Their music is worth paying

attention to, as well — the chaos and tension in it are real, not affected, and it escapes predictability with sudden shots of noise, unexpected acoustic breaks, and general disorder. Their side of the insert is messy, but I can make out some discussion of patriarchy, sexism, and gender roles that seems worthwhile. Officer Down have some really fast parts, some grindy doubletime parts, some mosh parts, plenty of sudden transitions, and a tinny metal guitar sound, which, put together, sound a little reminiscent of political hardcore from a few years back. Their singer's screaming vocals sound a little more contemporary than the music, and all together, it's good stuff. The record sleeve features a color reproduction of a drawing in crayon, giving the whole thing a real kindergarten feel — that reminds me of Richard Allen's article "Don't Call Me 'Kid'" in Things Fall Apart, which I wish these 'kids' had read, because the serious issues they are addressing are hard to take seriously in such a childish package. — b

GoodFellow, 762 Upper James Street, Suite 275, Hamilton, ON L9C 3A2 Canada

SEPARATl'ON/SERENE split CD: Separation is snotty, fast, yelling punk. The singer (whose voice might be a little bit loud in the mix? or is that standard for punk like this?) has personality and presence, he pushes his rough voice to the point that it sounds like it's about to break. Their music is simple (when I call them punk, I don't mean the Exploited, I mean melodic late- '80's type stuff), and could stand a little something to distinguish it from the other ten thousand bands that play this kind of music.Theirthird song is a departure from the other two, it takes a more emo approach (distortion on the vocals, quiet

their other recordings, too). In between songs, they have what sounds like a recording of a catholic mass: it's a clever idea, but it gets a little repetitive by the end of the 7", since the songs are so short (no complaints here about *that, * mind you) that the samples seem to take up almost as much time as they do. The first song is fairly lengthy for them, probably a good two minutes long, and goes through a few different transitions. The second one starts out scary as fuck, alternating a snare drum machine gun roll with a deep, completely distorted roar; it takes off and is over in a few seconds, leaving me reaching for the record player arm in amazement. The third one begins with the singer yelling "Liberta, liberta' (freedom, freedom) over and over; it's a song about ending animal oppression, and easily qualifies as an anthem. Their fourth song begins with a

catchy pounding part, excellent, and between it and the last song I think they have a three second song where they just shout "Society of Jesus!" The music is fucking great, filled with energy, as are the deep vocals.Their lyrics are printed in Italian and English, with one song in Spanish as well. Substance's recording is a little rougher, and their music a little less energetic: it uses more guitar chunk and less velocity, and their singers screaming voice is less deep, more conventional. But their songwriting it tight and interesting, and their music makes a good enough match for S.O.J. to make this another top notch grindcore/hardcore 7" from Italy. — b *Matteo Verri, address above at Society of Jesus 7"*

"All About Friends" CD compilation: Also known as "Hardcore Maniacs" issue #5. This is a lot of fun, and cool to see, because it's a departure from the typical predictable CD compilation format. Bound and stapled in cardboard, the booklet features a few pages of photos of each band (not bad photos, either), with the CD tucked in a flap at the end. Most bands do covers, which is entertaining too. C.R. starts off with a screaming, rough original, followed by Botch playing a screaming, rough cover of "Rock Lobster" by the B-52's. Hilarious! Next up are Impel, followed by Nineironspitfire, covering a two second song by Napalm Death (and believe me, this is not only Nineironspitfire's finest hour, but Napalm Death's as well... uh, did I say "hour"?). Then a song by Screwjack, I Threadbare covering Beyond, Coalesce

> covering Undertow (this really brings out the limitations of their singer's voice), Indecision playing one of their own songs, and Trial covering the same Iron Cross

song that Agnostic Front used to play (if you like Trial, this is priceless, the backing vocals shout "straight edge warrior!" at the chorus). State Route 522 and Jough Dawn Baker (whoever those bands are..? is the latter even a band?) finish the CD out with, respectively, a Cure cover, and what sounds to me like someone singing karaoke to everyone's favorite major label communist funk rock band... or is it a demo recording by said band, with another guy singing? Or what? Hm. Anyway, like I said, this CD is a lot of fun, so there you go. — b

Hardcore Maniacs, P.O. Box 11543, Kansas City, MO 64138

H8000 Hardcore Compilation CD: Spineless begins this with a hilarious song, the production is major label metal quality, the verse guitar line is haunting and catchy, the Slayer ripoff riffs at the end are fun, and the fucking lyrics: it's a song about summoning the devil by reading an unholy book! This Belgium metal thing has gone too far, the bands are no longer singing about real life

shit. But their song is great. I actually like it more than the next song, which is Congress, a band I've always loved; maybe the latter has peaked, because next to their younger imitators Congress doesn't sound quite as intense as they used to. The only thing they have to offer us here that Spineless didn't is a couple Integrity-style guitar solos. I guess when you pioneer new styles, like Congress did in Belgium, your progeny are bound to catch up to you one day. Life Cycle, the next band, has a terrible four track recording for their not-too- polished Belgian metal stuff, but they're the only band on here where we hear a woman's voice (too bad). Liar offer us one of their full-scale mosh-metal-murder straight edge anthems, "Invictus." It seems that Liar have been more influential than Congress on the latest wave of Belgian hardcore bands (Vitality, Sektor, and others that appear on this CD), as their slower, more danceable approach is now most prevalent. Blindfold has the same annoying, distorted, overdone melodic vocals that bothered me about them before, but at least they offer some variety next to all that metal (they have a saxophone solo, for example!). ODK Crew and Spirit of Youth are a little faster and more straightforward, but are still more like Congress than they are like any oldschool bands. Instinct actually sound oldschool, partly due to a terrible live recording. Deformity and Regression represent the really heavy metal side of things, while Hitch is more rock and roll. Firestone is the silly side of Spineless distilled and made pure: ridiculous whispering evil vocals, dimestore Slayer guitar lines, double bass mixed louder than the guitars. Fake is the last band, a much rougher, punker take on Belgium hardcore, but with the trademark metal influence still audible here and there. Anyway, this CD is a good introduction to some of the bands at the forefront of Belgian hardcore today; although, if you haven't heard a single band from Belgium yet, the best introduction would probably be the latest Congress or Liar full-length. — b

Sober Mind, at Genet address

Pasta Power Violence 7" compilation: Thus little 7" is an excellent introduction to the Italian grindcore scene, and features some fucking good bands. I recommend it wholeheartedly. Society of Jesus start this off with a fucking classic song: it begins with a pounding, old NYC hardcore part (if you can, imagine a Breakdown song being played by an apocalyptic Italian grindcore band — better yet, remember the Point Blank song "Turning Back"? This uses one of those riffs, but the terrifying vocals make it even more powerful than that was...) and ends with a couple merciless blasts of ma chine gun fire. Their second song is more

** _“Limited Options Sold As Noble Endeavors” 10” compilation (includes Contrascience #5.5):_ This comes with a thick little ‘zine with a number of characteristically indepth and well-researched Contrascience articles on why army recruiters are selling kids a bad deal. It’s important information for everyone to read and think about, especially young people trying to choose what to do with their lives. It also includes a page for each of the bands on the 10”. Let’s go through the music. MK-Ultra do the high, hoarse screaming thing with chaotic music, a little Coalesce in the music perhaps, but faster. Their recording holds them back a bit, it’s bass heavy at the very bottom end but lacks power. Man Afraid remind me a little of Born Against: explicitly, articulately anti-patriotic lyrics, simple, rough-edged punk music (it begins with an anthemic slow screaming part, then picks up speed), throaty, hoarse yelling and screaming, with a little sad melody added by the bass from time to time. Their song is the one that best represents the theme of this record, musically and lyrically. The Q-Factor’s song is next, a messy, uppity little punk song about big business and the corporate music industry. It doesn’t have the energy, catchiness, or skilled execution it would need to command attention. The Dillinger Four follow with a song that reminds me of Propagandhi (snotty singing vocals, anti-authority/reli- gion lyrics — although not as explicit as Propagandhi’s would be, pop punk music) — they’re a popular band these days in some of the circles I travel (that is, with two of my six friends!), and I suppose their music is talented and exciting enough here to warrant that, if you like pop punk. Those Unknown finish out the first side of the record with a similarly pop punk song, although the over- dramatic vocals put me off. Their lyrics and song explanation (question authority, decide what you want and get it, etc.) are right on, at least. The second side begins with another political, melodic pop punk/mod song from the Strike, which sings the praises of union supporters. Press Gang’s song rails against selling time for money, but it suffers, as do all the less exciting tracks on this 10”, from a weak recording and delivery.Thenceforward’s song begins much more aggressively than the other bands thus far have, and they have a more *hardcore* sound in general: fast beats, moshable verse riffs, shrieking vocals, fuller recording. No lyrics in the insert, though! I can’t complain too hard, because their singer sounds clear enough when he shouts “don’t wave your flag at me.” Swallowing Shit is the penultimate band on this record, and boy are their three vicious, abrasive grindcore songs a breath of fresh air for me after all that fucking melodic shit! DeadStoolPigeon finish this with a fast, class conscious song from their last CD. So the music here is spotty in quality, and will probably appeal to you more if you like rough-edged pop punk than if you prefer malicious, violent hardcore. But the undertaking as a whole is laudable for being so focused on its worthy goal, and thus

warrants anyone's time and attention. — b *Contrascience, P.O. Box8344, Minneapolis, MN55408-0344***

grindy, with their trademark deep vocals. Their songs have real energy, the mix is clear and forceful, and on the lyric sheet they quote author Milan Kundera, so they get a perfect score for their work here. The Obtrude songs feature a hysterically bad mix: the singer shrieking squeakily in your ear, the drums inside of a dumpster down the street, and the lead guitar far away across the hills. It's actually a lot of fun. Cripple Bastards have something similar going on (OK, I know they practically started the genre, so I can't actually say they imitated Obtrude; I'm just saying that I heard Obtrude first when I put on this record to review it...) with a ridiculous mix, absurdly jarring tempo changes, and a cacophony of screaming, grunting, hissing, and growling vocals. Their lyrics are inspiring — they speak at length (that is to say: the singer doesn't actually sing all of them) about the struggle of the individual to keep his head clear and his perspective fresh, in the midst of such a disheartening, oppressing world, so that he will be able to enjoy life and make the best of it. The last band. Nagant 1895, have a better mix than those two bands, but the actual recording is less clear, which holds them back a bit. They sound a little less confidant than the other bands, too, but they still manage to make the kind of ugly noise that is music to my ears... and the lyrics to their first song are "Jesus Christ, your sacrifice was not useless, not for the ones who built your temple with bricks of blood, and turned it into their castle." So, is there anything lacking from this 7"? Not really — although the cover art (a bowl of pasta) could have been more exciting! — b

S.O.A., Paolo Petralia, Via Oderisi da Gubbio 67/69, 00146 Roma, Italy _Voices: A Portrait of Sao Paulo hardcore 4-band split CD:_ This is the sort of thing I get excited about: a well-done, well- presented CD offering insight into hardcore in a part of the world I haven't heard anything from until this year. The insert has information on all the bands, plus all the lyrics in both English and Portuguese, and the CD has four songs by each band. Newspeak, the first band, has an excellent recording, up to par with any U.S. hardcore band. Their music is mostly fast, straightforward, clearly influenced by late-'80's U.S. bands in places (yelling vocals, backup choruses, etc.), but with plenty of details that set it apart (slower parts, guitar flourishes and leads, etc.). It's spirited and well-executed, good stuff. Self Conviction is next, with a less varied, more moshy sound and hip hoppy vocals (circa NYC eight years ago?). Sight For Sore Eyes are more melodic, still fast, but with a more pop sound. Their vocalist sings in

[Image not archived]

"Definitely Not the Majors" CD compilation: For a CD compilation, this has a remarkably high number of good songs. Of course, $_{t}h_{ere\ are}$ bad songs, too, some of them from the bigger name bands on here. Bloodlet begins this with one of their rock and roll groove songs, really not bad as far as the shit they're doing these days goes, but still pretty heartless and brainless. Next is Coalesce with some wah-wah guitar (!?) and their trademark brand of monotonous sandpaper-grinding groove. The

guitars actually do a couple leads, which prevent this from being as bad as their new LP. I.D.K. present a cute pop ditty that's sweet and catchy without being weak or soft, if you can stand that stuff. Ascension is the first band worthy of note; their heavy metal take on hardcore has always come across better live, but this is the best I ve heard it yet on record. It comes in with the echoes of distant drumming, and the drums themselves approach ominously, until the song proper hits.The guitar flourishes come across well, and the drums continue to be exciting throughout all the transitions and changes the song goes through. Only the vocals lack the craziness and power they have live. Next is the first incredible track, Sons of Abraham in their finest hour, with their subtly titled song "What Brings May Flowers?" about the Jewish holocaust. It begins with singing in Hebrew, and reaches epic proportions of drama immediately when the open guitar chord and double bass crash down. The song maintains it's high energy and passion all the way through, with metal complexity and guitar leads over the rhythm chunks, but'doesn't reach its heart-stopping climax until the end, when the music stops and vocalist, spitting venom, shrieks *"we sit in the death camps to sort out the past"before* the double bass explodes one more time. Gehenna is next, with a new song, not recorded or played quite as well as their older material (it just can't compare to their live performance of the same song), but Gehenna all the same, and with their best lyrics yet (like William Burroughs writing about the lowest of pariahs in their darkest fever dreams of world domination). At their best moment, everything stops but one guitar, firing away like the pounding heart of a thief running from pursuing police cars. After this, the next few bands blur together (Backlash, Buzzkill, Nora, Pay Neuter, Indecision, Pacifier, As Darkness Falls, Compression), with the exception of Earthmover, whose song about internal struggles shows their characteristic authenticity and energy. The Catharsis song on here is the same recording that is on the Samsara CD. But the most important song on here, the one that makes this CD remarkable, is the last one: a new song by Starkweather. On this song, they finally realize all their potential, potential we all thought wasted after the swore to stop playing shows and disappeared. This fucking hurts to listen to, it's so pained, so bloody with emo- i tion, with despair, soiled in the dirt of the very furthest extreme of

human existence. Singer Rennie roars, shrieks, cries out until his throat is hanging out his mouth in strips, the cataclysmic guitars and drums performing a dirge that burns with all-devouring fire as he snarls *"find me the heaviest stones to fill my pockets, I*

\ thought it for the best that I should drown while I have this thirst to \ quench, I hike to the river with a nervous shudder...". At the edges of his singing, a lead guitar of classical training and skill dances

I over the abyss, spinning and turning in solos of terrible grace and I splendor, all the more sublime for their proximity to such ugliness I and disgust, and, more, to nonexistence itself. When all goes I wrong, all is for nothing, this is the song to drown your bile and I regret; cast all your failed hopes into its black pit, let yourself go I into the black night of its nausea, and hope that that provides I enough of a respite from

your pain to live until daybreak. — b I *Bush League, P.O. Box 10165, New Brunswick, NJ 08906–9998* I _"We May Fight a Battle That Can't Be W_on" CD compilation: This I is an exciting, horizon-broadening record, for a few different rea

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a high voice, he sounds like he's straining a bit, like he's not entirely comfortable with what he's doing yet. Point of No Return finishes out the CD. They have more metal in their music than the other bands, and a good recording, like Newspeak. Their first song starts with a spoken piece about the political repression and murder in Brazil thirty years ago. That's serious stuff, and by writing a song demanding that the ones responsible justice be brought to justice now, this band is really sticking their necks out. The anger in their singer's voice is clear as he screams, in their third song (about child labor exploitation), *"a counterforce must be formed to set us free."* This is the kind of music that really counts, music about real issues that

affect human lives; that's what I loved about Kriticka Situace, and that's what I love about this. — b

Liberation, Caixa Postal 4193, Sao Paulo -SP, 01061–970 Brazil

"Die Zahne Zeigt Wer Das Maul Aufmacht Vol. 1 Benefiz fur die RADIKAL" 12" compilation: Fucking shit, I would give anything to read German right now. If any of you can read German, you must track down this record, at any cost, if for no other reason than to avenge my honor: I'm sitting here in desperation, looking through page after page of insert material, all in German, at all the professed goals of CrimethInc. and a dozen other would-be radical U.S. revolutionary punk groups made flesh in this German record — and I can't fucking understand most of it at all! As far as I can pick out, this is a benefit for German activists, publishers of a radical, anti-government, anti-fascist newspaper (Radikal Zeiten), who have been incarcerated by the government. There's a Bertold Brecht quote on the cover and photos of German activists and terrorists engaged in real all-out war with the authorities, the kind of war we U.S. punks only fantasize and preach about. In Germany and Europe in general there is a tradition (including, in the last few decades, the Situationist International, the Paris uprising in 1968, and terrorist groups like the R.A.F.) of actively fighting the powers that be, by any possible means, rather than just complaining about them.The record comes with a copy of the radical newspaper in question, plus a full-size, 20 page 'zine with a page from each of the fourteen bands and plenty of writing about the goals of the radical group under fire (and the goals of this record as a benefit for them). It even includes an introduction to anarchist thinking, with biographies of some of the major thinkers in the tradition. Not only all this, but it's done with energy and interest, not the sort of boring drivel that you get from American politicos. The sound level on the record is a little low, because there are so many bands on each side, but other than that the mastering is fine. The bands play a variety of energetic, gruff, rough, screaming brands of European hardcore punk, that makes for good listening (names includes Rawside, Amok, Circus of Hate, Zack Ahoi, Kulta Dimentia, A.A.K., many more). This is exactly what a revolutionary/political hardcore punk record should be:

filled with subversive and dangerous ideas and exciting music, with any profits going to support a genuinely anti-establishment project, rather tan just to maintain the lifestyle of some "professional revolutionary" or, worse, fucking capitalist record label. — b

Fuckin' People Records, Timo Nehmtow, Neustadt 80, D-25813 Husum, Germany

featuring the heroism of Greg Bennick,

wading through an ocean of shit

_ALL IS SUFFERING demo:_This is quite a big production for a demo, maybe all these other bands should take their demos as seriously. The cover is full-color, the recording and the mix of a high quality many of these metallic (Pantera-sound- ing?) hardcore bands can't even get for their CDs: thick, heavy, clear, bright. The tough, grainy yelling vocals and grooving guitar lines are what remind me of Pantera, but they could as easily remind me of Belgian metal bands like Liar (there's a guitar part in the first song that reminds me of the first song on the Liar full length: a single note, struck on the offbeat over and over in rapid succession, like a fire alarm). The double-bass drumming is somewhat overused, they sometimes use it in places that it doesn't exactly fit and they emphasize it enough that it's hard to ignore. There are some signs of deathmetal/black metal influence here: in the fast parts (ridiculously fast blastbeats), for example. The playing and musicianship in general are both top notch, and there's plenty of variety in the songwriting and eclectic intros. Still, for all the precision and skill in this music, it doesn't touch me that deeply; technical metal often fails to reach my heart, no matter how much the details impress me — there's such a thing as being too slick. The lyrics and song explanations are right on, though: the speak eloquently enough about technology, capitalism, the destruction of our world and ourselves, human bitterness and domination. The first track is even named after the book _Things Fall Apart_, a personal account of the social breakdown and human suffering cause by European imperialism in Africa, -b

Leonard Likas, 4220 Solomons Island Hoad, St. Leonard, MD 20685 _BLOQD-STRING — With Bloodstained Hands demo_ — Four songs from somewhere in Europe. This is a metal tough sounding band which unfortunately features muddy production far too heavy on the bass end. The music is slow tempo (a la NYC stomp) at times with throaty screamed vocals and more brooding and heavy like death metal at other times. Lyrically they touch upon despair in four different ways. This did remind me of Integrity a bit at times when they started to play mid tempo...especially with the particular vocal patterns the vocalist chose and the way he goes from deep growls almost to full out screams. Dwid would be proud. The last song is a live track and even though the production here is only audience quality it is easily the most raging track on the record. A dance part explosion at the end has more heaviness to it than most bands I have heard of late. A high black-eye-in-the-pit potential on this one. I would like to see these guys live sometime myself. A good tape to check out if you

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like Integrity and if you can figure out what country they are from, -jug *BLOOD-STRING, c/o Bodo, eintrachstr. 20c, somewhere in Europe.* _CATBURGLAR demo:_

Begins with some piano playing, probably by the band rather from a sample, good for them. The recording is really powerful for a demo, maybe a bit bass-heavy, but better than many of the 7" or even CD recordings I've reviewed this issue (since it's much too easy to put out a 7" or CD these days...). The vocals aren't well integrated into the music when they come in — the two singers roaring together just creates a sort of muddy mess — but when they alternate after that (as they do for most of the record), it works much better. They don't have bad voices, they just don't harmonize well. The music is on the faster side of midtempo, energetic, mosh-danceable simple chunky stuff for the most part, but dressed up with snatches of metal: the first song has a Napalm Death part (complete with double-picked classical guitar riff, blastbeat, and vocalist going OOOOOOOUUUGHI), the second song a Metallica part (from the song "One"), and the third song starts with an Iron Maiden rhapsody. This definitely adds interest to the music, which already has enough energy to work. BUT: they don't have the mastery to always pull off these parts with the grace they need, and they don't fit well into the rest of the music. One gets the impression that Catburglar just threw these parts in for fun, which is fine: the fun comes across in the music. Cool name; I wonder if they really are thieves. — b *Tom, P.O. Box 186, Lake Villa, IL 60046* _CLANDESTINE — demo_ — Check out this line in the first song (about veganism as a means to end animal oppression): "Termination of anthropocentric disrespect — purification of the self — liberation of the earth". Wow...these guys could teach English classes to American bands and make a fortune. Sometimes I feel like an idiot for only being able to speak one language... Anyway, I am a bit wary when vegan bands use purity as a concept to describe how the earth will be lifted from oppression. I am especially apprehensive when those bands go on to say (like this band does) things like "forced forward to the light of compassion." Maybe I am missing something in the language barrier, but when I combine purity and force, I imagine a hierarchical structure of oppression all over again in which a self proclaimed "pure" force demands action from an identified "unpure" segment. Sounds like eugenics to me, but I won't call these guys fascists...! am vegan too...I identify with their frustration with the world...but I would say that there are better ways to get people to do something then forcing them. The music on these three songs is metal/grind with demonic

> screamed vocals. The recording is passable except for the drums which sound like they actually aren't drums but rather pieces of paper being slapped with spoons. I imagine big kick boxing sessions at their shows, * — jug CLANDESTINE, c/o Sven Claussen, Barenhod 4, D-30916 Isernhagen, *

Scandinavia

CLOSE CALL — demo — Whoo boy, Close Call...today is your unlucky day. Of all the people in the world who could have gotten your demo for review, the demo which starts out with the song "Trend" which includes the line "This is not a trend",

is Greg Bennick, singer of Trial, whose "Foundation" CD, released two months before your demo was recorded has a song on it called "This Is Not A Trend". HA HA I I have caught you! You rip-off-the-Seattle-band-jerkies! Caught! Aw...shucks...I'm just kidding. I will side with you and assume that you never heard of Trial. Ok...fuck it. I like your demo actually. It, for those readers who have never heard of Close Call, is a cross between hardcore/punk at times and more rockin' styles at other times. Do you remember how Naked Raygun wasn't quite hardcore sometimes, but wasn't quite rock at other times? This is what this demo reminds me of occasionally, when it is not being fast and hardcore, and in that I respect their creativity. Lyrics involve a number of different topics: "Trend" (grrr...enough said); "Insight' is about keeping an open mind: "Paper Thin" is rad (it talks about people who lie to themselves and others. A great line: "there are better forms of therapy than the ones you know about") Good work, good recording, and good looking packaging (red tape shells with printing on them!). — jug

CLOSE CALL, c/o Nick, 95 Standish Avenue, Plymouth Mfr 02360, USA _CONSTRITO "Nem Ordem Nem Progresso" demo:_ The production on this demo is a little unclear, and it makes the songs sound a little flat, a little uninspired: it's not nearly as good as the production on the "Voices" CD compilation, for example. All this hardcore from Brazil (just from Sao Paulo, actually) has me curious... the bands I've heard from there seem to take political subjects more seriously than most U.S. and European bands; I suspect it's more pressing, more relevant to their daily lives. The best song here is the title track ("neither order nor progress"), a reply to the slogan on Brazil's flag, about the suppression of free speech in Brazil by police terror. Other songs attack media brainwashing, pernicious consumerism, and prejudice. There are speedy songs and slower, more "moshy" ones, all of them pretty simplistic and straightforward. The singer has a deep, gruff voice, but he doesn't really let loose as much as he should. So overall, I'm not really impressed with this musically, but their ideas are right on, so hopefully they'll keep at it and improve. — b

> *Pierre deKerchove, lua Baculo, 44, 04748050, St. Amaro, Sao Paulo/SP, Brazil* _DEADLOCK — Keepin' It Positive Demo 1997_ . *a* nine song demo! I have been aware of these guys for awhile now as they are located here in Washington state, and while I have never seen them live, I have seen the promo work they do with sending out tapes and videos even of themselves to people in order to spread their band over a

wider area. Impressive. This demo has Fat Records sounding vocals in an almost NOFX vein along with good quality recording overall and positive lyrics dealing with friendship, unity, and change. One song is an instrumental. I would love to see more bands explain their concept of change now that I am thinking about it, and while Deadlock doesn't do that, they definitely did get me thinking in another way. In referring to themselves as a hardcore band, yet sounding more like a punk band Deadlock

has actually played a clever trick on me: I found myself pondering the dividing lines between punk and hardcore, remembering a time when those lines were far less identifiable than they are now. I think that what will remain with me most from this demo was that train of thought, and that in itself makes this demo a successful venture in my mind. I have heard their newer stuff and it is far catchier and has even better recording production. Check them both out. -jug

DEADLOCK, c/o Sam, W. 4 Regina, Spokane WA 99218

_DEPRESSOR — demo — _ Another great tape! I am getting lucky this issue. Five songs here: four originals and a cover song. Great sound even if the sound quality itself is a bit muddy. Great tape even though the packaging is a folded single sheet of paper: it doesn't matter if the music and lyrics are strong. Sort of death metally at times but for the most part it is heavy sounding punk at a slow tempo...reminded me of the Meatmen to tell you the truth! Lyrically really strong. "Class War" is about how class war is a ridiculous idea and will not solve anything, but only serve to create more problems. "Wake Up" is a self — critical call to arise from apathy and become caring citizens rather than continuing as scenesters. The song starts with one of the best lines I have heard in a long time: "Spreading scabies at Neurosis shows / "non-conformist" but we look like clones". Excellent and intelligent throughout. Definitely get in touch with them and see if they have anything else to say above and beyond this tape, — jug

DEPRESSOR, PO Box472007, San Francisco CA 94147

DRIFT -The Luxury of Demise Demo — Just a question which popped into my head just now, maybe unrelated to this demo: Why do European bands always sing in English? I guess it allows people to access the lyrics who might not have been able to otherwise, but when bands might feel more comfortable singing in another language, I would much rather have them do that and then (if they wanted to) provide translations. I feel strange listening to English all the time. It is the standardizing language of the world if we allow it to be. This four song demo has a death metal feel at times with holy terror screamed vocals over

RADIKALNA PROMJENA (Radical Change) demo: One of the best things about doing this magazine is the music and 'zines we get sent to us from all over the world — there is no way I would have come across this band any other way, let alone been able to tell other people about them. Radikalna Promjena was formed when the members were forced by the bloody war in ex-Yugoslavia to flee from their homes. They met as refugees and decided that they had to work together to spread a message of anarchist positive change against the forces of nationalist ignorance, indus- trial/technological destruction, and war that threaten the lives of hundreds of thousands of human beings in their homeland and around the world. Now that's a good reason to start a band!

You'd think that with all that madness going on around them, they'd have a hard time learning to play well or getting a good recording, but this amazed me in both respects: the recording is top notch, bright and clear and powerful, and it adapts easily to the many and varied directions they take their music. And the music is excellent.Their mastery really shows in the moments when they throw in other styles to spice up their hardcore punk: they can play a minute of reggae, an Eastern European folk music intro, or a heavy metal guitar solo as comfortably as they can charge ahead playing their fast, energetic punk rock. At their best moments, which come frequently, their style draws heavily from late *80's crust metal/hardcore bands like Hellbastard (the missing link between Antisect and Nausea): eerie moments of metal drama, desperate yelling vocals, haunting guitar solos. At other, less common moments, they have a more metal/rock influence to their hardcore, but they don't suffer from this: it doesn't make them sound ridiculous, like it would so many other bands, because they're so at home playing any kind of music. The two vocalists are equally comfortable screaming back and forth at each other, singing with voices that bleed with emotion (a little reminiscent of Kriticka Situace? I'm not sure), or yelling choruses over and over in unison. The band was kind enough to send me English translations of the lyrics, as well, which deal with the subjects I mentioned above. This is the sort of thing I would recommend to any Inside Front reader, just for the sake of encountering something entirely different; but it's not just good for novelty value, it's intriguing, impassioned, and educational as well. — b

iadranko Kerekovic, Savska 155 b, 10000Zagreb, Croatia

metallic hardcore. Lots of changes and different patterns other than remaining with a standard straightforward approach. It reminded me of a slowed down Catharsis with less intricacy. (That's Catharsis from America, kids) The fourth song is a live track which was recorded off a soundboard... good to hear that the vocalist keeps his intensity up all the time. Lyrically interesting overall: one song is about technology and its effect on the earth, another is a really poetic attack on religion with a great line "where benediction is damnation -1 carve my sins in stone." My only complaint is the mix: not the recording, but the mix. Some parts got lost which could have been further up front to add power (namely the guitars) and some parts could have been further back in order to be less distracting (the occasional high guitar leads). DRIFT, no address with country given: just send your money to different European addresses from time to time and eventually you will hit on the right one, or maybe just throw $4

into a bottle and let it drift out to sea...maybe the DRIFT demo will drift back your way someday. Good luck. — jug

ENDURE "Chicago Hardcore" demo: Everything about the presentation of this demo is exemplary: the layout is computerperfect, and it includes not only lyrics and the usual stuff but also a mission statement by each member of the band. In these statements, they speak about straight edge and revolution, and prove themselves to be very focused and intelligent young men. The dubbing quality (they seem to have replicated these at home) could have been a little better, that might have flattered the recording more (it's good enough, but there's room for improvement). The music and vocals remind me of Mayday: the metallic music aims to haunt and threaten, and the vocalist sings in a throaty growl. The gritty guitars are tuned down low (they seem to be a tiny bit out of tune, in fact), and play together with the drums at a uniformly slow, grinding pace that eventually begins to drag. I'd say that what Mayday's music accomplishes, even on their latest 10" record (reviewed in this issue), Endure's music fails to, at least on this demo. There's one more subject to address here, the lyrics: and these are excellent, refreshingly honest and challenging in their willingness to address topics many bands never think to consider. They deal with topics from the real lives of human beings, like masochism (that's the sort of thing no hardcore kid wants to talk about out loud, and yet it's a more deep-running and universally relevant topic than straight edge ever could be), and the ways that personal qualities like curiosity and lust for control relate to broader issues like homophobia and the human domination of the natural world. Most of today's hardcore

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lyricists could learn a really important lesson from this demo: that we must always be addressing subjects that we feel touch (or, better, push and shove) us personally, in order to be inspired to write lyrics that will touch others (push and shove others??!). Even if you're talking about important things like capitalism, the media, etc., if you just regurgitate slogans that we're already used to, you won't be able to get anyone to think twice about (let alone feel) anything. — b

James Wei-hsin Liu, 4875 North Magnolia Avenue, apartment 308, Chicago, IL 60640 _FALLING DOWN demo:_ "We are the Japanese band, " read the letter that came with this demo. Good, I was wondering where they were. No lyrics in the insert, but plenty of speed (and, consequently, adrenaline) in the music. Yes, indeed, this demo never slows down, full speed ahead the whole way, with only two-second pauses for the guitar to lead in the next part. There's a double bass part on the last song which leads into a dance breakdown, but other than that, whenever the drummer is playing he's beating his kit at maximum intensity, maximum velocity, bass-snare-basssnare-bass-snare-bass-snare. It works great, keeps their straightforward music rushing forward tirelessly (with only a single backward glance, at late '80's bands like Side By Side).The singer has a strong voice, and he's pushing himself as hard as he can, never letting up either. His twisted enunciation reminds me of Roger Miret in Agnostic Front. Four

short, quick songs. The verdict: excellent demo, ten times as good as Ten Yard Fight or any other lackluster American revival band. — b

1-28-17 Kitahara Tanasi, Tokyo Japan, Shigeru Okuda

FATAL JUSTICE — Severed Forever Demo — No lyric sheet equals essentially no review as far as I am concerned. These songs could be about anything and I won't recommend something based on music alone because who knows what the fuck I could be sending people towards. I will give them the benefit of the doubt for a little while here: sharp edged crunchy metal guitar riffs with lots of brooding stomp parts within an overall vein of new Earth Crisis-ish music blended with New York tough guy hardcore and a dose of Slayer's eerie guitar hooks. I actually liked the music a lot. The vocals are throaty and screamed over the whole thing. I have a feeling that if these guys get into an even better studio than the one this demo was recorded in and put out another release with good lyrics, that they could be in my regular play rotation, -jug

FATAL JUSTICE, Keep it Alive Distro, expansielaan 20, 8411 TBJubbega, 0516462529, country???

FIDELIS — demo - No lyric sheet. No tape

NEGATE — Demo *97 — Please forgive me Negate, but no demo ever has inspired as much of an immediate reaction from so many people as this one has. This wins the award. This absolutely wins the goddamn award. What award? Well, for those who have encountered European bands singing in English before, this wins the "Most Completely Fucked Up U§e of The English Language" Award for their first song "Down For A Smile" and their second song, the straight edge anthem "Bored". I opened this demo an hour ago and put it in my tape recorder...! never got to listen to it though. Upon reading the lyrics, I exploded into non stop laughter and had to call Brian from Inside Front and read them to him and his girlfriend *[editor's note: she's my mistress, not my girlfriend.]*. We almost wet our pants. The first song makes absolutely no sense whatsoever. I have asked five people in the last hour and no one has been able to figure out at all what "Down For A Smile" means. I asked specific people, two of those five speak French, thinking that maybe in translating the lyrics back into French that we would find something in them that made sense. No luck. As for the second song "Bored" Brian has promised to print the lyrics somewhere in here so I won't retype all of them. The following passage can not be ignored. It is the ultimate. The best of the best: "Bored! About effect of drink / straight edge comes as fuck / we have learn something / the reality/BAD DRINK". Amazing. As for the other four songs...they are more clear: two topics include keeping your body clean and

poison free to the best of your ability, and animal rights. One is about hardcore as a family I think, and the last one is either an antiracism song or a racist song, I really can't tell ("you have hot UNDERSTOOD/anything FROM OUR LIFE / the color OF YOUR FACE / is your blame") I will give them the benefit of the doubt. Musically they play hardcore, with a terrible mix. The bass drum sounds like a little man is tapping a pencil directly on the cones of my speakers, and that is the one thing which stands out in the mix. Screamed frantic vocal stylings with back ups too. My head is spinning from the stress of it all. This demo is far bigger than my mental or emotional capacity can handle. — jug

NEGATE, c/o Arnaud, 23 av. du sud, 6001 Marcinelie, Belgium.

cover. Eleven songs. Noisy all over the place hardcore with screamed vocals. — *jug [Editor's note: sorry about this one Punk Planet/MRR-style review, we're not lowering our standards, I promise.] FIDELIS, Scott Stobbe, 310 Park Avenue, Capitola CA 95010 USA* _GANDIVA-demo-_ Strange that a Krishna influenced band would send their demo to an anti-deity zine like Inside Front. Good for them that I got a hold of it, because I am not going to tear it apart simply on the merit that it is Krsna conscious. Others might have. I will say this about it: Krishna influenced emo-thrash metal. Sort of rad sounding. High sung vocals mixed with terrorizing screams over emo melody which bridges into fuzz box guitar craziness. Damn...these guys are complex in their approach. Maybe they are going through prasadam withdrawal after being in the studio for long enough to record this tape. Just kidding, kids. It has a studio sound to it, and the mix is good. Definitely interesting and different. Big points to them for that. I am not fully aware of what some of the terms means which they use, so I will tell you to approach this with caution, but don't be afraid altogether. I kinda liked it. Four songs. This is one is a keeper, meaning that I give about 95% of the demos I review in this magazine away to friends after I am done with them, but this one I will hold onto and pop in from time to time. Send them your $$$ rather than buying the new Shelter record, -jug *GANDIVA, c/o Glen, 124 Colony Drive, East Longmeadow MA 01028*

HUMAN WARMTH — demo 96 — Due to the date on this one, I am wondering if it is a bit dated. Write to them and find out. I actually learned two new words with this tape, and I am wondering if both of them are actual English words or if they are words which somehow got lost in translation: "slaverists" used in the context of bosses in the workplace forcing allegiance from their workers; and "ankilozed" meaning apathetic. Okay. Song topics about workers rights and solidarity: right on! The music is a strange hybrid of poorly played punk and late 80's northeast hardcore. They sound like a mosh core posi band of the late eighties who had their Bold and Chain of Strength records taken away and replaced with the Misfits all of a sudden. The singer

has accents occasionally which reminded me of Glenn Danzig. I had to listen to it twice to decide if I liked it or not. It didn't catch my ear, but maybe it will catch yours, -jug

HUMAN WARMTH, c/o Eric Wurbel, 15 rue les jardins de france, 13 270 Fos s/ mer, France

RALLY CAP Demo: Mid-'80's stuff rough, overloaded mix, mid-'80's simple, simple straightedge hardcore music, mid-'80's punk vocals (that speaking/yelling thing

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that bands who listened to the Angry Samoans and the Circle Jerks did). In fact, that's what the music and vocals remind me of: early Circle Jerks stuff. The approach in general and, specifically, the lyrics are pure straight edge cliche, though: there are songs with names like "Friends Till the End, " "Think Twice, " and Thinking Straight" — and at one point the vocalist actually yells "my answer to this is the X on my fist!"The performances aren't much smoother than the recording, nor are the riffs as catchy as they must be for this kind of music to work, but at least the songs are short. — b

Rally Cap, c/o Greg Polard, 111 Bonnet Ln., Hatboro, PA 19040

RELENTLESS — Demo — Five songs which are unlike anything you have heard in a long time. Take the vocals out and you have simple tuned down heavy hardcore. Take the music out and you have Rage Against the Machine styled rhyming spoken vocals. No screams to be had here though which makes the energy level on this one pretty much non existent. Very strange. In a way I am intrigued because the blend of the two aspects is so bizarre, but I don't like the way it sounds overall. In other words: points for originality go out to them, but it just isn't to my personal taste. But why should what I like matter to you? Check this out if you are down with the rap/hardcore crossover scene, as it definitely falls into that realm. I certainly don't feel inspired by it, and maybe if the vocalist sounded like he was more into it that attitude in me would be different. Some of the choices made lyrically made me do double takes, and not necessarily good ones. Lyrically I am with them on the line "we must believe in ourselves" but they lose me on "strapped and it's no joke — watch your back it might get broke." Best line is "step it up or give it up" before the last dance part of the last song at the end. More emotion from these guys and I might have been more stoked on this. — jug *RELENTLESS, c/o Marty, 353 N. Kentucky Avenue, N. Massapequa NY 11758* _RIGHTS OF HUMANITY — Demo_ — No lyric sheet. What the fuck? I let my friend Aaron review this one. Here's what he said about it: "Pantera meets Korn meets Snapcase with interesting parts which aren't predictable. Cool back up vocal effects and a poppy snare sound." Ok, so maybe Aaron will never be a reviewer...anyway, he did touch upon some accurate points which highlight this demo, the first and foremost of which is the vocal style. There are two vocal tracks going on here with these four songs: the first being a Philip Anselmo/Pantera like on as the main line, and then there is this other track which punctuates from time to time in the style of Deicide (a high choked scream mimicking the words). Definitely

the complete Negate lyrics to "Down For a Smile" and "Bored"

DOWN FOR A SMILE I am so cool with everybody

I know its bad select your friends >

I'm sometimes a clot no just naive What can I do?

BE ANOTHER ONE! DOWN FOR A SMILE!

We must destroy suckers on earth These fuckin' guys must die one day I am too nice

You're down for a smile I'm so guilty

You're down for a smile I am so abused You're down for a smile I'll try to change DOWN FOR A SMILE!

BORED

Bored! About effect of drink How many killed by car? How many abused wife? How many boring men? TOO MUCH!

I tell alcohol effect Can you deny If you deny it YOU'RE WRONG Bored! About effect of drink Straight edge comes as fuck We have learn something The reality BAD DRINK!

In my head it's right Can you speak like that? AH! AH!

So it's your life but try to drop me when you suck Bored! About effect of drink You who are so young And fucking up your health Think about your parents RESPECT!

For some way of life Is just drinking alcohol Some are not agreeing STRAIGHT EDGE!

something you don't hear in hardcore very often. I think this reminded me more of Vision of Disorder than anything else. It walks that line between metal and hardcore, dipping into each side from time to time. — jug with special guest appearance by aaron

RIGHTS OF HUMANITY, 105 Tarpon Drive, Grafton VA 23692

THE RULE OF NINES — demo — This is a band which I want to see live for sure. Not because this demo doesn't do them justice, because it is really good, but rather because I can't imagine seeing what they must do live, and if they are still this good. Excellent recording quality and solid packaging, though I do wish the bass drum was a bit pushed back in the mix as it distracted me from time to time when I noticed it punching out. The layout utilizes Kinko's Macintosh computer rentals to their fullest extent. If you took the innovation of Botch and the energy of Dead Stool

Pigeon and mixed in a character and style all their own, you get Rule of Nines. They rock. I listened to this tape about three or four times right off the bat from beginning to end. That Mike Phyte guy is beginning to piss me off. First he puts out Botch, who are great...and now Rule of Nines...what makes him so good at choosing bands? Nowif only Brian D could acquire the same skill. Any way... write to them at this address... RULE OF NINES, 15460 Hollis St., Hacienda Heights CA 91745 or for copies of the tape, write: *PHYTE Records and Tapes, PO BOX 14228, Santa Barbara CA 93107.* — j^{u}9 _SKY CAME FALLING "A penny for your confessions" demo:_This begins with a guy speaking in an overdramatic, almost affected voice: "to touch... the wings of an angel... doesn't mean... that you can (inhaling gasp:)" and everything hits in unison, vocalist roaring, double bass going, guitarists flailing away. They pull back for a more abstract noise part, before going at it again, and finally leaving the song in to conclude in more messy, abstract noise. In the rest of the songs, there's more double bass, more alternation between screaming and speaking on the part of the vocalist (he's got a good screaming voice, but the speaking parts just sound too forced to me), more alternation between straightforward onslaughts and more subtle, abstract parts in the songwriting. This demo does have its own personality, but drips of artsiness in places (song titles like "of adornment and disgust" and "the fall of Cain's countenance, " for example). That artsiness turned me off to the lyrics at first, but eventually I came to see some value in lines like "last night I dreamt of her jaundice discolorations and how she sheltered me from damnation." I've seen better, but they get points for writing about jaundice discolorations. If they can figure

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out how to use those big words, speak at the beginnings of their songs, and play such "crazy" music without seeming so self-consciously arty, they'll be in good shape. — b

96 Shinnecock Avenue, Massapequa, NY 11758

STANDARD ISSUE — 1997 Demo: I wish I had gotten into hardcore a few years earlier than I did. For me, hardcore started being a vital part of my life around 1987 or so and there wasn't enough time between when I first got into it and when the Judge "Bringing It Down" LP came out to protect me from being influenced by the incredible production that record had. It changed EVERYTHING and up until then, was the most extensively "produced" record in the history of hardcore. The effect was twofold: it set new standards for what hardcore records could sound like. On the other hand, it almost forced new standard for what hardcore records should sound like. After all: why regress? And so with that record, I, like many others of the time, was tainted forever: listening for the quality of the mix as well as the quality of the songs themselves in whatever came along next. This leads us to the Standard Issue demo. It sounds like it was recorded on a four track by someone who had never recorded for before. While I praise whoever that was for their attempt, I have to say that many of the levels are so high as to make most of the tape come across fuzzy and distorted. Maybe I am listening too hard for quality, but there were some times over the course

of this that I had a hard time getting into it because of the distortions. Demos like this were a dime a dozen ten years ago: the east coast was FLOODED with cookie cutter straight edge bands singing cloned songs: not just with the same

topics, but with the same words. With that in mind, I wonder about the use of the lines "wake up and live", "true 'til death" and a song titled "No More". Perhaps one of two things is true: either these guys have never heard Youth of Today or Chain of Strength and are imagining themselves as innovators, or maybe the entire project has been created sort of tongue-in-cheek as their name implies. A joke? It doesn't have that feel. Straight edge lyrics with shouted back up vocals and a few "Go!"s here and there. Each band member thanks "God" first and foremost, so perhaps there is some Biblical reason why this should be in your tape collection. This atheist says wait until they record a 7" and then check them out from there. — jug

STANDARD ISSUE, 165 Mayapple Drive, Elizabethtown KY 42701 _TRIPHAMMER — Demo._ No lyrics sheet. Damn those Triphammer fellows. Six songs here from Salt Lake City which are well recorded and played. The music is tight and blends crunch with harmonics (not "harmonica, " you idiots, harmonics) on the guitars to keep things interesting. This is reminiscent of the slow ultra heavy hardcore coming out of Salt Lake City these days but it has these melodic lines throughout which really make it memorable. There are enough dance parts to make for more than a few Mormon black eyes when they play in SLC. I have seen these guys in SLC when Trial has toured through and the kids there are super stoked on them. I haven't heard anything from them in a while but I will be looking forward to whatever follows this demo, unless of course the band breaking up is what follows this demo! A seven inch would be good from these guys. — jug *TRIPHAMMER, 6265 W. 3670 S„ West Valley UT 84128 '*

BURNING INSIDE "Light" cassette: When my band was on tour in Europe, we played one show in Hungary, and discovered a whole new world of hardcore. The Hungarian scene is pretty isolated from the rest of the European community, and has developed into a fascinating variation on the theme of hardcore punk. Everywhere else we've been, "hardcore unity" is just a meaningless slogan, an empty cliche: but in Hungary, it is something fresh and vital, it means something. Among the kids at that show was an atmosphere of camaraderie and brotherhood/sisterhood that I thought was only a myth that existed in Crippled Youth songs. Apparently these kids took the late '80's "positive youth" and "unity" stuff at face value and made it a reality in their young, exciting scene. Being around them for that evening was one of the most inspiring experiences I had last year. It's extremely difficult to make CDs and vinyl in Hungary, so even the most established bands (like the four reviewed here) make cassettes — but the sound quality on all of these recordings is top notch, competitive with recordings from anywhere else on the planet. I'd really like to see is some label outside of Hungary release a compilation CD of all the bands there, to attract more international attention to this thriving community — a community that could teach the rest of us something about hardcore.

The new Burning Inside cassette represents a bit of progressive experimentation with the traditional Hungarian sound, which is in its pure form fast, simple, late '80's NYC influenced heartfelt hardcore. The songs on this tape have that speed and simplicity, with the shouted backing vocal choruses, but there's a little more melody in the guitars here, and the vocalist uses a little more singing melody in his voice than the guy from, say, Liberal Youth does. The first song is in Italian, and the other two in English, addressing working through personal crises and standing by the others in your community come what may. Like I said, the recording is clear and powerful; the playing is energetic, and the lyrics sincere, as well. Great stuff. — b

Tama Leiner, Budapest Vitkovics M.U.9. 1052, Hungary _DAWNCORE "Soulburner Times" cassette:_ This has a more metallic guitar sound than Burning Inside, and the music is a little more metal in general: chunky guitar riffs, gruffer roaring lead vocals, less Chain of Strength speed and more midtempo Breakdown mosh tempos. It doesn't sound like it's from Belgium, by any means, though: there are still a bunch of guys yelling together in the background of every chorus, no high notes are played on the lead guitar, and the song structure doesn't wander off into the land of crazy metal acrobatics. When Dawncore plays this music, it sounds fresh and new, like something they've just invented and are really excited about. That's amazing, since there hasn't been a band from the U.S. in at least six years who could do this stuff and make it sound lively and new. This demonstrates my belief that whenever hardcore music gets too stale and played out in our nation, we must look overseas to see how the same seeds of older ideas and influences have been sown in other soil, and brought forth different fruit. New Jersey tough guy bands should try listening to these to see if they get any new ideas from it ("uh, 'ideas'?" I can hear them grunting...). All the lyrics are in decent English, which makes them easy for me to understand; but I wonder if this makes it harder for local kids to follow them, since I know there aren't that many people in Hungary who speak English fluently. English should *notbe* the only language in hardcore: the more languages we use, the more we will be able to learn from each other. — b *Bozo Attila, 1125 Budapest, Szarvas Gabor u. 23/b Hungary* _LIBERAL YOUTH "Korlat Nelkul" cassette:_ The music here uses Warzone as a starting point, but ends by sounding less silly than Warzone often did. The constricted, yelling vocals, the speed, the slamdancing breakdowns, the short, fast songs with sudden stops are all reminiscent of that band, but they work more smoothly here. Liberal Youth's music never lets up, never loses a drop of adrenaline, it's filled with energy from the beginning to the end. The lyrics are all in Hungarian, which is great, although I wish there were some way I could get translations so I could understand them. Their name is pretty funny to me, but it's probably a pretty radical thing to name

your band in Hungary, I guess. Especially worthy of note here is the second to last song, "S.C.H.C." ("Savaria Colonia Hardcore — that's the hardcore scene that all these bands come from). It's not just Liberal Youth's song, this song belongs to everyone in Hungary and it's an example of the sort of communal atmosphere that I loved so much there. The night we played there, every one of the bands that played that

night played this song at some point in their set; and each time one did every fucking hardcore kid would get together around the stage and sing along — because it is a song that doesn't belong to any one person or band. Communally owned songs are the sod of idea that hasn't even occurred to us in our much more uptight, hostile U.S. hardcore scene. When everyone at the show was singing along, they were singing, in effect, "this song belongs to us just as our community belongs to us — -we're changing the world by working together, for each other and with each other, not against each other. Hardcore!" Seeing something like that was really exciting for me. That night, each of the bands there gave us a copy of their demo for every member of our band, and most of the demos had recordings of this song on them. — b

Horvath Norbert, Szombathely 9700, Baratsag u. 12.1/6., Hungary _UNITED SIDE cassette:_ The night after the show in Hungary, which was the third to last show of what had been a three month tour (and yes, we were fucking exhausted, we were at the end of our rope), we had a thirteen hour drive to our next show. A few hours into it, our rented van broke down. Ernie (our band mechanic**) got out and had a look, and informed us a few minutes later that the transmission (or the gears, or something really important like that... I can't remember) was completely destroyed. We managed to get the van towed (by a guy who spoke no English, since we were in southern Germany) to a used car dealership. We went in and sat in their showroom, drinking their free coffee, as their employees surveyed us nervously from a distance. I found the stereo that was broadcasting elevator music over their speakers, took that tape out, and put in this tape, which my new friends in Hungary had given me the night before. So there we sat, believing our tour to be over, stuck in the backcountry of rural Germany with a destroyed van, listening to Hungarian hardcore in a lobby. Thanks to this music, it didn't feel so bad. (In fact, Ernie and Alexei were so moved by the experience that they have adopted the verse of the first song on this cassette as their motto: "Don't let them killing the life!") As it turned out, the staff there were so anxious to be rid of us that they offered to lend us another rental van in trade for ours, to get us moving out of there. We made it to the show just before we were supposed to play, and finished out the tour, only to be showered with newspaper confetti up to our knees at the last show. We never did find out what happened to the old ? van. I can't imagine the rental company was thrilled when they got it back: not only was the engine destroyed and trash smeared all over it inside, but our German eighteen-year-old driver-guy Sven had driven it into a pole, smashing off the side-view mirror, and the guys from Gehenna had cut all of the seatbelts out of the back seats.

Anyway, listening to this again: the music here sounds something like Youth of Today with deeper vocals; at the best moments it has just as much excitement and energy, just as much punch and speed. There are group vocals on the choruses, fast parts, and only slightly slower breakdowns. And they also have the song S.C.H.C. on this demo (the song I wrote about in the Liberal Youth review). — b

Bertalan Andras, Szombathely, 9700, Vorosmarty u. 3., Hungary

*** Here's another story about Ernie: we broke down in the middle of Wyoming, and Ernie took off most of his clothes, got down under the hood up to his waist, and worked there for about three hours. When he emerged, his arms, head, and torso were absolutely black with oil, and he held clutched in his hand what appeared to be the van's still-beating heart. He threw this piece of the engine, which was about the size of a large video camera, into the ditch, where it lay still whirring and pulsing and doing whatever it had been doing inside the van, and told us the van was repaired.*

Cara a Cara #1: Este 'zine, publicado en Espana, me interesa mucho porque pretende. como lo expresan ellos mismos, "difundir y engrandecer el movimiento Hardcore en nuestro pais, " un pais que, hasta ahora. no ha sido muy conocido por su Hardcore. Sin embargo, tambien me hace sentir un poco nerviosa por su actitud hacia la cuestion del sello multinacional. Segun el editorial, el 'zine se interesa por bandas en multinacionales, porque esas pueden aprovechar su posicion (si se lo puede llamar asi) para extender el alcance del Hardcore. Por eso, dicen. "nos interesa mas un grupo como Sick Of It All en Warner [la banda en la portada], que cualquier grupo altemativo que grabe en un sello independiente solo porque si [y aqui sale una media linea en bianco] (aunque nos parece respetable)." Bueno, no me han convencido, jquiza porque la parte mas crucial de sus ideas ha sido olvidado! Dejaremos al lado mis gustos y la pregunta de si yo si o no creo que Sick Of It All sea un grupo Hardcore en estos dias. Puede ser que con un multinacional una banda alcance un publico mas extenso — o puede ser que el cambio del independiente al multinacional enfade al publico leal, mientras el multinacional ni promueva ni apoye el grupo, el cual muere sin mas. Un problema con un sello multinacional es que ese sello no tiene en cuenta los intereses del grupo, lo cual se dice mucho, y queda bastante obvio. Pero un problema aun mas grave es que el sello, mas que ser una corporacidn opresiva capitalista que abusa y oprime y todo para el dinero, no tiene una ideologfa basica que influye en su escoger y promover grupos musicales. Esto significa que el sello puede usar los beneficios que gana de un grupo mas pequeno y menos importante (porque no atrae suficientes millones de pesetas del publico) para promover otro grupo mas grande que expresa una ideologfa totalmente contradictoria a la del mas pequeno (como, por ejemplo, una banda sXe que firma con un major que tambien promueve a Dr. Dre o Cypress Hill). Y, claro, tambien hay el problema de la libertad artfstica, el de participar en el sistema capitalista, el de olvidar las ideas y las emociones sinceras para la fama y el dinero. Me extrana que todos los grupos americanos que menciona son enormes, pero, dado su editorial, no me sorprende. Entiendo que quizas para comunicar con mas gente, y asf sembrar el semillo del hardcore por Espana, han escogido los grupos con un publico mas amplio, y que esos estdn, mas que nunca, bajo un sello multinacional, pero todavfa me preocupa que lo que esten difundiendo es la idea de que un grupo debe hacerse esclavo de una corporacidn para engrandecer el mundo del hardcore. Al final de la entrevista con los madrilenos Like Peter At Home (que, para empezar, parece consistir de una gran parte de los que escriben y publican el 'zine, y que, segundo, habla con energfa contra los multinacionales — aquf me confundo otra vez y me pregunto, ^para que ese editorial?,

y solo puedo explicarlo por decirme que estan muy preocupados con contactar con tanta gente como sea posible, si esas personas tengan interns en el hardcore o no) dice, "Contratacidn, contacto con el grupo, venta de material [nos.detelefono, etc.]." iContratacion? ^.Espc an que el Sr. Warner les vaya a llamar? Las entrevistas (con Sick Of It All, los alemanes Ryker's, y varios grupos espanoles) son mediocres o peor, y utilizan las mismas preguntas para casi todas, aunque preguntan a los Sick Of It All cudles son las desventajas de trabajar con un sello multinacional. La mala calidad de la mayoria de las fotos para mf es calmante: proviene un alivio de la bonita y profesional (^demasiado bonita?) apariencia del resto del 'zine. Los artfculos son, por lo general, bien escritos y expresados, pero hay demasiado espfritu fraternal y sentimientos del estilo (el Hardcore, por ejemplo, se distingue del Punk por "la honestidad, la amistad, la colaboracidn, unidad y el respeto por ti y por los demds" — no di go que no sea verdad itQ^{ue} sd yo?), pero su rah rah rah puede cansar a uno). Como es el primer numero de un 'zine de introduccidn al Hardcore, puedo excusar su enfoque en la historia del movimiento, el esqueleto bdsico de un complejo pasado. Pero olvidados eso, lo de los multinacionales, y el sentimentalismo sXe, y considerando el

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interesan por Europa (y sobre todo por Espana, un hennanito mocoso en la familia Hardcore europea), y asi intentando justificar su enfoque en los grupos Hardcore mas separados del espiritu D1Y y combativo. mas ligados al mainstream, yo dire: Si estos chavales son realmente sinceros, si no son solamente mas publicidad para WEA (o. ;puede ser?, para Soulforce Records, Madrid), sus esfuerzos pueden ser importantes. Quizas puedan escapar del comercialismo para introducir al mundo el hardcore espanol en un foro equilibrado e inteligente. —

@*Andres Casas T.. Apartado de Correas N. 18.083, 28080 Madrid, Spain*

Corazon de Chancho #5: Este 'zine chileno es superinteligente e interesante. Trata varios temas, los cuales incluyen unos problemas con el movimiento straight edge, un festival local de "punk" patrocinado por un candidato politico, la abstencion electoral, la falta de creatividad en el activismo politico, y (gracias a Dios) una explicacion del nombre del 'zine (pero yo no revelo secretos...). Las entrevistas con Donfango (Chile) y Fotofobia (Argentina) no son nada especial, pero tienen un espiritu divertido que no se ve muy a menudo con tanta sinceridad. Las resenas de discos son demasiadas cortas para ser utiles, pero tambien hay resenas de libros (situacionismo, ginecologfa, organizacidn laboral, y punk) que son mas completos y educativos. El 'zine tambien incluye traducciones de dos articulos de MRR, uno por el guru de CrimethInc. (jno se si puedo soportar tanta emocidn'); las traducciones son excelentes: parecen captartodo el detalle ideologico de los originates, que se trataban de la monotonia activista y el escepticismo hacia la nueva moda cultural del "new age" y de la ciencia ficcion Hay una fotocopia de un articulo de un periodico que discute ataques neonazistas a latinoamericanos en Moscu; nota el editor, Julio, que Rusia puede parecer muy lejana pero que toda manifestacidn del racismo fascista en el mundo tiene una importancia global. Pero lo que mas me afecto en el 'zine fue una carta avergonzante e ignorante escrita al editor

de una revista argentina, *Vision, * de un norteamericano que enfatiza la arrogancia y estupidez de parses hispanohablantes (junta las naciones latinoamericanas con Espana, como si las aspiraciones y las situaciones de cada pais fueran las mismas!) que esperan alcanzar influencia politica o econdmica en el mundo. La carta esta llena de bigotria y estereotipos, y francamente me da vergiienza mas que me causa rabia, porque nunca me ha sido tan obvio que los Estados Unidos estan Uenos todavia de gente que he preferido olvidar tanto como fuera posible. Aun mas triste es lo que anade* Corazon de Chancho *(una foto de un revolucionario armado que esta diciendo que al menos el autor de la carta es honesta, mientras el resto de los estadounidenses piensan igual, pero en silencio) porque quiero protestar, ponerme defensiva, gritar, ";Ese tfo no soy yo! — jNosotros no pensamos asi!, "pero es evidente que mis protestas senan ridfculas. Actitudes como la de G.F.G. (el escritor ilustre de dicha carta) son tan extremas y tan crueles en su ignorancia que casi no tengo respuesta. Y que esa actitud viene de una persona que no tiene vergiienza de expresarse asi, que esa persona puede sentirse* tan *superior al resto de la humanidad, y que esa persona no sdlo es de mi pais pero que ademas es de mi propio estado...bueno, me quedo sin palabras. En general este 'zine es provocative y original. La unica Idstima es que no hay mas escrito por el editor, porque ^1 se expresa inteligentemente y profundiza en sus discusiones de temas que a veces son tratado brevemente por otros personas o grupos. Recomiendo entusidstica-mente* Corazon de Chancho *para una lectura interesante, y le suplico a Julio, por favor, la prdxima vez, £puedes darnos un poco mds de tu sabiduria?, que nos agradeceria tanto...(y siento mucho lo de tu tortugo).* — @ Corazon de Chancho, c/o Julio, Los 3 Antonios 414-B, Nuhoa, Santiago, Chile.

[Image not archived]

THE ART OF REVOLUTION: an ABC NO RIO benefit video: This is, obviously, a benefit project for ABC No Rio. While the cause is certainly worthwhile, the video leaves a bit to be desired. The bands appearing aroused some excitement in me at first — Oi Polloi, Born Against, Avail, and Aus

Rotten, in particular — but the quality of the recordings just wasn't quite there. Without a doubt, the most interesting part was the conversation with the Israeli hardcore band Nekhei Nattza about situations in Israel. Overall, though, I would say if you are buying this with the intent of getting a recording of a good live performance from one of your favorite bands, it's probably not worth it. The shame is that someone put energy and time compiling this with the intent of capturing the feelings that exist at ABC No Rio shows all in an attempt to provide a product for us to consume so that their feelings can continue. Look, No Rio needs money in order to be able to continue existing. It is a place that is an asset to punk and all they should have to do is ask other punks for some help to get it. If everyone sent a couple bucks the place could continue putting on shows, running Food Not Bombs, providing a place for art exhibits, etc. However, since the possibility of people just sending money for a cause just unfortunately isn't going to happen, they have to spend money putting together

a video and sell it in order to feel legitimate in asking for help. We always have to get something back for our money, right? All we'll ever be is consumers. — b.a.

Tribal War, P.O. Box 20712, New York, NY 10009

ABC No Rio, 156 Rivington St., New York NY 10002

nally coming back on the map, with a brief but well-put-together 'zine named after a Ringworm lyric. Contents: an interview with the infamous Tony Erba, now of Nine Shocks Terror (with Steve Peffer of the Mormons on vocals), an story about an evening of professional wrestling written by that same Erba, some record and 'zine reviews (focusing mostly on fast, ugly, grindy modern punk music), and reprints of two ancient interviews: the Necros in 1984 ("life for us is just seeing how long we can deny being adults") and fucking Bad Brains in 1981 ("punk rock isn't fast

music, all punk rock is really slow. We're a gospel group."?!). If this 'zine reprints one old Bad Brains interview ("I Against I" or earlier) every issue, I'll guarantee them at least a couple kind words each time. — b

P.O. Box 771296, Lakewood, OH 44107

Brat #3 [volume 2]: This is important because it is a politically/socially conscious magazine made by and for the youth of Louisville, Kentucky. It's ex-

citing to see this level of awareness and self-motivation among young people. Articles range from Critical Mass (up there with Food Not Bombs as one of the best "activist" activities going on right now), straight edge (the point is made, and made well, that straight edge by itself is bankrupt as a foundation for values, since it defines itself only in terms of negatives and does not place a positive value on anything — right on — still, that doesn't mean I should start drinking or smoking, or stop calling myself straight edge; it just means

that unless we straight edge kids decide what we *do* want, our lives and "movement' are pretty pointless), and the way that big businesses sell the spectacle of rebellion (personified by such bands as Rage Against the Machine) and thus can make money off of, and thrive upon, the very discontent that their system generates. This is good stuff, and done for all the right reasons; some of us hardcore people should get in touch with them and see what help we can offer. — b

P.O. Box4964, Louisville, KY40204-0964 _Change #10:_ Change has heart, it has personality, which is the nlost important thing for a 'zine to have. It's still confusing and off-putting to me here and there, but at least it has some fire in it, at least it possesses an identity. That said... professional basketball and the Simpsons? If you want to celebrate being involved in sports, that's great — go out and play sports, talk about playing sports, go crazy, as long as you're getting your hands dirty *in'real life.* And I think editor Patrick does... so why all this bullshit about fucking mainstream media stuff? So many Americans know so much about sports and care so much about sports because they feel like they don't have control over anything else in their lives — following professional sports is a surrogate activity. They're bored and impatient with their jobs all week, but they're content to wait for the football show to come on television. It becomes the one thing that they can feel excited about — and, to

maintain the status quo, the networks, bosses, and everyone else encourage us to think more about things like sports and fucking cartoons than about things in our lives that we could change. Patrick might think I'm being boring by politically critiquing the simple things he loves, but I want high stakes in every aspect of our lives: I don't want us to be neutralized so that we only riot in the streets when the Tar Heels win a basketball championship, rather than when taxes increase or war is declared. These recurring features of Change (the Simpsons and professional basketball) really underline a deeper theme in this magazine: Patrick's unusual anti-intellectual, anti-political sentiments. He makes it clear that he hates the mainstream, that he hates the way the world is set up right now, and

he's obviously really smart — so why is he always emphatically denying that he could ever have any political/social message or that he could work towards any real social critique or transformation? I think Pat obviously knows that taking some kind of political/social stand will be the inevitable result of following his ideas and inclinations through to their logical conclusion, and I imagine that he is just afraid to commit himself because it feels like he's up

[Image not archived]

hardcore scene with Harvest and Brother's Keeper interviews and the Syracuse scene news that this 'zine consistently delivers. There are a few layout errors in the interviews that occasionally make for difficult reading, but for the most part, this is solidly laid out, colorful, and interesting to look at, although never excessive. The record reviews are pretty short, but specific enough to be useful. — j

Full-size, newsprint, roughly 60 pages. $1.00 to Ryan Canavan, 201 Maple Ln., N. Syracuse, NY. 13212

Hodgepodge #2: Issue #2 of this zine shows that Hodgepodge is progressing at a rapid clip. Here's why: the editors have mostly corrected the scanning problems that marred #1; there are great photos of a wide variety of hardcore, "emo, " and underground bands; this new issue boasts a clean, readable layout that never fails to catch the eye, and it features above-average interviews with By the Grace of God, Monster X, Ink and Dagger, Louie from Antidote, and a piece on the Last Crime. The interviews are entertaining and thought-provoking (my favorite being the discussion of drug legalization with Monster X) and show that the editors, Mike and Kevin, are willing to go beyond the usual "so, dude, who's your favorite straight edge band?" line of questioning. Kevin reveals his true nature as a posi-core kid in his introduction, too: "All I know is that all the problems in life are actually not all that bad... Life isn't perfect, but we can make it nearly perfect if we understand how to think the right way." Uh, come again? Despite some minor flaws, Hodgepodge #2 is worth a buck. — j *(Full-size, newsprint, 56 pages. $1.00 to Mike Schade, 432 Red Jacket Quad, SUNY Buffalo, Buffalo, NY 14261.)* _Hot Rod Suicide #1:_ A kid called Andrew does this 'zine, and he gave it to me in Richmond last time my band played there. And it's a great 'zine, so I'd like to be able to give you his address, but I can't find it in here for the life of me!! Anyway, track it down if you can. The writing (an article about

goings-on in Richmond hardcore, for example) in H.R.S. is what sets it apart — it is clear and skillful enough to make any topic seem worth thinking about. The interviews (with $500 fine, who talk a lot about capitalism, Scott from Bloodlink, who explores a number of interesting topics, and Avail, which is shorter but still has some interesting content) make for really good reading, too. There are also plenty of really lengthy magazine and record reviews, at least as informative and interesting as the ones in Inside Front, if not better. The layout is a little disorienting (small text, decentralized placement), but benefits from disturbing images taken from the Re/Search reprint

of _Atrocity Exhibition_. I wish I could tell you where to find this. — b

??????

Inconsystemcy combined issues #1 and 2: There's a lot in here, it's a really thick 'zine. The computer layouts sometimes make it a little fuzzy (or is that the scanning at the printing factory?), but it's still legible. The illustrations (lots of band photos, etc.) add interest. There are a number of good interviews: Damnation (some depth, no revelations, but not as shallow as I've seen them be), Catharsis (one of the better and more challenging Catharsis interviews around), Trial (one of today's most articulate straight edge bands

here, as usual), Indecision (lengthy enough that they eventually have to start

giving useful answers), Ensign (same as the Indecision interview, actually), the guy from Trustkill (it's interesting to see a label guy speak for himself), Bloodlet (they never have anything interesting to say...), Ascension (fun guys, but the silly interview doesn't have much to offer), and Earth Crisis, Downset, and V.O.D.(there's not much to say about these interviews). The articles, which are lengthy, well written, and passionate, deal with such topics as the television anesthetic, nutrition and the vegan diet, how drug use is counterrevolutionary, etc. There are also show reviews (featuring, in fact, an historic picture of Culture playing, with me standing confrontationally right in front of their singer... this was shortly before we got our silly conflict worked out), lots of really long record reviews, and some more personable writing from the editor. Like I said, there's a lot in here, and some of it is really worth reading. The politics and general attitude are right on, too, which is great to see. — b

Robin Staps, Oldauer Heuweg 29, 29313 Hambuehren, Germany

Inmate #1: This is pretty damn basic. Inmate consists of interviews and not much else; the bands featured are Plughole, Kindred, Ashlar, Lockdown, and Morning Again. This has some of the worst record reviews that I've ever read, with descriptions that are so brief and vague that they're hardly helpful at all. The show reviews are a little better (but only a little.) There is really nothing remarkable about this effort. Inmate(s), I know you can improve, but you're going to have to try harder than this. Come on! — j

Photocopied, half-size, 40 pages. No world price listed. Dirk, Rooterweg 15, 3680 Neeroeteren, Belgium

Inmate #2: This isn't a bad 'zine: they seem to care about what they write about (2 short columns, one on protesting animal testing and the other about hardcore fashion

rules and how they get in the way of scene unity), even of their topics aren't terribly original and they don't bring anything new to them. Still, all in all, it's nothing really special. It includes interviews with Stalker — be scared. Be very scared — who tell us, "If you're not into metal, you're not our friend, " Reveal, and Catharsis, which features Brian rambling on about hardcore fashion and his lack of it, religion, NCHC, and the prime minister of the USA. Average record reviews. Show reviews that are personal enough to be usually interesting. Scene report disguised as "News." Scene reports are so boring. Someone really needs to revamp the whole idea, because at this point they're just lists of bands with a sentence or two about them — as useless as really short record reviews. At any rate,

that's not *Inmate's* fault, but they certainly aren't helping. I didn't intend for this to sound so negative. These guys seem like their hearts are in the right place.

Innocence Regained #1: This is one of those political punk 'zines with absolutely unreadable messy layouts. Well, it's not completely unreadable, I'm just being a jerk as usual... here's what I can make out: some advice on urban guerrilla warfare on the first page (that won me over right away!), followed by a brief but insightful criticism of voting as a (an ineffective) route towards change, a discussion of nudity, capitalism, objectification, and sex-

against too much. Well, go for it, Pat! Don't just make a religion out of your discontent — DO something about it! We'll all be behind you, when you decide to start concentrating on real life stuff and leave the fucking Simpsons and other television shit behind you. You know the network psychologists designed that shit to get people like us who hate everything to still watch television, don't you? Anyway — there are some decent 'zine reviews, record reviews that are about as good as three-sentence reviews can get (that is, decent), and some columns which stand head and shoulders above the columns in most 'zines these days (in one, the writer speaks out on political grounds against a certain straight edge band's endorsement of Nike... that's the sort of thing Patrick shouldn't be afraid of doing). The interviews, excellent as always, are with Ensign (not a bad interview, Patrick starts it off by asking some questions about sex... and pardon me for being a fucking jerk, but maybe he should have asked them some questions about the relationship between sexism, homophobia, and ignorance, since the last time I saw Ensign their drummer was screaming "you fucking faggot bitch! faggot cunt bitch!" at somebody he wanted to fight), Spazz (hilarious, due to Patrick's hilariously offbeat questions), Converge, and the guy who does the 'zine Sound Views. Finally, the 'zine ends with an article in which Patrick discusses the implications of the way the word "pussy" is used in slang — it's strange, because he demonstrates quite a bit of sociological insight and consciousness in this piece, but still writes it in a way that is insensitive enough that it made Nadia want to vomit when she read the pull quote. So from the beginning to the end of this 'zine, I'm torn between different feelings and reactions. Hmm. — b *P.O. Box 1010, Village Station, New York, NY 10014–1010*

Disturbing the Peace #5: This is much more "punk"-oriented than most of the 'zines reviewed here. That shouldn't put any of you off, though, no matter what your tastes might be, because this is an excellent, highly intelligent magazine. The editor is exceptionally well-spoken, and not afraid of starting trouble by speaking his mind (as the spicy letters section indicates), which immediately endeared him to me, of course. Other highlights include an interesting and educational column about the sex industry (first-hand experience), a reprint of the old MRR Amebix interview (they beat us to it, but we don't care), and articles by the editor on such subjects as the nonsensical claim some punks make to being "apolitical." Also present are a good number of reviews (ranging from excellent to mediocre), a couple good interviews (the Newtown Neurotics and the silly Charles Bronson), and various other entertaining tidbits (a "gossip column, " for example). They apparently spread this 'zine for free (postage donations, of course), so I'd say their hearts are in the right place as much as their brains are. — b

Stuart Schrader, 9 Fenwick Road, Whippany, NJ 07981

Drops in the Ocean #2: Editor Roger gave this to me when we stayed with him in Europe — I remember talking to him for a long time about how he had been living fairly comfortably on the Dutch welfare system for a while, concentrating his energy on doing various creative things. This 'zine has a very personal feel, but that doesn't prevent it from being useful to anyone who has interests in common with Roger. The quality of the photos (everyone from Rorschach to Swing Kids to Portishead) is absolutely perfect — in fact, the layout in general is gorgeous. The interviews (with Acme and Man Is the Bastard) are exhaustive, touching on everything you could want to know about these bands — it's also significant that he chose to interview two bands that are both interesting and hard to track down: that makes these inter

views particularly interesting. Not much else here, except for some scraps of (what I find to be) second rate poetry. — b

Roger NBH, Ie Jacob v. Campenstr 3, 1072 BB Amsterdam, Holland _Eventide #3:_ What Eventide needs to do is to tighten up and get focused. They obviously have the energy they need — this 'zine is really fucking thick and has a lot in it, especially for such a newcomer publication. But I don't get the feeling that they are sure what they are trying to accomplish besides just doing a 'zine. There are fucking twenty one interviews in here, from Morning Again to Rainer Maria, but they are all pretty superficial.There are a bunch of columns at the beginning, but they suffer from a common column virus: most of them are wandering and poorly written, and they seem to only have been included because MRR set the standard for 'zines to have columns.

There are a fucking lot of reviews, but they aren't really lengthy or useful either. There is a LOT of fucking advertising, and that's never easy on my delicate, overpoliticized eyes. If the makers of this 'zine got together, decided upon a unique goal for their magazine, went after it with all the energy they are obviously already using, and got rid of all the dead weight, they could do great things. I hope they do. In the meantime,

since this is free in the NJ/NY area, it should provide some brief reading to residents there. — b

225 Riveredge Road, Tinton Falls, NJ 07724

Fueled By Hate #1: Basically, what this 'zine has to offer is a few good reviews and two fairly lengthy interviews. The interviews are with Earthmover and Catharsis, and they both go into some depth about what the band cares about, what their goals and approach and motives are, why they chose certain cover art, etc.; if you're interested in either of these bands, this might be a good 'zine to pick up. There are only a few reviews in the reviews section, but each is as long as any Inside Front review (i.e. *longer* than any HeartattaCk or MRR review...), and they're all usefully descriptive, too. Other than those features, there's some writing about various problems within the hardcore scene, which is well-reasoned, if limited in its relevance. Drawbacks? Well, it's a really brief read, the layout and printing are far from beautiful, spelling errors abound, and this general aura of amateurish confusion often makes Fueled By Hate seem to have less to offer than it does. But the editor's sincerity and good intentions do come across, and so we can expect good things from future issues. — b *Steve Titus, 77 Zittel Street, Buffalo, NY 14210*

Funtime #7: I can struggle through some written German, but most of this looks really unfamiliar to me; it must be Swedish. Interviews with Ten Foot Pole, Unsure, Voodoo Glow Skulls, SNFU and others, with coverage mostly on bands of the "pop-punk" variety. The photos are mostly either too light or too dark, and most of the layout is pretty basic. For a seventh issue, this should look a lot better than it does. Funtime isn't anything to get excited about, even if you can read Swedish (or whatever language this was written •n!) — j

Full-size, photocopied, 52 pages. No price given. Stijn Vorbinnen, Boukopleinbaan 30, B-3110 Wezemaal. What fucking country is this from? Note: The above 'zine is obviously in Flemish. It must be from Belgium. -Gloria C.

Hanging Like A Hex #8: This 'zine improves with each issue, and although there are still some aspects of Hanging Like A Hex that could stand improvement (less typos, for one thing), #8 is a pretty satisfying read. Editor Ryan Canavan shows an affinity for AmRep/Relapse-style noisiness with his interviews of Today Is The Day and Unsane, while still keeping his feet in the

[Image not archived]

ism (an excellent piece, really), instructions on "altering" (vandalizing, those law-abiding scum would call it) corporate billboard advertisements (excellent again!), a rant about Michael Jordan's social position as an idol and how little he or anyone deserves that status, and various other articles of similar import. Graffiti writing comes up off and on from the beginning to the end, too. Really, I shouldn't have complained about the layout, there's some great stuff in here. A better layout (or even an equally messy one with more personality and aesthetic direction) would make this much more accessible, and easier to take seriously, but check this out regardless if you want a little

interesting reading. — b *P.O. Box 13274, Chicago, IL 60613* _International Straight Edge Bulletin #22;_

This 'zine is significant because, more than any other, it brings together people from all different cultures and nations who share an interest in hardcore punk — both the music and the general approach to life that comes with it. Interviews include the anarchist skinhead group R.A.S.H. (who are effectively confronted about the supposed difference between excessive footballteam loyalty and nationalism), Sight For Sore Eyes (Brazilian hardcore), and Meanstream (Bulgarian hardcore — when asked about gay rights in his country, the interviewee answers "there haven't been any gay [rights] demonstrations until now, but they have bars and stuff" — !). We also get hardcore news ("sdene reports") from Spain, Peru, the Philippines, two from Malaysia, Panama, the U.K., Croatia, the Czech republic, and Uruguay, some brief reviews (of a variety of international records and 'zines, of course), and various scraps of writing about hardcore punk from people around the globe. — b *Y. Boisleve, BP 7523, 35 075 Pennes cedex 3, France*

Interpol Times #11: This is a little bit hardcore, a little bit punk. Content-wise, the line-up consists of interviews with Clusterbombunit, Eversor, Hot Water Music, Ignite, One Eye Open, Necrosis (not Neurosis) and a special talk with a hardliner. Hmm. Layout is mostly cut-and- paste on off-white copy paper, the pictures are decent, the record reviews are sloppy (but get their point across,) and the transcription/ writing is of varied quality. The editor injects too many comments into the interviews and other writings; they're distracting, and only occasionally funny or otherwise meaningful. The hardliner interview is ridiculous: "Homosexual sex basically is a form of spitting in the face of Nature by using body parts that were intended for very specific purposes in wholly unnatural acts that defy Nature's logic and intent." If that's true, then how come animals have same-sex relations in the wild? Interpol Times is a tolerable effort nonetheless, even if #11 should look and read better than it does. — j

Full-size, photocopied, 60-odd pages. $3.00 to Dennis P Merklinghaus, Auf Dem Stefansberg 58, 53340 Meckenheim, Germany

La lune noire #2:1 do not read French. Like our curmudgeonly editor, I often wish that I had more languages under my belt. If I did read French, this 'zine would *still* be difficult to read because of the layout, which often consists of

strips of paper with text typed on them pasted over messy collages of photos and ads at odd angles. What I would read would be an interview with Stormcore, who manage to talk a lot about some pretty basic, simple questions (What's your line-up? Why'd you sign to Mad Mob? What do you think of the French scene?), although they don't seem to say anything brilliant; and some short interviews (that often use the same questions, when appro-

priate) with Pin Drop Records, Good Life Recordings, Hang-Up, Striving for Togetherness Records, Out for Blood, and Mass Murderers. The reviews are mostly brief and vague. Not useful at all: a lot of "sounds like mixed with "-style descriptions. (Face-down, for example, apparently skillfully ally the intensity of "I'emo" to the efficiency

of metal, whatever that means.) The most (potentially) interesting interview was with Mass Murderers, who discuss (tragically briefly) Basque issues, 77 versus 80s punk, and whether they're descended from either, and how singing in French affects the way a band is received in hardcore on a local and international level. They also are asked to define words like anarchy, pornography, and hardcore. I just wish they had some better questions to work with, and spoke more at length, more thoroughly, because they seem like they *might* have something interesting to say... — @ *Stephane Petit, 11, rue Vauvert, 49100 Angers, France*

Never Again #1: For a first issue, of a 'zine in English from Bulgaria, for that matter, it's amazing just how polished and relevant to my life this is. The cover reads "state resistance — by any means necessary"... fair enough! The interview with Laura of "Synthesis, " a 'zine from the U.K., is excellent — Laura comes across as extremely articulate, and has some really powerful stuff, to say, especially when she challenges the interviewer on his preconceptions about feminism. The other interviews include Unison from Belgrade (who assert that "with all the killings in ex-Yugoslavia and Afghanistan it is rather ignorant to sing about killing humans to save animals"), Jan from "Selfworth" 'zine (who has always seemed like a really mild fellow in my correspondence with him, but proclaims here that "even though sometimes the actions of "terrorists" seem real really violent, it is still nothing compared to the violence of this system!" fuck yeah!), a tattoo artist, the Bulgarian band Meanstream, and the Belgian distributor Empower. The articles (about anti-immigrant xenophobia in France, which is a real problem, and the roots of the oppression of women in capitalism) were well written and informative. Some nice long reviews, useful contact addresses, and scene reports (mostly from eastern Europe) round this out to make it a great first issue and a 'zine that I'd love to see read on this side of the Atlantic. — b *Jordan, Schipchehsky Prohod Str. #7-13, BL228A, AP29, Sofia 1111, Bulgaria*

> _No Barcodes Necessary #5:_ Probably the best hardcore 'zine to come out of England in quite a little while, unless I've missed something. Nearly every requisite of a quality 'zine is here: legible but organic layout (you can tell the pages have actually been touched by human hands, unlike many prefabricated computer layouts these days), a layout in which the editor makes his

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(laudable) goals clear, in-depth interviews (Hellkrusher, Mainstrike, Dropdead, Unborn — who turn out to be alqt more intelligent than I had expected, since they had been described to me as being nearly Hardline, and photographer Andy Thompson — good work including a non-band interview!), a great many detailed reviews of 'zines and records (although I can't imagine why they chose to review the latest Offspring record), and some social political commentary about the separation of the warring communities in Northern Ireland. There's plenty of great writing, ideas, and information here, it's a first rate magazine and I hope that people will start reading it more

in the U.S.A. The only thing I can think of that could improve is the columns section — they don't run quite as deep or seem quite as relevant as the rest of No Barcodes. — b

Mel Hughes, 83 Glebe Park, Chanterhill, Enniskillen, BT74 4DB, Northern Ireland
_Nowhere Fast #4:_1 found this 'zine to be a quick, entertaining read. It is full of short pieces that include whimsical, imaginative stories; well-written articles on topics such as freeganism (guess they beat us to the punch...), capitalism and the politics of employment, child abuse, and cultural attitudes toward death; an ode to an ashtray; and a diary that traces the short-lived and tragic career of Last in Line, the writer's erstwhile band. I was absolutely enchanted by "Corn." The juxtaposition of analysis and charm throughout the 'zine can be a little jarring, but not in a negative way: it is always fresh (yes, young, but never immature) and intelligent. I like having the more analytical pieces (which are original and not dry in the first place) separated by the writer's tales of childhood ambitions or flying after doughnut trucks. The illustrations are hand-drawn and often remind me of illustrations for children's books, and I'm not referring to Disney cartoon characters, either. I like the feeling of reading a children's book that is more than just that... —

@*Jen, P.O. Box 235, Jericho, VT 05465*
Only a Phase #2: This is quite attractive, well-put together, and not devoid of substance either. The editor is straightforward and tells us where he's coming from (in a piece against religion, for example), and I appreciate that. The interviews with Reveal, Born From Pain, and Pale are fairly detailed, though the bands don't really bring up any unusual topics (subjects include older bands they were in, bands they like, choice of record label, etc.). In the review of Pale's record, the editor mentions that he doesn't really understand their lyrics — maybe he should have pushed them harder to explain them in the interview. The review section concentrates entirely on European hardcore, which is great, an American reader (or even a reader from a different part of Europe) can read about a lot of bands here that she might not otherwise hear about. There's also a Catharsis interview in here, and the editor played a funny joke on me with it — he said that everyone he interviewed had to draw a picture of themselves for their interview, but he only did it to us, so there's a funny little sketch in there, and a photo of me in the table of contents (filthy, half-bearded, lost somewhere in Europe, sitting in this guy's car) trying to do the sketch...it reads: "Catharsis — drawing a worst case scenario?" — b

Karsten C. Ronnenberg, Pehmannstrasse 10, D-52134 Herzogenrath, Germany
Ou~~tlet #1:~~ The most interesting and exciting thing about this 'zine is that it's bilingual: many of the contents are printed in both English and Italian. This goes for the interviews, which include Mike from Phyte records (nothing really exciting), Grievance from Rome, and Catharsis. Also included are a number of record reviews, a short review of a hardcore festival in eastern Germany, and some writing here and there about things like sexism and the objectification of women. The printing is nearly unreadable in some places, which is a drawback, although the Italian parts are

clearer. I really like that this 'zine is accessible to people from two different language backgrounds,

and that it is created by a collective rather than just one dominating editor; but I would ask that they work to improve the layout and writing. — b *Luca Fontaneto, Via Muratori 95/b, 28060 Lumellogno (NO) Italy* Paperweight #1: Promising, but not entirely polished. Some of the interviews (Civ, Getup Kids) hold zero interest for me, but others (Trial, Voorhees, Devoid of Faith) are good choices. Some of the columns are well-done (Spencer Ackerman appears, and his friend Jesse Cannon, who brings up a number of interesting questions), while others are less thrilling. For the review section they picked a few records and wrote extremely lengthy reviews of them, and in all the words about each one they couldn't help but provide some useful information; so, good work there, I hope other small 'zines fol-

sumerism, and without the revenue from shirts bands might have to find more *dangerous* ways to finance their tours... punk rock!), and the column by Dennis (from Refused) also addressed hardcore fashion — enough about fucking fashion already!! That's the death of every would-be "revolutionary" youth culture right there, is getting caught up in caring about clothes and appearances. Fuck that. But the 'zine ends on a really exciting note — the editor dares to actually tell a story about one of his sexual experiences and how it relates to the rest of his life. If only more 'zine writers had the guts to talk about important, personal issues like this — aren't we grown up enough to be honest about sex and its important role in our lives yet? — b

P.O. Box 14228, Santa Barbara, CA 9310 7

~~XPoint of ViewX #?:~~ If at first the sheer number of X's in this 'zine turns you away, keep struggling ahead, because there are some decent writings to be had in here. This begins with several columns that discuss the "'68 revolution, " as they call it, and acknowledge that the hippies actually did accomplish something through protest; the overall message is to "look beyond the stereotypes, " a noble sentiment. Also included are interviews with Integrity, Refused, Rain Still Falls, Burning Defeat, an article about the horrible working conditions that multinational corporations inflict in the name of profit, and a piece about the effects of alcohol. The Refused interview is well-done and interesting, and Dwid says a few provocative things in the Integrity interview, too. — j "

Photocopied, half-size, about 50 pages. Where's the price? Contact Chris Paracchini, Via Della Salina 3, 6600 Muralto, Switzerland

Ravena #4: Three cheers to Ben Quirk for having the courage to put out a highly personal 'zine that is a pure, unfiltered expression of all things emotional. There will undoubtedly be more than a few people in the hardcore scene who regard Ravenn as nothing but drivel, but I happen to have a soft spot in my otherwise hardened heart for this sort of thing. #4 is filled with

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raw, "go-for-the-throat" poetry that others might label as a mere expression of "teenage angst, " but what makes this connect for me is the attitude and honesty

that almost every page manages to convey. This issue isn't just limited to poetry; it also contains an interview with animal activist Tony Wong, an immensely readable (although brief) article on gender and sexuality, and a neat little rant about the creative process, as well as a girl's brutal recollec-

tion of rape. The pictures of Kim Gordon and Thurston Moore were a nice addition (I can't help but hear the outro to "Disappearer" every time I come across them,) and Ben's artwork makes a good complement to the writings. Only two of the poems stuck in my craw: "Dookie" and "Midnight Tinkle

should have gotten the axe. Edit, edit! -j

Half-size; 32 photocopied pages. $1.00 to Ben Quirk, 1920–101 Eyrie Court, Raleigh, NC, 27606

/Reflect/#1: This is an excellent first issue of a 'zine that all Inside Front readers should be aware of. The writing is significantly more articulate and intelligent than you can find in almost any other 'zine in the hardcore genre, and makes for interesting and provoking reading. The editor is refreshingly clear and well-spoken about his intentions, and brings these qualities to the features he writes. These include a lengthy discussion of the implications of Christianity in hardcore, a rave review of a Converge show, and individual reviews long enough to be free-standing articles. I will say that his writing'style is based upon the traditional "college essay" approach, which some of you may find a little distancing (this issue includes an actual "college essay" about two movie adaptations of an old novel), and his reviews come off a little too much like potential press-kit marketing tools, but this stuff is still vastly superior to the writing in most similar 'zines. There's also a negligible scene report from Germany, a couple dashes of competent poetic prose, and three interviews: Fall Silent (who speak critically about militant straight edge and Victory records), Damnation (who seem to be interested in very little besides discussing the next business moves their band will make), and Snapcase (who speak about why they are breaking up). The last of those bands don't come across so much as the would-be rock stars that one might expect — instead, I felt sort of bad for them here, in the parts of the interview where it becomes clear that their lack of a real critique of their place in the capitalist-marketing machine of fake "hardcore" business has brought them to a position where there is nothing meaningful they can do but quit.

Oh well, quit away, Snapcase, it's all you

> can do for hardcore punk at this point anyway... let's hope others learn from your mistakes and emphasize their criticism of mainstream life and economics over the mere marketability of their band. — b

P.O. Box 988, Redmond, WA 98073–0988

> _Reflections #9:_ This comes across to me as one of those long-running, semiglossy, seamlessly executed hardcore 'zines that lack the extra something in the personality/originality department that makes a zine really

> special... there are probably at least fifteen of these *almost-good* hardcore zines, these younger brothers of Second Nature 'zine, floating about. In this one we find interviews with 97a (in which their singer categorically refuses to reveal his age, for some reason), By the Grace of God (which starts off with the editor sort of fawning upon Rob Pennington, but goes somewhat deeper), Young

the end. There's a LOT here. The magazine starts off with a little world news, the sort of thing that most of us supposedly politically aware hardcore kids know very little about (arms exports from the U.S. to the third world, for example), goes on through a little "hardcore scene" report (that is, anything in the hardcore scene that editor Dave sees fit to report), and then enters the letters section, one of the most important parts of Retro, in which a great number of pages is dedicated to a total of 14 letters and responses on a wide range of topics. Deeper into the 'zine we find a breathtakingly researched discussion of the connections between big business profits and the armed services, a discussion of same-sex rape (an important, and almost never mentioned, issue), an attack on the title of Earth Crisis' last full length (which is far too intelligent for said band to ever even make sense out of), a piece about a survivor of war-torn Bosnia that the editor knows, and an article by my hero, the young Spencer Ackerman, about the latest problems with police getting out of hand in Brooklyn. Damn it, I'm trying, but there's more here than I can possibly describe. The interviews (with the editor of Bamboo Girl 'zine, a proud and refreshing female voice in a sea of male 'zine writers and interviewees, and with the worthy Trial) are extremely in-depth and miss nothing: they practically make this issue worthwhile | by themselves. Some of the more accessible writing is to be found in a section in the middle, where Dave has compiled a bunch of little articles touching on all sorts of different things (even including a little poem about how much he hates poetry).

I Approaching the end of these hUndred- I some pages, we find the reviews: in these Dave has picked a few books, 'zines, and

records, and written a lengthy piece about each. My feelings about this 'zine? I'm not sure... Retrogression is written with the intelligence and informed awareness that I wish every 'zine had, but something about it is tiresome for me, too: the political articles are too dry to attract the attention of people not already involved in politics, the general approach to the 'zine seems somehow humorless (precise, but not exactly impassioned — are those things compatible, anyway?), and sometimes Dave's comments are just plain uncalled for (his vkntfdiiypersonal attack on Jen Angel for what seems to be a problem much better worked out privately) or off base (his suspicion that an issue of Profane Existence with a woman on the cover will sell better than one with a man... fucking come on!!). So while this is a magazine to be reckoned with, there's definitely room for improvement — especially after the

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Profane Existence book and similar projects have shown us how much *fun* political stuff can be. — b

P.O. Box 815, Norton, MA 02766

The Right.Path #1: Where to begin ... this is the worst-looking 'zine that I've ever laid eyes upon, for starters. Hand-drawn, retarded-looking title; horrible photos; no binding (it's stapled at the edges); little concern for presentation, etc. Hatebreed and Strong Intention are both featured on the cover, but only S. I. is interviewed here. At the very least, they should have given these out for free. I'll say this: if you ever want to get respect, Right Path, you have to work harder at putting out something of quality! Ugh. — j *Full-size, photocopied, about 16 pages. A whole dollar to Josh Engineer, 49 Wilcox St., Rochester, NY. 14607–3832*

Scream #6: Because of the atrocious public education system in the U.S., I can't really read this French-language hardcore punk 'zine, but it looks good enough that I can confidently recommend it to you Francophile punk kids. The layout is excellent, it retains the earthiness of messy D.I.Y. layouts but adds a real precision that, together, make this a prime example of the punk aesthetic. Ire, one of the hardcore bands I am most excited about right now, is interviewed, and though I can't read their French answers they are lengthy and appear far from petty or empty. The Devoid of Faith interview is in English, and the answers are shorter and less meaty, though not embarrassing or useless by any means. At the end of the 'zine, as well, is a much shorter interview with France's Obvious Waste. In addition to the interviews there is a short review section (the section is short, the reviews themselves are not), three columns by Frenchmen, and various political snippets that help to give _Scream_ an anti-American, anti-authoritarian atmosphere. — b

Luc Ardilouze, 2 Bd Rempart-Lachepaillet, 64100 Bayonne, France

Second Nature #6: Very pretty, very professionally laid out, and obviously a lot of advertising was solicited for this. There's a little squabble in the letters section between

the nerdy singer of the Enkindels (this guy will do anything to get people to pay attention to him, and he sure comes off childish here as well, sounding like a spoiled kid on a playground taunting another kid, only less mature) and somebody else (who is a little more well-spoken and coherent). In his dual response the editor correctly names Trial as an example of a band that genuinely cares about the subjects they address, good for him to be perceptive. The photos in here look fucking gorgeous, if you care about that at all. The interviews aren't badly carried out, although Refused and Boy Sets Fire are really smart bands and could have provided more challenging discussion, and I'm not too interested in Mineral (yet another band that just cares about playing music and nothing else, apparently) or the Descendants (they haven't mattered in hardcore for a fucking decade and a half!). The Grade interview is nice and long, although it still doesn't answer my one question about this band — was "Believe" (with whom they supposedly did that first split CD, the only release of theirs that I've liked) a real band or not? There's a funny story about a kid's first experience

with prostitutes that kind of breaks up the more predictable 'zine stuff, thank god. Sean Ingram reviews a hardcore festival, and spends far too much time complaining, if you ask me. The 'zine and record reviews are comprehensive, they cover a lot of fucking territory — they don't go into much detail at all, but they do cover a lot of territory. Actually, that's unfair, there are a few lengthy record reviews. The 'zine ends with a Converge interview; singer Jake speaks well and clearly, but he doesn't really go into depth about the things I wanted to hear about from him: neither "political" stuff (which he convincingly explains can be better expressed by others) nor the content of his lyrics or their music. Sum-

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mary: Second Nature retains its crown as the "Time Magazine" of hardcore 'zines, and if you want to read about hardcore it will provide well for you... but on the other hand, there's always room for improvement, and here, it should be in the direction of more content, more challenging thinking. That's what is lacking if anything is. — b

PO. BOx 11543, Kansas City, MO 64138

Self-Defense #2: This little magazine is definitely the most punk-looking of the bunch; it's of the cut-and-paste, scribbled writing school, and it's even held together by a rubber band! Content-wise, Self-Defense includes a little bit of everything: personal writings, quotes, a punk primer r-eprinted from Fucktooth, definitions of Anarchism, reflections on the Midwest Underground

Media Symposium, and interviews with Karate, Boys Life, Free Verse, and Intact. The Karate interview should draw a chuckle out of you, and the Intact interview features some interesting thoughts about sXe, revolution, and whether moshing is a good thing or not. Send Marissa a dollar and some stamps and check this out for yourself. — j *Photocopied, half-zine, about 40 pages. Two stamps to Marissa D. Johnson, 135 N. Terrace, Wichita, KS. 67208*

Slave #1: This is a really exciting first issue, and although it is filled with little first issue flaws, it is clear that these are only temporary: we just might be witnessing the inception of a great fucking magazine. The details are all perfect: they've made an effort to use artwork and illustrations from the punk community (I hadn't really even thought deeply about how much we stifle our own creativity for relying on older art for our visuals until they pointed it out), they interview a local controversial artist who has more interesting things to say than any hardcore band, they make their intentions clear and explain the meaning of the 'zine's name (a comment on the lack of freedom we as individuals have to choose our own destinies in today's world) in the introduction, and over the music

' ~ review section they print this Dead

Kennedys quote: "music scenes ain't real life — they won't get rid of the bomb, won't eliminate rape or bring down banks." So the Slavesters have their heads on straight. Politics, of one kind or another (articles about air pollution and racism in their home state of North Carolina, reviews of books about the "war on drugs" and the oppression of the Palestinians, an interview with environmental activist punk kid Rick

Spencer, editorials on public education, television and advertising, and abortion rights) actually outweigh music (interviews with the much-deserving Kilara and the surprisingly eloquent Coalesce) as the main focus of the 'zine, while _Slave_ maintains the perspective of "young-musically-oriented-people-exploring-issues." That's pretty much the same thing Inside Front is trying to do, so we have to pat them on the back for that. Drawbacks? Well, a couple well-placed spelling errors obscure the writing here and there, and, for that matter, the writing sometimes obscures itself — particularly in the reviews, which are mediocre at best and become downright incoherent when the writers try to spice them up with a little ranting and raving about their favorite records. But if they work on the writing and maintain their focus, this will become a really important magazine for the hardcore community. — b *P.O. Box 10093, Greensboro, NO 27404*

Sliver #1: This is the slickest-looking "independent publication" that I've seen in quite some time. From the looks of it, Sliver must have been inspired by the free-form approach of Raygun, although this magazine is a bit more conventional overall. Editor Grail Mortillaro certainly knows his way around a computer (as nearly every page demonstrates,) but he should invest a little more time in proof-reading his articles and interviews. At first glance,

this magazine looks like it could hold its own on any city newsstand, but a closer look reveals a lot of typos, grammatical errors, and cluttered layouts that make for a challenging read. There is no differentiation between the questions and answers in the interviews, and the abundance of typos conflicts with this magazine's attempt to look professional. All in all, it's still a good read, even if the featured bands are mostly of the mainstream/alternative sort: the Deftones, Vision of Disorder, and (gulp) Rage Against the Machine are all interviewed. Grail also includes some more obscure bands, as well as better-than-av- erage interviews with By the Grace of God and Damnation a.d., an article on whether there should be a right to health care, and a fairly solid record review section. Although Sliver smacks of careerism on the whole, at least Grail is devoting time to his own publication, rather than selling his considerable talents to the likes of Spin and Rolling Stone (i.e. "the enemy.") — j *Full-size; 64 offset-printed pages. $2.00 to Grail Mortillaro, 27 Commercial St., Gloucester, MA. 01930*

Sober Pride #0.5: This isn't the first issue of Sober Pride, it's the "appetizer issue" of the 'zine. I don't see why this 'zine couldn't have held out a little longer and. included the contents of the "appetizer" in #1, but putting that aside, this features interviews with Ten Yard Fight and One Day Closer, fanzine reviews, video game reviews (that's a little different,) and an article on "the war on drugs" that endorses legalization. Tasty photo of a rotting corpse, too. The picture of Manowar on the back cover is good for a laugh, but does that justify paying foreign postage? — j

Full-size, offset/glossy paper, about 12 pages. No foreign price; is this free? Write to Ricki, Haupstrasse 14, CH-9556 Affeltrangen, Switzerland

Solid State Entity #2: A very quick read. Solid State Entity is done by the same people who do cries.of.the.many 'zine; this is a more sXe-oriented affair, and resembles

a newsletter more than it does a 'zine. Everything seems to be a page in length, even the interview with the now-deceased 108; there are articles about conscription in Norway, being vegan for life, a desire to see more feminine attributes in the world, and remaining drug free. The most interesting is "sexuality the deceiver, " where one of the editors (Aaron) expresses an anti-feminist position because he feels that feminism only masculinizes women in the end. The article sounds troubling at first, but it's pretty balanced and interesting overall. In sum, this is better than you'd expect. The layout is above-average and the pictures are excellent. Best of all, this is FREE. — j *Full-size, photocopied, 8 pages. Contact Aaron or Morten, P.O. Box 386, 5001 Bergen, Norway*

True Till Death #2: This is a different 'zine than the one of the same name reviewed below.This one is in French, and it took a fair bit of effort on the part of Gloria and I to make any progress through it, since she only knows scraps of French and I know less French than Negate knows English. Negate (see the demo reviews) are actually interviewed here, and I feel terrible having so much fun at their expense, since I get the impression that they have positive goals and take themselves very seriously. I do think that they should sing in French, since it's obviously a language they are better able to express themselves with, and there are plenty of people who can understand it. Also interviewed are Belgium's Family of Dog and Rennes' A Way of Life (nice long responses), All Out War, Blood For Blood, and Children (not so long responses), Drowning Room, Right For Life, Muddle, Moelo's, and Give a Chance(short interviews), Headway (always fascinating), one of the fellows behind Overcome records (Loic, a truly sincere and nice guy), and, yes, another Catharsis interview. That's a lot of interviews, and they're all translated into French. About the Catharsis interview — I have to admit, it's a little weird for me to review so many 'zines that have interviews with my own band in them, and I hope that it doesn't seem to anybody that I am trying to glorify the band I'm in... I'm just reviewing 'zines people send here. I also hope that nobody feels that Catharsis (since we have been interviewed in more 'zines reviewed in this issue than I can count on one hand) is monopolizing space better shared with other bands who need the opportunity to express themselves; I mean, I care about what our band is doing very much, and want the interviews to be there to make our goals clear, but I don't want our band to monopolize attention any more than I want fucking Victory bands to. Enough about that. The reviews here are excellent, they go into a lot of descriptive and emotional depth about each record and 'zine. Making my way through them, I can discern the writers talking about more than just hardcore music: they're talking about life, real life, in all its complexity, contradiction, and beauty. That's what I love about what I've seen of hardcore in France: it seems to be much more related to broader issues, it seems to be more of an artistic approach to wide-ranging questions, rather than just a self-

referential youth culture. Good for them! The rest of us should learn from that, so if you can read French, you would do very well to read this 'zine. — b

Tanguy Romey, 18 cite Montgolfier, 29200 Brest, France

State of Existence #3: I'll do my best to describe this, even though it's in German and (being a stupid American) I can only speak English. I did meet the guy responsible for this when I was in Europe, and he seemed smart and cool, so I imagine the writing in this magazine is too. It's pretty brief: three interviews (Brother's Keeper, a short one with Germany's Loxiran, and a Catharsis interview which has been translated into German so I can't even recognize my own answers), a Berlin scene report, five pages of paragraph-long record reviews, and a few articles (one of which seems to be about animal rights and the A.L.F., and another, which I wish I could read, is by Daisy Rooks and is entitled "Not Just Boys' Fun"). Legible layout and durable cardstock cover. — b

G.D. Kopina, Prescherstr. 35, 74405 Gaildorf, Germany

Straight Force #2: "Hey what's going on?!! I hope your excited about this issue, I sure fucking am." That quote pretty much captures Straight Force: youthful, energetic, and basic. #2 is a low-calorie, light-hearted read with a thrown-together look to it, although Straight Force lacks a cohesive personality in its writings. There's an article about punk's demise that is full of conflicting statements: "Punk's not a rebellion anymore. True punk, of course, still is..." What? The conclusion is that punk is dead and we should "let it go, " although the author never discusses what this might mean. Should we abandon the sound of older punk rock but keep its non-conformist ethics, or should we simply let the whole thing drop? Unfortunately, the author proposes nothing. Standard interviews with Follow Through, Good Riddance and the Planet Smashers are also included. I got more out of the Weird Al picture at the end than I did out of this zine's content. — j *Newsprint, full-size, 40 pages. No price listed. Chris Howe, 49 Crestdale Rd., Glastonbury, CT. 06033*

True 'Til Death Zine #1: This 'zine looks pretty humble — it doesn't have a binding, but is merely stapled together at the edges — and is a very quick read. Interview-wise, this features Day of Suffering, Spineless, Rudiger Mahn of Lifeforce Records, and Deformity. The interviews are brief and rather unengaging. The reviews (of both shows and records) basically cheerlead the H-8000 scene, with the record reviews being extremely short, mostly positive, and close to worthless. The photos aren't too good. On a positive note, I've seen worse, although this is decidedly mediocre. — j *Full-size, photocopied, 44 pages. No world price listed; try sending a couple bucks. Contact PJ, Betlehem 4, 8930 Menen, Belgium*

Truth Will Out #4: The 'zine starts with discussion of some important topics by the editor, which is good, but I can't say I agree

[Image not archived]

much with his ideas (pro-technology, for example — and the figures he uses here are very misleading), which seem to have been constructed by Ayn Rand, the queen

of self-righteous capitalist/psuedophilosphical drivel herself. But he seems like a smart guy, and he's thinking about the right things... I'm sure that he'll find the holes in her "arguments" pretty soon. Next, we find a fair bit of material on the Libertarian political party, including a book review and an interview; as with Rand, this stuff makes sense until you consider the selfish and materialistic assumptions on which it rests. Still, it's great to see these subjects put on the table for discussion in the all-too-closed world of hardcore, they're important ideas that we should all have thought about at least a bit. The Bane interview isn't too interesting, except for the singer's stories of older Boston hardcore shows (the

Cro-Mags, for example-!), and I think his claim that hardcore is merely "a style of music" opens the door wide fucking open for corporate music industry exploitation of our community, so fuck that. The In My Eyes interview is short enough to be completely useless, and the Converge tour diary really let me down — I expected a lot from this band, but in these diary entries, this particular members comes across like just another nerdy young boy, writing about cute girls and similar shit. The reviews are pretty good, though few in number — it's cool that he prints the band addresses as well as the record label addresses, and it's funny to me that he quotes a few lyrics at the end of each review, like Brian Hull used to do in the older Retrogression 'zines. — b *AJ McGuire, 34 John Street, Worcester, MA 01609*

Ugly Duckling #2: This 'zine is written (in very legible handwriting) rather than typed or laid out on a computer, which gives it a more organic and personable quality that almost every other 'zine in this review section lacks. Computers really have sapped creativity from our 'zines in terms of layouts and formats, and it's refreshing to see a departure from that trend. The content itself is really personable here, as well — this 'zine is filled with lists of things the editor finds annoying or exciting, ruminations on such things as idealism and growing up, diary entries, etc., and the interviews (a long, challenging one with two members of Catharsis, plus Spineless, Culture, and a commentator on the death penalty) seem less prefabricated than usual as well. There's also a little fact-page about abortion, a scene report from Poland, and little pictures of ducks. To sum up, "Ugly Duckling" is user friendly and full of youthful energy — it's a completely different species of 'zine from, say, Profane Existence, but it's interesting in its own right. — b

Lieve Goemaere, Zwaanhofweg 3, 8900 leper, Belgium

~~Value of Strength #4:~~ The cover photo of Converge is so dark that these eyes can barely make it out; ironically, the rest of this zine is filled with pages and pages of good photos at excellent resolution, in addition to interviews with Kindred, Invidia and Earth Crisis. The graphics and layout are well- done and effective, and editor Jean-Paul Frijns shows remarkable restraint for being a graphic arts student. The Earth Crisis interview is mostly positive, but manages to rile Karl nonetheless: "I don't know what you're trying to say, dude, " he remarks after Jean-Paul asks him if he would go to prison for his animal liberation beliefs. The Kindred and Invidia interviews are both

interesting, but each would have benefited from a little more attention to proofreading. This issue comes with a limited tape comp, featuring mostly vegan straight edge bands, and all proceeds will be donated to the Animal Justice Front. Its clear that both veganism and straight edge are important concerns for Jean-Paul, as issue #4 also includes an article by the South chapter of Holland Hardline and an article by a member of the Animal Justice Front. However, unlike some other near-hardliners, he seems tolerant of others' opinions. A good read. — j

Full-size, 42pages. Price not listed! I'm guessing $5.00 ppd. to Jean Paul Frijns, Kloosterstraat 53, 6369 AB simpelveld, Holland

War Crime #6: OK, the music stuff in here is really brief — a few brief reviews,

a brief interview with Depressor, a couple advertisements, and one band photo. The reason some might find it worthwhile to read this magazine is that 95% of it deals ' with politics. Typical left-wing activist politics, to be specific, such as anti-mahogany and Shell protests, human rights abuses of individuals involved with the Black Panthers and Food Not Bombs, etc. etc. Personally, I find a lot of this left-wing protest politics stuff to not really be very efficient as far as bringing about discernible change in our world; I think a lot of it suffers from being predictable and cliched to the point that people in mainstream society just blow it off without thinking about it, no matter how hard anti-Shell demonstrators clamor for their attention. But you may disagree, and if you do, here's a magazine for you. I found "Federal investigators and Your Rights" to be, to me, the most relevant and interesting of the articles. There's a new issue out now, which, when I looked at it before sending it off to someone else to review, looked much more interesting and effective than this one. — b *P.O. Box 2741, Tucson, AZ 85702* War Crime #7: If you're sick of the average 'zine format (band interviews, talk of "scene politics, " sXe writings, etc.,) then pick up War Crime. "Cerebral" is the key word here. There are no band interviews, the record reviews are kept to a bare minimum, and the overall approach reminds me strongly of Retrogression, although this is even more politically concentrated. The introduction ought to give you a feel for this thing: "This zine is dedicated to those who still remain locked in cages and bound by chains, to those who feel the constant lashing of the whip upon their back, and to those who have given their time, blood, and lives to end this injustice. Our day will come." Unfortunately, War Crime lacks noticeably in the graphics/photography department, but it's big on content: everything from an interview with Greg Jackson of the Black

Autonomy Collective, a history of the Sea Shepard (part 1), an Animal Liberation Front interview, an article on Mumia Abu-Jamal... there's a lot of reading here, basically. Very few ads, too. — j *Full-size, newsprint, about50pages. $2.00 to P.O. Box2741, Tucson, AZ. 85702* The Way It Is #1: This is a new 'zine, still rough at the edges, published with the express purpose of informing and glorifying the Detroit hardcore scene. There are interviews with Detroit bands Earthmover, Dogz of War, and Cold As Life, and then with bands that won't leave Detroit alone, like Catharsis, Facedown,

and, uh, No Redeeming Social Value. In addition to the interviews (which are pretty basic), there are some show reviews and a touching

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retrospective on Earthmover's old bassist, who has left Detroit for. NYC; the 'zine is at its best at moments like those, when it actually evokes the atmosphere of the community from which it originates. — *b*

P.O. Box 510103. Livonia. Ml 48151

We Ain't Got No Car #5: Personal 'zines are difficult to do well, although they may be easier to do at all than some other types of 'zines. *We Ain't Got No Car is* similar to zines like *Cometbus, * but fails to be as interesting. Part of writing well is knowing where to stop, understanding what is excessive and why, and both the stories included and the 'zine itself are just too long. Although the stories aren't fundamentally less interesting than the ones in the couple issues of* Cometbus *that I've seen, the writer's style is weaker and more disorganized. I don't mean this as a violently harsh criticism: while the 'zine probably won't change your life, it's entertaining, and the writer has some good ideas. Plus he mentions* Inside Front. — @ wagnc, P.O. Box 49657, Atlanta, GA 30359

XYodaX #5: This is a straight edge 'zine from the infamous H-8000 sector in Belgium. Issue *#5* opens with a piece about despising cannabis that's a response to a newsletter advocating marijuana legalization. The editors neglected to reprint the newsletter, so the reader is left with a one-sided debate of only marginal value. Interviews with Upright, Kindred, Hans of Sober Mind Records, XContritionX, Morning Again, and Spirit of Youth; the interviews are of varying depth and interest. The rest of #5 is filled with some writings about skate-related stuff, Star Wars references (of course), and a reprinted pamphlet on supporting the Nigerian Campaign for Independent Unionism. The layout is decent and the writing is fairly intelligent, but this is hardly essential. — j

Photocopied, half-size, 56 pages. No foreign price listed. Julilaan 114 or Poggelaan 25, 8500 Kortrijk, Belgium

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Intensity "Battered Soul" 7"

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personal lyrics. Third and last (?] pressing out now on white colored wax.

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snifter

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Bonds of Trust / Acursed ’Split’ T Bonds consists of members of Outlast and Nine and It ☒ sounds like If you had taken the best from the both bands and then blended It to a perfect mix of raw oldschool hardcore. Acursed play furlos Hardcore/Crust that leaves no one unscarred... P

Intensity “Wash off the Ilas” MT

Finally Intensity has recorded their long awaited new album. This time Its allot harder and more wel thought out than the previous. The 10 includes 2 bonus trixli The first WO copies comes on red vinyl Out In May. *J n

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CAPTION

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records^ ^

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please make m.o. payable to Frank Heath not These Trying Days. Thanks!

At the eleventh hour, we recieved Eric's missing disc, and obtained delinquent layout boy Paul F. Maul's top ten list. So, in a very small, nearly unreadable, and partly abridged form, we present them to you... with, as fucking usual, our humblest apologies.

Paul F. Maul's Top 9 and Worst 1: 1. Babe Gladwaller stories 2. M4 with green tip ammo 3. John Denver 4. Motorcycles 5. Gloek 19c with 33 round clip 6. Oregon coast 7. Punch Rothschild 8. "Armed Joy" pamphlet 9. cold Alaskan mountain runoff water 1. money.

^ — ^» *iihi» “^ “^in “punk_and ih r'^rr1 Most fT^ that are fondly remembered in hardcore had members that had an imposing physical presence; bands like Youth Ot Today (sure they were about. 5 , ut t e* way back when) Negati ve Approach. Uniform Choice, etc. and yet. most kids that listen to hardcore are turned ott by htttng J m not gonna speculate why 1l^ ‘s ^^^ 0

go into much detail to the benefits of lifting (people treat you belter). 1'11 just give you a few suggestions as to how to go about gem ng into hfting m a way that s compattble with ^Mo^oole who listen to hardcore don't like going to a gym (myself included, even though I do lift al a gym now) and being around a bunch of fake, lanning salon-aitending nanw brand loyal, smug pieces of shit. Bui if you il , .k about it. most people who listen to hardcore are just as shallow as the gutdos at the gym, they re just not as upfront about their fakeness. Ok. so you don't like going to a gym, but you want to get into lifting. Here's what you need:

space in your apartment roughly equal to a 6' by 6' square to store your-
weight bench

straight bar .

about 200 lbs. of metal weights (plastic take up too much space on the bar)
curling bar (one of those wavy shaped bars)

With just those fiv^XXo™ can" mike qufcn of difference in your physique. More important than any equipment, is the discipline needed to stick *"h ' r«di^^ week out. Even I slack off sometimes, gel sick, or am just fucking busy to work out as much as I should. The important thmg is to get back on the bench, even tf you fuck off for a couple days.

helns to have a same olan What 1 do. is work out different body groups on different days. r u

Dav One chest and biceps' 1 do five sets fiat bench press, five sets inclined bench (be sure to get a bench that you can adjust to incline), five sets of butterfly presses (that s when you ay on the bench, holding dumbbells in each hand with your arms extended straight above you. Slowly lower your arms to your ^^'^ ^ Then for my b ceps nlihmmh a sli«ht bend to 'em is good until your arms are level with the bench. Then bring them back up the same way. repeating the movement ten times or so.). Then tor my biceps ? to five-^ up. Try to keep your back straight while you're doing them. Sometimes 1 do concentration curls, but 1'11 cover that next tssue.

Day Two I do® file seis of tricep extensions «uh). and five set., ofskufl crushers, just to be clear, when 1 say five sets, I mean do the exercise five m

tenfimes (depending on how much weight you're using), stop, rest for a minute or two. then continue with five to ten more reps, etc. Triceps extensions are when > holding adumbbell Mng the dumbbelfforLrd to your chest, keeping your elbow held inward toward your side, then extend your arm back out away from you as be

Skull ®rushers are perfornted as follows: lay flat on your back, hold the curling bar straight up above you. Slowly lower the bar down to your forehead, without swu .

Then raise the tar back up to its starting position. Repeat five to ten times. For shoulders 1 do upright rows, and military presses. Upnght rows: take your straight bar a... -«Jt w ih your arms lowered at youl sides. Slowly raise the bar up to chest level. Lower and repeat, etc. If you don't know how to do a military press, then what the fuck are you reading lns.de **D^v** VX'rel^So^^^ legs on day four. I'm just telling you what I recommend for those of you who wanna go about lifting at home. It goes without saying

Sa yoX go. a !~ freedom at home. 1 don't think .he staff at Bally's woLld take too kindiy to you playing your new Gehenna CD, but at home, n s open ^ ^ [f y<>« wanL take all day to lift a. home, you can. Next issue I'll go into more detail about lifting, but this should tide you over tor now. It some of my descr.pttons were hard to follow, tough shit. You shouldn't need me to tell you how to lift any fuckin' way!

AND... SOME OF ERIC'S FORMERLY MISSING REVIEWS (as many as we could fit):

97A- Abandoned Future CDep: Many people like to put down bands like 97A for playing this type of music these days, usually for 'rehashing' the sound and style of mid- late 80's NYHC/straight edge bands, and I think that is partly true with some bands, but so what. It seems like everything has been done already anyway, so you might as well play stuff that you like and enjoy. What sets 97A apart for me. is that they cover new ground with their lyrics, even if their musical style is all too familiar. And really, the music is blazing fast and impressively raw enough to avoid sounding dated. The music seems to get better as the CD goes on. with the .singer's voice getting rawer and screechier?The recording quality seems to improve also, with a thicker guitar and drum sound. The only criticism 1 have of this CD is the singer's voice. He sounds too screechy for my tastes. Everything else is pretty enjoyable. All the songs are under three minutes, hell, half of 'em are under one minute! And in that short time they still manage to throw in some respectable leads and structure, with a fair amount ot changes.

Teamwork Records . P.O. box 4473, Wayne, NJ. 07474

Brother's Keeper- Self Fulfilling Prophecy CDep: Whoa boy. I wanted to go easy on this, but so help me God this is some of the worst fucking shit I've ever heard tor 'hardcore'. Mike Ski sounds like the excreted offspring of Edith Bunker and the singer of AC/DC. I don't know if he's trying to be funny singing like that. 1 hope so. The music is helmet-ish midtempo slop, with a lot of tweedle dee leads and wah-wah overkill. At times the drumming is clearly ott. which is inexcusable when you re playing such simple beats. Simple, badly written mosh-rock with hideous unlistenable vocals adds up to the worst music I've ever heard from Mike. Wake up man!

Trustfiindkill Rees.

Catafalque- Awakening CDep: Hilarious cover-art for this CD. with winged fairies frolicking amongst the leaves and mushrooms on the forest floor. Now. it that doesnt clue you into what we're dealing with here, then the text on the inside cover should: "At the dawn the Catafalque will ride, to carry all your souls- Never to return!" This is not hardcore kids who have taken to ripping off Slayer and Pantera. Nor is this exmetalheads who have shaved their hair and decided to play hiphoppin' metalcore. This is a band of young European longhairs who play a musically impressive cross between Carcass, Anacrusis, and Maiden. You've got the awesome riffs, drumming, and changes ofCarcass, with the cheesy leads, lyrics and solos of Maiden. Melodramatic as tuck . six minute songs. This is definitely real metal, without a shred of hardcore. 1 find it hilarious to listen to. and more than a little bit ot a guilty pleasure. I mean, the guitaiists and drummer fuckin' pound!

Good Life Recording, PO Box 114. 8500 Kortrijk, Belgium

Kindred/Culture split CD: I was surprised by how good Kindred sounds, they breathe a decent amount of personality and urgency into the Slayerish style most hardcore bands

play within these days. Good songwriting, good recording quality, and good musicianship, and a hard to quantify element of surprise. When 1 say good songwriting (which I refer to quite a bit) 1 mean: they take the same instruments notes that every other band on the planet has. and they arrange them into parts that I find interesting and capable of holding my interest through to the next change, even surprising me by changing into something unexpected, yet still powerful and attention-holding. How a band like Kindred can do this; when bands like Culture/ who probably have the same eeneral influences, and play in the same style as Kindred) cannot, is a bit harder to explain. Or maybe not. 1 don't like the singer's speaking voice, which he does too often anyway. And they drag out the same tempos long after they ve ceased to be interesting. I'm sure that when they're coming up with this crap, they're pissing all over themselves with how heavy it sounds, and how much their nerdy fans are gonna go off when then break into yet another chugging stomp-part, but I'm just not with it. Obviously someone at Inside Front HQ likes 'em. because they made it into last issue. But that someone isn't me. There is something missing, and I have neither the time nor the patience to wait for it to show up.

Good Life Recordings

Deformity- Misanthrope CDep: Now that's more like it. With all the mediocrity I've eotta hack through this issue. I'm psyched to find this fucking brutal axe murderer of a release slashing and attacking right .back at me. Everything that it takes to impress me and entertain me with heavy music is present here, almost. But I'll get to that in a minute. Awesome, razor sharp musicianship that is put to good use with so many catchy, infuriating surprises, I never quite know what's coming, and even if I can guess what part they're gonna break into. I don't really mind. Vocals alternate between high pitched screeching that usually annoys the fuck out of me. and deep cookie monster vocals. But instead of singing about cookies, or the letter J, their lyrics are about getting abducted by aliens and other evil stuff. Which brings up a question that been on my mind for a long. long. time. When bands sing about evil, satanic stuff, or even about how hard they are and how violent they feel, what are their intentions? Meaning, how do they expect me to feel? Are they trying to scare me with their evilness or toughness? Or am 1 supposed to feel evil and Satanic right along with Deicide, like we're gonna kick some ass together, for Satan? Same thing with gangster rap groups. Am 1 supposed to feel afraid of them and their claims of ruthlessness, or am I supposed to feel like a thus right along with them? So when Deformity sings about splitting their victims heads wide open and fucking their brains out. 1 feel a little confused. Other than that, this is top notch thrashmetal. I hope they put out a full length soon.

Good Life Recordings.

Reveal- Dissection Of Thought CDep: Generic name, but Reveal seems to be well on their way to achieving their own sound. Urgent sounding, with interesting slightly technical riffs, lots of changes, excellent bass lines, screechy, high pitched vocals in a European accent, Reveal seems to have some amount of charisma or something, intangible that makes me like them more than most of their peers. Or maybe I've just

had too much cider. Anyway, the lyrics seem to have some thought put into them, the recording is good, nice packaging. They just seem to succeed at putting their own personality into the overfilled genre of metallish hardcore. Very clean recording, you can hear all the instruments clearly. My only complaint is that they rely too heavily on slower tempos. The lyrics definitely are thought-provoking. 1 just can't get over what a great bass sound this CD has. It's perfect.

Good Life Recordings, see address elsewhere

Regression/ Breach split CD: The cover of this **CD** shows two planets crashing into each other, and that's appropriate for the unearthly heavy sound of Regression. An out of this world guitar sound, that is just so thick and heavy I cannot fucking believe what I'm hearing. Comparable to Entombed or Crowbar, the awesome guitar sound on Regression's songs could make even Pansy Division sound heavy and threatening. The rest of the music is similar to Entombed, but not as fast. Man these guys pound! Awesome vocals also, that totally fit with, and even compliment the brutally heavy, pounding music. The lyrics are about the extermination of the human race, and the end of the world, which is what I feel like doing when 1 hear this. They don't really pick up much speed on these three songs, but they don't need to. They just sound like on unstoppable juggernaut of fucking death and destruction, especially since I'm listening to this on headphones, typing up this review on my mother-in-law's computer. Thanks Lolly. The music doesn't sound that complex, but something is happening here that makes this blow away most of the competition. Breach on the other hand, who I am familiar with outside this recording and already like, disappoint me with a sub-par mix, shitty (for them) guitar sound, and no lyrics. I can tell that the material on this CD is well written and original, it's just a bad recording. Still, pick this up for the unbelievable destructive power of Regression. Wait, they manage to turn things around on their third and last song, which has slightly more audible vocals, and a slightly better mix.

Good Life Recordings

Morning Again- Martyr CD: This band has gotten better since they put out that shitty CDep on Conquer The World a couple years ago, but they still have some more distance to go to reach perfection. Great recording, packaging, competent playing, I can tell they're trying to be what they think is heavy. It's just that they're trying to be heavy in the same way so many other bands are, and even though it sounds good, this record still sounds like they just stole parts from many popular metal bands (Like who, you ask? Slayer and Metallica. Who the fuck did you think!) and slapped 'em together. Not to mention the singer's voice still sucks, sounding like a little kid who's trying to sound evil. No charisma, no real hooks, this CD is like driving a Chevy Cavalier. It'll get you where you need to go, but you won't really enjoy the ride there. On the back of this CD they say, "This is our lives. This is where we belong. Nobody outside the band can understand this and we don't expect them to." I can respect that, and agree with it. Because to me, they just sound like another straight edge band trying to sound evil and heavy, and not quite pulling it off. Keep trying though.

Good Life Recordings

Visual Discrimination- Serial Killers 7;** Who would've thought that my favorite late 80's California hardcore band (besides Excel) would return with what is probably their best release ever. Usually when bands get back together, its to capitalize on their established name, and pawn off some watered down, uninspired slop on kids too young to know better. I had wondered what Tim Singer and co. were up to after putting out that Prison CD a couple years ago, and this is the answer. This 7" is angrier and rawer than anything VD put out ten years ago, with a lot less mosh parts and less 'me and the crew are gonna beat yo' ass' type lyrical content, which 1 can get into, depending on who's saying it. This time around they sing about drunk drivers, child abuse, 'social injustice', etc. actually the song about child abuse ('Suffer') is a Prison song. Where Prison sounded a lot like a cross between Beowulf and Helmet, this is hearty meat and potatoes blazing fast thrashcore. Very little metal overtones, this has the same type of feel to it that Devoid Of Faith has. Sure, I could do without all the pictures of corpses, the Manson quote on the cover, but the music is so enjoyable to me that I can overlook these minor annoyances. Tim has a unique voice too, with a slight drawl to it. I wonder if he still wears the hairnet onstage.

Deep Six Records, (no address) VD Army. 4915 Cecelia St., Cudahy, Ca. 90201

Urbn Dk- Will E. Survive? Yes E. Will! 7"; A big surprise, this 7" was. Fast , raw, punk rock that sounds similar to Battalion Of Saints or maybe Code 13. 1 thought this would be terrible, but I kinda like it. Gruff vocals that go well with the powerful, simple, yet effective music. The lyrics touch on homelessness, crack usage, and gangs in thoughtful, yet clear terms. They never let on who E. is, so 1'11 just assume they're talking about me.

Will E. Survive Records PO Box 2065, Northlake IL 60164

Rumor 39 7;** If you're gonna play sloppy, don't give a fuck punk rock, and least put some passion into it. This record sounds like the band was bored out of their mind, ah fuck it. I just broke the record. This blows. Give it up, morons.

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with them, you must first share yourself, give yourself to your art and your life.

Human Beings-Look at the world around us; it is a world that we have created. We transformed the old world into this one-hut why ***this*** one? Is this the world we would have chosen, if we had considered in advance the question of what the best of all possible worlds might be? But before you despair, think-we created this world, it is we who make it up. Could we not make another world out of it, then, if we chose?

JOIN US. We have chosen to live our lives for ourselves, to make each day an adventure rather than a rituol-to pursue our dreams at any cost. Perhaps we can transform the world around us a little, in the same way that we transform our own lives. But this transforming, too, must be an adventure... for our revolution is, itself, the very joy we take in it. Write and offer your services if you dare.

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Issue #12 (1999)

Subtitle: "Leading Cause of Injury and Death to Young People"
Date: May 1999
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Introduction by tbe Editor: October 7, 1998

The final Refused show, in Harrisonburg, Virginia, on October 5th.

It's probably best I write about this while the stamp is still on my hand and the emotions still smoldering in my heart.A couple days ago I went to see Refused, probably my favorite band right now, play their final show in some godforsaken town in northern Virginia.

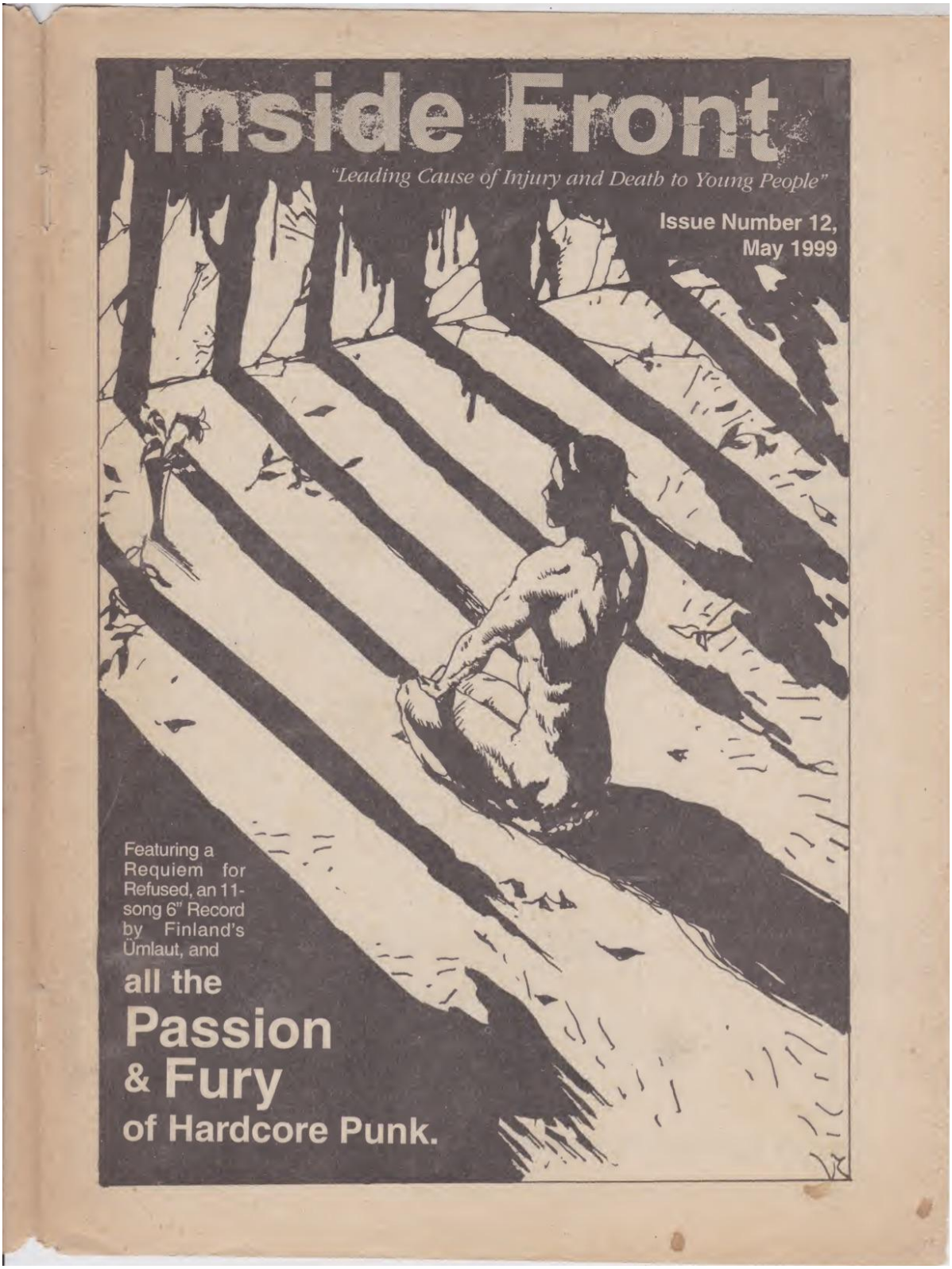
I saw Refused play for the first time in Belgium last May. It was my 24th birthday.The experience left me shocked and transformed in every way. For the months that had led up to that night, I had felt increasingly desperate. It was a quiet desperation, difficult to place, the kind of desperation a man feels when his heart yearns for new horizons but his mind cannot imagine where they could possibly lie. I wasn't sure what was missing; I couldn't even be sure, when it came down to it, that anything was missing at all, until that night.

I had enjoyed some of their recorded music in a polite, disinterested, way before then, and I expected to enjoy their show in the same way. So I was absolutely unprepared when they stepped onstage and hit me with everything I had been missing, everything I had been longing for all those months. All the passion, all the danger and daring and innovation that I had wanted and lacked in my life was there in front of me in their performance. Midway through it, when they played their anthem "Rather Be Dead" ("I'd rather be dead than alive by your oppression... *but Ed rather be alive")* I started crying.To see so many new possibilities I had failed to imagine, long-desired new vistas and horizons I couldn't even feel ready for or worthy of, was too much. I didn't stop for two hours afterwards.

In moments like that I feel that I am only truly experiencing life as deeply as it deserves when I have tears wet on my face. If we want to really live and feel, we need art, the most intense, unbridled art human beings can create, to keep our nerves raw, our wounds open, our hearts flush with blood. Without it we forget just how much is possible in this world, and we forget how much we want.

In the few months following that show, Refused fell apart. After eight years, the band members finally ceased to be able to agree about anything, and only a few shows into their U.S. tour they decided to break up after a couple more. The last one was to be in Harrisonburg, Virginia, and I drove up there with my friends to see it.

There are few enough beautiful things in this world already, and there is nothing harder than seeing one of them come to pieces. The atmosphere at the suburban house where the bands were playing that night was tense and melancholy. Members of Refused walked around, seemingly dazed, in varying degree of disbelief.Those of us


Inside Front
"Leading Cause of Injury and Death to Young People"
Issue Number 12,
May 1999
Featuring a Requiem for Refused, an 11-song 6" Record by Finland's Ümlaut, and
all the
Passion
& Fury
of Hardcore Punk.

who knew and cared about the band also felt disheartened; but we reassured ourselves that at least we would get to see them perform one more time, and perhaps this would hold us over until we found other bands or books or ideas to stimulate and inspire us.

When the police stopped by during the opening bands to harass kids about loitering and underage drinking, we didn't think much about it. It seemed like routine muscle-flexing on their part, and we all assumed that they would leave us alone to go on with our "rebellious" music as they usually do.

After the other bands were finished, Refused set up on the tiny stage in the cramped, sweaty basement. They took a few minutes to adjust every cymbal and guitar string, to make sure everything was perfect for their final show. By the time they were ready to begin, it was so crowded in front of the stage that we couldn't even move our feet.

They had just played two songs, and were only beginning to gather momentum, when the message came that the police were upstairs and had commanded us to end the show immediately. There was a great commotion as the kids who had organized the show tried to decide what to do; meanwhile, Refused conferred for an instant among themselves, and, realizing that this was their last chance to ever play a song, began "Rather Be Dead."

I was standing on the stage behind one guitar amplifier, and by the time they had reached the first verse of lyrics I could see the glow of flashlights swinging wildly in the back of the room.Three huge cops were fighting their way through the crowd. It took about a minute before they could shove through the front line of kids, pull the plugs out of the amplifiers, and silence the band. Refused hadn't even gotten to the part of the song where Dennis would have sang "...but I'd rather be alive."

Some of us were still shouting this, though, and the cops stood there on the stage, arms crossed with all the smug cruelty of ignorant power, staring us down from their position of macho authority, waiting until the shouts died down. Then they informed us that if we didn't leave immediately, we would all go to jail.The kid who lived in the house was given three $500 fines, and one cop said he was going to talk to the landlord the next day.

Maybe this was the point at which somebody should have done something to show that all our talk about resistance and revolution isn't just bullshit. It probably wouldn't have changed anything, but it would have shown that we meant business, and it would have set an

"From now on, do not consider my death as a frustration.

[Image not archived]

example for the younger kids at the show that hardcore really is about acting as well as talking. But no bne spoke up, nothing happened.There were three pigs in that room, and one hundred angry kids who had just been screaming that they'd rather be dead than live in submission to authority. But they all filed out of the room and drove home, with only a few insulting remarks muttered among them.

I was the last one remaining in the room. I tried to speak the head cop about what was happening, as one human being to another. He lectured me about the role of the

police in taking care of people and protecting them from each other, the same old fucking lies and conditioning, and when I tried to present my perspective he told me that if I didn't leave within five seconds I was going to jail. For what? "Obstruction of justice." He wasn't interested in or willing to meet me as an equal, as another person like himself. Like all cops, like all authority figures, his self-image depended upon how much fear and control he could exercise over me. At that point, I could have made a pointless but romantic gesture of individual defiance that would have caused even more problems, for us that night. Instead, I turned and walked away, hoping it was because I knew I could do better things free than I could in their hands, not because I was scared of what they could do to me.

Riding away from the house that night, I cried again, but not like I had at the first Refused show I had seen.There is nothing more humiliating than bowing to those who use force over you, of watching as they strip away the things that matter most to you, and being too terrified to do anything about it. Cops are no better or different than rapists, in that they think it is right for them to act on others with force and coercion. And I cried then not just because I had gotten a little tiny taste of the rape culture our society is built on, but because we were just heading home in defeat, in complete apathy, while somewhere someone really *was* getting raped by some motherfucker with the same attitude as that cop. Somewhere someone was getting beaten, somewhere beauty was being destroyed or silenced. All around us the world was being transformed into a polluted, ugly, violent hell, and we just sat there in the van, dazed, not even registering that anything had happened or was happening at all.

When we let the authorities take things like music and free assembly away from us without a fight, we demonstrate that our fear — no, our *inertia* — *is* stronger than our will to live. We've given up on controlling our own lives, on choosing and pursuing our destinies. That one night wouldn't have been such a big deal if we were already really fighting against the system of power and domination on other fronts, but most of us aren't. We're content to just sing our old impotent slogans of resistance, until they tell us to stop, as they did that night... and we do stop.

We settle for this because we've come to accept the police as features of our "natural" environment, just like advertising, government, taxes, war, pollution. But none of these things is natural; they are all elements of a world that our species has created, that *we* have created. They are far from inescapable; they are *unnecessary* tragedy, and we only deserve them as long as we accept them. It is inevitable that bands that make beautiful music will break up, and lovers will fall out of love, and people will grow old and die.This is all hard enough to deal with, without the needless stupidities and atrocities that we heap on ourselves as well.That is what really breaks my heart, all the senseless, meaningless slaughter and suffering and destruction that we accept dumbly; when we could, if we chose, if we *wanted* to, take control of our lives and make things better.

I didn't get myself arrested that night because I promised myself that I would go out into the world and somehow make up for what had happened, somehow balance

the scales. If there is nothing left you can do but make a symbolic, hopeless gesture against the forces that are destroying everything, make that gesture; but while you are capable of more substantial things, you should be prepared to swallow your pride and pursue them.

On the way home I asked Matt to pull over so we could all talk about what had happened. I told my friends how much it meant to me to see Refused play that night, how much! had needed it, and how crushed I was that they had been stopped once and for all by the same forces of ignorance and domination they had set out to fight. I told them that it was not enough for me to live in a world where things like that could happen without anyone even caring, that I would rather be dead myself than act like everything was cool. I begged them to swear that they wouldn't go silently back into the world after this had happened, that they would remember this night when something they wanted had been taken away.That, if they were going to go on living, they would not settle for living halfdead; that they would fight for what they wanted, and be courageous, and be beautiful.

And that goes for you, too. If you want this world to hold any music, any meaning for us at all, you'll have to be courageous, to be beautiful. That's what this magazine is about, and it's for you if that's what you want. Be creative, be alive, share every gift and every passion you have to offer, we all need all we can get... remember, Refused never got to play their last show for us.

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> *-Che Guevara, in a letter to his father, upon joining the Cuban liberation army-* **song."**

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>
> **Next-The CrimethInc. book. Another CrimethInc. compilation. Inside Front #13. Harbinger part 3. After all that, we'll probably disappear underground for good.**
>
> [Image not archived]
>
> Send contributions to the struggle in the form of well-hidden cash or money orders payable to "Brian D." Propaganda (pamphlets, CrimethInc. Worker Bulletins, posters, patches, stickers, etc.) is all free, of course.
>
> if you can't bear to detach yourself from your computer, read more at `http://crimethinc.cjb.net`... but we'd rather you g$_{0\ outs}$j$_{de\ and\ tr}$y experiencing real life for once. And if you're supposed to go to work today, remember:

Freedom is just a bomb threat away!

Introduction by the Editor

Ranting, raving? Emo? A call to arms?

CrimethInc. Marketing Pages

Have you noticed how common it's becoming now for labels to put out their own fake 'zines, shamelessly promoting their own bands? Real music criticism is disappearing, outmoded by this union of advertising and journalism, a match made in capitalist heaven. Is Inside Front merely the CrimethInc. equivalent of the Victory' Records "Megazine"? You be the judge.

Table of Contents

(oh yes, we are very content...)

Inside Front Dead Letter Office

In which amazingly stimulating discussions of violent dancing, old school vs. new school, and other relevant topics take place.

Feature: "Reclaim the Streets"

This is the story ofjust one little thing that my friends and I and some other people did (just last week, at this writing) to try to shake things up a bit in our town. It's not really a big deal, but it was something, and I think it's a good example of the kind of things we need to start doing to take our ideas out of the hardcore scene and start applying them to the rest of the world. All of us exist in more than one community, and if we want better lives, it won't be enough to just make punk rock better — we have to work on our cities, our neighborhoods, our streets too.

Feature: "My Life as an Earthworm"

Kafka might have written about a man turning into a bug, but it appears that Jason is *indeed an earthworm, and has been one all along.*

Feature: "Radical Puppets"

In 1994 I ordered a Grounwork t-shirt from Bloodlink Records. After about five months I sent a nice letter to Scott asking where my order was. I never got a reply. Several more letters were sent and I never got a single reply, more or less my shirt. Eventually the letters just turned to death threats. This went on for years. I would periodically send Scott threats–my shirt or his life. In the Fall of 1997 I got a phone call from Scott. He apologized profusely for his behavior and promised to send the delinquent order out right away. Several months, and many phone calls, later I still didn't have my shirt. In the Spring of 1998 I finally got a package from Scott-a Chokehold *t-shirt way too small to fit and a bunch of records I would never want to listen to. While Scott did put forth an honest effort to make amends it was too little too late. There is a similar story for this feature. Scott called my house several times promising me he would send the article off* real *soon. Well, big surprise, like the Groundwork shirt, the article never arrived.*

The Fifth Column *

Maximum Rock'N'Roll used to have a pretty good columns section, about a decade ago. Every writer had a theme of his/her own that was developed across the course of many issues; that was a columns section that made sense, and their writers took their columns seriously enough that they were worth reading. In today's 'zines, columns sections are usually a mishmash of disconnected ideas and poor writing, with no continuity at all. Hardcore columnists today tend to think of themselves as "personalities" rather than writers: they think it's enough to ramble about their opinions, tell a few disjointed anecdotes, and presto! they've made a composition that everyone should read. And even where this isn't the case, columns sections in political 'zines suffer from the same single-issue narrowness that plagues the American left in general: they contain information about a bunch of different, unrelated subjects, without any comprehensive analysis at all. Inside Front has a couple long-running writers going for it, but aside from them we have pretty much the same problem going with our columns, I'm afraid. Refuse to settle for it! Write us and tell us to fuck off! Or, better, offer y^{our} *ideas on how to do it better...*

Introduction to Situationism

We hate to turn academic and highbrow on you (I can see you rolling your eyes at me, stop that!), but unfortunately this is necessary if you 're going to be able to make any sense out of an academic, highbrow band like Refused. Besides, it can be kind of fun to be academic and highbrow sometimes, at least if you're a middle class brat.

Refused: The Realization and Suppression of Hardcore Punk

A retrospective on the band that captivated all of us here. It's a little absurd to spend so many pages on one band, but this gave me the chance to discuss a lot of issues I'd wanted to address anyway... hope you guys can get something out of this.

Self Conviction/Point of No Return Interview

An interview with members of two important Brazilian hardcore bands. I think this is fucking awesome, it was great for me to read a third world perspective on hardcore imperialism, the EZLN, and similar issues. If you don't read this interview because you haven't heard of these bands, you're missing out on a lot of stuff that could broaden your perspectives and increase your awareness.

Umlaut Interview

A reprint of their famous interview in M.R.R., plus some follow-up questions of our own.

Scene Reports

In which we try to breathe new life into an old, cliched tradition.

Reviews

Yes, records, demos, CDs, 'zines, even books, all things hardcore and consumable.

Advertising Ghetto

Inside Front Dead Letter Office

Every issue, something (or many things) goes drastically wrong here, and this issue was no ex- ception.This time, the worst one was the notorious Black Bag incident.We spent two months together last summer traveling Europe, and at the end of that time, I parted from my friends to head south for some train-scamming and street-sleeping. I entrusted them with my Black Bag, which contained all the records I had been given for review, all the 'zines, all the books I had found in obscure corners of Sweden, all the gifts my dozens of new friends had given me to remember them by. In a matter of a couple hours it was gone, stolen easily from them by some petty thief or C.I.A. agent.

One of the things in that Bag was a letter given to me by a German hardcore kid I met, a neurobiologist interested in Krsna-"consciousness." It was a lengthy consideration of the concept of democracy and whether it was even possible in Western nations at this point. It was a really interesting letter and I'm furious that it's gone. I'd wanted to write something of my own in response to it, too, contrasting the "American politics" notion of democracy (the majority gets to dominate the minority, the two are posed as opponents) to the radical democracy that we have evolved in the punk circles I travel in (we try to come to a consensus that satisfies everyone's needs, we regard each other as comrades rather than enemies).Alas, all is lost with the letter and the other contents of the Black Bag now.This is just to serve as an apology to my friend for taking the trouble to write that letter, only to see it disappear into the black hole of CrimethInc. disaster.

-the editor

Dear Inside Front,

Hello, Brian. This concerns your review of Gehenna's CD "The War of the Sons...", specifically the description of a show you say you witnessed in Belgium. Did this shit actually happen, or was it just a ploy to get Pantera-lovin'pro-wrestling fans to buy up their CD? That is... seeing as how you're the person running CrimethInc. I recall I think from #9 reading a review, a quote, or something where Congress or some

other band (aforementioned same on the 7" included with that issue) was rumored or documented as either claiming to or actually diving feet-first into people at shows at the same time as calling themselves SXE. I kind of went into denial about it, which is why I bought #10 and finally #111 bought from Moe of Zegota when they came to Birmingham in June.

I simply won't buy any more CrimethInc. stuff until I have an answer to this query.

Signed, a non-violent SXE (the only REAL kind), Erich Re-daction, P.O. Box 610554, Birmingham, AL 35215

*Dear Erich, *

First, let me address all the simple stuff in your letterAbout Congress: we're not really in touch with them anymore, I guess we've sort of gone in different directions... in the interview with them you refer to, their guitarist said he supported "slamdancing, feetfirsts, and other craziness" at shows, but only if it involved"lots of consideration and respect for each other? which doesn't really sound too bad. My personal opinion about aggressive dancing like that at shows is that even if you are respectful of others as you do it, you still may intimidate them into having to watch from the back of the room (if they don't know you well enough to know that you will be careful with them), which sucks, so it can often be a bad thing. But that aside, when you consider his quote about "feetfirst" diving in context, it doesn't sound like such a big deal-considering how much stupider some hardcore kids are about the same subject... and also considering how many more important topics there are that we should be addressing besides violent dancing. I'm personally really sick of the petty controversies about that subject (and others) that have distracted us for the last twelve years of hardcore, and I wish we could move on to more important issues. [Was the "violent dancing" thing really the most worthwhile topic you found in Inside Front to think about?]

As far as your allegation that we're making stuff up to get kids to buy our CDs... That's a pretty serious accusation, considering how much of an effort we've made over the past few years to emphasize why doing things like that is bad and to avoid doing it ourselves. Nothing in this magazine is "made up? especially not to impress anyone, and for that matter we don't really care if

you buy our CDs or our magazine or not. We care very much about spreading the ideas and the music, but we don't live off fucking record sales, we have other ways of getting by It's all the same to us if kids xerox the magazine articles or tape the CD's and copy the lyrics, as long as the material gets out there in something close to its original form. And by the way, I'm far from the only person "running CrimethInc."I do a lot of work, yeah, but it is a cooperative/collective effort involving lots of different people, and none of us really stands to make any money.

Now, the more complicated issue of hardcore and violence itself. I sort of get the impression that you've made the violence/non-violence question one of your most central standards of judgment about hardcore bands, etc. I would warn you against trying to see the world in such simple, black and white terms, in case you miss things that don't fit easily into those compartments.Violence, like I've said before, is a ridiculous

way for individuals to interact in our community if this community is to be a place where people learn to support each other and interact as equals. But the question of the value of violence is far from the only question we have to face in our lives. Wbat Gehenna did that night spoke to me on a deeper level than almost anything else I've ever experienced.lt wasn't the physical violence of their performance that touched me (only childish boys who haven't gone beyond the playground pressure to be "macho" are impressed by physical violence), but the emotional expression that they achieved with it. I wrote all about that in the review, didn't you read it? Didn't it make any sense to you at all? I really tried to open up about my own feelings and struggles in that review, and it breaks my heart if you didn't see or understand any of that because you were too busy wondering whether or not Gehenna meets your pre-set requirements. I'm absolutely against violence, per se, too, as I've emphasized; but there were more important things going on therefor me. I'm not demanding that you feel the same way, just asking you to try to see where I'm coming from.

If I've learned anything in my life, it is that things are complicated, that sometimes really good things and really bad things are closely tied together or even indistinguishable, and that life is almost always too complex and tangled up for generalizations like "violence is always, always bad" to be any use. Often I've found the things I needed most at the bottom of the blackest, most universally despised pits, and just as often the things I thought were safest and truest have turned out to be the most dangerous to me. Each of us is filled up with contradictions, and being a complete human being involves accepting and facing those contradictions, not simplifying everything until the really tricky, intricate stuff that makes life so unpredictable and rich just disappears.

That's why I can be opposed to violence and yet be deeply moved by a band that charges into the audience.

-the editor

Dear Inside Front Magazine,

I'm writing this letter in response to that stupid and arrogant Cleveland Kid. His letter was printed in I.F. #10. You can't imagine how sick I am of people like you yelling shit like "metal-free scene!" Don't judge people on the style they play, JUDGE THEM ON THE WORDS THEY SAY

Hardcore has always been more than a kind of music. It's a way of life. It's about being different, about not giving in to our sick society's rules and norms, isn't it? How are we able to fight the outside world if we fight against each other? I listen to both old and new school, but I prefer new school because I don't need hundreds of bands sounding exactly the same and singing about such unimportant things as being "straight for life." Many of today's old school bands are just boring, that's my opinion. When Brian D. says, "If music is played by people in the hardcore community and is angry, passionate, genuine and powerful, then it's hardcore" he is absolutely right. You don't have to listen to new school bands, but you have to accept them as hardcore bands, cause that's what they are. More hardcore than those fascist One Life Crew pigs. They signed to Lost & Found now, that's OK. A band that no one needs on a

label that no one needs. I've read an O.L.C. interview and these guys are pretty stupid. Fuck them! To you, Clevokid, and to all those old school elitists who just can't see that UNITY is the key: GO FUCK YOURSELF, YOU'RE FULL OF SHIT.

Good bye!

Yours, Tobias My address isTobias Gndig / Holunderweg 3 / 53937 Gemnd /GERMANY

ONE SCENE-UNITY!!!

*Dear Tobias, *

The question of what is and is not "hardcore" or "punk" is a really complicated one. Everyone has their own answers that they feel really strongly about, and it's really hard to agree upon any boundaries or come up with any definitions that make any sense. And despite that, everyone is constantly arguing about it...

I've done a lot of thinking about it, and come up with an account of what "hardcore punk" is that I think works pretty well. I'm kind of proud of it, so I suppose I'll share it with you. Basically, punk is a cultural and artistic movement.The word "movement" is key, because it emphasizes the process of change that any other definition is unable to account for. When considering punk music, it's useful to compare it to other artistic movements like Surrealism. Surrealism was not one particular method of painting any more than punk is one particular way to construct songs; rather, it was a movement of artists working towards a general goal, who tried different things and learned from each other's work over a period of many decades.At any particular point in the course of the movement, there were a few styles of painting that could be called "Surrealist;"but there was no one style that defined Surrealism.

Surrealism itself consisted of the series of styles that evolved among the artists who were involved across

those years. That explains how punk music could sound like the Dead Kennedys and the Bad Brains in 1981 and like H's Hero Is Gone and Zegota now: these bands are punk bands not because they have mohawks or play two-minute three-chord songs, but because they are all clearly part of the process of musical exploration undertaken by the members of the punk community.

When these "oldschool fans"say that the new "metal" hardcore bands aren't hardcore, they mean one of two things. They might be claiming that hardcore is not a community or a way of thinking or an artistic movement but rather a set of petty musical regulations. That definition doesn't do anything to explain why all the different styles that were called "hardcore" before Youth of Today deserved that title-and it serves the MTV media motherfuckers perfectly too, who would like to think that they can understand (and rip off) all that is punk just by listening to a couple old records. Fuck them!

Alternatively, these "oldschool fans" that you dislike so much may be trying to say (without knowing how) that they think that incorporating metal musical conventions into hardcore music is a bad idea. 1 can imagine bow that argument could be made, but as you imply, it seems like an even worse idea to glorify the musical style of a past era

of hardcore to such an extent that new experimentation and development is discouraged. That could freeze us in place until our whole movement died of stagnation.

Anyway, this is all old news by now, since I'm sure that by the time this issue comes out and is distributed both the "oldschool revival"and the "metalcore"phe- nomenon will be long behind us, and the new hardcore bands will all be incorporating electronic music and jazz improvisation into their songs.

-the editor

P.S. One Life Who?

fPPS.Wow, 1 wasn't aware that bands actually signed to Lost & Found; 1 thought they just discovered that they had an album out with them... Love, Gloria C.J

Dear Inside Front:

[A Different Look at an Almost Definite Thing?]

The concept of a "band" seems pretty restricting to me. Anywhere from usually 3 to 5 people (give or take a few), and always these people.

What if, instead of bands, people worked in musical collectives, containing however many people would like to participate it this communal music project. If a person would like to play drums sometimes, and sing or play the saxophone at other times, it is not only possible, but beneficial for that person to explore other avenues of expressing him- or herself. Now, it would be hard, if not impossible, for people to know all of the songs performed by the group, but there would be those songs that everyone knows and relates to, and others that only a select few would feel any connection to, which would justify playing them. (This is not to say that people can't play songs they don't feel a connection to, it's just

that songs relate more emotion when people believe in what they are communicating.)

Whereas a band might break up if two (or more) members fight, if a large enough collective was formed, it would be possible for people to continue in it, even if they dislike each other, because of the number of participants in the societal musical entity, and because the people at odds with each other would not have to be confined together (i.e.: on tour) at all. People could also leave, without regret, knowing that their exiting the group would not be pivotal in the destruction of the group. In your zine (Inside Front #41), there was an article about a song that has yet to be made, that would be so powerful that it could incite revolution in everyone who hears the song.What could be closer to finding that, than 20, 30, or even 50 people altogether who pool their creativity, to try and find that song, as opposed to *4* or 5? What could be more creatively stimulating than a number of people that don't limit themselves to playing with just one set of people (hopefully preventing a set form of song writing) or just one style of music, for that matter? A person's song writing style would not be limited to the "band's, " but could venture off in whatever way desired. For myself, I go through phases of what sort of music 1 listen to, write, and play. So whereas a person's varying tastes in music might tear a band apart, this change could make this communal project

stronger. This collective would also (hopefully) reduce, if not eliminate stagnation and monogamy/monotony associated with bands.

This idea is not something taken out of the blue, but merely an extension of what has been done in so many places for a long time, just taken to a higher level. For example, in the second wave of hardcore (late 80's, early 90's) in NYC, many of the bands had rotating members, on tours and recordings. Many members were chosen simply because of friendships, not solely their ability. If a collective were formed on such grounds; those of love, compassion, and shared beliefs and actions, then this communal music project might last long past its originators' times. This formation could have another advantage: instead of becoming close to just one or two people, you could share your life with a whole group, or at least have your choice of whom to be close with, opening up more opportunities for trust, friendship and happiness.

What could be closer to an anarchist/punk ideal? This could be nothing else but another nail in the coffin of the notion that the band members are better than those that aren't in bands. One rock and rollism that punk and hardcore could never seem to shake was the idolation of the lead singer. Many times I've found myself singing along to a song, pretending I'm the singer, not paying any attention to what I'm singing. Having constantly different singers would also force people to look past their voice, and look to the words, because the vocals would be as anonymous and ever-changing as the guitars, drums, and basses in conventional bands.

What would be more anarchistic? If this were carried out, it would take one of the most centralized

> things in the anarchistic/punk rock community and decentralize it. What could be more music oriented than a collective of musicians? Give it a thought, and something might come of it.

Norm Drouillard *
33 Sunset Blvd.
Brockville, Ontario
Canada K6V 3G3
*Dearest Norm, *

> *I agree with you wholeheartedly There are a thousand different ways for people to make music together, and it is really limiting that our community focuses almost exclusively on Just one, especially the most overused one. The four guys with guitars"paradigm is about the most predictable music cliche our culture has ever generated, and every time I see a hardcore band play I feel us laboring painfully under its constraints. It's worth remembering that this formula was created with the help of major label managing in the 1950's for the sake of making money off of the newest holders of disposable income, the teenage market. The Make-Up have a really interesting theory*

about the function of the 4-man band in the downsizing ofWestem music by corporations, which you can read in the liner notes to one of their records. To put it briefly, they suspect that major labels got tired of paying to maintain the older bands that had up to fifty members, so they created the myth of the lone genius musician... which found its epitome in the single industrial musician (Trent Reznor, for example) in the '90s.

The old Jazz musicians benefitted in a thousand ways from being able to create mix-and-match bandsfrom small armies of capable musicians. It's worth remembering thalpunk is NOT the only grass-roots/political music movement that has ever existed-we can learn a lot from the free jazz communes of the 1960's and a thousand other historical examples. We need to mess around with our own fixed ideas of how to make music and art, in the same way that we are reconsidering things like animal rights and gender roles... otherwise we will not be aware of just how much more is possible in our lives. New formats for the "band"are long overdue in hardcore.

[Image not archived]

There are already stirrings of people trying this. I've heard a few different bands (Ink and Dagger was one) talking aboutforming larger experimental collectives over the course of the past ye ar. There have even been similar plans tossed around in CrimethInc. circles to create a band consisting of only singers, that could be as small as two people or as large as an entire audience. In the meantime, the bands who do stick to the old rules had better remember that they are up against fifty years of cliche and repetition, and every time they pick up their guitars they will have to work that much harder to bring something new and magical into the world.

We have worked hard to improve hardcore. Now it must be destroyed.

-the editor

Reclaim the Streets

[Image not archived]

Before I write about this, I'd like to go on record saying that I hate protests and demonstrations. Traditional ones, at least. Carrying signs, chanting slogans, going through the same motions the marginalized left wing did all through the '8o's to no avail, all that shit drives me crazy. For one thing, everyone is so used to these methods that they no longer raise any eyebrows; "those damn hippies (/commies/ weirdos/etc.) are at it again, " the typical mainstream spectator thinks, and goes about his business without thinking at all about what their signs say. For another, they tend to polarize people, making at least as many enemies as converts: the whole idea of

a "protest" is based on conflict, and so the people who don't relate to the protesters* ideas (or methods, or clothes) are often turned against the cause they are championing. Frequently, the people who are involved in these protests are so desperate to have the "identity" that they think their politics confers on them that they actually feel (whether they admit it or not) that they have a stake in creating us-versus-them conflicts, in order to differentiate themselves from the masses they so despise. And finally, not only are protests like this ineffective and boring (and boredom is counter-revolutionary if anything is, in a society that depends on apathy and cynicism for its very existence), but personally, they make me uncomfortable. My politics can't b< real positive social change is not a new, "radical" orthodoxy, but a community of individuals with their own complicated ideas and perspectives who figure out how to work together towards the goals they have in common. Centrally organized protests, with everyone following the rules (either of the organizers, or the pigs, or both), don't provide the space we humans need to express our own individual • perspectives, to pursue our own personal goals in a group setting. A bunch of people shouting a sentence in unison smells to me of mobs, groupthink, even fascism; I want to make my own sentences, to see and hear others do the same, not to be part of one unified mass clashing with another.

In fact, I don't even like reading

> about that stuff in anarcho-punk magazines, or other anarchist "news" sources that blow everything out of proportion to make it seem like we really are on the verge of smashing the state. Yes, I want to know what other people are up to and how to participate, but quarantining our restless desires and rebelliousness to weekend protests (and gushy reports on them) does not a revolution make.
>
> That's why Inside Front has concentrated largely on issues of lifestyle. You pose little threat as a weekend warrior, with your daily life (and thus all your capabilities to think, act, and produce) still at their disposal as a student or worker. But if you try to follow your dreams full time, you enter into direct conflict with the system that would keep you doing other things. You have to be a revolutionary every day, not just for special events, to make that work. The payback is greater, too, of course. And people who try to make a full life out of freedom, rather than a weekend cause, are ultimately more dependable in any struggle for change; they show up to volunteer at Food Not Bombs because they need to eat, not just to assuage their middle class guilt.
>
> This is the same conflict going on in hardcore punk, of course. If it's just a style of music and fashion, something that we listen to at home, wear when we're not at work, or go to see on Friday nights, then it's not going to make our lives fundamentally better, no matter how much we may enjoy or even learn from it. But punk is more than that, at least in some circles.

> There are plenty of us who have been trying to turn it into a full-time lifestyle, to use the contacts and community that punk provides to create a sort of "underground railroad" by which to make our way to freedom from life-squandering employment and wage-slave consumerism. I know it has worked that way for me..

Still, once you've gone through the long and difficult process of reclaiming your own life and building a support community, there's still the rest of the world to contend with. If you want a full, good life, it's not enough to just be free to do what you want- you also have to live in a world where it's possible. That means like it or not, you have to think about what's going on in the world outside of punk, and how to work with people outside your community to get control over those aspects of your existence as well. And so even though I hate protests, demonstrations, and all that shit, I still think it's important for us to share our ideas with people outside our scene... and to figure out ways to take control over the environments we live in back from the police, and the property owners, and the "laws of the market." I want life to be an adventure for each of us, a wild and neverending celebration, and it's not going to be unless we can shake off the baby-sitters and break out of the old rules and patterns.

One of the latest attempts to accomplish this I've been involved in was the "Reclaim the Streets" festival we did here in Chapel Hill, the town I've been living in off and on for years. The idea started among some of the political college kids here who had been to Europe and seen similar things done there: whole blocks of streets taken over and turned into massive, unlicensed festivals. We're lucky in Chapel Hill that we still have a downtown area where people congregate-most cities in the U.SA are rotting from the inside out, their centers lifeless, abandoned for shopping malls which were in turn abandoned for strip malls. We decided to take advantage of that public space to reach the average shoppers and show them how much more interesting, how much more free that space (and any other space, not to mention their lives in general) could be, if they didn't only use it for what it was intended.

This was a big deal to me, because it was a chance to take our politics and our creativity out of the Saturday night punk show routine and really apply them, use them to recreate our world (if only for a little while, as an example). And pulling it off as a non-centralized, all-

inclusive, democratic event, where everybody did their own thing and brought their own causes and issues, was not only a way to break out of the death grip of "old politics'' — it was a means of demonstrating to everyone who was present what democracy really is, how the environment we live in is created by our collective efforts... and how much better we can make it if we're a bit more ambitious.

We held endless meetings talking about how to go about it, which were fun in themselves, at least for an ex-philosophy major armchair revolutionary like me. Should we involve the media, or not? Do we want to be acting for the cameras, or for ourselves and each other? How do we avoid the trap old-fashioned protests always fell into, of

separating the outsiders as passive spectators from the "activists"? What kind of games and tricks and adventures do we plan, to draw people in and broaden their perspectives at the same time? And how do we deal with the fucking pigs, whose job it is to keep anything like this from happening?

One of the first ideas we had was to invite and involve children. We tried to plan a bunch of activities for them to do if they wanted, and put up a lot of fliers announcing a "Kids' Day" on Franklin Street. Photographs of cops beating six-year-olds don't make for good press. We made plans for a lot of other activities, most of which we carried out, and I'll describe them below in a second. The general idea was for our group not to act as a central organizing committee but rather to be a catalyst to get people together and encourage them to feel free to do whatever they wanted, to unlock and unleash their desires as well as our own.

We were going to occupy all the parking spaces and the sidewalk on one side of the street, starting at noon. I had an idea to surprise everyone, which I wish had worked out: my friend Ernie has a huge, nearly dead

American car, about thirty feet long with big holes in it from rust. He inherited it from someone he knew who got her license revoked-he actually can't be caught driving either, since he has legal problems of his own, but we were going to have a friend of his drive. In the middle of the whole event, we were going to have Ernie and his friend drive the car into the middle of the intersection on Franklin, and have it "break down" right

there, stopping traffic from all directions. This would enable us to move our festival into the street itself.

The best thing about this idea was that Ernie is from the rural South and is of a different social class and cultural background than all the middle class college kids from Chapel Hill-if he pretended he didn't know who we were or what we were doing, and spoke in his best Southern boy accent, the cops wouldn't be able to connect him to us at all, they'd have to think it was just some crazy coincidence. I imagine Ernie and Josh getting out of the car, kicking it and swearing in dialect as all the impatient motorists honked at them, opening the hood to look and disconnecting something (Ernie is an automechanic) so the car would be immovable-some political college kid from Critical Mass shouts "ride a bike!" at them, and they shout back "fuck you, hippie!" Since the car didn't really belong to anyone, we were just going to have them leave it there, for maximum chaos. Unfortunately Ernie was so fucking sick that day that he couldn't even get up off the couch he'd been staying on, so that scheme didn't bear fruit... at least, not this time.

We spread the word mostly through word of mouth, and we sent out some email and handed out some fliers. I went up and down the street on a few days, giving them out to civilians of all kinds and explaining to them (in pleasant, unapocalyptic terms) what we were going to do. I made a point of not using words like "demonstration, " I tried to make it sound more like a nice parade or something, though I made it clear that this was an unlicensed festival, organized by the people who wanted to take part, not

the authorities. The day before, a couple people painted their faces and went around town wearing sandwich boards announcing the event and giving out fliers. Despite all this, the pigs didn't seem to know it was coming until it happened. In retrospect, we should have promoted it harder than we did. We were afraid of attracting too much attention, but (as we discussed) the more people that were there, the less power the cops would have, so it would have been in our interest to risk catching their attention to attract more interest. I'm sure we

[Image not archived]

could have come up with some new, creative ways to spread the word about what was going to happen through town. We should have worked harder to build up a mystique around it, so everyone would be curious and no one would dare miss it. I also think I should have fliered harder at punk shows, art openings, etc. in nearby towns, since we could have had a lot more people show up from outside Chapel Hill than we did.

At noon on the designated day, we all gathered downtown. We'd saved

the parking spaces we wanted to occupy by leaving cars parked in them overnight, and suddenly everyone unloaded their stuff and drove away, just as excited crowds started to converge on the street. Gloria and I had a big banner wrapped up in my backpack, and a few minutes before noon we went (dressed in our nicest clothes) to an expensive restaurant on a rooftop overlooking the street. We got a root beer to share and managed to snag a

table on the balcony. As the noon chimes rang out, we slipped the rope out of my backpack and tied it to the

arm of her chair, and then threw the banner over the railing as the crowds gathered. At the same time, two friends of ours appeared on the rooftop opposite us, shaking sheet metal in such a way that it made a thunderous noise. Most people below couldn't see what was making the noise, but it sounded dramatic, like something really important was happening. Unfortunately for us, we had failed to realize that a banner without a weight at the bottom will just blow twisted in the wind if you hang it from a high place. The waiters at the restaurant, who gathered next to us to see what was happening below, were surprisingly accepting of our banner, once we ignored their initial attempts to get us to remove it and be polite paying customers. But we wanted to join in the action below, so soon we ran down to the street, taking our banner with us to spread out along the asphalt.

I'd stayed up the night before writing a little manifesto of my own forthe event, and I stole a few hundred copies of that and some other fliers from a copy shop. A couple other people did the same thing. We gave them out to everyone who was there throughout the course of the event, everyone who was involved or watching with pleasure or confusion. I probably gave out about five hundred of the main flier I made, altogether. At the end I gave away copies of Harbinger, too, and there were people from various political groups giving out their literature, as well. It was really exciting to create a public environment like the one we have at good punk shows, where everyone

has literature to give away and everyone is interested in reading it. Our literature tables have languished in the seclusion of the underground for too long, when so many average joes and janes have to suffer the same things we're pushing against.

We gave other stuff away besides fliers, of course. Food Not Bombs arranged a special meal, including the usual bagels and bread, a slew of fruits and vegetables, and even pizza. A sympathizer from the local Turkish tea house baked us about a

thousand cookies to give away, each with a little social/political/witty message rolled and stuck in the top (this was the closest we got to our original idea of making fortune cookies, in order to give out ideas in a way that would be fun and nonthreatening for everyone). Somebody got a truckload of flowers from somewhere and gave them out in bunches. Somebody else shoplifted a lot of Polaroid film from a corporate chain store; a friend of mine took photos of passers by with it, and gave them

away for free. I made stickers to go on the backs of the photos extolling the virtues of gift-giving and decrying the system which makes it so hard for us [9] to do. There was a clothes line draped with free clothes that people had found, and a table with masks on it for people to wear, and dozens of other things collected to be given away.

My artist/musician friends all showed up with an assortment of musical [n] instruments they had made out of pieces of metal and odd bits of wire and other things. They joined the [H] various punks, hippies, and student types who had brought instruments of their own in a vast group " improvisation. Throughout the ' whole event there were always at least thirty people playing music [1] together — surprisingly good music, too. It really added to the festive ' air, and it was one of the most successful elements of the whole * thing, because literally anybody could and did pick up a drum and " join in.

That was only a fraction of what [v] went on. There were people there on home-made double-decker bicycles, [f] people dressed in crazy costumes, lots of people with huge puppets, [n] including two inside an enormous * zebra. Some people staged a puppet show with life-size props, and a / book reading in conjunction with it. There was a sandbox, and a massage therapist with her chair and equipment giving free massages to stress-ridden employees and other unfortunates. There was chalk for people to draw on the'sidewalk and [h] street, someone set up easels with [k] paper on them for kids and adults to [r]' draw on, there were water balloons somewhere that a friend of mine had stolen. Another friend of mine ' walked around with a loudspeaker alternately spouting nonsense, ' proclaiming radical theories, and [1] announcing fabricated "sales" at the [1] shops nearby. There were boom boxes blasting reggae music, a forest ,[v] made of bamboo trees, banners announcing our intentions to ' "reclaim the streets, " too many more things to even start to list [11] them all. It was a real life free community circus, and while it was going on we were all too busy running around doing our things [4] and soaking it all in for our feet to even touch the ground.

Gloria researched Chapel Hill ^ history, and she went around to all ' the chain stores on the street, • writing on the sidewalk in front of them what local businesses had once been there and when. She also made a flier with photographs of old Chapel

Hill to give out, from the ’ days when the streets were more unique and personable, less commercial. Around the pictures, there were stories of the old shops, ‘ the old people, the old Chapel Hill

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before the faceless chains moved in and dressed everyone in their uniforms.

There is a guy in our town who stands at intersections on weekends [n] carrying signs that say things like “hunt the whales” and “bomb Northern Ireland.” Once when we were doing Critical Mass, he was out there ˜ carrying a sign that said “ban bicycles.” This guy is my hero, the most loyal opposition we could have: I can’t think of a better thing for people to see ‘ when we’re riding our bicycles than a man carrying a sign that says that.

[Image not archived]

He could win the whole mainstream of America over to our “side, ” if there were more of him! The week before the big day, we spent a few nights at my friends’ house making signs, puppets, etc. In honor of my hero, who I feared might not be there, I made a sign that said “Ban the bicycle: keep Americans inside their cars, ” which a friend of mine held up to all the cars driving past (swerving as they attempted to read it) for much of the event. I also made a sign that said “If you’re not shopping, GO HOME, ” and I tried to make another one for angry drivers reading “Aim for Pedestrians, ” but I ran out of space, and it ended up saying “Aim for Pedestria.” After a lot of swearing and hitting things, I decided that was pretty good, too, and just drew an arrow on it. I was pretty excited about my signs, but I was outdone, hands down, that day: my idol was there, standing sternly on the other side of the street, with a sign reading “My Other Car Is A Cruise Missile.” Seriously, this guy is a visionary, one of the few true geniuses of our time, and I can’t thank him enough for the work he is doing. Other people in our unit made signs saying things like “Smile!” and “This is your street!” and even “STOMP OUT JAZZ MUSIC NOW!”, but nothing could hold a candle to his.

Of course the media didn’t get it at all. Their reports all expressed confusion as to why we were there and what we hoped to accomplish. That is exactly as it should be. The people who were there and who saw us all understood what we were doing. Our fliers made it clear if nothing else did. We didn’t throw it as a party for the fucking media, we didn’t invite them or pose for their fucking cameras (ever notice how differently people behave when they’re being filmed?). Our purpose was to reach people in the real world, to show how exciting it can be to come together in real space and time, in the flesh, not to create another fucking photographic or electronic record of ritual insubordination. Creating our own ways of reaching people, democratic ways, free ways, direct ways, that’s what we were out to do: to make the media obsolete, to steal their power and give out to everyone for free. Naturally they didn’t understand what we were up to, and it’s a good thing, too!

Looking back, these are some of the things I think we accomplished:

1.

<quote> Obviously, we brought new ideas to some people who wouldn't have encountered them before. Now, it's going to take a whole lot more than accidently running into our festival one afternoon to radicalize a forty year old man who has never let himself question the roles and rules

of his society. But there were plenty of people there that day that I would describe as "fence sitters, " people who are sympathetic to our ideas but never dare to think too hard about things or take action of any kind. We made it less intimidating for them to join us in reconsidering and reconstructing our society, by demonstrating just how much fun being critical and getting active can be. The air was buzzing the week after with people we had thought jaded and apathetic talking about how awesome the

event was and what they thought the implications were. And at the same time, we proved to each other that we don't have to keep our beliefs and ideas inside the confines of our little subcultures, as if they were something to be ashamed of.

2. There was a friend of mine there who had tried to commit suicide a couple weeks before the festival. He didn't do anything but sit quietly and look around, but he told me it was the most positive, awesome thing he'd ever seen, and for a few hours he was really happy. We were all really happy for those few hours. So many people, especially those of us who have been driven to the underground and the struggle against the status quo, are unhappy in this world, with so many controls and so much bullshit heaped on us on top of the inevitable tragedies that life holds anyway. This was a holiday from all that for each of us, a short, refreshing taste of real freedom and excitement, and it helped keep a lot of us alive, I think.

3. That day and the work leading up to it brought a lot of us closer, and created a better feeling of community among us local radical types. A lot of us knew each other vaguely but had never gotten the chance to get better acquainted, let alone do anything exciting together, and this afforded us the opportunity. A few years back I had despaired of anything exciting and revolutionary happening in Chapel Hill, but now there are enough connections between people and enough ideas and idealism in the air that the future looks good. I have a lot of friends now that I didn't have before, who have been a big help and a boon to me in a lot of ways. And it feels great to be doing stuff locally, not to accept my alienation from the place I live in (as I walk to the post office to mail off pamphlets and 'zines talking about exactly that), but to be doing something about it, and meeting other people face to face who want to as well. We can get so caught up in our international network of thinkers and activists that we forget how awesome it feels to actually have an impact on the places we spend our daily lives.

4. At first I was afraid that the largely middle class college kids who had worked hard to make this happen would think of it as the climax of all our efforts, and

feel afterwards that their work was done. But it actually worked to energize everyone, to make them all more ambitious and eager to cause trouble. That evening, eating free food back at their house, everyone was talking about what we would do next. Fuck yeah.

And these are some things I hope we learned:

1. Always put weights at the end of banners to be hung from tall buildings, etc.-they won't do you any good blowing in the wind!

2. When you're giving out/posting the advance fliers, it's probably good to have a rain date chosen and listed, so if it's pouring rain and meteors that day they will know when to come out instead.

3.
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We could still have done a better job of involving the straights and squares, who are inevitably intimidated by anything out of the ordinary. One plan some of us had that we should have followed through on was to plant people in the crowd of passers by, dressed as old uptight men and

nervous young Southern mothers, who would interact with us according to pre-set plans. If we came up with some good skits in which they got involved in what we were doing, that might have helped other people (who identified themselves more with the straight-laced actors than with us) to feel more comfortable doing more than watching from the sidelines.

4. Police. Some of us did react to police pressure, and the whole event ended earlier than it otherwise would have or should have because of this. The cops acted really nice, but told whoever would listen to them that our "party" had to be over by a certain time. They acted nice because they knew that with so many people on Franklin Street participating in our festival, it would be useless for them to try to intervene. If you have enough people doing something, you pretty much nullify the power of the authorities, which ultimately rests on group assent (whatever their firearms may lead you to believe). What cops do is look for leaders, people who can organize and command the masses for

them... and failing that, they look for people to make examples of, so everyone else will be frightened. We should have offered them neither, and continued about our activities. When cops asked who was in charge, we should all have denied that anyone was (we did that, I think, but they still figured out that some people felt like they were responsible for what was going on, and singled out those people). When they told one of us that the event had to be over by two o'clock, he or she should have said "uh, 1 don't have anything to do with it, but I guess if it's over by two I'll leave." No

spokesman/woman to talk to the cops — without that, they'd have to deal with us as a group of people all doing what we wanted, not a mass directed by a particular will. The other thing they might have tried, in exasperation, would be bullying us by picking on individuals (say, arresting the one person who was breaking a law nobody else was breaking). If we had all shown solidarity with whoever they singled out (join in breaking the law, make it clear that they will have to take all two hundred of us to jail with him/her, etc.), that would have made it really difficult for them to use that tactic. There's not all that much space in the local jails here...

5. Despite our attempts to avoid the whole "centralized committee" thing, we could have done better. Because we were the ones having the meetings and doing the fliering, etc., we came to think of it as our project, when the whole point of the event was to make something that

belonged to everyone. Sometimes we forgot that it was our job just to act as a catalyst, rather than to decide how, when, and whether or not the event itself was to play out. Something like this starts to really work when it no longer is one group's project but comes to belong equally to many different groups, all doing their own things with their own goals. Next time we should try to form independent cells, each with an equal say in what happens, that can work separately on plots and schemes of their own, so that we don't fall into the trap of thinking that we, the organizers, somehow "own" the event.

6. We should have thought more clearly about what would happen afterwards. We spent so much energy preparing for the actual event that we neglected to use the event itself to direct energy towards future events. We could have had more fliers, fliers inviting people to Food Not Bombs and a hundred other projects and capers we have going on here. We could

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have had some even more intense happening planned for a few days later to escalate things...

Next time we do this, and we have another one planned in a few months already, we'll get the word out better and we'll have four times as many people there. We'll be ten times as organized, we'll know how to ignore the cops and stand in solidarity if they try to take any of us away. And Ernie won't be sick, he'll show up and block the street off with his car, so we can claim all the asphalt for our own. We'll have smoke bombs set up to go off up and down the street, filling it with thick fog so no one can see to drive; multicolored lights will illuminate the opaque fog, cutting out silhouettes of wild dancers and monstrous puppets, as unseen musicians pound out feral rhythms on all sides. With the limited visibility, it will seem to everyone there that the whole world has been transformed into a magical place, filled with spirits and animals and wonder. And we'll pull the fucking power lines down, so people have to come out of their offices and retail outlets for once. Once and for all, perhaps.

Welcome to

Reclaim the Streets!

Please don't think of this as a protest "against" something. We're all gathered here most of all for the sake of *celebrating.*

This is a wonderful day to celebrate our I community, to be playful and creative together, to ' explore what public space can be if we choose to use it.

The secret of our streets is that we can use them I for *anything we want.* As long as we remember I , this, every day can be a festival, an adventure. Sure M we're used to coming to Franklin Street just to shop or ' work: we park our cars with some difficulty and make I our way inside to wait on customers or buy things. Maybe on the fringes of those activities we pause to hang out a bit, to exchange pleasantries with each other. After years of this, it's hard to imagine that our streets could be used for anything besides driving, working, buying. We have Apple Chill and Halloween once a year each, but it never occurs to us that we could get together to have fun like that except on the appointed dates.

What if you could design a Franklin Street of your own, a
street according to your wildest dreams? Imagine all the
possibilities! Would you

have fountains, statues, castles? How about free horses for eveiyone to ride? Elephants? Public transportation of other kinds, so parking wouldn't be such a problem? Activities besides shopping, free activities, so *everyone* could take part regardless of how much money they had... so the street could truly be a place for us to come together, rather than be divided?

That street can be a reality if you want. For *we* are the ones that make Franklin Street what it is. Every day that we come here, we recreate the same patterns of life that we are used to. It's important every once in a while to take a day to do something *different, * to remind ourselves that we can make this place whatever we want it to be.

This is a flier put together and copied by one of the participants in this "Reclaim the Streets" festival, nothing more or less. There is no Reclaim the Streets central committee or spokesperson; this is a public event, made by and for whoever wants to participate, and it can be whatever you want it to be...just like everything else in your life!

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> "What's that?" you ask, and I say, "it's all in the name 'reclaim'." See, you can only reclaim what once was yours and now is not. Streets used to belong to people. Streets used to be for the movement of all, not just car movement and on-street parking. Streets used to be filled with music, open air markets, animals, children, and human noise. In short, they were alive. But now street life is dying. You know, that kind of thing that echoes like

a tarnished sax on brick walls for your change. That kind of thing that looks you in the eye and says hello because it knows your name. That kind of thing that once had folks talk about "the word on the street." We have different kinds of words on our streets now. These words are not friendly words, and they don't know your name or even care. Because if you are not on the street to spend lots of money, and if you did not get to that street in a very large shiny vehicle, then maybe you don't belong there and could be getting in the way. So the words talk from telephone poles and tell you when to...

"WALK." Then they tell you when to "DON'T WALK." Don't think, don't dream, and don't talk. Don't ride that bike, don't skate on that board. Don't sleep on that bench, and haven't you been sitting there too long? Don't ask others for anything, don't put that flier there, don't loiter, linger, laugh, love, or live here! The lines are drawn. This space is for the new

perfume shop, bookstores might lead to independent thought. This space is

for parked cars, oh, and so is that space, and that space, and that space, and that space. This space is for car movement, and so is that lane, and that lane, and that lane. Flower ladies? That's quaint, but let's put them in this dark corner. Here are the lines you can walk within. Be careful, though, there are a lot of cars out there. Make sure you look both ways. Always look both ways. Always be afraid and be very afraid. What's that you say? A line for bicycles? I'm sorry

there's no more space for you.

Fend for yourself, but don't come into this space or this space or this space. Feeling claustrophobic? We'll let some steam off for you. Here's your sporting events space, here's your Halloween space, here's your Apple Chill space. You want more than that? You'll have to get a permit. OK? .

No, it's not OK. In fact, it may be high time to start blurring some lines. What we're trying to say is that it's time to reclaim the street, renew the avenue, remodel the boulevard, revive the drive, rescue the causeway, rehabilitate the interstate, reshape the pavement, repossess the bypass, reform the thoroughfare, re-own the cobblestone, retake the right-of-way, regain the lane, retake the turnpike, recoup the route, reoccupy the byway, ransom the road, recapture the cul-de-sac, restore the rotary, refashion the freeway. When streets are alive, people organize, they share ideas, they protest things. They cannot be controlled, monitored, or lulled to sleep. True street life is threatening to the status quo, to consumerism, to conformity. The lines that have been drawn seek to keep people quiet, silent, able

> to be manipulated. People coming together in public just for the sake of being with other people cease to be consumers, cease to be a market niche. This has become a threatening thing at the end of this millennium. And so the lines continue to be drawn. But they can't hold forever. Things are bound to bust out.

I discovered the other day that I'm really an earthworm. All these years 1 thought 1 was human, but in reality, I'm a slimy little invertebrate who crawls on his belly and has no idea where he is going. And worse than being blind, I have two brains, one at each end of my body, pushing and pulling me in and out of shit, and mercilessly distorting my well-being in the process.

I started to notice my earthworm characteristics a long time ago. At first I attributed them to psychotic human behavior, but now I understand them to be normal "night crawler" functions.

A classic earthworm activity commonly mistaken for human psychosis is the slime trail I leave wherever I go. All my life I've been able to walk into a room and immediately mess it up. It can be anywhere really. The moment I walk into the room the secretions from my earthworm body stick to anything in the surroundings, dragging them out of place with my every motion. Even if I straighten up the mess, the only way to keep my surroundings clean is to sit still; the moment I move, the slime trail starts.

Another earthworm attribute that I had mistaken for a dysfunction in the human world is my inability to see. Sure, I have eyes that look like human eyes, and sure, I'm tricked into thinking I actually have vision, but in the day-to-day problem solving needed to survive and perpetuate my species, I spend most of my time simply groping in the dark. I'm forced to feel my

way through situations and sometimes plow headfirst through some gauntlet, unable to see the extent of the task beforehand. And since I can't see where rm going, I often have no idea where I've been. I just move through time because I'm supposed to, more aware of what I bump into than what's beyond my immediate surroundings.

Another part of my blindness stems from the fact that I choose to live underground Sure there's no light, and there are lots of things to bump into, but the moist soil of old habits and traditions offers greater security than the bright, open expanse of the world above. I don't have to worry about finding the life-giving water of new ideas, because there is stagnant, old-idea water all around me. I don't have to worry about being stranded in the scorching sun of criticism, because the sun never gets to me. I don't have to worry about finding fresh pastures, fresh relationships in which to graze because down here there is an endless supply of nutrients from the rotting remains Of many other creatures' lives. In fact, the only danger 1 face is drowning in my own emotional security. One really soaking rain storm, one flood of new thinking could surround me with too much water, forcing me to either surface and get air or die in the mud of indecision.

But the attribute that finally convinced me I was not human but worm is the schizophrenia of my thinking. I realized that what I believed were opposing thoughts coming from one human brain are really the arguments of two worm brains working to push or pull me in their

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Shattering the Illusion of Perfection

Or in other words...Why I Told 100, 000 People That I Have Genital Herpes

By Greg Bennick

"I am incomplete damaged and imperfect this world is not divided between saints and sinners forgive me for being human.. **- TRIAL** "Saints and Sinners"

I got a call from Marco Collins, DJ on Seattle's 107.7 KNDD FM sometime in mid September. Marco had seen Trial play at the B umbershoot Festival here in Seattle at the beginning of the month and wanted us to come onto his radio show "The Young And The Restless" and talk about who we are and what we do. A bit of background to catch you up on what I am talking about: Bumbershoot is a _huge_ festival, with about 250 bands playing on dozens of stages over four days. Bands from the level of local rock bands all the way up to R.E.M. and The Indigo Girls are invited to play this fest, and about a half a million people of all ages come out to listen, party, dance and drink cheap beer in the fleeting Seattle late summer sun. It is a fucking zoo to be honest, and other than going down there to juggle and make money off of the locals, I usually avoid it like the plague. One cool thing about it though is that tickets to the event are about $14 and get you into ALL concerts occuring that day. On the day we played, the same $14 ticket got you into see Beck, George Clinton and the P-Funk All Stars, poets, world music acts, and about 40 other performers! This year was the first year Trial had been asked to play, and I was actually floored. I couldn't believe they even knew we existed, let alone had any desire for us to infect their rock event with hardcore. Still, always up for a challenge and an interesting time with new all ages audiences, we agreed to play. It was the last show of our summer tour, and it was a doozy. Imagine, if you will, a full stage with concert lighting set up at the end of what is regularly a hockey rink. Full concert PA with sound tech, drum tech, guitar tech, vocal tech, stage manager...about as far from basements and rented halls as you can imagine. This stage was sponsored by Marco's employer, KNDD 107.7, the local "alternative " mainstream station in Seattle. This is a radio station which tries desperately to give an illusion that it is hip, cool and exciting...but succeeds only in coming across as boring and mundane. Over 95% of their airplay is programmed and predetermined. Can anyone say "sellout"? It is a sad state of affairs when radio airplay is dictated by record companies. Bring on the pirate stations! Anyway...we were introduced to the stage by Marco the DJ. To our pleasure and joy (please note a hint of sarcasm), we'd discovered as we were setting up that there was a five foot high barrier about six feet in front of the stage, set up to protect us from the audience, or the audience from us...something like that. I have always thought that barriers were the stupidest things

ever created. We, dear reader, as sophisticated punk rock types, know that the stage barrier is regularly used today because M-TV showed a little too much of that wacky "mosh" dancing which all the kids seem to be doing these days, and this fact, combined with the shocking occasional

"stage dive" was enough to drive concerned parents to raise hell and high water until insurance agents ran for cover. It was under that cover that they must have decided to erect barriers in front of the stage to neutralize the energy of the audience by keeping them from touching the stage or performer. Well, they did a good goddamn job, because barriers destroy all hope for interpersonal communication at shows, and effectively reduce the audiences experience to literally _watching_ the band, rather than experiencing or communicating _with_ the band. (In addition, as a side point — in case there are any insurance agents reading this — the barrier actually mvitoinjury, as kids will be kids, and diving backfirst onto a wooden wall is not going to solve *any* injury problems. Way to go for wounding kids, you insurance morons...) Back to our story... as soon as we were introduced by Marco we took the stage under the rock lights where I promptly greeted the crowd, climbed down from the stage, walked to the barrier, climbed over it into the crowd, and we started our set. Pandemonium broke out immediately on both sides of the barrier. Trial was having a blast, I know that I was using the chance to speak to a room full of new listeners to the best possible advantage (say what you will about the myth of bands who use "we need to spread our message" as an excuse for playing non hardcore venues, but I am all for it — give me a chance to tell 500 new people about the Western Shoshone Defense Project and their DIY indigenous resistance to US government tyranny and I will take it, pretty much regardless of where it is as long as it is allages. And the Western Shoshone elders have told me that they agree: the basements-vs-venues debate means _nothing_ to them.

People knowing that they are being systematically murdered DOES mean something however, and that is where my voice, and yours as well to tell you the truth, come in). Anyway, the point is that audience was having a great time: the Seattle regulars were dancing and "moshing" like a bunch of friggin' nutcases, and the couple hundred new people who had just walked in to see where their $14 ticket would take them and had no idea what was going on were enjoying the spectacle too. On the other side of the barrier, the stage side, things were equally crazy. Aside from the fact that there was a guy crouched behind the barrier whos sole job was to hand me a water bottle whenever I needed it (I told him politely to go away and that I could control my own water bottle, thank you very much, but he was there for the duration. It was like having a slave, and while easy, felt *very* wrong), I heard later from the stage manager that the stage crew immediately called for an ambulance and paramedic team as soon as I climbed into the crowd at the start of the show! They must have thought I was committing suicide. Oh...just a note about the water guy in back of the barrier (the fact that he was there in the first place blows my mind to this day): about two songs into the set, I called over to the guy and asked him to get a chair (he had been crouching with my water bottle the entire time so as not to be seen by the crowd). He comes back half a song

later, puts the chair down, puts my water bottle on it, and then crouches down again! What the fuck?!? He thought I wanted the water bottle to be easier to reach over the barrier and so he'd raised it up for me by putting it on the chair I had intended for him to sit on! At that point I gave up trying to help ease his workload...he was like a trained Doberman...determined to kill until the end. Go team. I can only imagine where he learned to

suck up to bands like that. Metallica must have guys in the bathroom wiping their asses for them, if Trial has a water boy. Ugh. Ok, now that I have digressed about five light years from where I was headed, Marco Collins was really surprised by our set, because of the barrier leap for one (which he had never seen a band do before -1 should have told him to check out Catharsis, as Brian • would have done the same, but then applied the added bonus of growling at and spitting on the crowd), but more so because we spoke between each song about politics. That is what prompted his call to me later in the month to have us come on his show.

Marco is a great guy. I want to get that out of the way, because if I just tell you that he can fit more uses of the word "dude" into a sentence than a California surfer (or average straightedge kid) and that he talks like an M-TV VJ on crystal meth, then you might just stereotype him as normal mainstream rock DJ. The crazy thing is that while Marco might get paid to come across as normal mainstream rock DJ, he is really sincere and did have a real interest in a band with political affiliations coming onto his show. With the Marco disclaimer out of the way, I can tell you that I was terrified to do the interview on KNDD. A bit of background on that is due here: as you can tell from the title of this article, I have genital herpes. Even typing it now seems really strange and makes me remotely uncomfortable, as it isn't something I ever talked about openly before last fall, and had been my deepest secret for over eight years. The only people who ever knew, other than my sexual partners, were some close friends and family. Overall, I shrouded

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my intimate life in secrecy starting in 1991 when I got it, and regretted the rest of my life overall: allmy mistakes, my body, my shattered past and my unsure future were intensified by the fact that I had fucked up and caught the herpes virus. I felt less than human, ugly, undesirable, and unable to do a goddamn thing about any of it. Whenever it came to expressing my true feelings to other people, I was entirely unable to do so. To be honest, thinking about the fact that I have herpes had consumed me for years. It was always at the forefront of my mind, but because of societal "rules" (read that as "illusions") I always felt that I would embarrass myself and degrade myself if I opened up and told people the truth about why I was upset, withdrawn and angry so often. Many friendships and relationships suffered because of this apprehension. The bottom line is this: that there was always a lurking desire in the back of my mind to break all the ridiculous rules and tell the entire fucking world about what I was experiencing. After all, who the fuck am I? Who would care about me having herpes? Millions of people have it, and why should me telling anyone else about it be interesting

at all, let alone revolutionary? When Marco Collins asked us to come on the air, and I began to entertain thoughts of sharing my story, I realized that the revolutionary aspect involved in the telling of secrets, is in the telling itself. It is in the risks taken in opening up and sharing real human feelings and real human emotions — all too often suppressed and annihilated by our cultural "norms" (read that as "shackles") — rather than agreeing to adhere to the empty facades and false faces which we are 'supposed to' carry and wear every day. I think that these false faces and empty social graces are direct manifestations of terror. We fear anyone seeing our shattered inner selves, even though every

one walking by with stoic faces has their own tale of devastation to tell from somewhere deep inside. We are a culture of empty shells, screaming silently. I had harbored that inner desire to take what was for me the ultimate risk; telling people about what embarrassed me most, what scared me most, and what made me feel weakest — that I have an incurable, societally shunned virus...a virus which affects my ability to fit the male virile sex role widely accepted by the general public and portrayed on tv and in the movies. I am supposed to be smooth and collected, not afraid and unsure. I am supposed to have spontaneous sex, without regard for pregnancy or protection...condoms are still not cool you know, and actual people withSTD's don't really exist, do they? Well except of course those who have the once dreaded HIV...but we Americans stopped being concerned with HIV as soon as we saw that Magic Johnson was still looking healthy when we saw him on TV, now didn't we? Fuckers, people are still dying of HIV, just not as many rich people these days, because they can afford the explosively expensive drug cocktails which allow them to walk around with their own synthetic healthy facades, rather than screaming "I AM FUCKING DYING!!!" and thus shocking the general public into action. And as for other STD's, the sterile approach to sexual eduacation taken by conservative school systems and media outlets nationwide has undoubtedly resulted in an explosion of new cases, of which I am only one.

So, we had accepted the 107.7 invite, and I went into the interview with a vague plan. The station opened its doors to us ona Sunday night in October for the 9–11 PM edition of "The Young and the Restless". The show is a showcase of local alternative music and is one of the few shows on the station all week long which is actually broadcasted and programmed

live. Imagine that, you can actually call in and speak to a human being on the other end of the telephone! That is a rarity in this day and age of automatic answering systems and pressing one for "yes", and two for "no". Alexander Graham Bell must be spinning like a fucking dynamo in his grave. Where is "Press three to have this phone service immediately self destruct and its designers and inventors tortured eternally by sadistic secret agents." I await the day. Anyway, Timm (guitar) and I were the ones to go in and speak, and I was shaking, knowing that I wanted to somehow let my story out to the audience that night (potentially every radio in the Puget Sound area — about 2 million possible listeners, though the actual program demographic is much

smaller) and that this was the biggest audience I would probably ever have a chance to reach at one time. Listening to the interview now(which I have on CD), I can hear the nervousness in my voice at the top of the show: I knew I was going to go for it, but I didn't know how or when I would do it in the 30+ minutes we had on the air.

There were a lot of people in the local punk/hardcore community who had been critical of our choice not only to play Bumbershoot, but also of our decision to go on KNDD for an interview. I knew that the media is a powerful tool, and a dangerous ally at the same time. Used correctly, it is extremely powerful. Getting used *by* the media however, can destroy you. While I am sure that Marco hoped to have us spout out political rhetoric on the air and give his listeners something to tell their friends about at school and work, thus increasing his fan base, I am also sure that he didn't fully understand that we actually embraced the opportunity for our own needs as well, knowing fully our own abilities in front of micro-

phones, and knowing that we could use the situation to get good information out to needy people who would never have heard it otherwise. As it turns out, we were about to talk about the Western Shoshone Defense Project and also Seattle Rape Relief at length. We alternated for awhile, with Marco playing songs from our records and then talking with us about the band in between. It was going well, and I actually began to get nervous that there might not be a chance for me to speak in the time we had. I wasn't getting what I expected, which was a big open door to walk through with the story. But then Marco asked suddenly "Greg, the motivation for you to go out and write about all these subjects comes from where?" And at that point I realized that the moment I had anticipated was right there. I paused for a moment, and gave him, and Seattle, this answer:

"In 19911 moved to Seattle. I was at a party on Capitol Hill and I met a girl there and had a one-night stand with this girl, and slept with her...had unprotected sex with her...and caught genital herpes that night. It was an earth shattering experience for me, something that had no precedent in my life, something I didn't understand at all. In time I had some complications come up. The virus, even though virologist and neurologists can't understand it, the virus actually attacked some parts of my nervous system so that sexually I have experienced numbness over time, starting inl991, and it's been increasing over time. So I have found myself in a really difficult position. I found myself in a position of feeling

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extremely scared and extremely isolated because our society tells us to be ashamed, and our society tells us that we shouldn't talk about these things. One in five people have genital herpes. 30 million people in the US. I have no idea how many people

experience the numbness I feel, because no one talks about that, no one even knows about that. People with herpes are embarrassed to talk about that. So I felt so completely isolated and have over the years because of the messages I receive from the "mainstream" all the time — from right and left bombardment at all times telling me what I am supposed to be and who I am supposed to be. And I started to question

that. I started to question the facade. We put on this facade, this civilized and safe masking that doesn't reflect our humanity at all. We do that because what were told to do. You open a magazine and you see Kate Moss and she weighs ninety freaking pounds and women think "I have to weigh ninety pounds in order to be a woman." We open up magazines and see men with washboard stomachs and think we have to have that in order to be a man. Well it's not true. Whatever you have, that's what you have and that's your humanity. We deny ourselves our humanity. I realized that was going on with me this past winter. People as close to me as members of the band were always asking me "how are you"..."how are you doing" and I would say "I'm great!" Well I was shattered inside. I've been dying inside for a long time over the things that I face, because I don't understand them. Like I said, I don't even know if I'm the only one. So in time dealing with these issues, realizing every day that I was facing lies *with* lies made me really question where I was going, made me really question what it means to be human? What it means is that we're all hurt, we're all afraid, we all smell bad sometimes, and we all get sick. So why do we all agree to hide that? So what I realized is that I *am* human. This culture is not a culture that is only in denial

of death — we see that all the time, there is no death anywhere in our culture — but it's also a culture that is in denial of life. We're afraid to reveal our true selves. And what kills us, what makes our hearts and minds sick, is not that we are damaged, but that we are afraid to *be* damaged in the eyes of other people. We deny that damage every single day in exchange for that empty and worthless facade. And in doing so we all lose. What I learned over time is that I had to resist that as much as possible, and I resisted that by seeking truth in as many avenues as possible. Those truths turned into songs and those songs turned into Trial over time."

I will never forget what the studio looked like while I was speaking. It was is if the only thing living were my words and my lips moving. Marco had been leaning far over to his left towards a console to cue a song, and he was frozen there in his chair, bent over at that angle with his finger extended on a button. His assistant Adam had been putting on a pair of headphones, and when I started talking, he stopped dead too, with his hands at the sides of his head and the headphones half on his ears, just staring at me. Marco went right into a song, and as soon as we were off the air, shouted, as if to the world, "You can't PAY for radio this good!!!" He had gotten what he wanted for sure. Timm came over and we shared a moment together. He had had no idea, in the four years the band had been together. I have to say, that it wasn't until I got home that I really felt the first waves of intensity coming from what I'd just done. I spent three hours talking to my partner/girl- friend/lover Cynthia about it. The conversation took us through

worlds of emotion, and for the sake of a bit of privacy, I will leave that part alone. I had her support and respect, and that is what is important there. It was after we finished talking, that I went inside to check my email, as I had given a new email address out on the air. The mailbox was slammed with email: 30+ messages in those first few hours, and only one without substance to it (it said something like "Trial rules" or

something inane) The rest were from battered women, sexual assault survivors, people from all walks of life — certainly not at all just "punk" or "hardcore" — who wanted to share *their* personal stories with me, and who had heard what I had said while in the middle of going about their regular average evenings. It was incredible...it was as if I had opened up a door into the actual and real substance of man and womankind and invited people in to talk about our suffering, our fear, and our true depths totally unexpectedly. I got the feeling that each of these people had never imagined that they would be talking that night about the things we talked about in the individual conversations. I was online for hours communicating with people, and while I would have much rather had been face to face with them, the email was excellent nonetheless. I actually got a few letters eventually too, and about ten face to face contacts on the street. It was some of the best communication that ever resulted from actions taken with the band. For me, just knowing that I had been a catalyst for others to cast off the masks and facades even for a night or a little while was powerful enough. But more than that, however, was the fact that for the first time, as I sat there writing to complete strangers about what had just a few hours before been unspeakable that I realized that I finally owned my own past, my own secrets, and my own suffering. *I* owned them. Not society, not those around

me, not the strangers and assumed enemies, but _*me*_. I had taken the control of my own life back from all those around me, and I could finally breathe again. I told Cynthia that it felt as if I was taking, at age 28, my very first breaths since catching herpes in 1991. I realized that one of the best things about all of this was that I could now talk about whatever the fuck I felt like, no matter how personal, at any time I chose. I no longer had to worry about whispered words behind my back. What was someone going to say? "Shh...here comes Greg Bennick...! heard that he has herpes!" The words would be meaningless, as I had just told the entire city and beyond. I thought at length about the empty words and songs on the radio which one can encounter daily. Where is the real suffering there? Where is the risk? Where is the triumph or tragedy? I rarely see or hear it, if ever. I hope that for one night, I was able to share a tiny piece of something real and vital with those who chose to listen...something largely insignificant as far as the rest of the world is concerned. I shared my secrets, my fears, and that was all. But without a doubt, sharing my secrets that night with that audience was the most empowering experience of my life.

For more information about genital herpes, questions comments or conversation, or for a copy of the complete interview on CD, get in touch anytime: Greg Bennick; 427 Eleventh Avenue East; Seattle WA 98102; USA; _xjugglerx@aol.com_

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So You Want to be a Hardcore Singer?

with your humble editor

Considering the ridiculous sounds that are expected from hardcore singers these days, it is absolutely mind-boggling to me that you can't find any information or advice on the subject in any of the various well-circulated 'zines. Singing is different

from playing any other instrument because *your body* is the instrument, and if you don't know how to use it and take care of it you will hurt yourself. You'll probably have a hard time singing well, for that matter, too.

You're gonna have to learn this stuff anyway, the slow hard way, if you want to be a singer in a band that plays more than a few shows. Screaming your lungs out every night for weeks, especially while traveling, especially through such godforsaken nightmarish places as New Jersey and Cleveland (where hardcore touring is bound to take you), especially with no money, food, or sleep, has got to be one of the most dreadful things that can possibly happen to the human body. If you don't know how to take care of your voice, you're not gonna give your best performance each night, in which case you don't have any business being there. For that matter, you may lose your ability to sing (or even speak) at all, permanently, as Greg from Trial almost did (it took his voice a year to recover to the point that he could sing again), as others actually have.

And if you want to be a good singer, if you want to make music that matters and moves people, you have to take yourself seriously as a musician. Knowing this stuff is a part of that. I've spent the last five years gathering every trick I could, talking to every singer or actor/public speaker I met, and here's a summary of what I've learned.

A. ***before you scream.***

Before you start singing, it's important to warm up. You need to make sure all your vocal chords are ready to go (it's like stretching before you go running). The best thing you can do is sing a falling tone from the highest extent of your range to the lowest, then rising back up again. I learned this from an actress, and I've since heard the same thing from a number of other sources including speech therapy teachers. It sounds a little funny when you're at a punk show to do this... you can go behind the club/ house/squat to do it, or (this is what I do) wait until the rest of the musicians are tuning up and making enough noise to drown you out.

B. ***while you're screaming.***

The most important thing you can learn is to sing from your stomach with your throat open. If you are yelling in a way that uses your throat wrong, you will damage it permanently. You should have your lungs full of air when you scream, and use the air to carry through each note. Remember, the air should be coming from your stomach, your diaphragm, not your chest. Experiment a little and you should be able to figure out the difference. If you are too worried about sounding tough or whatever, you'll probably have a hard time relaxing enough to sing right... but then again, if you're worried about being or seeming tough all the time, you're gonna have a hard time relaxing enough to figure out how to do *anything* right, you macho fucking moron. Singing is like anything else in that only once you've cast off your preconceptions

about how you "should" come across can you really let yourself go and do something good. Listen to Bad Brains for the proof.

Some other hints: Henry Rollins and Tim Singer (Deadguy, Kiss It Goodbye, etc.), always stare at the floor when they

sing because it's the best position for the vocal chords. [It fucking sucks for their stage presence, but it is the best position for the vocal chords!] When your head is down and forward, your vocal chords aren't stretched out, so they can do the most work without being damaged. If you lean your head back, it stretches them thin and doesn't help at all (even if it might look cool for the fucking cameras); it can keep you from having a full sound, too. Try speaking with your chin down and then with your head leaned back and you'll see how it affects your voice. It's not too hard to figure out how to keep your stage presence while still singing with the chin low enough to protect your voice.

Cigarette smoke is going to create a bad environment for throat-teari ng screaming; so is cold air. Often a small, hot, moist room (such as summer punk house shows often take place in) can be great for your voice because the moist hot air keeps your throat hydrated, warm, and ready to go. Keep drinking water, lots of water, while you're screaming. Here's a note for practice: the worst thing you can do is scream for a while, stop for a while, and start screaming again. After you stop screaming, your vocal chords shrink back down and they need a while to heal (as we're about to talk about); if you start screaming again then, you're going to damage them. Do all your screaming in one block for the day. You should be able to tell when you're running out of throat to scream with. Stop then.

C. ***after you're done screaming.***

After you're done screaming, if you try to sing a scale, you'll probably notice that you're missing your upper notes. (When you're screaming a lot on tour, you may sometimes only have a

few notes left, in the lower ranges.) What you need to do now if you're going to heal is be *absolutely silent* for a while. Don't speak at all, don't make any noises. This is going to piss off your bandmates, perhaps. *Fuck them.* If you don't do this, your voice won't heal for the next day. Make unintelligible gestures at them with your hands and mime exasperation when they pretend not to understand. Nod a lot. Move your lips silently'. But don't speak for a few hours. When you do, speak quietly and gently, don't make any loud or high noises. You should be able to feel what is safe and unsafe for your voice, and eventually you'll be able to tell when you've been silent long enough. Play it extra safe at first, since it will be hard to fight off the various jerks and assholes who don't understand or care about your voice and think you need to talk to them. There are going to be times on long tours when you have to be silent for the rest of the night. This is tough, since it's also important to communicate with people at punk shows (and everyone always counts on the singer to do it), but keep your priorities in

mind. It's good to make other band members take responsibility for communicating anyway, so that the division of labor in the band between the "musicians" and the "communicator" doesn't become too deep. This silence may force you to be a little of a loner, an introvert. Good enough. Use the time to think about what you will do the next night, how you will speak and perform better. Remember what you're doing there in the first place.

D. ***what to put in your body.***

You know

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what alcohol does to your throat? It dries it out. Artie from Milhouse (and now Indecision) went all over Europe drinking heavily (he may not appreciate me pointing this out, but I'm sure he'll survive) and screaming every night,

and fucked his voice up pretty badly. Your vocal chords need to be clean and warm and wet for you to sing well. So like it or not, drinking and smoking are gonna fuck you up on tour, and they probably won't help you too much at home, either, if you want to be a good screamer. You should be drinking constantly, but drinking *water* I take a big jug with me on tour and fill it up everywhere I can, so if we're ever in a place without drinking water I'm still all set. Drink water constantly, all day long, so you'll be completely hydrated for the show. Drink as much as you can during the show, and a fair bit after, too, to replenish your supply. If you're working hard you'll be sweating pretty hard when you play too, so you'll need to keep a lot of liquids coming in. Water is the best liquid you could drink, at least while you're singing. Fruit juices are too acidic, in my experience... and that bubbly water that everyone drinks in Europe can make you choke if you try to drink it in between lines.

If your voice is roughed up, you can help loosen it up to sing by drinking hot water. Really hot water will loosen your vocal chords up a lot, and if you keep it coming, it can help you maintain your voice to scream longer than you would be able to normally. Last time my band recorded, there were a few days when I drank about three gallons of nearly-boiling water in three hours, and I was able to scream the whole time (though my digestion was fucked afterwards!). I've heard of singers drinking tea or coffee for this same effect; but coffee also dries out your throat like alcohol does, so it's a bad idea,

and water's always the best for your voice. There are kinds of tea that can be good to drink after you sing or in the morning when you wake up to help the healing process. You'll probably wake up with your voice pretty fucked, in which case you shouldn't speak until you've loosened it up with some tea or hot water anyway.

I know at least one guy who doesn't eat anything sugary while he's on tour, because he doesn't want there to be any sugar in his throat that could encourage bacteria there. That sounds a little superstitious, but a little superstition doesn't hurt. Illness is a real danger to singers since they wear down their ear-nose-throat system by screaming, and

you have to be really careful to eat a healthy diet, sleep enough, take vitamins, etc. so you'll be able to stay healthy. Being sick is really bad for your voice too! Another thing you can do to help your voice heal, in addition to not talking after you sing (which is the most important thing and absolutely irreplaceable), is to take ginger root and suck on it. This doesn't taste great, but it supposedly helps. I've never been a big practicer of this but I do know people who swear by it.

That's pretty much all you need to know to take care of yourself as a singer, as long as you follow those rules. There are other things that are really important to singing, like making *eye contact* with the people you are singing to (screaming at), rather than just posing staring at the fucking floor or ceiling; articulating the words of the songs with some emotion rather than just delivering them in a flat, dead "tough" monotone like Karl from fucking

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Earth Crisis or any of the others in the armies of dull one-note singers plaguing hardcore today; taking the time and energy to speak about the subjects of your songs rather than just going through the motions of screaming without offering explanations (as if there's *nothing* to be angry about or discuss in this world!), but those are subjects for another article. In the meantime, I just beg you to take yourself seriously as a musician and a communicator, take care of your health and fitness, and try to really give something new to the genre, if you want to be a hardcore screamer.

The Everyday Effects of Late Capitalism: How We Come to See Power, Knowledge, and Technology *by Eric Boehme*

— "No doubt I recognize the irony of using technology to decry it..."

— paraphrased from Sideshow Bob

Creating political disruptions and change in our time has become increasingly difficult. There is no longer a mass population base to support large social movements, the trade unions have declined in membership, while the groups that are active today are predominantly single issue groups, organizing and fighting for the rights or the recognition of this or that identity, battling one battle instead of many. Whether that means animal rights groups, the environmental movement, women's, gay and lesbian, and racial groups or the myriad other politically progressive issues the left

fragments and divides over, there is no longer any attempt to look at the larger picture, to see the connections between all of these problems and to fight on a number of fronts for social change. In addition to the fragmentation of left activists, there has been an almost whole-hearted embrace of technology and the specialized knowledge that comes with it. Progressives and movement activists across the world see the interconnectedness and the information potential of mastering technology as a boon to the possibilities for social change.

Yet I wonder whether we should not question our use of technology in both our larger socially connected struggles, and in our individual every-day-life battles we wage against the technocapitalist system. Are we contributing to the division of labor, the growth of a technological elite who come to wield the same kind of power that monopoly

capitalists once had? What are the global changes that are pushing technology and specialized knowledge further and further into our institutions and our everyday lives? What are the connections between a growth of specialized knowledge and the power one has in society? Is this a positive change? Can we benefit from the use of technology? Or is technology's encroachment into our very psyche causing permanent damage to our humanity, to our possibilities for revolutionary change?

Many punks see to be extolling the virtues of technology lately. Yet is this a misplaced energy? Certainly technology brings benefits with it, yet when we join the ranks of the "new technolo

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gists" by becoming computer programmers or working on web design or using the "new media" to make our living, are we just becoming another guardian class for the constantly changing capitalist system? Unlike the direct contradictions between worker and owner in industrial factories, the workers in the new media / new technology field, seem to have no direct place to look to target opposition and rebellion. That's the best thing about working with computers isn't it? You can stay at home and be your own boss... or does the technology become your new boss? Do you unconsciously develop a link in a chain so deeply ingrained in you, through your acceptance of the use of "knowledge" as a way to get ahead, through your unquestioning embrace of technology and science, that you pleasantly submit to the newest form capitalism has taken, this newest skin it has grown as it constantly swallows the organic world and any possibilities for drastic change. Do we cheerfully shackle ourselves to the techno-capitalist juggernaut?

I don't think that we can talk about capitalism any longer just in terms of workers and owners, factories, social classes, and any of those other outdated terms Marx used to describe the historical context in which he lived. We have to talk about our situation now. Today. We have to analyze and critique capitalism in all of its various forms. We have to think about how it colonizes both Third World countries, by developing exploitative industrial and manufacturing systems of the kind we experienced a hundred years ago, and our very own country, through an ethic of consumption and our implicit acceptance of the interpenetrations of technology,

science and capitalism in the first world. This is a quick sketch of the first world condition in which we find ourselves, that of late capitalism. No doubt there is still much to say about the living and working conditions in the countries that are developing industry, manufacturing, and capital accumulation the old fashioned way — this is not the place to say those things. Since 1972, when all the world's stock markets were connected by computer, there has been a radical change in the way technology has penetrated our lives — a change so drastic and massive that it has disrupted many of the old categories we previously used to analyze and describe our history and context. We need to update our critique and look at capitalism now in its globalized, technological, new-information-age form. We need to analyze the developments and changes wrought by late capitalism in new ways — questioning our acceptance of the

old, worn-out categories and assumptions where we all thought we could use technology for our benefit and for revolutionary change.

Late capitalism has changed the society and economy of America, Western Europe, and Japan drastically. Most of industrial and manufacturing sectors of the economy have moved to so-called Third World countries in Latin America and the Pacific Rim. For the most part, the economies of the First World now thrive off of the service sector, high-technology/new information sectors, the culture industry/entertainment sectors, and the trading and speculation on the liquid assets of finance capital run by the "professional classes" of managers, programmers, academics, doctors, lawyers, or entertainers.

Globalization has connected all of these sectors through the increased penetration of both technology and science into the institutions of political and

social interaction. We are now governed by a large bureaucracy, run by a technological elite — a set of social engineers and manager — who govern the country just like managers run their businesses. Using the tools of instrumental reason, the goals of efficiency and technical progress based on both the scientific method and the means-ends rationality capitalists use to turn people into tools, the people who run our society utilize specialized knowledge to wield power. Yet unlike the situation of industrial capitalism, where workers confronted owners and bosses through the direct contradictions of their separate interests, all of us who are involved in the service, new information, new technology, new media, or finance capital sectors have similar interests in maintaining and developing specialized knowledge. Indeed, instead of producing material durable goods, these sectors produce and develop new forms of knowledge — virtual products that do not exist anywhere yet have a kind of power over our consciousness.

It is this connection between power and knowledge in which I am most interested. There seems to be an implicit assumption among many of us that the more information we have, the more power we have. Indeed, the way the economic and political system increasingly works, it is no longer income and wealth that give status and power, it is specialized knowledge. All of the "professional classes" that pursue specialized knowledge rely on the deep connections between science, technology, and the creation of

more and more specialized forms of knowledge for their increasing levels of status and power. Science and the use of technology become an inherent part of our everyday lives. We gain power over others by our knowledge of science and a greater ability to use and manipulate technology. A new class of elites is developing — a class of professionals who control, maintain, and develop the technology sectors that are colonizing the everyday lives of normal people.

So what can we do? Well, I'm not very optimistic about our chances, yet I think it is vital to never assume anything about our use of science, technology, and instrumental reason. We have to develop new ways of thinking about the way capitalism interacts in a globalized fluid economy and how technological elites are reaping the benefits and rewards of these new inroads capitalism makes into our lives. We have to continue to

be active as resisters to technology and capitalism, sometimes using the resources we have available, sometimes refusing those resources knowing the long-term, unconscious effects it will have on us. We can never assume the use of technology or specialized knowledge will ever be neutral — we have to analyze all of their effects. We have to keep the long-term project in mind — by this I mean we have to remember that it is people not machines that will change the world — we have to remember to connect and interact as much and as often we can with potential allies. We have to go out into our communities and resist technology and capitalism on an everyday level, speaking to our friends and neighbors where they live and on their terms, not on

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ours, yet still keeping in mind the macro-level, global connections that capitalism and technology use to bulldoze the rest of the "life-world." We have to find human connections in desire, love joy, and ecstasy — all of the things that technology transforms into an individualized, alienated experience. And we have to remain active — whether that means in groups or as individuals we must constantly be on the lookout for places, times and organizations where we can resist and refuse the assumptions and the effects of a world of globalized late capitalism, a world supported and sustained by science, technology, and specialized knowledge.

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Further Reading:

Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge, * Fredric Jameson,* Postmodernism: Or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism

Jurgen Habermas, *The Rational Society, * Ernest Mandel,* Late Capitalism, * Herbert Marcuse, *One Dimensional Man*

Disgruntled CrimethInc. Sweatshop Worker Presents Demands

An unsolicited response to Inside Front readers in general, yet specifically tailored toward specific participants in this issue's letters section, and, also, those who chose not to participate. From Paul F Maul Artists ' Group member Vladyonovich Perciavellian.

Compatriots,

While attempting to lay out and beautify this current installment of Inside Front, I've become uncontrollably discouraged. I fear that collectively we miss points that should not, that *cannot, * be missed if we are to be any kind of threat to contemporary mores.

If you've read this correspondence section you've been witness to details that will prove important. You've become aware that an important dialogue concerning totalitarian distortions of democracy, cooperative endeavors and discussions of other political

concepts that affect our lives has been omitted due to circumstances beyond our control. This is a much more serious and substantial void than we may at first realize. Such a dialogue in print may have provided a heavy enough counter-balance for what remained to be more acceptable: music.

Hardcore fails when it creates anything less than revolutionary inspiration. In an album, a soundtrack, a compact disc, I want to see a fucking soundtrack for disobedience — something that gives me enough of a jolt to take my deviance further than I would without it. Bands that cannot or will not inspire such behav

ior are simply not worth my time. I'd also question whether they're worth your time. Further, music, or discussions with music as the point of focus, that do not inspire or attempt to inspire such radicalism, should find itself deleted into oblivion (Fat Wreck Chords bands, for example, and the 'zines that exist to promote them, should wake up one day to find that nobody cares about them, since they don't care about anything beyond themselves). *The travesty is we ^f ve allowed our attention, our energy, to focus on the vehicle rather than the travels and the destination.*

If the preceding correspondence is any accurate reflection of I.F. and the thought process it inspires in its readership (which I'm not wholeheartedly convinced of... yet), then I resign. I don't want to participate any longer. As I stated, my time is quite important and if my efforts and energy support nothing more than discussion about music details I want out.

In a broad sense, hardcore and most of its participants in general have come down with a bad case of Missingthepointitis, this letters section being only a minor reflection of that. When I receive my copy of I.F. I indeed find worthwhile discussions about concepts that truly affect my life: capitalism, collectivism, anarchism, employment, housing, food, world travel, trans-continental cooperations vs. corporations, and, of course, revolution and radicalism of all sorts. This is what I.F. gives to me and these are the topics on my mind upon completing an issue. I have difficulty understanding how others walk away from the magazine inspired to do nothing more than perpetuate hardcore music rhetoric.

This phenomena could possibly be the result of the continuous bombardment of emptiness from the hardcore

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media's contemporary powerhouses. Long, drawn out and impeccably detailed blow by blow accounts of who signed where, who changes what, who places that infamous series of tightly spaced thin black vertical lines to a backdrop of a white rectangular box and on what release, in addition to other nonsensical gibberish that speaks very little about our actual lives and, better yet, how to improve them. Discussions such as these, among others, have inspired a culture so hopelessly introspective, so perpetually self-involved that we often fail to realize the context of our existence. Is there nothing more important to discuss?

An entire section in a widely circulated magazine (a great magazine!) is set aside for us to knead and mold, shape and change in any fucking way we possibly want to. If we

have something important to say, we're essentially guaranteed that many thousands will hear us — at no cost at all! Indeed, someone else will foot the bill! This blank canvas, this prime opportunity (please listen closely) is virtually exclusive to punk, hardcore, underground and other radical publications, and should be one of our most cherished assets.

— Vladyonovich

The CrimethInc. Board of Trustees Responds:

Uh, yeah, you're right. Endless band interviews, vapid and wandering, advertisements, promo-pack photo covers on 'zines, old school vs. new school, what the fuck are we do

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ing rehashing all that shit? As if the rest of our lives isn't boring and trivial enough already. We do need to concentrate on where we're going and why, not just on the make and year of the car we're driving ("spirit of '88!"). The problem is, "political" magazines filled with abstractions and infighting and, most of all, complaints about the apathy and stupidity of the rest of the world are equally boring, equally ineffectual, and possibly more harmful, for they inevitably alienate everyone else. The others end up just reading the hardcore press kit 'zines because they think the "political" kids are fucking dicks. The question is how to make a new kind of magazine that will be exciting and accessible enough for everyone to read and participate in, while simultaneously offering ideas and resources for changing our real, everyday lives.

I don't think Inside Front is nearly there yet, in the letters section or any other. And it's true, in fact, that we've actually fabricated one letter in each of the last three issues, just to keep things more interesting in it — ! So this issue we didn't do that, and you didn't like the section, go figure. But we're working towards it, I hope. And I'd like to say that I thought Norm's letter was actually quite good: if we are going to make music that makes us capable of things we were not capable of before, that's a serious undertaking, and we will need to do some thinking and talking about how to go about this, how to explore and try new things until we find the magic combination. As long as we don't get so distracted by the form that we forget the content! So that's why we still feel pretty good about covering music here. Our emotions precede our politics, anyway, don't they? Or is this not about us

as human beings? And that's not to defend the legitimacy of debates about "old school vs. new school" music (that's not about us as human beings either, is it!)... just to say remember why we're here and what we're doing.

Punk Feasts, Politics and Change: A Communique From the CrimethInc. Leninist Brigade for Political Re-education

Collective authorship

Today, punk rock fests suck. No doubt everyone's a still a big fan. Yeah, three days of listening to your favorite bands is really the way to go, yeah, that's fucken punk man... but these days, we think fests are all about entertainment, buying shit, and making money. What happened to the politics, to the community, to the workshops,

the meeting people, the coming together and connecting for political and social change, the community beneficiaries we put on these fests to raise money for? Why does every political kid I know have more and more critiques of these things when these fests were the way we met each other in the first place? Why are we becoming more and more disaffected from the broader, music-entertainment based group of people who come out to these fests, pay their money (not thinking about where it is going), buy a bunch of shit from these huge punk-rock distro flea-markets, listen to some bands and leave, not having had their lives changed and their worlds rocked?

Detroit fest — 1999. This was the fourth of these annual fests in Detroit and once again, filled with the tension between kidz who care about politics and those who just want to rock out. Every other year, this fest was run by a collective group of kids work

ing together. This year one guy went behind the collective's back and took over booking and running the fest. Every other year, there were a number of workshops where hundreds of kids sat down and talked with each other — you name it, we talked about it — the Gulf War, sex and gender issues, economic change, anti-racist action, becoming radical teachers — we taught each other the tools for social change. Every other year, the collective made sure there was space and time for the workshops. This year, it seemed there was less and less interest in workshops, politics, and connecting with each other. Every other year, there were three or four prominent beneficiaries that were given donations out of the money made from the fest — thousands of dollars given to these groups to help them in their pursuit of social change. Each group had a literature table, often spoke between bands about their organizations, and often gave workshops on the issues they were working on. This year, the organizer neither advertised nor talked about who the beneficiaries were supposed to be (some members of the CrimethInc. Collective saw only one very generic information sheet). None of the groups showed up to talk about their issues, and there seems to be some suspicions about whether any of the groups are getting any money at all from what was supposed to be a benefit for them.

Sure fests are a dime a dozen these days. Sure many of them are about music and entertainment, about making money. But not Detroit. Fuck your Initial Records Crazy Fest, we don't care about you, we will not show up and support you. But not Detroit. Like the Minneapolis and Columbus Fests, Detroit is about building ties that bind, about doing things and acting in

ways that are punk but are about more than the music. Detroit is about politics and community. Of course there has been the tension since the beginning between political kidz and unpolitical kidz. Yet we can't let these fests turn into just one more fucken money generating machine. Fests are public spaces where we can talk and act on our private politics. We can't let these places turn into another mall, another blank-eyed, uncritical place to consume your fucken products, your fucken genocide. We need to take back fests as public places or start our own. Who really gives a fuck about the bands anyway? There have been very few bands lately that this branch of the CrimethInc. Collective has seen, that fucken rocked our world, that made us

want to take to the streets with a black mask and a molotov cocktail, that inspired hope, anger, and energy for us to fight for political and social change. We go to fests to see people not to see bands. We hope against hope that a band will inspire us, but we prioritize connecting with people over the spectacle of entertainment. We go to fests to meet new allies, to make new friends, to experience the pleasure of love, desire, conversation, physical intimacy, social interaction, and to gather the political tools to fucken change the world. We don't need more bands as performers, we need each other as political allies and friends. And we can't lose the public space of the fest to those who don't care about community or about politics. We think we should be RECLAIMING the fests, not surrendering them, going into fests like Detroit prepared to

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make them events for politicizing kidz, by any means necessary, using our creativity rather than our penchant for complaining to seize those fence-sitters and reactionaries and get them into politics before they even know what hit them.

Or should we even try to save fests, to try to keep politics in punk? What the fuck? If you don't care about what we care about, we're not gonna force you to be political (in spite of our Leninist moniker) ... you have to find your own desires. We know that our desires involve connecting with each other. We know that fulfilling our desires involves everything punk fests were originally about: the music, the speech, the words, the politics, the resource sharing, and the ultimate goal of social change. For those of us who care about politics, who care about building communities, who have dedicated our lives to change, and who still want to connect with each other as we grow older, we need to stay in touch. Those of us who still live and love punk rock but who are developing our political skills and resources outside of the punk community, we need to continue to have a way to connect with each other, to talk, to play, to see each other face to face, and connect our lives in a way that will make it easier for us each individually to effect a broader change.

Toward this end, the CrimethInc. Collective hopes to encourage an all workshops, all play, all human weekend, as an alternative to the all entertainment, all-consumer-all-consuming spectacle of alienated groups of unpolitical and uncaring kidz gathering together to "watch" music and each other. Not forgetting the importance of fighting for those

spaces left to us, fighting to keep politics and community an integral part of the Minneapolis, the Detroit, the Columbus gatherings, whatever other music fests or shows we organize or attend, we propose a new gathering, a new society, a new connection and a new chance for re-connection, to fight for change. A purely political kid fest might be a GREAT opportunity to plan how to do that. That is what we think we should do: regroup what is good about punk for us, clarify and solidify it, and then try to give it back not just to the world but to punk too, to keep that soil fertile so it will produce more of us. This generation *will not* be the last one of politicized punks, severing ourselves in frustration.

Maybe we're living out the dreams and fantasies of our left ancestors — the Port Huron of the student movement, the summer camps of the Old-Left communists, the Union Summer organizing drives put on by trade unions — yet we think this is an important step in establishing a community base from which to connect with other groups and to connect with each other as individuals. We need the chance to politicize new kidz that larger music fests bring us, yet as a friend of the Collective's said at Detroit, "we have much to teach and learn from each other." Join us. Let's share the tools we each have, we each use in pursuing our pleasures, our hopes, our politics and our dreams. Fulfilling your life's desire lays the groundwork to bring the larger changes to

make it possible for everyone to fulfill their life's desire. Desire unceasingly...

— The CrimethInc. Collective

For info on the all-workshops fests and networking by political punks contact:

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What the Punk Boy Means When He Says Electro

by Spencer Ackerman

Call the INS, because Dylan Ostendorf of *HeartattaCk* is having his music infiltrated by a certain unsavory element. Aesthetic purity has seen better days.

This is from Ostendorf's review of 12 Tone System's *Soundtrack To Synthetic Music IT* printed in *HeartattaCk* #21:

Hmm...the title says it all. Pretty synthetic. At least they used the electronic stuff the whole time and made it legitimate, rather than throwing in a note and stupid-ass electric croaking sounds or some shit. Doesn't mean I'm down...five boys dressed in black with greasy hair and softly spoken vocals that are oh-so New Wave or retro or something. I'm sick of all the movie down...five boys dressed in black with greasy hair and softly spoken vocals DJ-Looping-Unoriginal-Bastard and whoever the fuck else is

making "synthetic music" in their basement studios and I'm sick of everyone else who wants to jump on the electro-techno-hip hop bandwagon. Devo are not men, Ink & Dagger are not vampires and computers aren't musical innovators. At least I can hear some real sounding drums in there somewhere lost amidst the mechanical storm... It's clear that Ostendorf is less concerned with reviewing 12 Tone System's record than he is with expressing his frustration and discontent over the proliferation of electronic music.

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So distraught is Ostendorf with the electric threat that he makes no distinction between genres; the "electro-techno-hip hop" conglomerate is apparently a single concerted effort suckering people towards an empty promise. Buy the electronic snake oil. Comes in one variety.

Why is this suddenly troublesome? Although it has been ghettoized with astonishing efficiency, 'synthetic music is older than punk rock. Perhaps Ostendorf's problem is that 12 Tone System, his point of departure, is on the hardcore label Keystone-Ember. Ostendorf is observing the preliminary stages of astonishing efficiency, 'synthetic music is older than punk rock. Perhaps cultural miscegenation in his own backyard. Someone has to warn people against polluting the bloodline.

Culture is fragmented in America. As evidenced by the existence of this magazine and the thousands of similarly-focused others, whatever vice-like hegemony pop culture ever possessed is now either disregarded or recycled for an ironic jab at its impotence. Pop culture's weakness is exposed whenever it co-opts an underground element for feeble renegotiations of its own expiration date. Its plain to see that culture is not manufactured and dispensed in a topdown fashion; in whatever form it takes, it is constantly being created regardless of economic disadvantage, historical or contemporary oppression or even a lack of an audience. So, there's no uniform American culture, which is not something to be lamented.

Instead, we have myriad communities of interest bound together by some common cultural force. Sometimes that binding force comes from an element of pop culture. I read in *Stay Free!* about the owner of the world's largest collection culture. I read in Stay Free! about the owner of the world's largest collection of "Little Mermaid" memorabilia. This middle-aged man's obsession, coupled with his mustache, would paint him as a pedophile in the eyes of cultural *auslanders.*

Inside Front couldn't exist if music wasn't a binding cultural force. Amongst the young, music's accoutrements often become a nation; music is rarely, if ever, music alone. The vitriol of the patriotic against the pop culture imperialists is a reminder of this elevation. The first song on the *Lyricist Lounge* compilation is Cipher Complete's plea for the faithful to "Bring Hip Hop Back." (Bringing it back. Sound familiar?)

Once the subcultural nation is established, it's easy for the understandable desire for artistic control to transcend a particular artist. When the idea is entrenched within the community's thinking — once the community is aware of its binding force — it becomes a new idea: the notion of cultural purity. Hardcore For The Hardcore.

This is often a necessary instinct for the culture's preservation. When a major label, for instance, distant from the culture, signs a subcultural phenomenon, its marketing strategy is to sell the subculture along with the band. When this happened to punk rock in the mid nineties, it gave punk bit of an identity crisis, and examples abounded of reactions to the perceived infiltration, all in the name of keeping punk alive. Punk reevaluated its mem

bership requirements when faced with The Other.

But the idea of cultural purity can be very dangerous. The Other isn't always an outside element bent on exploitation. When The Other emerges from within the ranks of the nation, reactions are perhaps more volatile. Music based subcultures are bound together, after all, by music, and when musicians begin to branch out of the borders of the nation for inspiration or experimentation, the nation is thrown into confusion. The faithful become The Other, like 12 Tone System did in Ostendorf's eyes.

The culture's tenuous grasp on a common identity is shaken. The experimental artists are scorned for not paying attention to the glass ceiling while derivative artists are embraced when they give the culture what it wants to hear. Faced with the destabilizing force of new influence, cultural pundits hearken back to an idealized time when the culture was pure. The myth of the

Ideal Form, ever present in the history of the world, resurfaces in music-based subcultures as the Old School. Be it in hip hop jungle, drum n^{A}O bass, techno, industrial (assuming, of course, that Ostendorf is wrong and these genres are in fact distinct), jazz, rock and roll, heavy metal, or punk rock, the idea that at one point in the not-too-distant past all was well within the pure culture has proven to be a powerful force for resisting change. Once the myth disseminates throughout the culture, distinctions are easily made between the loyal and the disloyal — the only distinction that matters from the perspective of opinion leaders in their attempt to reinforce the criteria for cultural identification.

The culture regains identity at the expense of a part of its constituency. It is at this point that the culture is no longer beneficial for the experimental artist, for *any* artist.

An interesting paradox: a music-based subculture develops, presumably, because pop culture doesn't pay an appropriate amount of respectful attention to a certain musical idea. This prompts a motivated individual or group to approach that idea in response to pop culture's unsatisfactory treatment. Like-minded individuals join in with a slightly different approach and the culture materializes. Once faced with the "Inner Other, " the purist element in the established subculture takes the place of pop culture when it disregards, marginalizes and finally purges the Inner Other's unfamiliar experiment. This has grave consequences for the subculture: once a healthy haven for artistic growth, the subculture shows itself to be concerned with self-referential perpetuation. In an attempt to save the nation from an inevitable paradigm shift, the purist element destroys what it tries to preserve- the spirit and purpose of the subculture.

The tactics of the purist element are present in Ostendorf's review. The ultimate aim is to delegitimize the achievements of the distasteful element. This marginalization, to be successful, must not deal so much with the substance of the particular example in question, but with the nascent threat it represents. He identifies the Inner Other (12 Tone System's use of electronics, in this case)

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and complains about its presence, regardless of how limited 12 Tone System is in influence. Secondly, he extrapolates beyond the boundaries of the Inner Other's control-how are 12 Tone System responsible for what's on movie soundtracks?

Thirdly, he condescendingly mocks 12 Tone System for doing things which modern hardcore bands do, namely writing music in basements, dressing in black and using a soft-spoken singing style, as if these are only legitimate musical accoutrements for rock and roll bands. Fourthly, by stating that "computers aren't musical innovators" he slyly implies that 12 Tone System isn't comprised of human beings. This is an especially disparaging association to a subculture that frequently employs iconography skeptical of technology's dystopian potential. Of course a computer isn't a musical innovator. Neither is a guitar.

Ostendorf's reference to "DJ-Looping-Unoriginal Bastard" is particularly pitiful. Every Wednesday in February at the Knitting Factory in New York, Paul D. Miller (AKA DJ Spooky) hosted "Afro-Futurism, " a forum for experimental black artists to gain recognition. Aside from tinkering with traditional African music's, the common bond between the artists was a willingness to experiment regardless of musical genre. And Ostendorf would have us believe that the incorporation of turntables (by which he means any kind of un-rock instrument) consigns these musicians to a contemptible status? Sounds like what opera said about jazz, and what jazz said about rock, and what rock has been saying about hip hop for twenty years. What X says about un-X.

The desire for musicians to experiment with an intermingling of rock and roll and electronic music reflects the staleness of both cultures. This new hybrid was inevitable. It's so ridiculous to be

grudge an artist respect for refusing cultural allegiance over innovation. As Spooky put it: no props for the culture cops.

Spencer Ackerman can be contacted at 678 E. 24 St., 1st Fl., Brooklyn NY 11210.

All the Arms We Need?

by the notorious Bryan Alft

I've been thinking a lot about guns lately. I hate them, and have never had any desire to own one. This negative feeling towards guns was fairly unique among my family and among the community I grew up in. I spent the first 18 years of my life in a fairly rural area where hunting was an integral part of life for many people. And, I have family members who are committed gun collectors. Nevertheless, I am at a loss to understand the interest in guns or gun culture.

My opinions toward guns have evolved quite a bit over the last year. I had always been the standard bearer for the usual liberal belief that guns should be outlawed,

or at least severely controlled. And, I probably will never understand the desire to own an instrument made solely for killing. However, distrust for those in power has made me wary of attempts to remove guns from the hands of the citizens. I believe we should have a right to ensure that we are equipped with the tools to rebel against a government should it fail to be representative

of the people and make attempts to remove liberties.

So what is my concern about guns? I think the heart of the problem with guns in this country is the romantic notions so many people hold about gun ownership. Guns are interwoven into the ridiculously distorted and overdramatized made-for-television history of the United States. And, this history of our nation, with its pioneers holding a gun in one hand and a flag in the other, is widely linked to the image of a tough and rugged man.

We are taught from day one in this culture that we must be tough and manly and to 'take no shit' from anyone. Movies and television teach us that 'real men' use force to prove their worth. Guns are shown as the easiest and quickest and toughest way to prove this masculinity. Ownership of one is a patriotic part of our 'proud' American history.

Shoot first, ask questions later. Suddenly, every boy and man in this society who maybe doesn't feel so powerful or manly, can own a gun — have the power to take out anyone who pisses him off on the street — to shoot his asshole boss if he wants to — and so the gun becomes a surrogate ego, their manhood, the proof that they are tough as nails — like all great Americans.

This type of image is what sells the NRA and other rightwing pro-gun causes, and also fills the coffers of the gun manufacturers. And, is certainly a factor in high crime and murder rates. We need to work as a culture to change the attitudes we exhibit about guns and violence. If attitudes were changed about the ownership and use of guns, then there wouldn't be a need for laws to curtail gun prevalence. Guns should be viewed as a

necessary evil — only to be used in an extreme situation, not as a beautiful and desirable item, nor as part of a simple entertaining video game. We should loathe them and their use, as we should all violence and war.

Gun advocates are quick to note that 'guns don't kill, people do'. Absolutely(!), so start teaching a fear and disgust for their use. Stop teaching that shooting is fun. Stop teaching the use of a deadly tool as a way to resolve conflict. Certainly, I would never want to disallow someone the right to defend oneself, but let's make the act of shooting at someone so loathsome an act that it really, truly only happens under severe situations, not when, someone fucks with you in a parking lot!

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Editor's note: In response to Bryan's article about guns, I think it's worth pointing out how the A.T.F. has used gun ownership as a pretext to attack and even slaughter countless anti-statist (or at least antisocial) groups. The conflicts with militia movement and David Koresh's compound in Waco are only two examples. It's almost as if the U.S. government permits us our "right to bear arms" only for the sake of having an excuse to wipe out any anti-government force that gets to rowdy and ambitious. Guns are there in the stores sq *that when they feel ready to start arming themselves and taking their struggle against the authorities seriously, the authorities can come in and shit them down. Perhaps (in the U.S., at least) a revolutionary group could stay viable and have deeper effects if they didn't offer the government such an opportunity to destroy them. Remember, on the playing field of sheer physical force, they will always have us beat. No matter how many guns you have, even grenades and bombs and tanks, they will always have more — and they will justify using them against you to the public on the grounds that you have them and are a public menace. Yeah, the idea of being able to fight their coercion with force of our own is really attractive, and there are situations in which that can work (or at least I hope there will be soon!) But every time I get fed up with everything and I want to go get guns and start planning my first wave of terrorism, I ask myself: do I want the power? Or just the symbol of it?*

What is a Union, What Does it Do, and Why Should I Give a Shit?

*By Dave Coker, * Industrial Union 640, Delegate #231, Industrial Workers of the World

"Everybody gotta work in this world. Some folks lucky, some folks ain't" -Mojo Nixon

Truer words have never been spoken like the above quote by that great country-folk-punk laureate, Mojo Nixon. The aforementioned line comes from a song about a chicken processing plant bursting into flames in the sleepy little town of Hamlet, North Carolina. It seems the boss had ordered the exit door chained shut in an effort to keep workers from stealing chickens, or worse yet, going to the bathroom. As a result, those workers were burnt alive. Had there been a Union in place or a pro-Union presence on the job this sickening incident could have most likely been avoided. This example is one of the more graphic ones that can be used to illustrate how a Union presence on the job could drastically change the well being of the workers. In this case it meant the difference between life and death..

The cold, hard and pretty much unavoidable fact is that, if you're not already working, you're going to have to get a job at some point (unless, of course, you are on Mr. Brian D's plan...). Having to go to work can be an unpleasant experience in and of itself without having to worry about some asshole boss trying to screw you out of your overtime pay or chain your ass into a burning building. *So what is the alternative?* The alternative is arming yourself with an understanding of what a labor Union is, how it

can benefit you, and how to use (or get around) labor laws when necessary. I've been a member of the

Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) for about three years now. The IWW not only has a long and proud history of revolutionary labor struggle but is still active today in the labor movement. The following is from the viewpoint of my understanding of revolutionary industrial unionism (read: DIY Unionism) as put forth by the IWW.

_ *What is a Union?*_

Only about 12% of the U.S. working population is unionized. Over the past 60 years Unions and working people have suffered major rollbacks in the gains that were won by struggle in the 1930's. Unions have gone from a viable force in the U.S. to one of mystery and misinformation. There is a great deal of confusion as to what a Union really is. Forget Jimmy Hoffa, forget all the mob stories you've heard, the real deal is that the boss can do whatever she or he wants when there is no union in a workplace. Your pay can be cut, you can be fired, unsafe working conditions can be a day to day reality for you on the job. There are next to no limits to the abuse you can suffer in your workplace. It's really hard to win an argument with someone who can fire you. Working people found out a long time ago the hard way that they didn't have any power or protection on the job as individuals. What they also found out was that their voice was much more effective on the job when they acted together as a group. This is what a union is at its very base; an organization of everybody who works for a boss, using their collective strength to (1) *Stop the boss from doing what the workers don't want*- like firing employees without just cause, awarding jobs or higher wages based on favoritism or discrimination, treating workers unfairly and with disrespect, lowering wages, or lowering safety standards, and (2) *Make the boss do what the*

workers want- like paying higher wages, providing health care and paid leisure time and treating workers with the respect they deserve.

_ *The Legal Process o f Organizing a Union,* _

The answer to the question of how to organize at your workplace is certainly one that is more extensive that what I can offer here. There are different situations that are presented at every corner and turn of every organizing campaign. What can be offered here is information on the actual legal process by which unions are recognized on the job as well as a few tried and true tactics that the IWW has been using for nearly a century.

Getting to the point at which you will try to gain union recognition is the hard part. (Gaining union recognition is when your boss officially recognizes the Union and agrees to negotiate workplace terms with the Union) A majority of your fellow and sister workers will have to join the union for it to serve as the official bargaining agent. There are no "textbook" organizing campaigns. Every workplace offers a different climate and, in turn, presents different obstacles. Building solidarity with your fellow workers on the shop floor is the key. After that is done there are essentially three ways to gain union recognition; voluntary recognition, independent recognition, or a National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) election. The *voluntary recognition* includes situations

where the employer, verbally or in writing, accepts the union's claim to represent a majority of employees. Another route to be taken is an independent election to be conducted by an

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other, neutral, third party (other than a governmental body). A swift election presided over by a third party is preferable to the NLRB election which can take 30 days or more. Faced with the demand of union recognition though, employers

will usually demand a NLRB election. This allows your boss time to try to convince (or coerce) your fellow workers that they don't want a union. Your employer will prefer a NLRB election because it can be a drawn out and legalistic process that can be postponed for several months. By the time the election comes around many of your union supporters may have been scared out of the union or fired under the guise of misconduct on the job. This will be a crucial time for the organizing campaign. You and your fellow workers will need to seriously consider what resources you have at your disposal to push back any offenses your boss might make.

While the NLRB can be a resource, particularly when your boss has started firing union supporters, it can also work in your disfavor. To simply rely on the NLRB and labor laws (many of which aren't suited to *real* protection for workers) is a poor route to take. Many charges have been filed with the NLRB resulting in a sweeping "legal" victory five-seven years down the road. By this time it doesn't really make any difference as the union is probably long since busted and supporters have moved on to other jobs- there is no union in place to celebrate this hollow victory.

*_A Union Contract_*

In theory the union contract, or collective bargaining agreement, is put in place to secure the gains that workers have made through struggle and sacrifice. In practice it can be quite a different thing. The union contract is a double-edged sword. It wasn't until 1939 (thirty four years after the IWW was founded)

that the IWW even used contracts in the sense that we see them today. Up to that point the IWW had always settled problems on the job with direct action. While contracts can be used to secure gains, they can also be used to bottle the action of a militant rank- and-file. Union contracts as we know them today are inevitably riddled with no-strike clauses. When the right of the workers to stop production is taken away their best and most effective tool in class warfare is taken away.

*_Acting Union at Your Job_*

Acting Union is the real meat to any organizing campaign and is the first step into solidifying a serious Union presence. It is important to remember that even if the organizing drive at your workplace falls through it doesn't mean you have to give up hope. *You can still act union on the job.* Section 7 of the National Labor Relations Act states: *Employees shall have the right to self-organization, to form, join or assist labor organizations, to bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing, and to engage in other concerted activities for the purpose of collective bargaining or other mutual aid or protection.* Acting union is realizing that the interests of the workers and

the bosses don't always align (in fact most of the time they run in direct opposition to one another) and, being a worker you take the side of other workers on your job. You act as a unit to solve workplace problems that are created and maintained by your boss. In addition *acting union* is a good way to show skeptical workers on the job that a union is to their best interest. For instance, there was a coffee shop that myself and one other IWW member worked

in a few years ago. It was a small mom n' pop type place with a staff of no more than 20 workers. There was no "official" union in place but we organized against workplace obstacles as if we were a Union. The pay was low, we were treated disrespectfully by our bosses, and promised pay raises had never come through. All these grievances came to a head one day as we all stood in the kitchen receiving our meager paychecks. We all agreed to meet later that evening (outside of work) to decide on a proper plan of action. That night we talked about what we didn't like and how we thought we could change those things. We made a list of our grievances and elected one worker to go to the bosses and lay those out. That worker made it clear that it wasn't just one or two employees who had a problem, but the entire staff. The following pay day those promised raises had been instituted. It was a good feeling to know that our collective energy could push through demands and have them met.

*Direct Action Gets the Goods!*

"I don't know of anything that can be applied that will bring as much satisfaction to you, and as much anguish to the boss, as a little sabotage in the right place at the right W."-Bill Haywood, Founding Member of the IWW

It is also important to remember that while labor laws are in place, they may not be enforced in a manner that really protects workers. Working people *cannot* rely on the government and government bodies to aid them in their struggles against the bosses. They are a resource to be used in a worker's favor but they are not our only resource. The laws are written in a manner

that mainly protects the interests of the bosses. The courts and laws are all on the terms of the bosses, but when we bring issues back down to the workplace then things begin to be put in terms of the workers. The simple fact is that working people run this society. It is by our labor that roads are built, dishes are washed, and books are printed. As the old IWW tune goes "without our brain and muscle not a single wheel can turn". You could stand in your bosses face all day long and reciting labor laws that pertain to your situation and

still have your ass fired. But when the workers start doing things that slow down the profits the bosses sit up and take notice. This being said then, the question of what to do remains. Through the years workers have devised various creative ways of forcing their boss to grant demands. These can be work slowdowns, whistle blowing, sitdown strikes, sick-ins, dual power, or monkey wrenching.

A *work slowdown* is exactly what it sounds like; a method that keeps you on the job, but slows down your bosses profit. Railroad workers around the turn of the century in Indiana were notified of a cut in their wages. Immediately they took their shovels

out to the Blacksmith shop and had two inches cut off of the scoop. They returned to work and told the boss "short pay, short shovels".

Whistle blowing is simply telling people the truth about what goes on at your job. If you work in a restaurant, for instance, then perhaps you could contact your local health inspector about the rat problem the company has in the kitchen.

The *sitdown strike* has a long proud history in working class struggles. This tactic was employed by IWW theater extras facing a 50% cut in pay. The 150 extras, dressed as Roman soldiers,

*Further Reading and Other Resources*

The IWW has a veritable wealth of information and literature that could benefit you in your struggle to gain a more democratic workplace. In addition we also produce a monthly newspaper, *The Industrial Worker, * that has all the latest national and international labor news. We'd also be happy to answer any labor related questions you may have one on one. The following is a short list of further reading on the subject.

*Labor Law*

-*Labor Law for the Rank & Filer.* By Staughton Lynd. Charles H. Kerr Publishing (1740 West Greenleaf Ave, Chicago IL, 60626) -*Rights of Employees and Union Members.* By American Civil Liberties Union. (Available from Association for Union Democracy, 500 State, Brooklyn NY 11217, for $17 ppd.)

-*IWW Organizing Manual.* By IWW.

*General*

-*Solidarity Unionism-Rebuilding the Labor Movement From Below.* By Staughton Lynd. Charles H. Kerr Publishing.

-*The General Strike.* By Ralph Chaplin. Reprinted by IWW.

-*One Big Union.* By IWW.

-*How To Fire Your Boss-A Worker's Guide to Direct Action.* By IWW (Available from the Greensboro IWW, Po Box 10093, Greensboro NC 27404)

-*Sabotage.* By Elizabeth G. Flynn. Reprinted by IWW.

Contact the IWW General Headquarters at 103 W. Michigan Ave, Ypsilanti MI 48197. Ph: (313)-483-3548. Fax:(313)-483-4050.

> Email _ghq@iww.org_ or the Greensboro IWW at PO Box 10093, Greensboro NC 27404, Ph:

davecoker@ usa.net (313)483.3548

waited for their cue to carry the Queen out. When the cue was given they all surrounded the Queen and refused to budge until their pay was not only restored, *but tripled!*

A *sick in* is a way to go on strike without really going on strike. The idea is to have a majority, if not all, the workers call in sick thereby crippling business for the day. This tactic is the traditional method used by public employee unions which are legally

prevented from going on strike. It is swift on-and-off method that will be hard for your boss to counter.

Dual Power is basically ignoring the boss. Workers often have the means at their disposal to institute changes on their job- no need to wait for the boss to do it.

Monkey Wrenching is a very broad term. It can be defined as any number of tricks or deviltry that reminds the boss how much his or her workers are needed (*and how much the workers don't need the boss!).* While all these tactics are nonviolent, they are usually illegal and should only be used only during open wholesale class war. This could be anything from creative uses of super glue or "losing" vital workplace items. Perhaps restaurant workers could place a bunch of live crickets or mice (purchased at a local pet store) in the kitchen after hours and then give the Board of Health an anonymous tip. The possibilities are endless and your creativity is the only limit.

These tactics are all tools for a disgruntled work force to use as a means to gain respect, higher wages or whatever is lacking on the job. Be creative and you and your fellow and sister workers should be able to use these tactics, modify them, or devise others to fit your specific situation.

PF Inside Front Personals

Classified ads are free in Inside Front, as long as we remember

to run them for you, with one exception: if you are a record com- pany/distribution whose catalog features Cosmopolitan Magazinestyle photos of skinny models flaunting fashionable band clothing (a la Initial Records), we are not amused, and will charge you $100 per word... you cynical, apolitical motherfuckers!

NB GRAF1X — Looking for any bands, labels, 'zines, etc. — hardcore or non-hardcore — who want artwork and/or design done in any style... l've done work recently for such bands as 25 ta Life, Voice ot Reason (CT), No Holds Barred (CT). Will work for free, at cost, for trade, or *cheap...* Get in touch; Nick Baxter, 15 West Dayton Hill Road, Wallingford, CT 06492 USA email: dhelix@iconn.net

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN — The results are in! After extensive polling, we have now found that the winner of the trophy for the person most likely to ruin hardcore for 1999 is Aaron Turner of Hydrahead Records. Congratulations, and keep on ruining hardcore! This free classified paid for by the Bob Bennett Booster Club, Nevada.

CROSSBLOOD Distribution — Still Iwking for more hardcore/holy terror/S.E./ Youth Crew/Old Schix)l bands and other distros who wants their shits smellin over here. Write and send your stuffs to Dennis C. Matibag/C.E.T./University of the City of Manila/lntramuros, Manila/Philippines

FNM zine looking for writers and pictures. Labels/bands/zines send stuff for review. Ads are free. "Smaller" bands get in touch to be on cassette comp. 103 Stratford Ct., Georgetown KY 40324 _xveganjx@hotmail, wm_

Will trade Unconquered records and merchandise for Gehenna merchandise, records, or body parts. Write to Jason Glines, P.O. Box 40314, Reno, NV 89504

Looking for: Celtic Frost t-shirts, Acid bath merchandise (t-shirts, hats, etc.), Crumbsuckers t-shirts and Y.D.I 7" to buy. Lee Altomare, 61 Linden Ave., Bethpage NY 11714

1. am looking to start a tight knit web of persons who are both involved in the hardcore scene and enjoy/ play/collect original 8-bit nintendo games. Contact _odjnd@connectni;t, com_ or Colin Tappe, 118W W. 6th Avenue, Escondido, CA 92025

Wanted: Unrotten teeth for replacements, please contact Mike Cheese at P.O. Box 83694, San Diego, CA 92138–3694 PS. no Belgian teeth, they're as bad as mine.

DESPERATELY SEEKING: Magnetic Fields "Holiday" CD, videos of Diamanda Galas/Systral/Morser/ Catharsis/Gehenna, , and still looking for old Gism artwork and records. Contact the CrimethInc. address in Atlanta.

Introduction to the Situationists

... the next badge of intellectual elitism.

What's bad about political/intellectual elitism? It alienates everyone else from politics and critical thinking, rendering them powerless more effectively than any oppressive government could ever do. The propaganda of network TV is not more responsible for the apathy of the mainstream Westerner than the average radical leftist is. Those for whom being "political" and "educated" has become an identity, who use these terms to define themselves as a certain type of person, thus make others think that politics and radical thinking are the hallmark of a certain group of people (a drab and haughty group, at that), no more, and marginalize themselves from the rest of the world which so badly needs some of their ideas — but not their scornful "specialism, " not their divisionary attitudes and identities.

One of the Situationists' chief goals was to fight this conception of the self according to roles played in present society (i.e. intellectual professor, indifferent bricklayer, student radical), so it's ironic to see them used everywhere now by people who want to assert their status as members of the high political elite. Everywhere I turn now (Refused and other band lyrics and slogans, the AK Press catalog, and an even worse piece in Adbusters) I see the terms (which, since the academic language they used isn't common, are already exclusive and exclusionary) thrown about — spectacle, detourn, derive, etc. — and the ideas misused and misrepresented by individuals who obviously have read little or none of the original texts but hope only to be impressive by citing the "latest" in hyper-radical/-intellectual French underground thinkers.

To combat this sort of thing, which ghettoizes thinkers who had ideas relevant to everyone to the most "sophisticated" of armchair revolutionary coffee-table discussions and college historical studies (which are always about putting ideas in the museum/mausoleum, rather than bringing them to new life), a straightforward, accessible, user-friendly introduction is in order. In the punk community (my thinking is that each of us travels in a few different communities, in which they know something about the needs of the people around them and can thus figure out how to act in everyone's best interest) that should take the form of an article, in a widely read 'zine like Inside Front.

Unfortunately, and honesty is always the best policy on these things (though a part of me would love to set up a smokescreen and just plow through this article with no regard for content, quality, clarity or responsibility) I have to admit something to you, dearest readers of Inside Front: it's five in the morning, I've slept two hours a night for two weeks, I just moved out of the last house I will stay in for at least twelve months,

the article is due in three hours before we leave for a ten hour drive, and I'm too fucking exhausted to write the lengthy, detailed introduction you deserve. The more I think about it, the more I realize it could be a fucking book and still not be complete, anyway. But you're all smart kids, so our "Introduction to the Situationists" need not be more than a suggestion that you track down the original texts yourself. It would be much better for you to do the reading yourself and pursue the stuff that interests you, anyway, than to just soak up a watered-down version here.

Still, let me offer a tiny bit of background. The Situationist Internationale started as a group of artists in the late 1950's, from a number of different nations, publishing together a magazine critiquing modern society in its various economic/social/political aspects, and meeting periodically to discuss and further refine their theory. They wanted to bring Marxism up to date, to construct a theory of what was going on in society that was preventing people from being able to live fully and act freely. The result was a critique that centered around everyday life, what happens to people and what they do on a daily basis, rather than abstract economic forces etc. The idea of the "Spectacle, " the empty roles and values and passive rituals that modern life perpetuates (and vice versa), was at the heart of this. The Situationists were characterized by a healthy opposition to ideologies, too, and denied that there was such a thing as "Situationism, " doing their best to fight off the stultifying, paralyzing effects of dogma and party line.

Early on, there was also a lot of interest in such topics as geography: how could cities be designed so they would bring the most pleasure to their inhabitants, rather than just being created randomly by "market forces" that people think of as beyond their control (when actually it is their actions that create these forces)? To pursue such questions, Situationists would go on extended "derives": wanderings through environments designed to explore their psychological conditions. Another commonly-referred-to Situationist idea from that era is detourning: to detourn is to take an old art work, form, or formula that has a prescribed meaning in society, and, by adding some new element to it, bring out its "true" meaning: an example would be re-titling a "Dilbert" cartoon "Despair." (You can probably imagine how that works.)

Eventually there was a falling out between the artists and the more purely radical members, who saw no hope of real art being made until after a full scale social revolution — or at least in the act of that revolution itself. Anything less was treading water, in their eyes, keeping the farce of capitalist, alienating, uncreative life afloat for one more miserable day. The artistic faction left, and the remaining group became more and more involved in perfecting their critique. In the late '60's, a student group influenced by their ideas pulled some clever stunts at their university, which eventually escalated into the events of May 1968, in which the French government was quite nearly overthrown: workers joined students in a full-scale, national strike, fighting police and riot squads in the streets, refusing to recognize any authorities, asking questions in every corner of society that were usually quarantined to the radical sector... non-stop

discussions were held about how a new, truly democratic society could be formed, and for a month the fate of humanity seemed up in the air.

Finally, the labor unions sold the struggle out by negotiating merely higher wages, and everyone went back to work as if nothing had happened; but that month stands as evidence of how much dissatisfaction there is in the modern world, and how it can rise to the surface under the right conditions. They don't teach us about May 1968 in U.S. schools because they don't want us to know that such things are possible. Most of the ideas in Inside Front are Situationist-influenced: the emphasis on how you spend your real-life time (rather than what abstractions you pledge allegiance to), how time and space are formed and controlled by the ways our present system forces us to interact, what the effects of other systems of interaction might be, all that goes back to them (and beyond, of course). The Situationists saw themselves the same way the CrimethInc. 'workers' see ourselves, as full-time (neither part-time nor professional) revolutionaries, with an immediate stake in things changing and no interest in getting too comfortable in the role of dissenting outsiders. Many of the slogans you see so many bands and 'zines use (even this one) were Situationist slogans. Their influence is everywhere in our underground. That by itself is not so significant, but the fact that in their analyses of the same things we're thinking about in hardcore punk today (consumerism, socialized roles, issues of economic exploitation and oppression, etc.) they went so much farther than most of us have yet is important. If you're interested in ideas you read in magazines like Inside Front, one of the next places you could go to get more ideas and inspirations is the Situationists and their texts. Don't be too intimidated by the cliquish more-anarchist-than-thou guy at your local bookshop who claims to know Society of the Spectacle backwards in Greek; they might really have something practical to offer you for your life.

Reading: These are the books I have sitting around me as I write this:

Society of the Spectacle by Guy Debord (Black and Red, Detroit) — This starts out terrifying (insofar as it's so abstract and theoretical that it seems to be talking about nothing, as well as being absurdly academic and dry as toast), but gets a little clearer as you proceed. If you're going to try to learn about this stuff at all, you should eventually give it a shot, since this is one of the most central and important books to come from the Situationists; but go slowly, and with patience...

The Revolution of Everyday Life by Raoul Vaneigem (Rebel Press/Left Bank Books) — This book is equally academic and frustrating in places, but in place of Society's blankfaced inhuman approach it is filled with the sort of passion for life and experience that Refused brought to the fore in their politics. That makes it a lot more likable, and

perhaps more dangerous in the hands of young, romantic punk kids, since the insight is no less here than in Debord's book — in my opinion, at least.

What is Situationism? A Reader edited by Stewart Home (AK Press) — This is the sort of second-hand rehash that everyone is reading. The title is a slap in the face to those of us who thought the anti-ideology aspect of the Situationist "platform" was among their most revolutionary ideas. There are some great insights and leads to follow in here, but there's some shit as well... and even a little tiny bit of radical infighting, egotism, and careerism too, inevitably. Look past it and you'll find, in small doses, some of the clearer summaries of and reflections on Situationist ideas and influences that you can get anywhere.

Guy Debord-Revolutionary by Len Bracken (Feral House) — This is by far my favorite critical/historical work on the Situationists. It covers a lot of the theory, with enough clarity and simplicity that it's accessible (thank god), while also telling the life history of one of the people at the center of the whole thing. That combination of abstract ideas with factual events that played out in reality makes the stuff in here seem humanly relevant as well as theoretically right on. Yeah, this is a good book!

Enrages and Situationists in the Occupation Movement, France, May '68 by RenŽ Vienet (Rebel Press) — This is a blow by blow historical account, written by an insider from the radical core of the struggle, of what happened before and during the events of May 1968 in Paris and France in general. If you're interested in seeing how the ideas we're talking about here played out in practice, this is what you want to read... plus, it's filled with photos of graffiti, great slogans like "Live without dead time!" that have been ripped off a thousand times in the past decade.

There's an anthology of articles from the Situationist Internationale journal and similar writings, translated by Ken Knabb (Bureau of Public Secrets), that has real value if you want to read these guys in their own words, too. To learn more about the artistic aspect of what they were doing, especially early on (and I think this is the most overlooked aspect of the Situationists, and wrongly so), you might be able to go to a university art library and look for catalogs from retrospective exhibitions, etc. If you're interested in this stuff and want to go into any more depth, but can't find the resources, just write us and we'll photocopy or steal you more stuff.

REFU

i The Realization and

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> As you may know by now, REFUSED had a great impact on the lives of some of us here at Inside Front. I was lucky enough to know some of the guys already, which often helps me to get more out of a band. So this is also intended to give a little more context to their music, for those of you who don't know them.

Do not — and I cannot emphasize this enough — *do not* run out and buy the Refused "Shape of Punk to Come" record on Epitaph. Steal it.

REFUSED ARE FUCKING DEAD

The Final Refused Communiqu6 to the Masses, October 1998

Just like the political theorists and philosophers (Baudrillard, Foucault, Derrida, Debord and so on) we also managed with a sort of self-fulfilling prophecy. A manifestation of an idea to a concrete action.

When Quilapayuns in 1972 realized the importance of widening their spectrum of action by dividing the band into 5 different sections to be able to spread their ideas on as many locations and to as many people as possible they had realized the principle of collective mass-organization.

A division into 5 new directions means in practice 5 new projects that can challenge and fight the boredom and death that sneaks into our everyday life, 5 new ways to make the political manifesto that once was known under the collective banner of "the Refused Party Program" concrete, 5 new forces that can devour and choke every tendency of the bourgeoisie shackle that keeps us down.

So why does Refused have to die to be able to rise from the ashes like the Phoenix? It is impossible to take part in a revolutionary program when every aspect of existence has to be projected as entertainment and music, a tradition that both in expression and creation has been dead for far too long. We were hoping that we could be the final nail in the coffin of the rotten cadaver that was popular music, but unfortunately the reification was too big for us to succeed with our feeble attempts to detourn this boring discourse. When every expression, no matter how radical it is, can be transformed into a commodity and be bought or sold like cheap soda, how is it then possible that you are going to be able to take "art" seriously? When every political idea has to become safe and categorized just so that it can be defined by disgusting "journalists" whose only aim is the selling of issues and the cashing of paychecks, how can we then show the seriousness of the situation? When the single purpose of every song written is to accumulate capital for the record companies that will only kill every attempt at spontaneity and creativity, how are we then expected to create? When every show played just becomes another brick in the wall between people, between "fans" and "stars", when we instead of getting communication and interaction are being forced to become nothing but consumers and producers. When people are being praised as geniuses and idols just because they play music or write books or something equally boring and "cultural", when the widespread belief that their creation is more important than that people take part in everyday life, what does that say about the rest of us and what does it say about the system that we have? When we continue to uphold the bourgeoisie myth of self-realization by saying that anyone can make it just as long as they work hard or pick up a guitar, we uphold the dream of good vs. bad jobs (rockstar = good, factory worker = bad) thus we also uphold the class system and the justification of it.

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When the self-appointed elite talk about culture, the culture that tricks us into believing that there is such a thing as culture, without any thought or consideration of the political or economical system. When we become just another sub-culture with all the right attributes instead of a real counter-culture, then

it is time to die, to revalue the position that we are in.

Refused "broke up" on the 26th of September 1998 in Atlanta, Georgia, and in a last feeble attempt to break the linear timeline that the modem ways of production have forced upon us we played the last show in Harrisonburg, Virginia on the 6th of October 1998. The show was interrupted after 4 songs by the local police force who thought that they'd had enough. We knew that they were onto us but it was both a shock and a relief that they did not catch us until the last

show.

Then, after 7 years of trying, we finally managed to create our own time-space within the capitalist power structure. The crowd managed to manifest a moment of passionate living when they continued to scream "rather be alive..." to the corrupt and useless preservers of private property. So what now? We will continue to, at every attempt, overthrow the class system, burn museums and to strangle the great lie that we call culture. We will continue with new projects and forces to do everything in our power to overthrow the capitalist structure that alienates us from every aspect of life and living, smash the reification that forces us to dress in outdated identities and rules: we will continue to demand revolution here and now and not in some vague future that all reactionary leftist fundamentalists and reformists are talking about. We want every day and every action to be a manifestation of love, joy, confusion and revolt. This is the last that we have to say about it, WE WILL NOT GIVE INTERVIEWS TO STUPID REPORTERS who still haven't got anything of what we are all about, we will never play together again and we will never try to glorify or celebrate what was. All that we have to say has been said here or in our music/manifestos/lyrics and if that is not enough you are not likely to get it anyway. We THEREFORE DEMAND THAT EVERY NEWSPAPER BURN ALL THEIR PHOTOS OF REFUSED so that we will no longer be tortured with memories of a time gone by and the mythmaking that single-minded and incompetent journalism

offers us. Instead we need to look forward. We've got everything to win and nothing but our boredom to lose. Refused are dead — long live Refused!

Refused final communique.

This is Refused own words, and they will not answer any questions at all.

For comments, please contact BURNING HEART RECORDS.

Gender Roles, Hardcore, and Refused

When I first got into hardcore, I was a very angry young man, frustrated and impatient with society in general but unable to put together a coherent analysis of what I was frustrated about. All my hardcore "role models" were also angry young men, a bit older than me, who in retrospect weren't much different than the mainstream men

they were rebelling against: they talked and acted violently, they weren't particularly interested in the perspectives of women or people of other ethnicities and backgrounds, they placed a premium on toughness and made a religion out of denying the validity or even possibility of compassion, sensitivity, community itself. Predictably, my relationships with other hardcore boys (including my close friends and bandmates) fell into the typical patterns of men's relationships in the mainstream: we competed against each other constantly and in everything, we almost took pride in disregarding each other's feelings and needs. Needless to say my friendships were often as irritating as they were rewarding, and playing together in the band was sometimes nothing short of agonizing.

I remember at one point I got a letter from a guy who did an emo label on the West coast. He wrote that, on principle, he wasn't interested in angry music made by men. The way he saw it, men in

[Image not archived]

our society are conditioned to believe that anger is the only emotion that is acceptable for them to express, and so if you're a man, making angry music isn't rebellious or revolutionary at all — it's just acting out the role that you've

been constructed to fill. 1 didn't know how to answer this. It seemed like a compelling argument; but a lot of the time 1 felt nothing but anger, and it seemed wrong to deny the legitimacy of that emotion completely and refuse to express it.

At the same time, I was finally starting to think about gen

der roles, about how men and women are taught to behave and how this can prevent us from being complete people and living full lives. It was hard to admit to myself that this might be going on in my own life, too — for what if it was? I had no idea of how to do things differently, I'd never seen men act or interact differently and I had no concept of how it could be done.

I finally came to a conclusion about the question of men making angry music: I decided it would be a mistake to deny the worth and meaning of rage just because the person feeling it was a man. But at the same time, there isn't anything revolutionary about going through the motions you've been taught to go through: being macho, being tough, expressing the same violence and lust for domination that characterizes the motherfuckers you're fighting against. So it's OK to be a man and be angry and play angry music, but it has to be *your* anger, *your* outrage, not the charade you've been molded to keep up so that the status quo never changes.

Still, I had no examples of hardcore singers who were doing that. I was beginning to meet people who had the courage to step

outside the narrow confines of their socially defined roles (though there seemed to be more women doing this than men, at least in the

U.S.). But though I wanted so badly to see these ideas applied to hardcore, I had no idea where to start.

That was one of the reasons it was such a revelation for me the first time I saw Refused perform. They were doing everything I had wondered how to do, breaking

every stereotype and archetype and institution of gender, expressing a broader range of emotions at once than I had ever seen before. And effortlessly, it seemed! Before this starts to sound like mere press-release glorification, let's talk about exactly what they did that worked.

Although I hate to concentrate on the "front man" (even from that designation, it's clear what a symptom of our sexist, hierarchical society it is that we tend to focus on the singers of bands), a lot of it comes down to their singer, Dennis. Dennis's performances mixed expressions of all different kinds: at one moment he would be dancing around with a giddy flamboyance that no typical hardcore boy would dare display, even by himself. The next instant, he would be screaming his insides out with more rage and fury than these kids had

ever seen their most pissed off idols exhibit. This was confusing as fuck for the hardcore boys who expected Refused to conduct themselves according to the rules, to act as tough and "manly" as they could in order to impress people and "earn respect." Dennis challenged their assumptions of what it was to be male, of what males had to do in public, of how hardcore singers should sing and present themselves. He showed that it was possible to behave in other ways, dispelling the myth of gender differences in a few short minutes for those who were watching and ready to see. And more than that, he showed how much *more* passion and energy there was to be found in abandoning the shackles of so-called manhood: he showed how *genuine* anger and rage can be expressed better by someone who isn't worried about posing and pretense, and at the same time he demonstrated how much more there is to feel and express than mere anger and frustration. He introduced the idea of being complete human beings, admitting and exploring every facet of ourselves, just by singing and dancing..

On their last record, too, he wasn't afraid to move from one persona to another, sometimes screaming furiously, sometimes singing or speaking in a high, sensitive, "feminine" voice, sometimes yelling with a passion that bridged and transcended gender classifications. This benefited the record, of course, filling it out with more variety and daring. By doing all this, Dennis made it easier for all of us to feel free to be ourselves, to do whatever we want and lead full

lives. He provided a role model for younger kids, so that they could imagine other standards of "cool" besides conventional masculinity. And for the older ones, he was an example of courage and transformation, of how it *is* possible to develop new ways of acting and being

Although Dennis's was the most visible challenge to traditional conceptions of hardcore masculinity, especially when Refused performed, it's worth pointing out that it wasn't just him doing this. It was the entire band shaking things up: daring, for example, to make music that was more than just one-dimensional "hatecore, " to assault traditional ideas of which emotions hardcore bands should express. The final Refused record ventures all over the map musically. It has the same moments of fury and. peace, of joy and fear that Dennis's singing does, and more, many more; without it, of course, none of Dennis's work would have happened in the first place. It was Refused's work as

a unit that contested the image of the hardcore band as symbol of masculine prowess that was left over from less enlightened times. That was something I'd been waiting to see for years.

Rock Music, Performance, and Self-Awareness "They're all screaming about the rock and roll, but I would say it's getting old. It belongs in the museum where its rotten soul's been sold."

Refused was a band that wasn't afraid to rock. They leapt about the stage with all the moves and poses of the greatest rock bands, guitars flying and microphone stands swinging. They embraced their role as stars and entertainers — when they were performing, at least, that is. They did their best to out-rock the rockers with their own tricks and formulas.

And this is as well it should be: they were, after all, and hardcore band... that means "hardcore punk, " as in "punk rock, " as in rock and roll. And hardcore isn't really that much different from rock and roll, whatever we'd like to believe. It's still subject to all the same shortcomings rock has been ever since it was taken from the black underground and made into commercial music for the white youth

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long live

market. Still the same old cliches: the audience passively watching (or at best dancing to) four guys with guitars and drums, the band searching for some last chord progression that hasn't been quite beaten to death yet, the audience seeking to break out of their fatally bland realities by idolizing the singer, who inevitably perpetuates the whole farce with some recycled "charisma" and egotism. Still the same economic transactions, too, the bands being the means for capitalists (corporate or private) to make a living off their communities, to profit at the expense of everyone else — often the bands most of all, who figure they're getting paid in status if nothing else. Every time a hardcore band goes up on stage to play, to challenge people and do something new, they're up against the entire history of rock music as it has been commodified and castrated. Small wonder so few of them manage to fight through to new and crucial territory, weighed down with so many years of tradition, the dead weight of our past.

Refused admitted to all this. They didn't try to sneak around it by coming up with a new little twist to disguise the tired format; they embraced the whole routine and took it as far as it would go. Some have said Refused played with the rock formula to shock us hardcore kids, to evade our expectations; that is true, but they did this by showing us what we already knew (but refused to admit) was going on. They did this for a few reasons: first, to be up front about the cumbersome heritage of their punk rock, to lay all that constricting history out on the table so they could confront it, subvert it, go beyond it. Until someone did this, it was bound to be a ghost always haunting us, always pulling us down.

Refused's rock performances established a direct conflict of the past and the present on a number of levels. Every night they tried to pour their hearts out, they were

up against the years of repetition, of drama become melodrama, of passion become farce: using the old, decrepit moves, could they play hard enough, soulfully enough, desperately enough to escape the gravitational pull of the past, and make rock music seem brand new again for a moment? There could be no greater challenge than this, and when Refused played their best shows, it was because they rose to it.

And in so doing, they accomplished a sacred act of liberation, of absolution for the time-worn and -wearied formulas they employed. For everything in rock and roll that is now a cliche was once magical, dangerous, fearsomely profound: the first time a guitarist leaped in the air, you can bet every man and woman who saw him felt their worlds end and begin again anew. To fight through the scar tissue of years of Van Halen and worse imitators, to steal back and make fresh again James Brown's moves, Little Richard's guitar licks, powerful magical spells sold into slavery as impotent commodities, to rescue them in the name of the struggle for liberation and passion that rock music has been a part of (if with little self-awareness) at its best moments — to take the dead and bring them back to life, indeed — what more romantic, quixotic, beautiful task could any band set itself?

Another reason Refused played with the tradition of the rock performance was to bring out the tension in *any* performance between "true feeling" and manipulation. They would play manipulative samples in between their songs, to fuck with the spectators' emotions, and they did the same thing by going through rock motions that they knew we are all culturally programmed to respond to whether we like it or not. Watching Refused, I felt myself simultaneously responding to the real emotions they were expressing and the irony of the cliches they were employing, and, despite myself, enjoying the cliches as well. That tension between real and fake is there in all rock music in this day and age, and Refused brought out this dichotomy, played with it, and even subverted our ideas and expectations by blur-

ring the lines between so-called "real" and "fake" emotions, forcing us out of our paradigm and into a new world where the old distinctions are meaningless.

Finally, Refused forced us to register the rock entertainment quotient of what they were doing in order to deal with the problem of being performers who sought to activate people. Performance is a spectator sport. Under normal conditions, it does not activate people, but rather enforces and reinforces their passivity. They deliberately put themselves on a mock pedestal as performers to remind us that we *were* watching a performance, that a rock show is *not* a democratic environment, that rock as we have known it is *not* about the liberation of the spectator but rather her enslavement to keep bank accounts and egos fed and hierarchies in place. And at the same time, they tried to play so hard that they transcended all this. The only way you can get to motivation and action through performance is if you shake people up so much that

just watching forces them to re-evaluate themselves. That was what Refused did for me — I'd never been so actively involved in watching something in my whole life as when 1 saw them in Belgium. As much as they were moving on the stage, I was moving twice as much inside, changing, ripping, growing...

The Shape of ***"The Shape of Punk to Come":***

Major Label Recording Quality as Radical Statement

The members of Refused made a full-time career out of the band. They didn't make much money off it (that's pretty much impossible for any artists who keep their integrity intact, no matter how they conduct themselves in the market otherwise), but the band made enough to pay for them to do it full-time. They put out a record on Victory, the most disgusting of the U.S. capitalist psuedo-hardcore labels, and then signed to Burning Heart, a big record label in Sweden (although it's worth noting that B.H. wasn't bought out by Epitaph until the "Shape" record had already been recorded and released). They exceeded their recording budget three times in the course of recording their final record. All this required compromises with what we all generally agree to be the d.i.y. ethics of the punk scene. But, for once, 1 don't fault Refused for making these compromises. They were on a mission that didn't allow them to do otherwise.

Why did they do all this? To show us what would be possible if we *all* had the freedom to spend all our lives being creative, if we *all* had all the capabilities of modern technology (recording technology and otherwise) at our disposal. It seems strange to us, paradoxical even, for a hardcore punk band to have the time to spend all their lives working on their music, and the opportunity to record an album with the same equipment and time that major label bands do. That's because we're used to having fucked up lives, no money, and no capital in the punk scene. And to some extent, we've accepted this: we don't think about what we could accomplish if we had all the means of our society in our hands, we can't imagine our lives free from boring jobs except in terms of the poverty and difficulty that this brings upon us today. We're accustomed to our role as outsiders, we wear our poverty and alienation on our sleeves as badges of authenticity — forgetting that this is an acquiescence to the marginalized position society has created for anyone who wants to demand more from life than it has to offer.

According to anarchist thinking, the tools and technology our society has at its disposal should be available to all of us, since all of us contribute to society. They shouldn't be reserved for the use of a specialized elite who cast their pearls before the swine of the masses. When the top notch recording studios and engineers are only avail-

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•able to the wealthiest record labels (the ones who have made their wealth by making emotionless, watered down music that caters to the very lowest common denominator of the market), of course the only music that comes out of them is watered-down tripe and drivel. A real punk band — a band that, by definition, would never water

down their art and go through all the bullshit necessary to get access to those capabilities — would never normally get to explore the vast possibilities those resources have to offer. And so we never get to know how much more exciting our music and art could be... or for that matter, how much more our lives could be: imagine a world where everyone could be creative with all the tools and resources our species now has at its disposal, where we could reconstruct our cities themselves in accordance with our wildest dreams! A crazy thought, maybe, but no crazier than the idea that our music, our cities, our lives themselves should be engineered from a distance by an elite of so-called "specialists" who fought their way to the top by stomping on everyone else.

In my eyes, Refused did what they had to to record this incredible record, layered deep with samples, oft-ignored instruments, and carefully orchestrated expectation-defying musical sequences that must have taken months to work out, to show us what we should *all* be capable of. *The Shape of Punk to Come* isn't meant to set a precedent for all punk bands to try to sign to big labels and get huge recording budgets. *All* punk bands can't do that, anyway, of course — that's the nature of capitalism: only the most ruthless and bland can get to the top. Rather, it should inspire us to be even more ambitious in our struggle against the system, to be even more greedy and demanding in our lives, to realize how much better all punk music could be if we lived in a society where all artists could focus completely on their art, where all artists could make their art with the best tools available, where all of us could be artists...

...and to fight for such a world, for all of our sakes, by any means necessary.

[I imagine some of you are objecting by now that there isn't enough top notch recording equipment for everyone to use it at once, and that if we all were artists, we'd have nothing to eat. OK, OK, to some extent that's true, but seriously, with a couple changes (decrease the production of air fresheners, for example) we could make our lives a lot more free and creative than they are... provided we take control of our society back out of the hands of the stockbrokers and C.E.O.s, that is.]

DENNIS

Speaking with Eric Boehme in October

Dennis: OK... so hit me.

Eric: I didn't want to talk about the band. I just wanted to talk... you know, a conversation, not a like interview or whatever. But I will ask you about something we were talking around the other night, wondering if you think that the way you perform onstage is "spectacular, " and whether you think it alienates the audience, do you think it is intimidating for people to come up and talk to you after because of the persona that you have onstage?

D. Yeah, I think it is... which is bad. There is a bunch of different aspects to why I do what I do and I think that the first one is that I am a bit afraid of people. Its easier to do the role, you know, like when I talk between songs I try to be all intellectual and talk about crazy stuff so that people are a bit more confused and don't know what is going on. I mean people that are down with political language, know what I am talking about but... I think that is one of the reasons. I don't want to alienate people,

cuz I think of myself as an approachable guy. I would like people to come up to talk to me, they can. Its weird because like I said the other night. It is all about perpetuating the rock star myth. It's all about being there and being the rock star but trying to use this idea to destroy it. Its like the French intellectuals talk about how after the revolution there is no need for intellectuals because they have played their part already, their ideas are already within the revolution. I try to do what I do best. I'm not a very good singer or guitar player but I am a really good performer. That is just how it is. It would be weird to say anything else. I just try to get people to enjoy the show.

E; But do you think that sorta reinforces a passivity on the part of the spectator? You know, as far as our bodies being constructed by a society where we sit back and watch all the time and where if we think at all, it is between choices of what to watch? I feel, and I think the Situationists felt as well, that the spectacle catches everything up in its grasp and that any opposition is played out on the very terms of the spectacle, even the kind of things that we romanticize, like bombing banks, throwing Molotov cocktails...

D; Yeah, it turns into a commodity. Like the word revolution doesn't mean anything anymore because it is used in the same context as cellular phones. Yeah, definitely...

R But I mean, where do we go from here?

_D:_ I think to clarify a bit of what I think and what I am doing for myself... my whole idea is to come into a scene that is so stereotypical, so predictable, a scene where the ideas are used again and again... to come into the scene, looking the way I do, talking the way I do, and acting the way I act onstage, will hopefully make people think more than just me being another hardcore kid talking about the issues that I talk about just the fact that I am sorta breaking off. I think that people will go home and remember Refused and remember what we did as something different. Hopefully, that will inspire people to think about like, "why was he looking like that or why was he doing that, I mean he was all gay what's up wit that" and people think about what I do and create a reaction. Instead of giving them politics, I will give them more than that... like breaking the mold of punk rock. It's a conscious decision to look different and act different. Not necessarily to act different, I mean cuz some of that stuff comes naturally to me. But stuff like the microphone tricks, I actually practice but when we play music I want to do stuff and it just happens as I'm there. But at the same time, it is a lot about breaking the ideas about what I punk rock singer should do.

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_E:_ In doing this every night, I'm just reminded of another band that we both know, where they try to always spontaneously construct a

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space for revolution to happen NOW, you know and what you saw about how they try to bring the audience into it, the singer roaming out into the audience... I just wondering if what you do raises a barrier between the performers and the audience. I guess this goes back to another conversation that we

had about technical proficiency and how that involves specialization and a division of labor where everyone cannot be a part of the thing that is created.

D: At a certain extent it does... people will notice that the stage is there, it is me, and I'm not some random kid. It is a barrier but I think it is more up to the people to sorta interact in what we are doing and take part in that instead of trying to push them into something, saying you HAVE to be a part. Guy Debord said that "revolution is not showing life to people but to make them live." I think they have to do that themselves. I definitely think it is a big problem and a contradiction when I go up onstage and I talk about destroying the role of rock stardom, or fucking the idol and I know that some people see me as the rock star. It is weird. I just try to use the medium that I am best at to make people think about the my ideas in the way that I appreciate myself.

_E:_ That is exactly what draws me to your stage presence. I can see the pleasure that you get from it. I think maybe that is a thing that just "performing" doesn't have, that there is a pleasure in it and real desire.

D. Yeah, I love doing it. I love playing punk rock and I love being just, Dennis onstage. If I can incorporate that, this feeling of... "happiness" is the wrong word, but this feeling of doing something I really like with ideas I think are important. Even if it is contradictory. It clashes every other week yet I think about why I am doing this... what can I do that is better? How can I interact and make people more a part of the show than just spectators and consumers? It is hard. Also when it comes down to the fact that there are five people in the band and I'm the one that has these ideas, its hard. Before we went on tour I had all of these crazy ideas of what we wanted to do, I had a hard time incorporating them cuz some of the kids didn't see the point. They are like, "that's kinda stupid. It would be good... break down the barriers... but we just want to play music." That is something that we think about a lot with this new project to keep the spontaneity to let it happen as an interaction not so much as a presentation. I mean, like the Make Up, even if you don't like them, I think they have the right idea cuz they make the crowd sing along, you know jazz it out, it's not much because it is still like performance, but they let people in a little bit more than a normal rock show. You have to have the music that allows people to interact. Up until now you have had all this crazy hardcore music that doesn't allow people in to interact, its too damn hard. It's crazy and loud and trying to incorporate people into that is kinda weird. I mean, this whole band has been about perfection, about being tight, being real good, so it is hard. It's weird too because whether I want it or not, I've become like this rock star. People write me letters, they want autographs... you know.

E. Yeah, like having an interview instead of a conversation.

Ek Yeah, yeah...like people want to ask me weird questions. Not to communicate on the level that they normally interact on. That puts me in a weird situation cuz I don't want to be there having to feel uncomfortable because people look at me a certain way. Like I talked to Amanda [McKaye], and she says that Ian can't even go to shows anymore because people won't leave him alone. It has to be so hard being in that position where you don't want to... it's one thing being in Aerosmith were you want people to notice you... I always thought about that... it's good to have inspiration but then you start talking about wanting to be like someone... If you look at someone and say "I want to be like them, " it is just so alienating.

NOW...

_D:_ It's a hard transition to make because we are so caught up in this world of buying and selling, of commodification. I don't really think you can step outside of it. Most of the time people that claim they are radicals, like people who move up into the mountains to live away from everything, don't really accomplish anything, it doesn't serve a purpose. It becomes a small sub-culture that revolves around it itself. Instead of being a part of a culture that needs to be changed, they stand outside of society, thinking like "all these people suck." _E:_ Yeah, I have friends in hardcore who say that they will live in hardcore the rest of their life and they are fine with being around this small group of people. I think there is a certain comfort and pleasure in that which I really respect but at the same time I know that I have my foot in many different communities, not just hardcore and I think I have a responsibility to a larger community, not in the sense of a moral responsibility but in the sense of a kind of human responsibility-

D. For so many kidz you meet, it seems like it is one thing or another. I don't think it has to be that way. I don't think people are similarly minded enough to JUST be hardcore, or just be revolutionary all the time. There are so many places and outlets that we should use... I just think that we need to find new ways of finding pleasure. But I don't think that we can find those ways within the social relations we have now, the economic and political system we have, I just think that we have to have a big revolution before people can begin to start being fulfilled. I mean, that's such a weird term because I can't imagine what it would mean to be fulfilled. But before people can live their lives to the fullest, I think there has to be a total change in the system that we have. It's hard. But there is a certain pleasure in fighting that in itself gives me pleasure and to be in this opposition and to be fighting and knowing that the odds are fucken unbelievable... but at the same time I have all these great ideas. Hopefully someone will catch on. And you meet people that inspire you and you continue to go on. I think that revolutionary people are romantic. Because if you believe in something like this, and you believe that the word revolution will come, it's so romantic. I believe in it but at the same time there has to be a certain naivete, there has to be a certain way of romanticizing so that we can bear with it every day.

E. What exactly do you mean by romantic people?

_D:_ Emotionally insane! Like this joy... I mean, people ask me, "why are you guys so angry what are you angry about? Well, of course I'm angry because the world is so fucked up and I see people suffering every day but at the same time, a lot of the fighting and the writing and the singing is because I've found out that you can actually meet people who are inspiring, that you can accomplish amazing things. There is this joy of living and discovering that life is boundless. People who ask me why I'm so angry, I guess I think that I am almost never angry. I'm actually kinda happy because I've found a way to live life to its fullest and it makes me happy to know that I am trying. I think it is a romantic notion to have all of these ideas and schemes and plans and I just go with it!

_E:_ I guess I am sorta influenced by a certain critique of romanticism, a critique of artists like Blake and Rimbaud whom I really love and admire but who are so radically individualized that they separated themselves from all social surroundings; their whole goal seemed to be about overcoming those social tendencies. I guess the closet Marxist

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in me doesn't want to pursue that type of thinking because I want to think that somehow we are all connected. I don't want to lose sight of those connections. 1 mean that's why I can sympathize with ideas about abolishing work but in a whole other way I think that work is some-

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thing that connects us as human beings. In the sense of working and creating something that we share, not in the sense of working in wage-labor slavery, I think that work itself is important for sociality. I guess the other thing is, I'm wondering if we

work for our own pleasures NOW or like all of those revolutionaries

that we talked about who have killed themselves because they became cynical, do we push it all into the future only to later give up? I feel like I never want to be that way, I never want to give up. But one of the things that will keep me from not giving up is to become more selfish, more introverted maybe and not always thinking about someone else.

D; I know where you are coming from. I can totally see your point. It sometimes gets to the point where you can't really talk to people that you don't find interesting because they don't really talk about the same stuff that you want to talk about. It's scary. It scares me. It's a frightening thought that one day I'll get up onstage and no one will care and then I think, "why should I give a fuck." I think that we should just make sure that what we are doing makes us feel good and hopefully it helps other people as well, to never lose sight of the fact that my political ideas are really important to me. Fulfilling my political ideas gives me pleasure. It is a selfish thing. Writing political songs, talking to people... it makes me happy. Hopefully it can affect or inspire or piss people off. Also being older in punk rock makes it hard to relate to

other people. I mean people who scream "vegan power" as if that's the utmost political expression that we can have.

You feel old and jaded and like, "yeah, I used to be that way once upon a time." It is scary and 1 don't want to lose that romantic notion that we can actually change the world.

E; I mean, this getting older thing... I know that I am not going to go out in the street and bomb a Shell station, although I encourage everyone to do that, I know that I won't because it will jeopardize the long term revolutionary goals that I have. Sure it is a set of goals that has everything to do with me taking up my privilege but I think teaching is important. And I'm not going to throw away my opportunity to be a college professor by a symbolic act. I don't feel guilty that I'm not doing that kind of work any longer, but I know that I'm not as radical as I could be.

_D._ Yeah, I know. Some kid gave me a lot of shit because he was asking me about direct action and 1 said, "sure that is a great thing, go for it, but I wouldn't do that right now." I think that what I am doing right now affects people more than if I was sitting in jail. They got really pissed off and boycotted our shows just because I am rational

about what I can accomplish and what I want to accomplish. I think that's such a romantic idea... I mean yeah, bring me a black mask and a Molotov cocktail. How many people are you gonna help if you can't even talk to people? I mean, you have to weigh what you do best. I think there are many people that are really good at doing something like that. I mean, I know some of these people, but I'm not. I wouldn't want to jeopardize what I am good at

because of a silly idea about how a revolutionary should work. I don't feel guilty about it but people do try to give me guilt trips about that because I don't do stuff like that. I think I do revolutionary work as well, but just not in the same way. I think revolutionary work has to take place in all places at all times. There can't be one single action

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or idea that is revolutionary. It has to be multiple ideas and multiple passions and multiple actions.

E; But in thinking about the difference between.the individual and the social and I remember growing up, I thought a lot about this kind of intellectual revolutionary elite, you know, kinda like "smart punks" and how we were going to change the world. But now I think much more about the people that I find revolutionary or inspiring are people that I can connect with — not necessarily smart people but people that I could connect to and have these interactions where I was just fucken inspired and motivated to continue fighting. I'm connecting more and more with these people — staying in touch, we are all getting old together We're talking about what we are doing, how we are changing and what we want in the long term.

_D:_ YEAH...when you get into this, you find motivation and strength in everything, you're young and fresh, excited...when you get older you become more selective

and can't get that feeling again, you have to still seek inspiration. Yeah, I like meeting people who I can talk to who are way smarter than me because it inspires me to go home and read. Sometimes you get in the position where you think that you are really smart because you've read a couple of books and you can throw around these political words. And then you meet someone and they just blow you away... I mean, it's like, "one day, I'll be able to talk like that or have all these crazy ideas." I'm definitely drawn to people to keep on doing this, to keep getting inspired. It's not as inspiring to see bands play as it was ten years ago. I think most people just lose everything. Because the bands aren't inspiring they just disappear and do something else. I still want to stay in this environment, this political and revolutionary environment where there is so much potential to still reach people.

_E:_ I think that for me some of the music is still inspiring.

D. You're right. Once in a while there comes a band that blows you away and you are like "holy shit!"

E. I know... believe me!

Dl But I'm much more inspired by someone who thinks about their situation and their ideas and why people do what they do. That's much more inspiring than seeing a guy playing guitar.

_E:_ I guess when I think about it most of the bands that inspire me today are because I have a personal and face to face relationship with the kidz in the band. Like I've spoken to them or I'm friends with them so their music and lyrics mean something. I think it is really inspiring to see your friend rip his or her heart out on stage and feel like when they are talking to everyone, it seems like they are talking to you, or about you and being able to connect like that. Yeah, the music is rad, but it really is the people that are more important to me. _D:_ I've had the experience where I thought people were inspiring in their lyrics and then I've met them and they are not at all. But the idea of politics, or the lyrics are just smart or whatever, that can be the difference between an amazing band and an average one.

E: Again back to the individual and the social how we get pleasure in revolution... I wanted to talk about art and about the artistic experi —

ence. What is the role of art in the revolution? Is art about creating and giving pleasure to yourself in the creation or trying to give other people pleasure, inspiring people through your art?

_p:_ Yeah, I've been thinking about the role of the artist lately... I think there are a couple of contradictory roles that I play. Somehow I think the artist always makes it a goal to speak for other people. I constantly do that and 1 think its bad because 1 think people should be equipped to speak for themselves. Someone made an interview with me and they were talking about how the media and politicians aren t doing their jobs, so is it up to the artists and the culture to talk about these things? I think NO, it

is up to the people, there should never be experts, or bosses, or politicians that speak on behalf of the people. I would say we should make art for self-fulfilling reasons. No art should be made solely for the purpose of speaking for others. But if you make art that is inspiring, you can inspire others to do things, especially with music. Yet this is how 1 feel about music: music has become so commodified and such an easy expression of emotions that most of the music that is out there cuts our emotions off. It fits the lowest common denominator. Strike a chord, sing about love and you sell off these emotions to people. I think that fucken amputates people s emotions. In the spectrum of human emotions, music presents a small part, a safe part, presents a little bit of broken heart, a little bit of going crazy all night and presents it in a package where people actually pay money to experience this. Like, "yeah it was such a good show, 1 moshed the whole show." Instead of going home moshing... you know what I mean? It's so hard to believe that playing a show can be that creative. 1 mean the act of creating music is different from repeating yourself. Like playing a song that is three years old and of course I won't feel the same about it when I wrote it so you try to recapture that spirit and sell it to the people. They'll pay you a couple of bucks to have that. I think that's a big problem and it sorta limits the spectrum of emotion that people actually can feel. I mean it would be amazing if music could somehow trade in the full-on fucken madness of living and the full-on sorrows of a broken heard instead of narrowing it down like it does. I mean if you are in the dark like that people consider you crazy. I think music does this a lot. Me and my friend Eric talk about this a lot and these are some of the reasons he doesn't play music any longer. He thinks that there should be other ways of feeling these emotions outside of playing these chords or going to a show. I mean, I realize all of this but I fucken love it. I have such a hard time thinking that 1 can do something else that will be equally fulfilling. 1 have to go out there and play and tell people that most of the music they listen to makes them fucking stupid, it is making them lose the emotional spectrum that they could have. And then we play another song. And hopefully the next time I come to town, no one shows up... because they're out doing something else.

This is a part of a longer "conversation, " the rest of which appears in A.T.R. #2, available from CrimethInc. or from Eric Boehme himself at 118 Raritan Avenue, Highland Park, NJ 08904 USA.

DAVID
Speaking to Inside Front in November _

Inside Front: When Refused worked, what was it that made it work?
David: Looking back, it just seemed like we were aiming for something that... we had no idea what it was. When we were good, we were all so focused, especially me, Kris, and Jon... and and Dennis, the four of us. At the time, we had all these motives... but you can t really speak of Refused

as just one band, because we went through so many phases. The first year or two what made it work was me and Dennis, we started off and knew what we wanted and just played and

[Image not archived]

1. E: You've told me that you didn't think that record could work live... why not?

_Dd.:_ That record was so worked through, so thought through, the structure... We spent so much time writing and recording it, seven months, there were so many people involved... once it was done, to go out and play it live was beyond repetitive, it was some sort of charade. As far as I was concerned, at that point we could walk out on stage and put the record on

_I E:_ You did use some prerecorded music when you played those songs live... what was that like?

_Dd.:_ It was interesting, because it involved the sound guy in the performance process... but so many times it just got fucked up, and you can imagine how stupid we looked when we'd built up this big intro and the tape was supposed to start and there was just silence, and we just stood there. 1 did like the risk involved in that, actually. But anyway — I find the mechanical aspects of music interesting, I grew up with metal and was very much into deathmetal, which for me is about the dehumanizing of music, that brutalizing of music, taking sounds and distorting them... and therefore I was very interested in techno music and stuff like that. When music becomes

mechanical, it can't be reasoned with, it's like a machine and it's twice as scary and brutal. That was very much what we were going for on the "Shape" record, we wanted a mechanical sound, a prerecorded feel to it, we didn't want it to sound like it was played live at all.

_I.E:_ That's unusual, because Refused to me was a band that played music about very human themes... was there a deliber

ate contrast there, between mechanical music and human emotions?

_Dd.:_ Well, like that one song on that record ["Protest Song '68"] which is a tribute to the '68 movement and the revolution, which is a good example of free human spirit and human will, we made that song the most mechanical one, with all the drums sampled and looped.

_I F–_ Do you think there's a fundamental difference between analog and digital music?

_Dd.:_ I've never put any pride into instrumentation, into being able to play the music... what interests me is what is recorded, I see that as a form of "audio painting, " if you will. So I don't think there is anything more genuine or important about analog music. I enjoy the mix of analog sounds, actual playing, with digital sounds, but what matters to me is the music itself in the end. You can make digital music sound more acoustic and organic than anything you can play, and probably the other way around;

bands like Meshugga [deathmetal band, I have no idea how to spell their name! -editor] from our hometown sound more technological than Squarepusher [?, again] ever will. Music is more of a mindset, what's in your head, and whether you play it or program it, it doesn't really matter...bands like Meshugga that are repetitive and minimalistic can have that industrial factory kind of feeling more than any electronica.

LF? There is a traditional division of labor in hardcore bands between the singer as verbal/political communicator and the rest of the band as musical communicators. This tension seems to be at the root of a lot of the problems bands face... how did this play out in Refused? _Dd.:_ Me and Dennis had the plan from the beginning, it was our mission, we were going to save the world. We shared views on all the common topics of the day, hardline, Krishna, abortion, veganism... but my focus had always been on music, I mean I started playing drums when I was three years old. Music has always been a theme for me. For Dennis, I think it was a sort of escape from the small town in which he grew up, whereas for me it was a sort of calling. So when Refused got a lot of attention, which we did in Sweden, what was important for me was to have something to offer that I could be proud of, and music was my way to reach out... whereas for Dennis, it made him refine his politics and focus on that, so we kind of drifted apart in that sense. And with the addition of Kris in the band, and my connection with him, it was only natural that we just focus on the music more and more. Dennis focused on the politics more and more because we didn't leave him much room to contribute creatively. But, to some degree — and me and Dennis talked about this on the night of the last show, you remember when I came over to your van and asked him to come out — I had my politics, and then my politics became his politics because he was the spokesperson for Refused. I didn't like doing interviews, 1 didn't like talking because I didn't think that there

was anyone who understood my motives or our history or where we were headed. So Dennis's opinions were usually just pinned on me, and the rest of the guys in the band. And while my politics aren't that far from his politics, it was still a strange thing. And that's what's very liberating about the Refused breakup, that now I can focus on my own politics, and I don't have to think about paying attention to where somebody else is heading because in the next interview I'm going to have a question about something Dennis talked about in the lyrics, have to answer some question about some aspect of world economics that I'm not interested in at all. It became a sort of a burden, to some extent, for the rest of the band. My politics always go hand in hand with my creative process; I could not become an anarchist without changing the way I thought about music; but it usually goes the other way around, my creative output and intake affect the way I view the world and the way I view people. I guess it's pretty natural that the vocalist's politics are the ones the fanzines and the media focus on, the ones that are brought to the forefront. And I know that Kris has his politics and Jon has his politics and I have mine, but what is known is Dennis's politics, and that is what people identify with. So I guess the music of the "Shape" record was a way for me and

Kris to reach out, to influence people ourselves, to show them what we were about, because it was a very personal record.

_I.E:_ Do you think that things would have happened differently with Refused if everyone had been involved equally in all aspects of the band?

_Dd.:_ Well, the "Shape" record was such a huge project... we could have done it differently and had everyone involved in every decision but it would have been a five year process and it would have been incredibly painful. We burned out in '96, basically. My impulse was that we should do it ourselves, cut ourselves loose from all ties with labels and the music industry and release the record ourselves, that was what I would have wanted, but we couldn't do it, there was no energy left. And if we were gonna do that record we were gonna need money, that a bigger label like Burning Heart could give us. And none of us had that kind of money or energy to put into Refused in that sense. I mean, if we'd started putting our records out ourselves from the beginning it would have been a different story, but after six years there was no one in the band that could do it.

_I.E:_ Do you think that you guys should have started putting your records out yourselves when you started the band? Do you think that would have made a difference?

_Dd.:_ Yeah, definitely. That probably would have been better. The way we did it, we were like "Oh, some German label wants to license our record! Awesome, let them do it!" and that was that and we never saw any money, still haven't, and then "Oh, Equal Vision wants to put a record out, Awesome!" and we never saw any money... We were so

excited about hardcore and about us getting any attention at all. If we'd done it ourselves, we'd probably have money by now, and we would have had control over what was going on...

_I.E:_ You would have had more control over the level of popularity your band reached, too, and how you were presented to the world. _Dd.:_ Yeah, exactly. It's hard to think of whether I regret it or whether I would have wanted us to sell fewer records in Sweden... I can't think like that, we did what we did, and lots of it could have been done better. But we focused on living it, and we never slowed down. It was an extremely intense six year period. We said yes to every show we were ever offered, basically... I guess in '96 when I was having some trouble with my wrists we canceled about twenty shows, with Dennis's ulcer and everything, and that's pretty good for a seven year career. We lived it so fucking intensely. But... I guess there are so many "buts, " things that could have happened differently.

_I.E:_ How did being as popular as you got in Sweden affect you, affect your interactions with other people?

_Dd.:_ I appreciate the way it happened, because I got to see it from the outside. Dennis was the focus, he got the attention, he was the big star, and I got to see how his popularity, how his media persona affected him as a person and how annoying it all was. I could see it from the outside, just look at it and say "this is so ridiculous, why

would anyone want this?" I'm a very self-centered person, I'm prone to glorifying myself at any chance I get, I remember when I was a kid and people asked me what I wanted to be I answered "rockstar"... I probably would have wanted that situation, I probably would have wanted to get famous, and I got to see it from an outside perspective. But people stop listening, that's what happens. They stop listening and they start nodding. And I know now that I don't want that. It's an impossible situation and it's impossible to keep a clear head in it.

1. _.E:_ I want to go back to what we were talking about with the tension between the political and musical voices of Refused. When you think of Refused, how important do you see the politics as compared to the music?

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_Dd.:_ Well, when I look back on Refused, there are three things that I think about: one is the music. Another is what we said, you know, in interviews, our "media persona." It may seem weird to be talking about the media so much, for a punk band, but you know that we got lots of attention in Sweden, we were on talk shows and in every magazine, and the newspapers wrote about us constantly, they just kept writing about us until the day we died. That last manifesto that we wrote, they read it aloud on national TV. So anyway when I think of Refused I think of our music, our politics, and the life. And in all three aspects, what's really interesting to me is the process, the seven year process, and that goes for the politics as well as the music. We had our politics when we started out, and then we had our politics

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when we did our first full length, and we had our politics when we did the second one. And then the "Shape" record is definitely the most extreme one, it basically combines many of the ideas that we had been talking about in the years before, but it also has a whole new

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twist to it, which was basically all Dennis. To answer your question, I value all three equally, but what's interesting to me is the process of how we went from Krishna-friendly metallic hardcore to what's on the "Shape" record:

_I E:_ Let's talk about the title of the record, "the shape of punk to come" — what is that meant to imply about punk rock? Do you still think that punk rock is a legitimate musical medium at this point, in 1998?

_Dd.:_ Speaking of what I know of the American and European hardcore scenes, including Sweden, I think a lot of it is a joke... and I think that that's what drove Refused a lot, in the direction we went was that there were really no other bands that we could identify with, no other bands that we felt were really pushing themselves hard enough, that were giving the kids or anyone, including themselves, that much, and that's what drove us to go as far as we did with "Shape." And the idea of the title partly came from that frustration, just feeling: "no one is fucking doing anything, OK,

this is the shape of punk to come, we're presenting it to you, " just to piss people off, to say that there's still someone out there trying to do something...

_I.E:_ So do you think punk is still a legitimate medium?

_Dd.:_ Well, so much of who I am I have gotten from punk and hardcore, so to deny its relevance, its cultural, social function as a community, would be to deny myself; I definitely believe in it, still. No, I don't believe in it as it is, I believe in the potential of it... and I think that the potential of it was what caught my interest in the first place, what made me want to take part in it, and that potential is what I tried to make something of with Refused all those years. And the potential is still what I see, though I don't see it realized in as many bands or as many fanzines or as many people as I would like to. But there are some things about hardcore punk that you just don't find any place else. The music that I'm working on now has just left "Shape" far behind, it's way out there, it's not like anything I have come across within the punk or hardcore spectrum of music, but I still want to exist within the hardcore punk community in some way or other. Because punk is the only place where people just come up to you and say "this sucked about your record, and this was bad, and that was good." I've taken part in a lot of different sorts of communities, as far as music goes, for a very long time; jazz, classical music, whatever. And nowhere else does that clear communication exist between the people who write the music and the people who listen to it.

That's something you and I talked about a few days ago: how I'd like my role as a musician to be less mystified, to have my role be like a carpenter, where someone could just come up and say "could you make that window a little smaller, because I'd like it more..." To have the music be a function, and that's how it's been in punk rock.

_I.E:_ As far as music goes, my view of what the hardcore community should be, ideally, is this: I think artistic communities are important for fostering creativity, to have a bunch of people working together so new ideas can grow between them, people giving them back and forth... and the hardcore community should work like that.

_Dd.:_ Right.

_I.E:_ I guess my last question is: what do you think the net result of the Refused experiment is? What's left after these last seven years, what consequences...

_Dd.:_ I've thought a lot about that. When I first realized the potential of Refused's demise, which was over a year ago now, I started thinking about that, wondering what would Sweden be like without Refused, for example. I talked to friends about it, and a lot of them couldn't even visualize the concept, since we had been around for so long, and had such an impact. As far as the community we had in Umea, I always think our greatest achievement is what these people are going to go on to do now, after they've experienced this. We never had the same impact in the rest of Europe or in America as we did in Sweden, but there are a lot of people there who have witnessed the relentless passion with which we did that band, and played every show that was offered, and the passion with which we talked about the things we believed in; and I know that that will have results, and I hoping that somehow it will make Sweden a

better place to live. And for me it's also the lifelong friendships; besides my family, I met everyone I know through Refused. For the last five years, I didn't work or go to school. I ate my mom's food and managed to get by on money from t-shirt sales, and I did nothing but Refused, so to put down the results of Refused's seven years would be a very big project... It's given me direction musically, it's taught me a lot about music, its function, how people react to it, and how people talk to you... I guess what I hope is that the records, especially that last record, the historical evidence of our band, will continue, and that hopefully the people who were in the band will carry on the same level of enthusiasm towards life and towards art in whatever we do from now on. The most important result is probably what we will manage to do in the future with what we learned.

_I.E:_ How do you feel about the way Refused broke up, in the middle of the tour...

_Dd.:_ The thing was that we had decided what we were going to do, it was going to be a nice, peaceful breakup, we were going to do the rest of the tours, play a few more shows in Sweden, with the finale in Umea on New Year's Eve, and that was already decided when the tour collapsed. There was some bad blood, I think there's no bad feelings now...

_I.E:_ Do you feel like it would have been better for the sake of the mission of Refused, if you guys had made it through all the tours and finished the way you had planned?

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_Dd.:_ Well, you know, we never did anything right (laughs), and this totally makes sense in the grand scheme of things, for Refused to split up in some random town in America.

Using the Mainstream Media

David.: I just got allergic to the media, 1 thought they were lying fucking scumbags...

Inside Front: Yeah, I hate all those people. My take on that is that we only hurt ourselves and our project by trying to use those channels to reach people. Here, we just won't talk to those guys, you know? And my feeling is that it can't have been good for you guys to have to be talking to them all the time and have to be distracted from your real mission by them...

David: When we came out, we were on a mission, you know? It was like a crusade, we were going to bring vegetarianism, veganism, straight edge to Sweden, and we did, and it had an enormous result. But when I started getting sick of it, and decided I wasn't going to talk to them, I could come home from being out of town and people from the newspaper would be sitting in the kitchen talking to my mom, they'd just walk in, and start taking pictures and asking questions, they'd stop at nothing. At that point we weren't exactly the latest scoop, either; they just want a story, and they just search until they find it. And if they don't get the right answers from me, they'll take them from somebody else, but they'd still print my picture next to it. 1 saw that

happen so many times, my words twisted and my face put next to things that 1 had nothing to do with... We were naive, definitely.

Inside Front: 1 think maintaining "media silence" is a fundamental part of establishing and concentrating on our *own* channels of communication.

David: Yeah, definitely. Like until now, I stopped doing interviews.

DENNIS

Speaking with Inside Front in February and April

Inside Front: Let's talk about the function *of fashion* in the Refused Party Program. At one point in the band's history, it seemed the idea was to present the band members dressed in a sort of stylish uniform... on the one hand, this challenged the visual expectations of hardcore kids, but on the other, we're all so obsessed with image, especially in a youth subculture like hardcore, that it seems dangerous to risk replacing one image with just another when you're trying to get people to abandon the pursuit of images altogether, to get them to go for real life. Youth subcultures and oppressed minorities have traditionally focused almost exclusively on image as a means of selfexpression, since they're made to feel it's the only thing they have any control over. How do you think Refused s experiment with fashion worked out?

Dennis: 1 think a little bit of both — in one sense it did sort of work out that a lot of times people would remember the fact that we were playing a show because we stood out from the run-of-the-mill hardcore bands, but in another sense, as you mentioned, I guess a lot of people focused a lot on the fact that we were dressed nice or whatever. I think my initial idea was to present the band as a collective, a unit of people, of individuals, the idea being; here we have a program that we're all involved in together... trying to remove the star of the singer/rock star and make sure that people realized that Refused functioned as a unit, that it's not my band or anyone else's band but it s a group where everyone adds up to something.

> _IF:_ On one hand that makes sense, and it is exciting to see a group of people dressed in a uniform, but on the other hand that is how for example the Chinese Communist Party works, dressing everyone in unisex uniforms...

D: Oh yeah, yeah...

> _IF:_ ...so you are flirting with some scary stuff working with uniforms... was that intentional?

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Refused where we actually *enjoyed* playing music, why not try to make the best of it? It's sort of like you're in the position where you know you're doing everything you can, within the power you have, within the preset media that you have, to establish this idea of a change, revolution... and at the same time you know that this pre-set limit and the medium you're working within isn't likely to change that much.

_IF:_ Yeah, a lot of people think that

the ones who are willing to compromise are the ones that keep the system in place...

Ek Well, yeah, but at the same time, if we're talking in terms of the Spectacle, there's nothing that goes outside of it — like you can be as do-it-yourself as you want to be, or as punk rock as you want, you'll still be part of the, uh...

IE •••the system of identity and commodity...

Ek ...yeah, the system of roles, the system of exchange, of producing and consuming...

IE — see, that's actually exactly what I'm talking about, I'm not drawing a distinction between d.i.y. and corporate compromise. Instead I'm saying, well... for example, Inside Front is a magazine where we sell "revolutionary ideas, " so perhaps by doing that we're the ones who are providing the outlet, letting the steam off in a way that still takes place inside the exchange economy, for what would otherwise be a truly revolutionary energy. That's the danger that you and I and everyone like us faces.

IX Yeah, yeah — I totally understand, I sort of agree with that, like how punk rock has been a safe outlet for rebellion for all these years, it s always been like "well, you can always rebel within punk rock, " it's sort have been a small Spectacle within the Spectacle, and you can always go back, after you've done your years of rebellion, instead of maybe demanding everything at once. '

IE It's a limited playground, you know?

EX Definitely. That's one of the fulfilling things about punk rock, that we can actually be in charge of the stuff that we're producing and consuming, and sort of be in charge of our lives on this limited playground... but at the same time you realize after a while that it is really limited, that it's sort of a safe rebellion, and then you come to the hard part, you know: are you going to go outside the punk rock community, try to infiltrate beyond that...

IE And is that the way to go? You guys tried it, tell me what happened...

IX It's really hard to tell, because you don't want to sit and say "yeah, we changed so many people's minds, " which I don't really think we did, but if you look at the last Refused record, and you look at all the ideas, all the lyrics and all the written stuff, all the clues that we leave behind... that record has sold over 30, 000 copies, that's a lot of records,

a hopefully at least a percentage of those people have actually taken the time to find out what the ideas are that are driving us to do this. So in a sense, I think it can work... If your goals are set on maintaining the independence of the punk rock community then I think we failed miserably...

IF: But that by itself is a completely unambitious goal, right...

I> Yeah, I think so... but at the same time that's what the punk rock community has been for the last twenty years, it reached a point where everybody said "this is where we want punk rock to be, it shouldn't change from this" —

IE — "how long can we tread water here" —

D: Yeah, exactly. And as soon as bands go outside that they start to get a lot of shit for it. Which is understandable if people think that they've found their ideal world... It's a really hard thing, because we still had all the punk rock ethics and then all of a sudden we had to make weird compromises. It wasn't not necessarily big things, just weird things, and we had to decide if this weird thing was worth reaching out to more people.

IE I think there's a false dichotomy between either being d.i.y. or working within the mainstream, with those companies... I think there's got to be a third choice, a solution that no one has hit upon yet...

IX Yeah, I think so as well. The new project that we're doing, the new band, we're definitely trying to figure out a different solution for ourselves.

IE A way to reach out to *everyone, * that is still d.i.y., in some sense. And I don't really know what that would be, but we need a way to not have an exclusive community, but an* expandable *autonomous zone, that's what I think.*

D: In a way, we tried to work towards that with Refused, but didn't really succeed. I think with the new band I'm doing we're trying to find, as the Buddha would say, the middle path... if you're bold and daring enough, you can actually try to do something different, that nobody has done before.

IE That's what punk is, really, or was... and will be again, right?

IX But it is really hard, because the music industry itself is really conservative, and as in the punk rock scene there's so many rules. Refused, we sort of got caught up in... well, one important aspect of Refused was that when we started the band, we didn't really know, it wasn't like the whole agenda and everything was there when we started the band, it was just like it just happened. Like the politics just sort of came along the way, and we're just like "holy shit, what's going on here?"

IE "Fuck, we're a band on Equal Vision that hates capitalism!"

D. Yeah, exactly, that doesn't like Krishna people — or, I won't say Krishna people, but — that doesn't approve of Krishna "consciousness." What the fuck! But we all know how it is after you've done something and ypu change perspective and you try to sort of justify all the stupid things you did... We didn't set out to be the most political, anarchist, punk rock band, all those ideas, they were always there, but when we started we just wanted to sound like Gorilla Biscuits, which we failed with —

IE — thank god you failed!

D. I mean, the first show we played, we played like four Gorilla Biscuits songs. That's where our heads were when we started the band. And all of a sudden I'm reading all this politics and all the lyrics are political and there's a bigger idea than to just play music and put out records... IE 1 wasn't going to ask this, but do you want to try to talk about why you think that your band and your scene evolved into thinking about these issues, whereas other bands that start out covering Gorilla Biscuits don't?

_D:_ Seriously, I don't really know why that happened. I would say that a lot of it had to do with the fact that'even from when the first miniCD came out, all the lyrics were about politics...

_IF:_ ...even though you didn't know anything about it.

D: Yeah, exactly, we knew that we hated capitalism, but we weren't really well-read about it, we were just angry and naive, like hardcore kids. But when I got into straight edge, the whole European tradition of it was so much more political. We had Man Lifting Banner, Nations on Fire, all those bands were political, so when I started writing to those people and trying to get involved in the European scene, I remember in '89 I did an interview with Man Lifting Banner and they sent me all this literature, and 1 was like, "wow, these guys are crazy, they know what's going on everywhere and they're so political, " and that inspired me to do, like, a straight edge band that's political. IF: There's a very different tradition of youthful rebellion in the U.S. from the radicalism in Europe, and that affects the way that hardcore plays out in both places. It's funny how kids not just in Europe but especially in places like Brazil get involved in an American rebellious thing and turn it into something revolutionary.

D: Yeah, when I started getting in touch with American straight edge kids and it turned out they didn't really know what was going on, I was surprised, and then afterwards I realized that all the straight edge kids that got political stopped calling themselves straight edge in the States, that's just like a general thing, if you start talking about politics you stop calling yourself straight edge, because it's such a different scene from what we were doing up here...

_IF:_ See, I still call myself straight edge...

_D:_ Oh, I still do...

_IF:_ ...the idea being I guess to help this scene grow, for the same reasoi)you do, but that is sort of a drawback in the U.S.: there's a sort of a "brain drain" of people leaving straight edge for "oh, I have a more educated identity now, I can't brush shoulders with the unwashed Philistines..." [Dennis laughs] Ok, why don't we go on to another question here, before I run out of tape. If I ask you when and where you started to get your dance moves, are you going to tell me that it's just because you enjoy performing, and you wanted to start challenging people, and all that stuff, or do you have a more complicated conception of how your moves relate to rock and roll and James Brown and all that stuff?

_D:_ I don't know, I probably could come up with something really pretentious and intellectual, but...

IF: I'm going to if you don't!

_D:_ Let's face it, when I started, I always enjoyed — when I got up on stage I always went nuts. We talked about why I started dressing up and all that stuff, and I think the moves just came with that. And it was a whole challenge, a whole fuck you to the world of testosterone, and the macho ideals that hardcore all of a sudden was. I was like, this isn't really me, I mean, I am a sort of feminine, petite kind of guy — and I just started looking at all these performers that were feminine, and that challenged people so much, and offended people. And especially in a scene like this, where we're playing shows with a band like Madball, and then I go up and I'm all feminine and I do all these crazy moves... It's just one of those things, I just enjoy dancing around...

you know, I used to take my t-shirt off, and be all hardcore _IF:_ — I still do that, so I don't get my only shirt sweaty —

_D:_ — I know, but for me it was just like why am I doing this? Because I've been looking at pictures from American bands that do this. And I'm like: this is not really me. I don't want to sport my tattoos and stuff. And then I started looking at James Brown videos, and trying to incorporate dance moves into punk rock. Because, you know, the revo

lution of everyday life should be very sexual and very challenging. And also when you have a scene that's so puritanical, like the straight edge scene, so afraid of sexuality and everyone dresses up in big baggy clothes and it's totally genderless...

IF: Yeah, I hear soul music sometimes, and I wonder, why don't we ever sing about fucking?

D:Yeah, exactly —

_IF:_ Not that it's the only thing in the world, but it's something in the world.

_D:_ — rock music is very sexual, and it is very... primitive, I would say, and the whole idea of sexuality is so primitive, and just being sexual like that on stage is so in sync with what rock music was all about and punk rock could be all about...

_IF:_ This leads to another question I was going to ask you. One of the gutsiest things I've seen a hardcore singer do, faking an orgasm — I mean, I'm assuming you were faking —

_D:_ — yeah, I was I —

_IF:_ — in the middle of song, in front of all these uptight machismo kids... now how did you get that idea?

_D:_ I just did it on stage one night. That part of the song is the breakdown where everything becomes quiet, and one night I was just breathing really loud, and then I started faking an orgasm, and everyone in the band was like "that was so fucking crazy." And you could tell how people reacted, they were just like, what is going on. It just stuck there, because I really liked it; people were actually really offended by it, and it was so good.

_IF:_ Yeah, that's what I want, is to contact people with that kind of closeness, you know? When I play music to people, I almost wish I could make love to each one of them, and find out what they re like with their barriers down, but I can't so I play music and try to get to them like that... so, here's a question: when you'd fake that orgasm, would you actually try to do it in exactly the same way as when you are making love to someone, or did you find yourself *performing?* _D:_ I found myself performing, a bit, because I'm not that loud, I m more... yeah, I'm not that loud when I have orgasm. So I was definitely performing it a bit, but I was trying to work it up so you could hear that I got excited — and some nights, I got really, not into it in the sense that I got excited excited, you know, but I got really into it, I was really caught up in what I was doing. It was performing, but I tried to take that emotion of the orgasm and sort of amplify it.

_IF:_ So would you ever go out on a limb, and have an orgasm in front of a crowd of people?

_D:_ I don't know... that's one of those questions I'd have to think about for a while!

_IF:_ That's taking the abstract idea and making it real, terrifying...

_D:_ Definitely, definitely —

_IF:_ It also is the difference between performance and real life, the whole question of how valid performance is.

_D:_ Exactly.

_IF:_ Let's go on to something else: prerecorded music. I know that was the idea of some of the other people in the band, but I want to get your feedback about it. I remember when you played in Greensboro, you were giving this really personal, inspiring speech about seizing the moment, not just waiting for change; and in the background the tape was playing a woman singing dramatically, and it totally manipulated my emotions. On the one hand, I was responding emotionally to what you were saying, on the other hand I was being manipulated by the tape, and then at the same time the whole thing almost made a joke out of the seriousness of what you were saying. That happened with your dancing, too, like you'd be doing this frivolous hand-clapping

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dance while you're singing this really emotional protest song.

Tell me about how you guys tried to use melodrama and manipulation with Refused.

_D:_ I think the whole idea was to make it into more of a show. So there's

a crazy intro with the drumbeats, and me going up singing by myself, and then the band blasts in, and trying to make it so it builds, and the violins come in... Just to have all these different elements that are totally unexpected, because

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it's so not punk

rock to do that... to make people think "what's happening now? what is this? why are they doing this to me?" To use the surprise in the songs to make people react in different ways...

_IF:_ Here's a question about that — do you think "the shape of punk to come" should be more one of "shows, " or of not being a show but being real, if that makes sense... or do you think there's not a distinction between performance and actual action? Should we work more towards performances, that separate the performers from the audience, for example through technological means such as samples, or should we be working in the opposite direction?

_D:_ I think our plan was... well, neither, and... everything. I think the shape of punk to come should be, certainly the unexpected, but at the same time, you can use mediums that are so ordinary and have been

used a million times before, to create all these... I think the shape of punk to come is not about the aesthetics of punk rock, it's about the emotions around it more than the actual aesthetics. The way you go

about creating your punk rock masterpiece, it should be more about the emotion, I mean, "The Shape of Punk to Come" for Refused, it was like "let's do this album and give everything we've got, " with the title it wasn't really like we wanted people to make records that would sound like the Refused record, because that would be such a waste of time and energy. We just wanted to show people us going all out, that you can do crazy, mad things with your music and not let anything stop you from realizing what you want to do — not let the aesthetics of punk rock stop you from creating what you want to create.

_IF:_ So what about the melodrama and the contradictions in your performances, though, like when you were speaking seriously and there's this manipulative sample playing in the background as if I'm watching the end of a bad movie? Did you guys do that deliberately, did you think much about it or did it just come out that way?

_D:_ I think a lot of it just came out that way, because when I get up on stage I try not to say the same thing twice; you tend to a lot, because when you play thirty shows in a row it's hard to vary what you're saying, but yeah, I think it just came out that way. Also when you hear that voice, and the music comes on and gets really emotional and bombastic, then it's easy to talk that way when you have that background. It's easy to go with the flow and start talking about stuff you might not say otherwise.

_IF:_ But do you think there is a tension there between man and machine, between Dennis the human being and this CD player playing this prerecorded, synthetic music to people?

D: A little bit, yeah. Because for me personally, I don't like, I was sort of against, not really against the idea, because it was a part of the project around the record, but 1 don't like electronic music at all. If it were up to me, I wouldn't have done it. But since it was a project that we wanted everyone to be involved on all these different levels, and since that was Jon's big thing, that he did all that stuff, we tried to incorporate that the best we could, tried to make it a part of Refused, so that everyone in Refused had his different role, and everyone could

express himself according to what he wanted to do and not let the limitations of what we were before or what the world expected us to be become a hindrance in any way.

_IF:_ That was what was significant about the record, was that — most punk bands, they get new ideas, they get new influences and they stop playing punk rock, or they can't work with each other and they break up. But you guys all had different ideas and aesthetics, and somehow took all that stuff and brought it all *into* punk rock, which is a very generous thing, to take these ideas back to the place you've been, rather than to leave it for them... and also to be able to work together and make music even when you have different aesthetic ideas, that's amazing.

_D:_ It is — and it's hard. In a sense, that's what made this record really

really good, and also, that's what made us realize that we couldn't go on doing it much longer... because it came to a point where we realized we were four different people striving in four different directions, and you can have all this tension, and frustration and anxiety... and creativity, and make it into something really exciting. And after we did the record we realized "we're not going to be able to work like this, we have to come up with an idea of how we're going to work together, " which never happened... but you know what I mean, the whole tension and everything made it really exciting.

IF: That's our idea as anarchists, too, I guess, that we could create a society where everyone contributes and it isn't just one person's plan, and it actually would turn out to be more exciting than a society that comes down to a few people telling everyone else what to do.

_D:_ Exactly.

_IF:_ Like if you look at Refused as an anarchist collective, maybe not a smoothly running one, but compare it to Madonna's band — that's

not a collective —

_D:_ — that's a dictatorship. We definitely tried to make it so the last record was 25% of everyone in the band, we had all these different roles, tried to keep the feeling of a collective, and still make sure that everyone got to do their part...

_IF:_ ...right, and that everyone is responsible for each other's ideas, and bringing them into the world, and for their beliefs, even if they aren't ready to be. OK, I don't think you ever answered the question I was trying to ask, but all the answers you gave were good, so let's go on. I don't know if you're going to like this question or not, but... there was something about Refused that seemed deliberately pretentious. Not just in the fancy dance moves or intellectual references or language, but in the spirit of everything you did. And my question is: pretentiousness as revolutionary? or what?

_D:_ [laughs] ...I think it's a funny question! It's good though. Refused — it was so pretentious! But it was not pretentious in a way that it was stuck up pretentious, like "we know so much better than you, and we have the right to be pretentious because we are these great artists..." It was more pretentious in a way like... we wanted so damn much, you know, and we wanted to explain, and expand, and create things that were so out of our reach... it became really pretentious, because we wanted so much, I think... does that make sense?

to fan the flames of

_IF:_ I think so — like you're overreaching yourselves, and you have to be like —

_D:_ — always pushing it too hard, making it... like making the language really intellectual, just because I wanted to write essays that were pages and pages, and instead we had to adapt everything to the medium given to us: the record, the music, the booklet. Also, when you come up with the idea of just having a new idea, already there we have a lot of pretension. Just like writing a song like "New Noise, " there you go.

_IF:_ I guess perhaps deliberately being pretentious is a way to make yourself feel free to do that stuff.

_D:_ And also deliberately being pretentious is a way to control it, so you don't become pretentious because you think that you're so amazing or you think that you're so great, you think you're so smart... a lot of the time being really pretentious makes you able to laugh, laugh about it, to criticize yourself and just say "what the fuck!" Which is important, because I hate that when people become, like, "I am a big artist, and no one understands me..."

_IF:_ They're gobbled up by their own image of themselves.

_D._ Exactly, and it's so much easier to do it sort of over the top, so that you can look at it from an outsider's point of view...

_IF:_ ...and protect yourself from it by making a joke out of it.

_D:_ Well, not making a *joke* out of it, because it was dead serious, you know?

_IF:_ No, what I mean by "making a joke out of it" is when you act like a rockstar, you're *joking* about being a rockstar, in order to be able to be dead serious about the other things... because if you really are a rock star, then all the politics become a joke.

I> Yeah, exactly.

_IF:_ I thought of a question about what we were talking about before we got in the pretension issue. A lot of bands, maybe everybody starts the band being equally creative, but then some people work harder than other people and end up eventually being the voices in the band. How did you guys in Refused manage to keep everyone still contributing?

_D:_ I think just by doing a lot of records where it was just one or two people that did everything. Going through the process of the first couple of records it was only me and David doing everything, and then realizing, being on tour for so long, and becoming such a tight unit, we actually... Well, I think a lot of it is that like, David is a total control freak. David wants to be in charge. If it was up to David, he would have done all the lyrics, all the layout, every riff, and recorded everything himself.

IF: You know, when we first met in person in Belgium, we were hanging out and we hadn't really broken the ice yet... and I was complaining about Ink and Dagger, some completely predictable stupid hardcore gossip, David just interrupted me, and he said "you know, I wish I could build an army of robots to do my bidding." That broke the ice, and we could talk as real human beings after that, he'd broken us out of the cliche. But I never really thought about what he said until just now.

_D:_ Like the "Songs to Fan the Flames of Discontent, " it was David's work; I mean, everyone was involved, but David wrote most of the songs, and David was, like, in charge in charge of what we were going to do. And I think he and I realized that if we wanted this band to function, if we wanted everyone to be happy, we were going to have to make sure that we could use everyone's talents. Because we'd done all the, like, I wrote all the songs on the first demo because 1 was the only one who knew anything about hardcore, we'd done all that, and we decided let's try to make a record where everyone is equally involved.

_IF:_ But how did you get them to be equally involved?

discontent...?

_D:_ It was really easy — we started writing all the songs, and practicing, and as soon as we had some songs — everything that is on the record in terms of layout and politics, and all the lyrics I started sketching out way before the record was done. I was like these are the issues I want to talk about... and as soon as we started to have all the songs finished, our roles sort of fell into place, it was so obvious what we were all going to do, it wasn't even forced in any way, or trying to make people do anything. When we started recording the album, everyone just knew what their role was.

plagiarism: "I stole this scrapbook from you but it doesn't matter because you stole it too."

_IF:_ Let's talk about the function of plagiarism in the Refused Party Program. Most of your ideas, slogans, even the visual images were borrowed from other sources, and introduced — or reintroduced — into hardcore. And the music is revolutionary and new in the ways it combines old ideas, but it's doing that just by recontextualizing old ideas. What's your ideological stance on plagiarism?

_D:_ I'll quote Guy Debord: "Plagiarism is necessary. All progress depends upon it."

IF: All progress?

D: Well, yeah, most progress... we can adjust that a little bit! But what we have here is all these great ideas; and if you find a thing that is a great idea, you want to take it, use it, and make other people aware of it. I think that's pretty much how all music and all political ideas are created, when you take something that already exists and try to adjust it a little bit, put your personal touch on it. And since everyone has different preferences about a text or a song, it always comes off differently. I think a lot of people were just like "man, it's just a big '60's rip off, " but — and in a way it is — but if you look at it in the context of where the record came out, in what time and scene it came out, how it came out, how the whole product came to be, it's nothing like anything has ever been before. But if you start taking out sentences and riffs and structures of course you can sort of take everything apart and figure out where we stole it from, where the idea came from. But I think that's how it is with everything. You find these great ideas and you just try to make them into your own ideas, adjust them to your own life and your own background and experiences. I think the greatest idea... one of my favorite singer/songwriters, Phil Ochs, he said that the perfect political fighter or whatever should be a mix of Elvis Presley and Che Guevara. There's something that people can relate to and at the same time there's something totally different — 1 mean, what if Elvis Presley all of a sudden would start talking socialist politics, it would be insane! And that's how we feel that we're trying to... I mean, we're in this scene where everything is a certain way, and we do this record and we sound really different and we look really different and we talk really different, but at the same time people sort of can relate to it and understand what's going on.

_IF:_ Now on the one hand, you're breaking down the idea of intellectual property — that's an anarchist idea, that ideas belong to everyone and you don't necessarily have to always sign a dead white man's name to everything. On the other hand, it's a very postmodern thing to say there's nothing new in the world, and so everything we do is just going to be an ironic version of something that's been done before. And I don't think that's what the Refused record was, but I see a lot of that, though, even in hardcore styles where we're always drawing on old fashions, looking backwards... and I'm just waiting for somebody to come up with something new.

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_D:_ That is a postmodern idea, that history stopped, and we're just repeating everything... which I don't necessarily agree with, but in a lot of senses you can actually see it happening,

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how everything that comes up is just people repeating old ideas.

_IF:_ So how do we destroy that old, dead history that lies on us like a weight, and start history from scratch,

_D:_ 1 think the only thing that we can do is... the thing is, we have to break out of the time/space settings that are set for us, and I don't think we can do it by just style, or manifestos, or music. I think that creating your own history, uniting theory into practice, has to happen on a way bigger level. And seriously, it's not really that important if we're using '40's style-clothes again, that's just inevitable in the Spectacle that everything repeats itself and there are all these roles we're supposed to play... there has to be a change in the bigger picture, an all-out revolution, that will hopefully destroy all these silly roles and destroy all these silly cliches that we turn into, believing that we have multiple choices...

IF: And that would be the *beginning* of history, since history as we've known it has already ended.

_D:_ Exactly.

_IF:_ OK, I'm with you, awesome — give me a black mask! [laughter] OK, I have one more question, and it's about Final Exit. I finally figured out what I love most about Final Exit: Final Exit, for me,

and I imagine it was for you guys too, is like a guilty pleasure. We're all programmed from growing up in the mainstream to have all these stupid desires, like I can't help but love the American 1950's rebel image, like James Dean, I have a fucking leather jacket left over from when I was a punk kid, you know, and I actually feel kind of cool when I wear it, even though that's dumb as fuck! Similarly, as hardcore kids we all get a kick out of singing about being stabbed in the back, even though we know it's ridiculous. I listen to the first Final Exit, and it sounds like a sort of "guilty pleasure" for Refused... I mean, it's stupid as fuck to be like "you stabbed me in the back, I'm gonna kill you, " but it's also like you're affirming and embracing that side of yourself, like "OK, I have this ridiculous desire, and I'm going to celebrate it rather than being ashamed." _D:_ Yeah, I think we realized that a lot of it was really silly, but we loved

it. We figured why not do this, and go balls out, and sort of try to make people realize that it is really silly, and at the same time make it kind of smart and funny. It was so fucking cool to be on tour with Final Exit, it was so awesome to just get up on stage, play bass, X-up and jump around. And just being such a cliche, not even a parody of myself, just to be such a straight edge cliche — it was so much fun to make fun of ourselves and the things that we loved.

_IF:_ 1 think that's really positive, too, to celebrate even ridiculous desires, too...

D; Oh, definitely, you should live life according to your desires and not worry about whether what you're doing is the right thing or the cool thing...

_IF:_ ...although the problem is, we are all programmed to want all these fucked up things, like that piece 1 wrote for your book about all the power dynamics bullshit that is programmed into our sexuality — there's that difficult intersection between wanting to remake yourself into something better, like wanting to become someone who looks at meat and doesn't think of it as food, doesn't get hungry for it, and at the same time still wanting to celebrate who you are and accept that, be proud of it.

_D:_ That is a tough thing. But every once in a while, you have to indulge in nostalgia, in that whole role, that whole sense of identity that is really stupid, but once in a while you just have to go balls out and be like "aaaah!"

_IF:_ And maybe that's away to defuse those desires, to harmlessly play out that programming without being trapped by it.

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_D:_ Like I was with my friends in Separation and this band Eclipse, I played a show with my acoustic guitar, and all the kids in Eclipse are really young — and they were all X-ing up and being really straight edge, and I just X-ed up. 1 was sitting there with my acoustic guitar with my turtleneck on and 1 was X-ed up, it was so hardcore, we were sitting in the backstage room like "Where's the marker!", you know? And once in a while you have to do that.

_IF:_ I've actually never X-ed my hands in the entire ten years I've been straight edge...

Di Aww! Yeah, I've been straight edge for ten years, and I did it a lot of times, I did it at the last Refused show, even!

_IF:_ I don't actually remember that, I must not have noticed...

_D:_ I did! It was crazy, because when we played our last show in Sweden, last summer — we didn't know it was gonna be the last show then — we knew that Jon had started drinking... so me and Ulf were like really upset, not really upset, but we were like, fuck, you know? So me, David and Ulf X-ed up on the last show we did in Sweden, and I X-ed up on the last show we ever did.

IF: Well, the tape has run out, so I guess those are the last words of the last Refused interview...

This final piece is from a *letter David sent me. It was the last thing I heard from him before disaster struck in both our lives and we fell out of contact. I feel strange about putting it in here, partly because I haven't been able to ask him about it, and also*

because I feel like it's dangerous to take things that are important in your own life and mass-produce them. There is a real temptation for us journalist types to cannibalize everything from our private lives — turning every moment of passionate living, every piece of unique correspondence into public property, preserved freeze-dried and soulless in the mass media — as if that would make them somehow more real, more significant. All the same, I'm going to print it here, because it sums up for me everything I'd like to say about Refused but can't... and if Tm going to really try to get my feelings about them across to each one of you, I'm going to have to take some risks.

On the last night in Sweden before leaving for the states in the summer of '96 we played this festival in the south and lots of our friends were there, some came with us and some had been out traveling and met up with us there, it was a beautiful night and we hadn't started falling apart yet, that began at the end of the US tour, we were unstoppable and in love with ourselves and the world, there were about a thousand people at our show, going insane and my brother was there, carrying our stuff, taking care of troublemakers. At the end of the show Penn is told everyone we were going swimming and when wC'd loaded all our shit we all ran, followed by a bunch of kids, down to the beach, got naked, all of us, girls and boys, into the sea. Me, Jonas (Bloodpath), Dennis, My brother Storknasse and Kris weren't in a hurry so when we got down there everyone was already going nuts in the water, way past midnight, almost full moon, it was beautiful, all these kids having a great time and none of them would have been then and there if it wasn't for the band. Anyway, Jonas was hyperactive as usual and decided he was gonna tie his towel like a cape round his neck and run up and down the beach until he couldn't walk anymore, which he did, and the rest of us followed. If you've never felt the cold wind against your naked body you haven't lived, we raced up and down that beach until we could run no longer and then we dove into the sea. An hour later we said goodbye to everyone and left for the airport, and for the rest of that year (178 shows) whenever I felt like none of it mattered anymore, I thought of Dennis, Jonas, My brother, Kris and myself runnin along the water like crazy horses with capes tied, waving from our necks and diving in to the still warm water in the middle of the night. Still makes me smile.

> Phil Ochs stated firmly "If I have something to say I'm going to say it now." So here it is. The deck was dealt and we all lost. As we sit tight and enjoy the soap operas that are designed to keep us bleeding out of our eyes and keep us nodding and sighing, there is still hope in the petrol bomb, and in it, the revolution. For in the destruction and the overthrowing there is the certainty of salvation. We need to destroy the museum and its old artifacts, we need to tear down the power structure that enslaves and then in revolution we can live and be alive. Yes, this is our hymn and our praise to the brave and bold stranger in the night, to the fed up worker and the angry wife. Hope, revolution and dedication. Fight fire with fire and everything will burn. *Yeah.*

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it feels good and when Jon, heavenly looking, stares into our eyes we know that nothing is wrong, that we will walk on water and look at each other with amazement. It's a night of magic and every note hits like a hammer. The smell of perspiration and perfume is flowing through the air as we hold ' each other tight, moving along to the manifesto. This could be the shape of punk to come, liberation theology in practice, togetherness spiting the dividers and rulers, the sum ot our parts forming the gag in the mouth that voices the status quo, woven into fabric with every last thread of our defiance, sewn to fit like the shirt on my back. Or it could be just another sleepless midnight punk romance.

troduction to Brazilian hardcore.-, and the EZLN:

SELF CONVICTION /

" ' I don't remember how I first came to be in touch with people in the Brazilian hardcore scene, But I've learned more about life (and corresponding political issues) in the rest of the world from my communication with them than I could have from a thousand books. That's | one of the greatest things about the hardcore network, for me: the people it puts me in contact with who share some of my dreams and beliefs but have entirely different perspectives to offer. I thought that instead of being selfish, I should share their perspective with you $_{v}$ guys, too, so here's an interview with members of two of the more active Brazilian hardcore bands. One of the most useful elements of this, for people in the USA and Europe, should be the Latin American perspective on the EZLN... • ,

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year of Biology and works from 9 to 6 :

in a Vegan Food Store (the first one | in Brazil!!!), He also plays guitar for other bands and takes part in a local group simi lar to Food Not Bombs. And finally myself, Tarcisio, 22.1 work from 7 to 4, and I have a reasonable wage for Brazilian standards. I share an apartment with 3 other friends. At night I study (second year of Letters).

I also play in other bands and I'm making my first attempt of translating a book (Animat Liberation) into Por- S tuguese. I leave my apartment about 6 in the morning and I'm back only . about 11:30 at night. I use the time spent tn public transport (about 3 or4 hours a day) to read, so when I'm not too tired I read a lot. I usually make exercises between 5 and 7 (after work — before school). So... my everyday life is not exactly what I expect it to be.

Yet I should not complain. I'm pretty lucky cos I have a good job -1 work at : an Institution for Blind People where we produce didactic books in Braille for blind

students, so at least I'm not spending my time to give profit for any multi-greed corporation — and also cos , || I have the opportunity to study in a ' free University. In Brazil, only 6% of the population are able to go to Universifies Many people don't even con- _ j||j J elude the elementary school. Here, everyone is used to start working with 14 years old to complement their parents' wages. In the rural areas the average age to start working is even less, 7-year-old-kids work hard in sugar cane plantations, coal mines and in other rural activities, getting |

POINT OF _NO RETURN_

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wages like one dollar a day or less.

> Slavery can be found not only in our history books... But back to my personal life, during the weekends (practice with the bands (usually 2 hours of rehearsal for each band)'; handout with my friends, go to the shows, and

that's it.

> *How did you all become interested in hardcore ? Please describe how it first came into your lives, and why you decided to get involved with it. Also- if you can, please offer a short history of the development of the Brazilian hardcore scene, from its origins*
>
> _Tarcisio:_ In the late 80's and early 90's, we were all involved with "alternative" music at some level (some ot us in punk, others in metal). Around '92, we met each other in an anarchist group called Libertarian Youth (except Juninho, who joined the group later), in which 90% of the kids were involved with hardcore. That's where it begun to most of us. In that time, we used to play in other bands: Andre and myself played in Personal Choice and also in a grindcore band with Alexandre, called No Conformity. Wagner and Jeferson formed Positive Minds. The straight edge scene actually started to get bigger here around 1994. Before that there was no "scene" if you know what I mean: There were many punx, hardcore kids but no good structure at all. Then more shows started to be organized, with more communication, labels, bands, fanzines and so

S on. The roots of Brazilian hardcore scene are the old punk Bands in the early 80's: Olho Seco, Clera, Ratos de Poro, Inocentes, Fogo Cruzado etc. Many of these bands broke up, some of them started doing metal (RDP), others became more rock-oriented

(Inocentes): in the late 80's and early 90's new bands started to come up. Our best influences come from this time. Leucopenia (RIP), No Violence, IHZ (RIP), Rot, Acio Direta etc.Today I think the hardcore scene reached its

best phase. We have a good structure: several bands, some labels, good shows (about 2 per month with an average of 200 hundred people in each — sometimes more, sometimes less), and good communication with people from other places in Latin America, the US, Europe, and Asia.

It is clear from your writing in the Self Conviction CD and your politicized approach to D.I.Y. hardcore that you've done a lot of studying and thinking about hierarchy, anarchy, capitalism, revolution, and other philo- sophical/political issues (how's that for a fucking generalization! sorry). What are some of the sources of information and inspiration you've drawn on from outside of the hardcore scene-i.e. books, magazines, perhaps movies, collectives or historical figures and movements...

Tarcisio: I wouldn't say we did so much studying but we sure did a lot of think

ing. Actually, the writings in the CD came rather from many discussions we usually have among ourselves and with other friends about political issues. Also because, in the last 8 years (since we committed ourselves to change the world!), we came across many different theories and we felt always influenced by them at some level. Personally, I found myself interested in communism and anarchism first, then veganism, eastern religion and so on. Each of these theories has different concepts of revolution, each comes with different solutions for ending misery and injustice.The writings m the CD came also from an internal process of confronting these antagonistic theories. Such conclusion is not the ultimate one for, I know well, there is much more to learn. Specifically, we had a song that used the word "revolution" and we felt a bit uncomfortable of talking about it, since it is such an abstract word for most of the kids.This is usually taken as something too distant, too far from our reality. And most bands that use it, do it because it is "cool"They are so eloquent but they sound so untrue! We wanted to show that revolution for us is something real, not abstract, so we decided to try to

put it in details, not in general, vague ' terms, that does not contribute to anything unless to showing how radical, you are. Yet the text isn't complete at all, since it does not go in details about the process of revolution. This is the point in which rnost doubts arise. I have many ideas of how a revolution could take place in rural areas (the Zapatistas are a living example) but within the cities the problem is much deeper, it is something which I still have no concrete opinion and which I intend to study a bit more to come in with some consistent conclusions.

We used to read a lot about anarchism, mainly while we took part in Libertarian Youth. Some of the authors which certainly influenced our views were: Errico Malatesta from Italy and Tolstoi from Russia, giving two completely different approaches to anarchism; Bakunin and Mackno from Russia (Mackno was one of the main characters of a big anarchist community started after the October Revolution in USSR, later smashed as counter-revolutionary...), Ghandhi from India and Thoreau from the US (non-violence and civil disobedience), George Woodcock's compilation of anarchist

writings, and Noam Chomsky from the US. Chomsky is probably one of our greatest influences. We also have read some writers (which most of them you probably never heard of, because they are from Brazil, Uruguaj and other latin American countries) like Eduardo Galeano. Leo Huberman from USA, Caio Prado Jr., and Celso Furtado. Their books gave me a good comprehension about the history of humanity (most of them from an economic perspective, since they are so much influenced by Marx): from the ancient civilizations, the Middle Age and feudalism, mercantilism, colonization, the development of capitalism, and so on until the present situation. Some of them gives more attention to Latin America, so we can hold a good comprehension of what the hell happened around here for us to live in such a fucked up place. Noam Chomsky, again, offers in his books a great and wide view of the current situation all

The Zapatista uprising inspires us a lot. There is some good

books about it (one of them is called Zapatistas — Documents of the New Mexican Revolution — it covers the initial six months after the uprising). It gives us a whole new perspective of struggle, different from all the previous leftist guerrilla militias of the 60's and 70's in Latin America. We also try to keep informed about what's happening throughout the world to identify the real sources of the conflicts: the situation in Africa (civil wars, starvation), Middle East (the problem of JsraeLpetroleumissue), American Im- : perialism and so on. Usually what we learn through common media is partial news with right-wing overtones, so we are very suspicious towards it.

And finally, Andre and myself also like to read something of Eastern Philosophy. Mostly Taoism (TaoTe King) and the Vedas.

How important do you think the actual art of making music should be to "political" hardcore bands? Is there something radical about making innovative, challenging music in itself, or is the radical message more important than the art of making emotional music, in your eyes?

Tarcisio: Music, like many other kinds of art, may reveal so much aggression, intensity, frustration, happiness in itself that no words could express in a better way. For myself, the art of making music is itself political or revolutionary when, through its intensity and originality, it inspires other people not to follow the standard mostly done by others, but to create a new unique style that truly expresses their own seif. I don't think Self Conviction is really innovative. We try to put some rap and hip hop influences in our music but we don't care a lot about the artistic side of the band. We simply play the music we like the most, that flows naturally from our experience (and that our skills enable us to do), and we rely a lot on our message. However I feel that the art of making music in political bands can be really important when it's innovative and challenging, for it reinforces the message. I personally like that kind of band which makes you feel like: "I want to take a machine gun and blow the president's head off" or something like

that. I mean, I'm not saying that the good bands are the ones which make you feel a igry, specifically, but those who makes you angry or happy, whatever, but actually motivate and inspire you not to be a passive individual.

At least one of you has been to the United States. Offer your perspectives, on the differences in hardcore scenes and society in general between the two nations.

Frederico; The most striking differ- s ence, which we can perceive imme- diateiy, is that your scene is much richer than ours. In most places that I've been in the US. hardcore kids came usually from the white middle class and it seemed to me that the poor and oppressed kids sometimes* have nd possibility to identify with hardcore at all, since most bands and zines are always wasting time with subjects which seem superfluous for a person who has to worry about surviving, and thus does not see in hardcore a source of inspiration. Here in Brazil, since the early 80's, the hardcore-punk scene was always composed by young kids from poor neighborhoods, that see in this scene a way to get rid of the accumulated anguish from the oppression of everyday life, — Everyone in the US is more potential consumer than people here (who I already think are pretty much consumers). When I was in the US, I was impressed with so many needless paraphernalia that my friends accumulated inside their cars. It seems that ever those involved with hardcore, : are not able to escape from their "fate" of growing up as compulsive consumers. Everyone is eating all the time, in the streets, in the cars, anywhere, and there are so many fat people!

Here our basic structure is much weaker. When there is a show, the organizers usually rent the drums and the amps, since most bands do not own them. Brazilian bands barely make tours around here because everyone works arid once you leave your job to go on tour, you will take a long time (six months or perhaps more) to find another one. In the US, everyone that plays in a band quits their job when leaving on tour and then,

when they come back, they are used to finding another one quite easily.

American population is too close-minded in itself, and they have minimum knowledge of "outside" world. They think they pre 'a kind of "chosen people by Dog" or some similar stupidity and thus they ignore utterly the rest of the world. I was impressed when I saw in a local TV news, that they had a section entitled "the world in 59 seconds", that is, during 1 hour of journalism, only 59 seconds were assigned for external news. It must be very helpful for the ones in power that the average American citizen keeps completely alienated from what happens in the rest of the world, while simultaneously extremely busy trying to find out what his neighbor has been doing.

American hardcore kids reflect these kind of xenophobic isolation, since they don't know what happens in hardcore scenes all around the world and take everything that comes from outside the US boundaries as a mere Imitation of Americans, and not as a legitimate cultural manifestation. It would be just the same if I considered the samba and bossa nova present in the music of people like Stan Getz, Miles Davis, Herbie Hancock and even Beck, Beastie Boys and Cibo Mato as a mere imitation of Brazilian music. An American friend of mine who had been here some time ago could not understand how, among our local straightedge scene Nations on Fire

could not accept how an old European band which he never heard of could be more popular than an American band..

Another striking difference is what we consider Left and what you consider Left.The Left around here is composed by all the sectors of soci

fight social mobilization, revolution and so on). The ways to reach this

Third World Hardcore.

Why is it important to you to identify yourselves as "Third World Hardcore"? Explain the significance of this.

Sjcisjo: "Third World" -implies many things. First of all, it means we live in a completely different reality than you do. From our personal lives to the hardcore scene, everything is differ-

'wanted to start a band with veganism as focus. They feel they had to be more active for veganism but they had no money, no equipment, nothing at all. What did they do? They started a rap/hip hop band where everyone sipgs and no "big" investment is required. So that's what we had in mind when we said we are part of the Third World Hardcore. It means to do the best you can with the [few] resources you have.

Above all, I thinkTWH means that if you're not dedicated, you're out, and I will tell you why. Firstly, hardcore activities demand money. Usually, as fares I know the US and European scenes, what people do is investing their time and efforts on their bands, zines or labels, and this will provide them with some money back, so they can keep on carrying out these activities. TWH is not like that. Here, starting a band or a zine means you're going to lose lots of money, with no chance of getting it back. We do it because we love it. It is part of our lives We are able to carry out hardcore activities only because most of us work and pay for the costs. Consider the following: I play guitar in a band, so I pay for strings, any repair that sometimes is required, transportation, rehearsals, recordings, trips to play outside our state... everything. What do 1 get back? Nothing at all, I can count on one hand how many times I left the show with $20 dollars in my pocket Almost no one here has money to buy equipment, I play guitar for six years and I never had amplifiers to play in my home. We pay for rehearsals in studios. It is really expensive (about $12 each hour of practice) but to buy equipment is almost impossible. One Marshall JGM 900 is about $2, 000. Few people can afford it so we rent equipment in the shows and almost all the money raised goes to pay for it. For people who makes zines the problem is the same. We Brazilians, as any other poor/under-developed country, have no tradition of reading. Also because of the language barrier that doesn't allow non-Portuguese speakers from another countries to read it, zines sell few copies, usually around 300 to 400 copies when it is pretty well done. Starting labels is an adventure. You

have to work hard on'it, «and be ' pleased if you can manage to get some money back to pay for your next releases.

So the point of identifying ourselves with Third World Hardcore ? has two different reasons: first of all, for the kids of Third World countries, we try to create a bond among

us, in a way that they feel motivated to carry on; that they feel we are not lesser than American and European scenes apd we should not idolize them; that we have to assess our scenes taking our situation in consideration; and that we always should try to help smaller scenes of "far-off countries" (using an eurocentric terminology). On the other hand, for the kids of First World countries, we want them to know that there's something more besides the four walls that they've built around their countries; that there are true, dedicated hardcore kids, with lots of things to say, trying to build up a scene in their places; and finally that it is extremely interesting to hear from a person who lives in a completely different reality/cuiture cos we can leam a lot with that.

Ultimately theTWH thing was a kind of protest. We see stupid American "hardcore" bands selling 40.000 copies of one cd while we strive to Sell 1.000 (in the best cases cos many bands don't even have money to put out a cd).That's outrageous because we know that many bands in Third World countries have quality and many important things to say, and very, very few people in First World pays attention to it. We think hardcore was supposed to be a worldwide movement of communication, enjoyment, exchange of information and so on. And we find that for most of the kids, it is just another way of putting the US on a pedestal and idolizing it. It js so fucking upsetting to see the very same structures of imperialism in which capitalism is based on fitting for hardcore scene too. The sacrosanct Stars and Stripes above all, then the "Ifluminated" Europe (G7 and so on), then the scum of Europe (Portugal, Eastern Europe and so on), then the scum of the world (us...and so on). Well, I don't like to play the victim... Up to now, we're doing well by ourselves. But the point is: I be

lieve that there are many concerned kids that maybe never thought about it and perhaps would like this situation to change. Should our scene be driven this way? Don't you think we could be learning from each other instead?

What do you think hardcore kids from the United States and Western Europe can learn from third world hardcore bands and kids ?*

Tarcisio: I think the best thing about keeping contact with Third World kids is that you will be able to learn a lot with so many different cultures and different realities, thus being able to understand better our world and ultimately ourselves (and for those who care, to come up with more reasonable criticisms and solutions for the order under which we're living].

*Over the past five centuries, the cultural, political, and economic forces of the West have attained an incredible power and influence throughout the world. Not only have Western capitalism and state power come to dominate the lives of the citizens of Western nations, but, through corporate expansion and political intervention, the rest of the world has also been brought under the control of these powers. Hardcore punk is a rejection of this system that started from within the ranks of these Western nations. Why do you think people in the third world have also become involved in hardcore? What do you think draws them to it, rather than to other revolu- Jionary movement**

Do you think that it makes sense for people outside of the West to reject Western cultural domination by associating themselves with Western countercultures like hard-

core punk? Could it be that this is just a subtler form of Western imperialism, that those who feel oppressed by the dominating forces of Western culture turn to Western countercultures in their fight against the obliteration of their own cultures? Or is there something that hardcore has to offer that no other revolutionary movement could, that is relevant across all cul-

Tarcisio: There are some different kinds of kids who get involved with hardcore and their personal motivations vary. First, There are the poor kids, the ones who live in favelas or in very poor neighborhoods which are far-off downtown (we call it periphery). I would say that most part of these , kids get involved with hardcore as a ' way of escaping from a hard reality they face in their places. Almost all of them have a real shitty education and therefore are not prone to think about, Important political aggressive music " and use it as a way of releasing their accumulated anger, A few kids that also come from these poor places are different. They are educated, not because they go to school, but because they are autodidactic or cos they were born in a more cultural environment; they! also feel themselves identified with the aggressive, powerful music; but they main thing is that they see in hardcore a way of 'salvation' (the word, with religious connotations, is not really good but accurate after all). I have some friends like these: they started attending hardcore shows and finally got involved with vegan straightedge not because it is cool, or because they wanted to fit in with some group. This was the only 'salvation' for people tike them, who live in the middle of a favela ruled by drug traffic, seeing in their everyday lives so many deaths, police harassment, young kids phisically dependent on coca or crack at 12, 14 years old and so on.These kids are very interested in politics for obvious reason. Then there are thpse vyho are not ppor but, not rich either, iike myself. (But I think the rich kids also fit in this category). Here we have two different kinds: the first one, (the typical rebel-with-no-reason-why-kid. Stupid teens that are only in it for the music-sorry for the cliche; They just like to! follow: American standards; only attend * to gringo-mainstream-pseudo-hardcore shows; don't even know local bands and zines and labels; and don't give a shit for political issues or anything which may demand thinking. And finally you have people like myself, and most of my friends. We got involved with hardcore-punk cos we were pissed off with this society and its sys-

tern. We started taking part in hardcore as a way of releasing our anger and frustration and at the same time, trying to get involved in a community of non-passive Individuals, that aim to fight for a better world.

Frederico: What makes people in Third World to get involved with hardcore is, at first, the cultural domination. People around here consume all the scum of American and European cultural production, and this process end up opening the doors also for counter-culture movements of First World nations Cultural domination is extremely noxious for the people of T.W. countries but it is so for the people of F.W. nations too, because the effects of its fundamental purpose (to pasteurize and uniformize) is something bad both for Brazil and the US. In the T.W., the cultural domination ends up creating means of fight-

Tarcisio: It does make sense to reject Western cultural domination by associating with hardcore. Cultural domination takes place through the indocrination of population by movies, magazines, music, big corporations, and so on. In the case of Brazil this domination means, for instance, an attempt to replace our rice and beans by Mcburgers and fast food or games like soccer by video-games and TV. Hardcore, then, does provide a good environment to question all this cultural imposition, and to start thinking and seeing with skeptical eyes American movies (with heavy ideological overtones), fashion magazines (dictating beauty, our way of dress), and the whole American way of life that big corporations tries to establish within Brazilian society. So, yes, it may be that we rely on Western counter-cultures like hardcore to fight against the obliteration of our own culture!

> But we cannot rely only on that! There are some good manifestations of authentic Brazilian culture that may and should be supported tn order to avoid American domination.

Frederico and Tarcisio: In the musical scenario the situation differs. Brazil, like the US, has | a big national, industry of mu

sic.We rather export than import music. Though in many other areas of cultural life (dressing, eating, enjoyment and so on), the American way of life did succeed in overthrowing Brazilian culture, in the musical aspect it is quite different. Rock, jazz or blues are nothing here compared with Afro-Brazilian music styles like Pagode, Samba, Axe Music, etc which are reaily the mainstream of music industry here. I don't mean, however, that this music production, genuinely Brazilian, is good at all only because it doesn't submit to American cultural imperialism. Most part of the groups of Pagode, Axe Music, etc. are utterly stupid, hollow, singing noth-

and their role has been the same of pop-American bands in the US: creating apathetic and conformist people. Hardcore, thus, can be an alternative for commercial American music as well as for Brazilian. There are some few mainstream groups like Chico Science e Nao Zumbi, that really came up with a intelligent approach to Brazilian culture, raising important topics in their lyrics, using the language of our local population, and mixing many different music influences with afro-Brazilian rhythms.

[Image not archived]

Frederico: Hardcore does have some features that no other movement can offer: a music which is so powerful, full of energy, and mainly so aggressive, which makes it extremely exciting; a room for discussions of a real wide range of subjects, from religion

to politics, from culture to economy : and so on; the possibility of anyone, | anywhere start a zine or a band, which makes it extremely democratic (in the rbal sense of this word), dismissing an "illuminated" minority of geniuses to produce culture; and also providing a worldwide net of communication that I've never seen in any other movement.

mere is a long tradition of American ^hardcore bands touring Europe, making a lot of money off European kids to bring back to the USA, and spreading a lot bf American trends through the European hardcore scene without showing any interest at all in European ideas or innovations-let atone in helping European bands to come to the United States. [At Inside Front we call this "hardcore imperialism; since these bands are really just following in the footsteps of a history of American corporations that have sucked money out of foreign markets and replaced local culture with standardized, McAmerican Coca-Culture.] When the Iron Curtain was lifted and American bands started going to Eastern Europe, there was an initial . surge in the hardcore scene in places like the Czech Republic; but the endless stream of disinterested American hardcore bands coming to cash in took its toll, and hardcore kids there have become jaded and disillusioned.

Now, American hardcore bands are just starting to become interested in touring Latin America, even though no Latin American

hardcore bands (and still very, very few European bands) have been able to tour the United States. How can you bring American hardcore bands to your part of the world without something happening like what happened in the Czech Republic? Do you think this will be a good thing or a bad thing In the long run? And what can American bands who want to play in Latin America without contributing to a tradition of "hardcore imperialism''do to avoid this?

Frederico. Well, there are basically two kinds of American hardcore bands that usually come to play here. The first one belongs to what we know as "mainstream hardcore." Bands like Agnostic Front, Shelter, Madball. Sick of it All, when they come, it is in a major scheme. Usually the tour is set by organizers that have nothing to do with hardcore, and make a lot of money setting the show prices at US 20, 00 or more, and demanding US 1.000, 00 from bands that want to play with them. These American bands, in turn, have no interest at all to know either our scene or Brazilian reality, limiting themselves to sexual tourism or hanging out to eat exotic dishes when they're tired of doing nothing at the hotels.Their only interest is making money.

[Image not archived]

The second kind of band which come to play here belongs to what I could call "true hardcore". They are bands that refuse to take part in this major scheme I just described. Few American bands (like Los Crudos) and Europeans (like X-Acto from Portugal) have already ventured around here in this utterly Diy scheme, Bands from Argentina are always corning. It is almost impossibly for these bands to make some monev because our scene is not like European, so usually what they get is only some rhoney to pay for their plane tickets. Even the "mainstream hardcore" bands cannot make lots of money cos most part of it goes to the organizers. Those who organize the DIY tours around here are people really involved with hardcore punk, and thus these bands always have much more con tact with hardcore people here and they are able to live and know Brazilian reality. When bands ccme to Bra

10 years before the uprising in January 1994. As they used to say, there was a "wall" between the jungle and the citi&So neglected was the state of Chiapas that this permitted the EZLN to grow so much without anyone realizing it. Chiapas was a state abandoned to death. Most chiapanecos are illeterate, they die'; from curable diseases, have real bad , health service (for instance Chiapas | has one doctor for each 1500 inhabit- , ants), most people, has no housing , and so on. To sum up, Chiapas is a state of misery. These people raised in arms to demand democracy, justice and freedom. One could say that these is just what many political parties and governments have been trying to attain. WRONG! Any reason-^ able person knows that we cannot j demand democracy, justice and free-) dom and at the same time defend a system like neoliberaiism, based on authoritarianism, inequality and exploitation; The Zapatistas lift the banner of REAL democracy, REAL justice and REAL freedom for EVERY-ONE. This can only come through great changes in the economic and political sysfem we live, and for this the zapatistas offer a set of revolutionary laws they've made, dealing with subjects that vary from woman rights to agrarian reform. There are some characteristics of this movement that draws our attention to it.They offer us a whole new perspective of struggle that never was seen before.

To understand this, 1 need to tell briefly how they were formed: Around 1984, (10 years before the first. uprising) a small group of activists came to the jungles of Chiapas with an orthodox leftist concept in mind: they wanted to create a guerrilla group of vanguard, a group of mentally and physically strong few, to conquer the power and establish a dictatorship for the masses (essentially a Marxist-Leninist concept), just like what happened in other Latin American countries like Cuba and Nicaragua. Once they reached the jungle, they started a communication with the, indigenous peoples of the region. There was a double learning process: the indigenous people learned Spanish, history of Mexico, reading and writing, etc. while the mestizos

learned to know the Jungle, to carry heavy loads through great distances, to reduce theirfood intake to the minimum required, etc. At the same time, the EZLN needed a social base that could be attained only with the support of these local indigenous communities while the Indians needed military knowledge to defend themselves from the violent guardias blancas (armed guards hired by ranchers to protect their property). Many Indians started to participate in the EZLN, and it forced the organization and purposes of the Zapatista movement to change. The hierarchical structure of the Army was vertical, "as authoritarian and undemocratic as an Army can be, " and the orders came from the top.The Indians had a different way of making decisions, which was rather horizontal, and in which the final decisions always came from the basis. I mean that no decision within the indigenous communities was made until an assembly (where all people had the right to express their opinions) took place and a consensus was reached. The increasing of indigenous people in the EZLN radically changed the concept of organization of the Zapatistas, until a moment when no decision could be made without the agreement of the people. Slowly, the purposes of the group were

also changing until they become what they are today: a "post-modernist" revolution (as some

Committee-CCRI, a group of delegates of various indigenous communities, then the EZLN (the army), with all its internal hierarchy). But 1. even the CCRI cannot make decisions without the consultation of the whole population. And 2. this hierarchy is HE fundamentally moral, the leaders have conquered the trust of the population, not their fear, so any time the com- [5] munities feel their representatives are

® ' > The importance of the

Zapatistas is obvious. First, we have a new possibility of change, expressed by their own forces and their fight in Mexico. Second, as Subcommander Marcos once said, Zapatistas are "professionals of hope" (in opposition to a declaration of the president of the republic of Mexico, regarding them as "professionals of violence").

The Zapatistas are the materialization of my hope and my dreams, and (I'm sure] of all the people that truly believe in an egalitarian, just, and free society. Their existence itself is a great, never-ending source of inspiration for ALL the discontented people around the world. Just like myself, I truly believe that many people get from the [5] Zapatistas their strength to stand up and to fight! As Marcos said in one of his many communiques: "Freedom is just like the morning, some people waits for it sleeping. Others wake up and walk the night in search of it. The Zapatistas are insomnia addicts that make history desperate." The Landless Workers Movement (MST) is a Brazilian movement for agrarian reform. In the last years, MST gained a great prominence among Brazilian society. Their actions provide subjects for headlines in the major newspapers almost everyday. In Brazil, unlike in the US, the problem of land is a real big issue. Land (like wealth) is really badly distributed. Brazil is a rich country (I mean we have plenty of natural resources) but concerning the distribution of wealth-including land-Brazil fill the bottom of the ONU rankings, side by side with very, very poor African countries. Here we have huge areas of fertile lands completely abandoned.The main thing is, the big landowners don't want their land to be occupied by small peasants and farmers cos i. they make a lot of money with speculations in the real estate market and 2. they don't want competition, even of smaller producers. So we have too much land in the hands of very few people. MST is an organized movement for agrarian reform and so they have all the structure to take these lands for the poor peasants. So, if you have a family and have no place to live, you look for them,

commission look for fertile lands that are not being productive and then decide which families want to go there. They organize an invasion and take the land. That's when the problem starts, cos they wilt have to fight for ; the legalization of the occupation.The landowners will try to banish everyone from their lands so usually MST peasants will have to fight police attacks first and then the court. I forgot to mention that the act of the invasion, many times, does not happen peace- F fully Landowners have their own personal guard to protect them from invasion and stealing of cattle and stuff like that. These guards welcome MST militants with gun fires, even knowing that poor peasants have nothing but scythes to fight. Killings, therefore, are common.

If MST lose the battle in the court, the State send the police to banish the peasants and they have to look for another land. But the fact is that many times they manage to earn the land legally because it is not being productive for many years and the law gives privilege to the people who use the land to produce (at least in theory it is that way). The battle in the court also takes some time, so the invaders will live in these lands for a minimum period (maybe one year-1 can't be so precise about how long but it takes some time)..

Meanwhile, MST provides all the means for the peasants to start

> would not teach a phrase like: "My car Is blue? our rattier "My spade is brown". This makes learning a lot easier and more enjoyable too, while avoiding desires of unattainable things [consumerism} among poor people); they forbid alcohol and drugs since alco-

could be said, is a reformist movement, a necessary but palliative solution, that does not actually solve the

at all for the poor peasants, since they are many times being used for personal political promotion of many'left- 1st' politicians. Anyway, I have hope MSTs increasing of power may turn it into a more revolutionary organization in the next years, and I also hope that this revolutionary struggle be rather for self-determination of the poor population than just a staircase for leftist politicians to take the power and do the same shit as China.

MST and the EZLN for the simple reason that we are closer to these problems than you are. Agrarian Reform is not an issue at all in the US. We, as any other Third World country, still

is done by peasants (men, women and kids) cos our agriculture is not mechanized like yours: there is a huge concentration of land and so on. So MS f is very relevant fo(Brazilian re|

Mexico, we Brazilians are much more familiar with Mexican reality than you are. I feel most of the American population is completely alienated from what happens outside their boundaries. They are mostly indoctrinated

What concrete things can "third world hardcore" bands and kids do to support revolutionary forces like these?

hardcore community about it. As individuals, however, ali of us can do a lot. The Zapatistas rose up five years ago and they were not smashed because of public support and pressure. We, as individuals, can try to keep i Informed about what happens in the Zapatista communities and, wnenever necessary, organizes demonstrations in front of Mexican Embassies (or, rather than organizing them, contacting the local Zapatista Solidarity Commitee in your country and check-

going to the jungle is not the only way of helping them. I remember once I read Subcommader Marcos saying that the war is won politically not on military terms. In the case of MST I cannot think of any practical means by which you could help at

all. But I believe that everyone who fights for the end of capitalism (like you do) and consequently the end of private property is ultimately helping not only the MST but all people in their fight for self-determination ☒

scenes to startpaying more attention

to "third world hardcore" bands in the future? Do you think it is more important for you to build ties to those hardcore scenes, or to other "third world hardcore" scenes in other parts of the world?

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Tarcisio: Actually, I don't expect that much. I mean, I do believe more people who never heard of Third World scenes will start paying attention to it, but I think that most part of the kids (unfortunately) are more concerned With hardcore mainstream rather than smaller scenes. I think it is important to build ties with hardcore scenes from everywhere, it doesn't matter if they are from the third world or notThere are great people in the US, in Europe, in Asia, South America, everywhere. I would say, however, that making contacts with people from otherThird World scenes is particularly important because we encourage each other to keep carrying out our activities despite the low feedback [we]9et

Let's talk about the use of English as the "universal hardcore language." Bands from all over the world sing in English, so that people from other parts of the international community will be able to understand them. To some extent this makes sense. But in many countries, especially the ones outside of the Western elite, most members of the hardcore scene do not speak English well or even at all. It seems that the use of English by bands and'zines in those scenes could make local members of those hardcore communities feel left out. What do you think about this? How can it be avoided? i

Tarcisio: What you just said is certainly right and it also holds true for Brazilian reality. Here, most part of the kids do not speak English. So I'll tell you why we made this choice. In Brazil we have a popular proverb (I'm not able to translate it) saying

that when we have to make a choice between two bad things, we have to choose the less bad. So, we know the harmful consequences of assuming English as a standard language (the cultural weight intrinsic to it, and how it slowly invades other "less powerful" cultures), but we have to balance , ;

things. Portuguese has almost ‘„ ^, .

Portuguese-speaking countries (which are already few).

able to identify with a band which I don't understand a single word. Perhaps if Manlittingbannerfrom Holland sung in Dutch, or Nations on Fire from Belgium sung in Flemish, these bands would probably mean nothing at all in Brazil. And they were very im- portapt for me and my friends We try to solve this problem by translating EVERYTHING we do into Portuguese forthe kids in Brazil. We made a zine with all the translations; of the:lyrics

Landlords' power and dominance are multi plied.
Clench your fists! A real war in the fields ex ists.
Clench your fists! A real war exists.
They've built the fences. Separation from our misery.
They've set the boundaries.
Prevention from equality.
Militias are formed to protect their possession.
Only militancy can end this form of oppression.
A march to strike down every single oligarchy. An occupation to free the helpless from tyranny. Organize, revolt, show them the tools of liberation.
Destroy the oppressive empire.
Agrarian Reform. Revolution.
This system must be overthrown — It has chained our hands.
A fucking elite still rules the country — They own the land.
Greedy and corrupt bastards imposing fear in the fields.
Defenseless rural workers — Millions have already been killed.
Years of poverty. Our rights have been taken away.
Worthless politicians have ignored social de-
Tools
(a Point of No Return song about the MST)
[Image not archived]

and the comments into Porttigueseand« we hand it out with the CD every time someone buys it. Also, we always communicate with the audiance at the shows, explaining to them what the songs stand for. This way, we can assure that everyone in Brazil understands what we are talking about, and at the same time, we are able to establish communication with people like you, something which otherwise would probably never happen if we used Portuguese.

H's important io remember that it's no coincidence that English is the. "master language" of our day. It is the most common language because it is the language of the powers that rule the world. They would like nothing better than for everyone to

trade their native languages for English, so they could rule all of us without having to learn anything from us at all — just as they want everyone to abandon their own cultures so they can sell us their culture substitutes (McDonalds, rock music, Western "individualism" and commodified fake rebellion, etc.) instead. That's what all this talk in businesscircles about the "Global Community" is about: turning the world into one huge market for Western products. Teaching everyone English and getting everyone interested in Western ideas and music are a part of this process, and this is going on through hardcore too, as we can see. Do you feel compromised using English in your band

Tarcisig:Yeah we do feel compromised $_{t}$ in using English. Just as you feel compromised in selling/buying things but you hai/e to do it. Unfortunately English; became necessary for a more effective communication, so we regret its use but we believe the benefits surpass the negative effects (I wish we are not mistaken) Also, we try to work as a vi-

rus, feeding off the cell, but ultimately; destroying it.The rejection of American cultural domination is definitely part of our agenda too.

Is there alternative to everyone in hardcore only learning English? Shouldn't English-speakers have to learn the native languages of other

from listening to bands that sing in their native language? |

Frederico: It would be great if English wasn't necessary for a good communication in the hardcore scene. I will give you an example of how u is possible to do it: in the early 80's there was a big hardcore-punk scene around here, with many bands and all of them (absolutely all) sung in Portu guese Sorne bands were really famous around here and used to sell 100.000 copies. American hardcore also influenced these bands, but the punx around here listened mainly European punk bands, mainly bands from Finland (Tervet Kaadet, Ratus, Kaaos, and so on). Of course, no one here speaks Finnish and thus could not understand a single word. They just knew the general agenda of these bands.The most strange thing is that, in Finland, Brazilian punk bands were also very famous in the hardcore scene. So true it is that there was a band from Finland (Fora Macabra) that learned and started singing in

_Tarcisio:_This is true but certainly too far from our reality. Why should the CHOSEN people learn the language of the LESSER races? I do believe Americans would ONLY learn another

language if it helps them to DOMI-

NATE the people who speaks it. Now, learning a language is not an easy thing to do. It takes a long time to start to understand it and there are so many different languages around the world) Maybe thefe is a better (maybe not better, but at least more plausible) solution, one which a French band, a real nice band, called Mano Negra, does. Many kids in hardcore scene around here like their music (including myself). They sing in many differ

ent languages. I remember I saw lyrics in English, Arabic, Spanish and

M^Km:=1108®® AOiiBte^ •:

**Conclusion, **

Tell (us about your present projects, your future plans, and what we should expect to see from the rest of the Latih American hardcore scene in the comingyears.

Tarcisio: Well, the present project of Jeferson is taking care of his children. He also plans to... take care of his cKildren.. a[n]d in a far-oft future maybe he will ...take care of his children... who knows what else? Alexandre was recently graduated in Jiu-jitsu (now he has blue stripes), he is striving to become a real Ninja (just like in the movies), so he will be able to kill Antonio Carlos Magalhes (*) (only for fun) with, a poisoned arrow [and maybe remove his eyes to have a remembrance], and when the cops come, he will just..: disappear in the middle of a red smoke cloud Wagner faces a crucial moment of his life: he has to choose between finding a job or starving. I hope he makes up his mind fast or else the second option will no longer be an option. Ris future plan is to make lots of exercises because he thinks his arm is thin [but I think it's not]. Andre already teaches Tai-chi-chuan and this year he will graduate as a psychologist. I think, only among his friends in hardcore . scene, he has enough patients for his whole career — our crew covers ex-murderers, active robbers, kids who suffer from severe ego-trip, com- • pulsive lying and many other forms of psychopathologies. Juninho keep on studying Biology. He also trains a lot

violent dancing for the upcoming shows. We are all striving th make our shows around here more dangerous (in the worst case) and more bloody tin the best case). 5

I'll keep on studying Letters and probably become ateacher in the future. I have lots of plans; passing through my mind of how I could help our society with my skills.J know that in MST, within the occupation^ they need teachers, so maybe I; could try

one day. Anyway, I don't know if I'm able to leave my city, my friends, my family, so in the end, if I cannot leave this shitty place, I'll try to be good, useful within my community. I also intend to translate some important literature into Portuguese (mainly concerning animal liberation since we have almost nothing about it in Portuguese), but this will require much

Concerning hardcore everyone is doing something: Andre is starting a band which does not have a name yet. Alexandre also sings for Point of No Return, Reborn and a project called Inspire. Wagner sings for Rethink. Juninho plays for Rethink and PONR. Jeferson plays for PONR And I play in the same bands as Alexandre. So as you see, the FLAME STILL BURNS around here, (sorry again about the cliche

• I was just looking for a pretext to tellyou that I have it tattooed in my back.) :

Thanx for all the [few] people who waste their.time con-:, tacting the wild and-unknown

enigmatic Ihnds of Brazil.

RS: I'd like to make a brief comment about hardcore as a "revolutionary movemen-fias you mentioned m your

question 8.1 don't see hardcore/punk as a revolutionary movement. By this I mean that 1 don't see hardcore-punk as a force of change. It may be considered revolutionary in the sense that it rejects this society and it is open for a discussion of how this system

should be replaced instead, but if by revolutionary . you mean hardcore-punk is a force of change I disagree. Actually, I see hardcore as a staircase for the kids to start getting involved with real revolutionary struggles. Hardcore for me is a school. I found myself in front of so many different perspectives and ideas and opinions, that gave me the opportunity to think, rethink and decide what way to choose. It may be revolutionary for the individual but never for the society taken as a whole. Whet do you. think about it?

inside Front Party, Une Response; Granted, there are significant differences between the hardcore community and the EZLN! But we at Inside Front do look at hardcore as a movement towards change, if only a small

^change. Hardcbre is an example of the self-transformation of a community, in this particular case the punk rock community. When punk rock first started, it was actually largelydependent on and controlled by

mainstream business (major labels, rock clubs, corporate distributors, etc.). But now, as a result of the ongoing d.i.y. revolution, there is a vast grassroots network of independent bands, labels, distributors, collectives | that organize shows and political/artIistic actions, etc. Thanks to the work of groups from Crass to Profane Existence, people in punk rock are able to interact and operate in completely different ways now than they did twenty years ago. If this same transformation took place on a larger scale throughout all aspects of our lives, that would be full-scale revolution. It's true that transforming music/entertain- ment is much easier and less threatening than attempting to alter something more fundamental like the work system... but it is something, and, as you said, we can learn from it how to take on greater objectives.

[Image not archived]

Contacts:

Self Conviction is over but we're still around with Point of No Return It is almost the same band. If you want to share ideas or anything else; write to

Liberation Records [1]W OSMBB^ ' *c.r:WI* A- "1 .^W 181: CEP 01061–970 1 .

Sao Paulo — SP

Brazil.

You can contact some PONR members by internet:

Fredenco — valovelho@hotmail.com

Marcos and Liberation — mslib@uol.com.br

Luciano — Iuciano2@regra.cohn.br

In the USA the Self Conviction and Point of No Return CDs are available from:

Indianapolis, IN 46230–0241

[Image not archived]

Maximum Rock'n'RolI Interview (from their September 1998 issue)

interview by C. Nilsson

MRR: Tell us about your name, "Umlaut." _Smedvig (vocalist):_ It's for all those English who don't use accents on their writing. Here in Finland we have a much richer and more developed language than places like America, and that shows

in our accented letters and words. So “Umlaut” is about pride in our language and unAmerican culture. Finland has a language that came from a different family than the rest of Europe, you know. It represents our own culture and our fight against American culture.

_Baron E. (bassist); E_ven if the word “umlaut” isn’t a Finnish word.

_S:_ We want them to at least understand our refusal. _MRR;_ So, tell us why your songs are all so short, so fast.

_S:_ It is part of our general ethic, the Umlaut ethic. We play fast and short, we live fast and short. That’s the way we do everything. That’s why we drive motorcycles, to move fast, to go from one place to another, to never slow down, always with the wind in our hair. We have a rule that none of our songs can be more than thirty seconds long. That forces us to do a lot in a little time, to never waste time, to always come to the point fast. If we can do a whole srthg, a whole musical thought, in thirty or twenty Or ten seconds, that’s more excitement, more action and no time to be bored.

_E.:_ And if our songs are faster, are done faster, then that’s more time left over for other things. Other bands want to play for an hour, we say play for ten minutes. Play a whole sixteen song set in ten minutes. If all bands did that, we could have six bands play in a two hour show. No bullshit, if you like a “band or you don’t, you know immediately, and if you don’t, they don’t waste your time. Get to the point. And when the show is over faster, then there’s more time left over for other things, for other parts of life.

_S:_ For riding motorcycles.

, _E:_ Play faster, live more. We strive always to do everything faster, to move faster, to get more life. Because, we know that we will not live loo long!! _MRR»_ So tell us how did you get the vocal sounds “ on the demo tape.

Si That’s actually a very good question! We wanted to experiment with the vocals. Ulf used to work as a motor and automobile mechanic, and at his shop they had the gas Freeon. He discovered one day (because we are always, always experimenting) that breathing in Freeon makes your voice really low. We already knew that breathing Helium makes your voice high, so on the recording, we took a lot of Freeon from Ulf’s shop and some Helium balloons, and I breathed the Helium in from the balloons and Ulf breathed the Freeon for the low vocals. That’s how we did those very high and very low vocals. A lot of people have asked us!

MRR; Do you still do that.

_S;_ No, because they changed the containers the Freeon comes in. Now they

are too big to take with us to shows. They are illegal to take in cars or on motorcycles anyway.

_E.:_ In case we get in a crash and everything freezes!

_S:_ Freezes in Finland, I don’t know. But also when Ulf would inhale the Freeon his head would hurt very much, and we played one show when he was knocked out after only two songs, which was really fast. And for me it’s better to move around and

swing the mikestand around, not always having to inhale from the balloon between words.

MRR: So, tell us what was the song "Intifada" on that demo is about.

_E.;_ That is about the struggle in Palestine against the forces of Western imperialism. Anywhere that people are oppressed and have their lands taken away, of course, that's shit.

MRR: Can you tell us more about the song itself.. _S:_ It was an accident, really. We just made it out of a noise that was left over in between songs on the recording tape and a sample that we found on an old punk record, we had the cassette with us. But it's a good song, very short, maybe the best on the demo!

MRR: Has Umlaut ever played over the border in what used to be the scary U.S.S.R.

E, : Yes, we have played there. Just a couple times, small villages, you know.

MRR: What was it like.

E.; The shows were good, though the people didn't understand us a lot, and we didn't understand them very much, sometimes.

_S:_ Like at one show in a small village there, they paid us with ten sticks and a heavy black rock, and the chief gave us his daughter for the night!! We would play over there more, but I think some places you don't even get the sticks and all they have to offer you for the night is a goat.

MRR: Yes... so, weren't you in another band?

_E.:_ I was but I rather you not mention the name of it in the interview. We formed that band with the idea that every song would be made from riffs from Motorhead songs. At first it was great, and we could write a lot of songs, but soon we ran out of cool riffs. We had used up all the riffs from the cool Motorhead songs. Motorhead is still around, you know, and we kept waiting, hoping and hoping that they would start to write cool songs again. But they didn't, and so finally we had to break up. it was very sad, but we just couldn't write any more cool songs. I'm a little ashamed of that band now, I'm much more proud of this one. so please just mention me in this one.
MRR: Where do you all live. Is there some address where people can write to you.

_S;_ We actually all live in squats or sometimes the youth centers here. We never stop moving, like I said, never slow down. We mostly stay in Helsinki orTuurku. where all our friends are. But if people want to find us I guess they can write you and you give us the letters.

Further Questioning by Inside Front (January 1999) *interviewed through the mail*

Inside Front: Why did you want to do a 6" record?

Smedvig: Because of the metric system, of course. And also since the demo that you are putting out is a full-length recording, there might not be room for it on a 5" record. I think our next release will be a double full length record, perhaps we will have it released as a one-sided 12"... although again an 11" would fit our measurement system better.

IF; Tell us how it happened that one of the songs on the 6" is in Spanish.

Buni (drummer/vocalist); Well, you know, the song is

about American cultural imperialism, which is an even bigger problem in Latin America than in Finland. And also the song title is from a 1980's political slogan about Central America... so it seemed it should be in Spanish. Also to show support for cultural diversity of all kinds (we do not hate American influence because it is not Finnish, instead we hate it because it stomps out culture diversity and we want to have all cultures intact for us all to learn from)... and I've been traveling in Mexico, and learned the language and seen what life is like, so it seemed right for me to sing it in Spanish.

_IF;_ So why is most of your singing in English on this last recording, if as you said in the MRR interview you are so proud of your Finnish background?

_S;_ Understand, we are not nationalists! As 1 said in the last question, do not hate American culture or language itself, we just want diversity so we hate the cultural imperialism of America everywhere (McDonalds in every Finnish city!). We use English right now to communicate with people in faraway places who do not speak Finnish, but you're right that next time we record songs we should probably use a wider variety of languages, not just including Finnish. But you know, I had this great idea I want to talk about: what if there was a punk rock language? I have thought a lot lately about how everyone learns English so there can be a common language, but how that puts the USA in that position of power where they don't have to learn from anyone else and everyone has to do what they do. What if instead of us all learning English, we all learned a language that none of us speak? That would be more fair. Perhaps we could pick an African language from a culture where there is no violence or hierarchy, so there would be no words in the language to go with the bullshit we've learned in our societies. That way the language could help shape us to interact better in punk. Also, think how exciting it would be for teenagers getting into punk, to be learning a whole language that their parents didn't understand! It would be like finding a new world, all the 'zines and songs in punk language, everyone speaking it at the shows. So 1 think we should do that. I'm trying to find the perfect language for us right now.

_B:_ I had another great idea I wanted to share, since we're talking about good ideas, and this one is important for you because you do an American 'zine. When I was traveling North America I learned about these things called raccoons, that live in suburbs and cities without ever being noticed. They survive off the trash and in the unnoticed places, without ever getting caught. 1 think the squatter punks there could learn a lot from them, I think there should be an alliance formed between the squatters and the raccoons. The raccoons could teach the squatters so much about being stealthy, making use of trash, and living in hollow trees, and maybe in return the squatters could teach the raccoons how to use the internet. —

_IF;_ Tell us how you got the idea to do your Bad Brains cover.

S: Well, you know, we have always loved old Bad Brains, but their songs (even the early ones) are much too long for us to play, even as J

fast as we play everything. So we decided to just .do a cover of part J

of the song-the best part, I think, *S*

_B;_ I hear that a tribute record to Umlaut will be released, and Bad *g* Brains' contribution will be that piece of their song, taken off *g* their record, as a cover of our cover of their song. *B*

_IF;_ Tell us the story about the lyrics to your new song "F.C., " and talk about the subject of the song. |

S: It is a funny story where the lyrics came from, actually. They , H were sent last year to the Inside Front address in the USA by a M woman who had written them in support of the suspect accused ® of being the "Unabomber." She was inquiring if any bands wanted to use the lyrics she had written. Brian at Inside Front didn't know what to do with them, so he sent them to us. They W were written for a folk song, originally, 1 think, but we took two lines from them and they worked great for our song. It's good when we don't even have to go to the trouble of writing lyrics for our songs and the world just provides them for us! The subject of the song is just the struggle of the individual to maintain dignity in the face of the fucking machine, when you fight against it and it strips it all away. Here is the piece of those lyrics that we used for our song, which will be on the Hayes Auto Service record next year:

"EC."

surrounded by the cameras, tormented by the crowd now you're bound with chains and shackles, still you hold your head up

_IF:_ What is the punk scene like in Finland?

_S;_ It has been good for a long, long time. From Terveet Kadei to today we have had good punk bands and an anarchist scene too. Today there are still some good kids involved.

_B:_ I like Endstand, for example. Though I'm not sure if they know us very well.

_IF:_ I've heard your next release will be with Hayes Auto Service. Can you tell us why you decided to have them put out your record?

S: Well, we couldn l find any record labels that wanted to put out a record for us, so we decided to go with an automobile repair shop in the U.S.A. Ulf had connections with them because he is a mechanic himself.

_B:_ It would seem strange for us to work with an American 'zine and an American autoshop to release our music, but we know our music can only bring bad things anyway, so we'll bring them upon the Americans if we can! Also, it is important that we choose not to release our records with record labels (instead with a 'zine, and a garage) to fight against the capitalism in punk.

_IF;_ Any more news of the band, or tours we can expect?

S; Probably not in your part of the world for a long time. First we want to tour places like Malaysia, the Philippines, Chile, New Zealand, Greece, Bulgaria, all the places where there is an active punk scene but no one interested from outside. We

want to go there and learn what we can, and help! Anyone from those parts of the world, please get in touch.

To reach mlaut in their homeland, write to them care of C, Nilsson, Gravadersu 4n, se-222 23 Lund, Sweden.

To check on their upcoming double full-length release, contact Hayes Auto Service (c/o George), P.O. Box 594, Louisburg, NO 27549 USA

(Hayes Auto Service shirts are $3 postpaid and come with optional oil stains)

[Image not archived]

REPORT: Chicago Summer, West-Side Goddamn, it's hot. You wouldn't think it would be this hot, but with the lake-effect and all, today it's up around 100 F with 100% humidity. I'm drenched already and I've just gotten up. Last night I did the old swamp-cooler trick: soaked a sheet in freezing cold water and wrapped myself in it to stave off the heat and humidity and get some sleep. Went to sleep wet as a fish, woke up comfortable and dry. Now that I'm up and moving, I'm soaked again. Open the back door to see Kaleb workin on his bike on the backporch. Antonio's pumpin R&B from upstairs, while across the alley, I can see Armando and Ruel workin on Ruel's hotrod. Three houses down, across the alley, I see the Man With One Arm come out his backdoor with his huge doberman. He stands around as the dog runs in circles around his yard.

Feeling Outside

I can tell Kaleb is still upset from the other day. He's twelve and he and his older brother Little Rick accidentally stepped on their tiny rottweiler puppy while playing football on the concrete between the apartment and the garage. It was killed instantly. I try to help him out with his bike to cheer him up a bit but the back rim is permanently bent, rubbing on the brakes every rotation of the tire. I tell him he needs a new back rim and he sighs because we both know his family can't afford it. I've become friends with his family. Kaleb's father big Rick and I sometimes sit on the backporch and pick through some old Motown tunes on our guitars while his wife Toni sings. She has such a beautiful voice. More often than not, Rick's not around and they are fighting. They are being evicted because they can't pay the rent. But it's such a slow process in Chicago that I know they'll be around for a little while. Big Rick is right-on. We talk for hours every time we end up running into each other. He builds computer hard-drives out of dumpstered parts but he can never seem to hold down a job. He doesn't say why and I don't ask. At least once a week someone from their family is knockin on the backdoor and I always answer even if it is 7 o'clock in the fucken morning — askin to borrow a dollar, tradin tools to work on stuff, askin me to play ball, lookin for some flour, or sugar... you know, neighbor shit. Like I remember from growing up in a neighborhood in a small town, like I never felt when I lived in white areas where I didn't know any of my neighbors. I get the feeling Rick and his family are outsiders like we are. One of the few black families in a predominantly Hispanic community (all the blacks I've seen seem to live in our apartment building), they probably have the same kinds of language

culture shock that I do when I'm at the grocery-store, the gas-station, the movies, or anywhere else — neither they nor I speak Spanish. I understand it a bit, even come to dream in Spanish sometimes cuz with the weather like it is, all the windows are open. Everyone knows everybody's business cuz no-one can afford an air-conditioner. And all I hear out my window is Spanish. Yeah, Big Rick and his family are like me..

. kinda. I'm a white kid, living with other white kids in this apartment. You know, the "low-rent" white kid crowd. I ride my bike East to go to school, Big Rick's kids ride Chicago Transit Authority East to go to public school. My friends come over from the North, their friends come over from the Southside and further West. Me and my roommates don't belong here, but the rent is cheap and yeah, maybe we are the first gentrifiers. Except, I'm trying to get to know my community. If I don't share their race or culture, I do share their class position. This summer is the third year here for me and I know my neighbors, I know the streets, I know the gangs, and I know what's up over here. I don't belong. But really, I don't belong anywhere else. **The neighborhood**

Situated north and west of the more gentrified parts of Chicago, the neighborhoods where Hispanic populations were pushed out by rising real estate prices and hip white kidz lookin for the next cool place to live, my neighborhood is overwhelmingly Mexican and Puerto Rican, with some Blacks, and a few Polish folks here and there. The neighborhood is mostly residential — apartments and two or three story houses. A gasstation here or there, a fruiteria, a carneceria, a grocer, with scattered pawn-shops, junk stores, garages, bars, and stores that seem to only sell hubcaps. While most of the people I know are lower middle class to lower class, (you know the neighborhood is lower class if you see Mormon missionaries there — they tend to target the more disaffected and economically downtrodden), there are a few people around the neighborhood who either own property or talk about owning property one day. There are lots of kids and front porches and tiny churches in my neighborhood. Sunday is always crazy. But so is Cinco de Mayo, Mexican independence day, New Year's Eve, and whenever the

[Image not archived]

Bulls win the championship. Everyone shoots their guns off.

The alley and the animals

[Image not archived]

The alley is a big part of the neighborhood life. A lot of houses look out on the alley or have backporches on the alley, like ours. All the kidz come and go by the alley and I do as well, cuz I ride my bike. Riding the bike you can see everything. It's not like coming and going in a car. You see everything and meet everyone through this alley. That's how I met the gangbangers and the kidz I play ball with using a bottom-less milk-crate nailed to telephone pole in the alley. There are always people looking for cans in the garbage and once or twice a week, old broken down trucks full of tarnished furniture, appliances, and big hunks of crazy twisted steel slowly drive down the alley looking for stuff. One day I'm standing on my back porch trying to catch a

little wind cuz the apartment is so sweltering. Looking across the alley, I notice three black kidz I don't recognize sitting in a car parked in someone's backyard across the alley. I sit and watch them for a minute, and they glance up and see me. Yeah, OK, trying to act all natural, foolin around with some of the knobs in the car and pretending to chat casually, sure I know that's not your car. I'm not sure what I should do. Big Rick told me that rival gangs had once thrown a molotov cocktail into the car of a guy a couple of doors down who called the cops on some kidz stealing a car. Fuck, I don't wanna call the cops cuz cops suck, but I don't wanna go down there. What if they've got a gun? Finally, I take the phone out on the backporch and pretend to call as I'm standing there watchin them. They split but I'm hoping against any backlash. Nothin ever happens. And my neighbors still have their car. I'm tellin ya, the alley is the action, at least twice or three times a week I hear gunshots from the alley — it's the action, not only for people in the summer, but for the animals as well. Walking through the little gangway to get to my apartment from the alley, I'm always assaulted by a swarm of bees and flies hovering around the garbage cans. My roommates freak out about it but I just figure its natural — you know, hot weather and garbage. Garbage is everywhere around here, again, not like any white neighborhoods I've lived in. I see kidz throw shit on the ground and while it makes me cringe, I feel like a dumb-ass white kid if I ever say anything about littering. It's a different thing around here. The alley is also home to a couple of families of stray cats, no doubt hunting all the rats I see around — the cats are quick and usually stay out of sight but often, when the night is clear and the moon is out, I ride

up real silent-like

and surprise twenty or so cats of all sizes pawing through the garbages. I think someone is feeding them cuz sometimes I see little empty tins of cat-food side by side next to the garbage. Everyone likes to walk their dogs through the $_{a}$li$_{ey}$_$_{a}$nd here, dogs mean something different than every white place I've ever lived. Here they are macho, status symbols — everyone's got the shepard, the doberman, the pit-bull, the rotty — and they walk them around with big chains and weights on their shoulders to build up their muscles. It's nice to know people around, people walkin their dogs, cuz I never want to run across one of these dogs, all snarlin, growlin, and foamin at the mouth, with someone that I don't know.

My Neighbors

Big Rick and his family — his wife Toni, and his kids Little Rick, Teisha, and Kaleb — live next door in our building. Toni's cousins live upstairs on the one side

while Maria, a single mom with two teenage kids, Antonio and Anna, live on the other side. One night Maria and I were comin in at the same time when a couple of cops roll up on us and start hasslin us about drugs in the neighborhood. I know the house they are looking for is across the street but of course, I'm not sayin anything. They're all up in our faces asking what she is doing there and saying to me, what's a white kid doin in a neighborhood like this. We're like, "we fucken live upstairs..." Fucken pigs. On the ground floor, live a couple of rastas — NoIon and his sister, Jamael — you can always smell the kind in the hallway when they are home. Big Maria and abuela Juanita live next door with a revolving variety of brothers and uncles who are always comin and goin at all hours of the night. Big Maria is always havin me and my roommates do little chores for her like liftin stuff and her abuela always sits out on the frontporch in the summertime watchin the neighborhood kidz. Paul, a black guy who plays in a blues band and seems more middle class than most around the neighborhood, lives a few doors down. We always shoot the shit and he's always tellin me to come out to one of his gigs — usually I'm workin. Of course, Armando and Ruel live off the alley a couple of houses down.

Armando has an ex-wife and kidz that I see around sometimes. They're always throwin BBQ's off their backporch, pumpin salsa : music until all hours — some- | times I sleep with the ear-plugs in. I remember one night early in the summer when I woke up to screams and looked out my window to see flames shooting out their windows and off their roof. Ap

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parently, they had left hot coals burning in the kitchen when they went to bed and the whole house went up. As for the rest of my neighbors, I know almost everyone's face and wave hello when I see them, but it's the kidz in the neighborhood that I know the most.

The Kidz and the Gangs.

You really live in a neighborhood when you know the kidz and the old people. And it was the kidz that I met first. Little Rick and Antelino used to always hang around the backporch and we'd kinda talk to them. Then they started pounding on the door wantin to hang out. Then Antelino is sleepin on our floor when his Moms kicks him out of the house. Then he's in juvy, then jail. All in the three years we lived there. Don't see Antelino much anymore cuz in between stints in jail, he's livin with his

uncle on the West side. We first met them when they were fourteen and fifteen. They used to bring over their younger friends, and through them, we got to know the gangbangers in the neighborhood — Pookie, Boo-Man, Roberto, Dog, Alex, and a bunch of other guyz who know my face though I don't know their name — all of them brothers or uncles or friends of these younger kidz we first met. That saved our bacon now, cuz knowin these guyz and having them know me, makes me feel a lot safer walkin around and livin here. We live two streets away from the dividing line between the Latin Kings and the Manic Latin Disciples, two sub-gangs inside the larger groups in Chicago known as "the folks" and "the people" We live in "people" territory. The second

year we lived there, a gang war broke out. Forty kidz got killed in just three months that spring in ours and the surrounding neighborhoods. One day I was riding my bike up Milwaukee and I saw the aftermath of a drive-by — a car, riddled with bullet holes, up on the sidewalk. The ambulance was just leaving and the cops were all over the place interviewing people. Crazy. Another day last summer, I decide to take a different route than normal home walking up Talman instead of California, on the "folks" side of the line. A guy walks up to me that I don't know and have never seen b4, askin me to represent, to flash him a gang-sign. I know the different signs and I'm about to flash but I remember a couple of weeks ago Little Ricky gettin jumped by the Latin Kings and gettin a beatdown in front of the police station cuz he represented wrong thinkin they were "people." I remember his Father tellin me that everyone 'round here respects God. I tell the guy that I represent with Jesus. He eyeballs me for a minute and then asks why I got two ear-rings. I tell him, "Jesus takes everyone, black, white, latin, or ear-ringed." He shrugs, gives me one last look and moves away. Crazy, yeah? I try to keep an eye out on the changing graffiti to see where the lines move and change, I can never be sure of any of the streets except my own, especially now that things are heating up. A couple of days ago me and some kidz where playin ball in the schoolyard and one of the old-boys I don't know but have seen around, comes runnin up to a garbage can right next to the hoop. He overturns the can, pulls a gun-shaped brown-paper package out from under it, and runs off. A few minutes later we hear shots a couple of streets down. Yet this is the neighborhood. I guess I've come to know gangs differently since I've lived here. Not like you see on TV, but as groups of kidz livin in the neighborhood, protecting their turf and protecting the people who live there. I saw some of the guyz bum rush this guy in a car cuz he was drivin the wrong way down our one-way street. I thought he was a rival but they were like, "No man, we just wanted to stop him b4 he hit any of these kidz drivin the wrong way." Many a day I see Pookie and Boo-man out on the corner, lookin after some kidz whose Mom is off at work. It's weird but I get the sense of family that a lot of romanticized gang movies portray. One day one of our friends, a tall kinda goofy lookin white kid, got robbed

at gunpoint right outside of our apartment as he was leaving to walk to the train. The way he described the kidz, I knew Pookie and Boo-man were there. I was pretty pissed so the next day I caught up to Boo-man, Roberto, Alex and Dog on the street corner and was like, "yeah, listen... my friend got robbed the other day, and I'm not sayin who did it but that shit ain't cool cuz we live here and we give y'all respect so you gotta give us the same..." They kinda shuffled around and said some stuff about not knowing who was "with" us and who was not, never admitting they did it. But the next day, his wallet was hanging on our front door with everything in it — not the downstairs door to the main apartment building but the inside door to our specific apartment. I felt like that was respect... Sure there are drugs in the neighborhood, violence and a lot of bad shit. That's part of the paradox of connecting with the kidz and the gang-bangers yet still wanting to have the respect of people like Paul, Big

Maria and the all the neighborhood abuelas. This is just a part of everyday life there. Hangin out on the corner in the summer, sharing a joint or a few beers, someone keepin an eye out for 5–0, it was like living in a community for me. Maybe it sounds romanticized, but I felt like I really lived there. Not just slept and ate there. Especially when Roberto breaks out the big-wrench and turns on the fire-hydrant. That shit is so much fun. All the little kidz drag their abuelas out to play in the cool water shooting out of the hydrant. Everyone takes turns shooting out the water and even after the cops come and shut us down, the next day, we're back at it. Though one day again I feel caught between being a responsible adult member of the community and a kid playin on the corner in the hydrant. Paul comes out of his house, all pissed cuz he doesn't have any water pressure yellin at everyone. I try to calm him down cuz Boo-man and Dog are all flexing like they're gdnna do somethin but this is the paradox

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of living here. Knowing the kidz and the gang-bangers but still wanting to have the respect of the regular folks that live here. Knowing most of the gang-bangers are these people's children, nephews, or uncles yet also feelin a tension between those people like Maria, who gets up at 5 AM to go to work all day, and Boo-man and Pookie who chill on the corner all day. I don't quite know where I am. Once again, the outsider I guess. But in the hot Chicago summer, sometimes you just try to live and get what pleasure you can from life, whatever tensions and inconsistencies that brings.

> **So it's time for us to revamp and revitalize the stale concept of the "scene report?' With this issue of Inside Front, we decided to fuck with the tradition a bit, and try doing "scene reports" that captured what was exciting about places themselves, not just in relation to hardcore punk, Greg Berwick's columns about his travels in India in earlier issues of Inside Front are an example of what I think makes a great scene report: they offer information about a place most of us haven't been to yet. tell what if s like there and some of the adventures that are to be had, and relate all that to issues that we are thinking about in the hardcore community..**
>
> **The scene reports here are all experiments, and different experiments, at that, tentative forays into the future to determine what scene reports must become if they are to remain useful at all in 'zines. Please write to us and let us know which of these works best which direction you think we should go with this section... and, if you can, write an experimental scene report of your own and send it to us for our 13* issue. Thanks alof**

REPORT: THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL

by Alex DWGSHT

It had taken months of painstakingly meticulous effort and concentration to even get me to that day. The better part of half a year, planning and plotting, weighing one item against another, and doing my damnedest to make effective decisions. I didn't know what the fuck I was doing or what I was getting myself into, which was the only certainty in any of this. Man, the headaches, the late nights, the fear — god, the fucking fear! I was so scared...

I had gone to bed really late the night before — way too late. I knew I needed my rest, the next day was gonna be huge. Nervousness to the point of restlessness was inevitable, though, and I understood the futility in trying to catch eight hours of sleep. And I had to sneak in as much time with my girl as possible it would be a long time before I would see her again; another weight added to my already overburdened shoulders.

I awoke at around eight with nothing to do but go through my usual routine of cigarettes and coffee as I had been fully packed and ready to split for over a week. My mom came by and wished me the best. Her eyes were as dry as can be, which I remember vividly, and was a little unusual for her. I took it as a gesture of confidence towards my undertaking and was pleased. After tying up some loose ends on her school work, my girl said she was ready when I was. After a deep breath, I said goodbye to my kitties and my home and hoisted my pack on my shoulders and got in the car.

My girl and some of her friends were, oddly enough, heading in relatively the same direction as $_{\text{myse}}$|f — a brilliant stroke of luck! I wouldn't have the faintest idea how I would've otherwise gotten to such a remote wilderness area of northern Georgia. K©[o)©

I remember feeling so disconnected from the conversations happening in the car. Even when I was asked questions about my own state, whether I'm nervous or excited, things like that, I couldn't really connect — I was so focused internally that everything else seemed like background. I did try distracting myself by chain smoking, listening to some of my favorite music that I know I wouldn't hear again for quite some time (Catharsis' first EP, Dillinger Four's EP's, and London Calling, if you're interested to know), and holding on to my girl's hand for dear life.

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All and all, it was a long drive, much longer than expected. After some 8 hours in the car, most of which along the mountainous, winding, and very scenic US 19, we arrived at a small town, Dahlonega, GA., some 20 miles away from where I was to be dropped off. We were all pretty beat. Actually, everybody seemed completely exhausted and frustrated — this was only supposed to be a five hour drive, but the road was tricky, even at a meager

30 mph. The others insisted on bumming around the town for a bit so me and my girl could steal some

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Go ahead and give a kid a bit of freedom, they won't know what the fuck to do with it. Standing in the parking lot I think I expected some Park Ranger to jump out of the woods, grab me by the hand, and direct me to where I was to sleep. At the very least, I expected some sort of sign telling me where this shelter was. No such help, I was on my own. What I had was what I had. I was completely self-contained and could do as I pleased. There was no one to tell me what to do or show me where to go — for the first time in my life I was free.

I took another deep breath, composed myself, and started walking toward where I thought the shelter would be. It took some work to find, but I eventually got there, and found a couple other folks readying themselves for bed — it was about 10 o'clock. We exchanged pleasantries for a quick second when I realized how hungry I was. I hadn't eaten a bite all day, I had been too nervous. I clumsily took out my Wisperlite Stove and a pack of Ramen and after an embarrassingly long set up time, I got dinner underway. I quickly ate, cleaned up, and set up my bed. Just before sleeping I penned the following:

"4/23 10:35 PM. Man, I pinned myself to be the guy flailing in his own feces by now. I'm trying not to be overconfident, but I really feel alright. A small bout with nausea, but feel good. Granted, I have yet to walk more than 50 yards. Man, it's hard to write — my hands are freezing. Excited about tomorrow's hike, but it should be very taxing...we'll see. A warm feeling thinking about me and Mya's goodbye — that's what's keeping me warm despite the chilly 35 degrees here. Geez, I actually took the plunge. Wow!"

The Appalachian Trail is a 2, 159 mile wilderness footpath spanning from Springer Mountain in Georgia to Mount Katahdin in northern Maine. It passes through 13 States: Georgia, North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine. The Trail is visited by hundreds of thousands of people each year and is America s oldest and most famous hiking trail. Every year, several hundred people set out to hike the entire trail in one shot or "thru-hike", as it is commonly known. A thru-hike usually takes between four and six months.

. Even at this point, I'm still not entirely sure why I involved myself in an endeavor of such magnitude. I had backpacked a few times in the last couple years, but usually only for 3 or 4 day trips. It was also obvious that hiking wasn't something I was altogether that good at — actually, hopelessly incompetent was more like it. I was terribly out of shape: smoked more than a pack a day, never exercised, didn't eat very much, had perpetual headaches, and felt generally run down. My repertoire of outdoor skills consisted of being able to set up my tent and light my stove and not much else.

But I could put one foot in front of the other and was somewhat certain that I could get in shape and learn what I needed to know once I not "out there."

In any event, there's a certain romantic value to prancing around the woods for an extended period of time. I longed for the quiet and solitude. To be able to eat and sleep and move and relax — all at my own pace and when I pleased. More than heading out on the Trail, though, I think I was most interested in breaking out of the monotony of my life at the time. Things had got to the point where, well, it was just a pretty lame existence. Working shit hours at a job I hated was wearing me down, night life was slim, my motivation was dwindling. I could continue at the same pace or make some sort of dramatic change in my life. So I decided to do the craziest thing I could think of, stir shit up a

I worked, saved and planned for six months. I borrowed money from anyone who had some. I bought a whole slew of gear and close to six months worth of food and necessities. I divided up all my provisions into 17 different boxes to be sent to post offices along the way, at about 10 day intervals (it's nearly impossible to carry much more than 10 days worth of food along with other gear on your back — at roughly 2lbs per day, food gets really fucking heavy really fucking quickly). I pounded out an itinerary and informed all who cared to know roughly where I would be and when. Basically, I covered every base I could think of. Even though there was no guarantee I would make it all the way (I could get sick, break a leg, freak out on the first day of hiking and run home crying, etc.) I was determined not to let a lack of preparation stop me. I had done everything that could possibly be done — all that was left was to hike 2, 200 miles.

Before I go further with this "scene report", of sorts, I'd like a few things to be understood. Despite the previous paragraphs, this essay is not a travelogue, a blow by blow account of my experiences on the AT. This intends to serve as a VERY loose source of certain practical information about particular areas along the southern half of the Trail. I repeat, a VERY loose source. You will not be able to copy this article, throw it in a backpack and get farther than a couple of miles. Moreover, the most valuable information herein if considering a similar undertaking with unquestionably be the list of books and other materials toward the end of this article. This text will simply highlight particular places I stumbled through along the way and will let it be known that such and endeavor is possible for anyone interested.

Also, the hostels, restaurants, businesses, and individuals listed are not to be misused or abused. Do not take

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advantage of there generosity to long-distance hikers! Their voluntary support of the long distance hiking community is relied upon by thousands and only continues when it is not taken advantage of. More specifically, if you do mistreat or misuse such information I will track you down and kill you. Quite simple.

In the same breath, understand that the wilderness corridor the AT takes you through is one of but a handful of pretty places left in this country. Don't fuck it up

with litter or other poor practices. Understand "No trace" camping. Pack out your trash. Better yet, pack out all trash. Don't try to burn left-over food or debris. Better still, don't even build campfires unless in an emergency. Don't travel with a huge amount of people. Don't shower or do dishes in a stream. Shit, don't even shower or do dishes at all. Lick your pot clean and deal with being dirty. Fuck soap! Dig a six inch hole for your shit — and make sure it's far, far, far away from the Trail or any water source. Pack out your toilet paper or don't use any at all. Remember, a little exercise and a strict vegetarian diet will virtually eliminate the need for it.

The Southern Half of the Appalachian Trail

Amicalola Falls State Park (Springer Mountain), Georgia to Harpers Ferry, West Virginia

From the visitors center at Amicalola expect a long, lonely 40 mile, roughly 4 day walk to civilization. Georgia, while not known for its huge peaks, is difficult enough to challenge even veteran hikers. All up and down — you cannot buy a flat piece of property! Simply exhausting. Names like Blood Mountain and Slaughter Gap do not help matters. To be sure, it's petrified look in late April and startling views certainly make it worth while, just be prepared to earn it. After a long climb up to Blood Mountain you'll jet down a steep slope and hit US 19, Neels Gap and the Walasi Yi Center.

The Walasi Yi Center is a familiar place for all AT hikers. A grocery, gear store, cheap hostel, shower, fully equipped with a staff far more experienced than any other I've seen make Walasi Yi a welcomed oasis. The first 4–5 days are always the toughest — you're still getting in shape, not used to the outdoors and fine-tuning your gear. The folks at Walasi helped me with all these. Custom fitting my backpack, helping me with a brace for my knee, caretaking my first food drop from home. Yeah, this place is essential. $11 hostel; 9710 Gainsville Hwy. / Blairsville, GA. / 30512 — (706) 745 — 6095

Beyond the Walasi center is more of Georgia notorious ups and downs. A few days outta Neels Gap will take you to US 76; an 11 mile hitch (West) takes you into Hiawassi, GA., a good place for food supplies and a good nights sleep, if necessary. The workers at the Hiawassi Food Lion were sympathetic to my obvious lack of funds. I got 4 AA batteries, two packs of Newports, Pringles, a bag each of M & M's, peanuts, and raisons, a 2 liter of Coke, three boxed dinners, and some talc for my sore ass, all for just over $7. Can't beat it! The town's also good for a haircut and some take out. The big, fancy Holiday Inn has successfully put a number of small time motels out of business with their $25 room, free breakfast, swimming pool, hot tub, ride back to the Trail, free stove fuel, and other such amenities. Food drops will be held at the nearby post office (Hiawassi, GA. 30546)

Back on the Trail a quick 8 miles to the North Carolina — Georgia border. No, state borders don't

quite matter much, especially in the woods, but there is a cool tree to mark the spot. Got a camera? Stand by the tree and look proud — just walked through your first state.

Entering North Carolina, and Nantahala National Forest, you'll find a sharp change in the layout of the mountains. Instead of real sharp ups and downs, the Carolina Mountains take you up slowly and gradually. Sounds easier, but these mountains are a good deal higher. From 3–4 thousand feet in Georgia to 5–6 thousand feet here. It seems that the forest is getting greener and, of course, the temperature warmer. A very peaceful and pleasant place to walk.

Less than a hundred miles from the Georgia state line you hit US 19 once again, this time at the Nantahala Outdoor Center. Like Walasi, you'll find a hostel, food stop, gear store, etc. Nantahala felt a bit less friendly, however. They rely far less on the business of long distance hikers and more so on their rafting trips along the Nantahala River. As a result, backpacking gear is too expensive, as is food. And the hostel is often full with rafters. NOC is, however, a good choice for a food drop, given it's on Trail location. (NOC / 13077 Hwy. 19W / Bryson City, NC. / 28713)

After deciding to pass on the amenities at NOC, it's a quick day and a half to Fontana Dam, NC., a small resort town at the foot of Great Smoky Mountain National Park. Heated hostel with kitchen, $25 NICE hotel rooms, general store with enough for a long-term resupply, laundry, restaurant, etc. A great place to stop before the drastically more remote Smoky's. Packages held at Fontana Village, NC. 28733)

The GSMNP, technically considered a highlight of the Southern AT, is usually more of a disappointment. To be sure, it's really beautiful; great 360 degree views, lots of wildlife (bears!), lots of great hikes. But all in all, I think it's a tad overrated. For one, the shelters are disgusting, which would be fine if you weren't required to sleep in them per park regulations. To keep bears and other such creatures away at night, the shelters in the park are gated, three sided shelters which are filthy and over-used. I don't think I've ever slept in worse. Old clothes, garbage, HUGE rats, graffiti — certainly no resemblance to anyone's idea of a camping trip. On any given night, almost every shelter is filled to capacity with senseless people who only add to such filth with their poor backcountry habits. The Trail itself is undoubtedly more crowded than in other parts — usually, again, with cosmopolitan types, boy scouts, and frat boys with very little sense.

Happening upon the one road in the Parks 70 miles of the AT, Newfound Gap, be prepared for shock. If you started at Springer Mountain in Georgia you've been witness to nothing but woods and sleepy towns for over a month. Nestled between the Alpine Village of Gatlinburg, Tennessee and the unconscionably gaudy Cherokee, North Carolina, where the Trail meets Newfound Gap Road, is one of the largest tourist spots in the eastern US. Just as fast as can be, when you set foot off the trail and onto the concrete platform, busloads of screaming junior high school students, old couples in Cadillacs with Florida plates, middle-aged geeks with a multitude of camera equipment and their drooling offspring all materialize into a loud, obnoxious pool of

shit you'd just love to see destroyed. Then come the looks and the questions: How'd YOU get here (like it's an impossibility without a machine!)? Where'd you start?

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— What does yer mother think? What

do you do about food? Where are you going? Fucking endless! (As annoying as it is, most of these folks are good for a hitch to Gatlinburg where the infamous Grand Prix Motel will give hikers a double at $20! At the first light make a left, two blocks on the left. Be prepared, the proprietor is a crabby Eastern European fellow with a thick accent and curt tone. 'WHAT, WHAT?! YOU WANT ROOM?! 20 BUX! NO, NOT NOW! GOTO ROOM! NOW! PAY LATER! HERE"S KEY! GO! GO!) Exiting the park at Davenport Gap, it's a quick half mile to Mountain Momma's Kuntry Store. With all the hospitality of a NYC cop, the Thigpens will feed you only what they want you to eat, yell at you about cluttering up the joint with your pack, and generally assume that they're doing you a favor. And, I guess they are if you've been on foot for over a month and are looking for a hot meal. They also have a honeymoon suite (read: rusted trailer) for those with a strong stomach and $8. They hold maildrops, but I'm not sure how reliable a spot it is (1981 Waterville Road / Newport, TN. / 37821)

A stay at Mountain Mommas is usually a rare thing for a through hiker who undoubtedly has other things on his mind: Southern Balds and Hot Springs, NC. While walking the border of Tennessee and North Carolina north of the Smokys you'll begin to see the second distinctive change in your surrounding. The presence of the balds are just so fucking cool. Enormous mountains, that take hours to climb, but lack any vegetation at all except grass. Great views! Some balds worthy of note: Max patch, Roan Mountain, Big Bald, Little Hump, and Big Hump.

50 miles north of Davenport Gap lies Hot Springs, NO, a sleepy town of no more than a few hundred, but with a ton to offer the long-distance hiker. The AT goes right through town, on Bridge Street (very strange: walking right off a mountain and into a town), home to all services. Elmers should be your first stop. An old house converted to a bread and breakfast by politically minded hippie types. $12 will get you a great room in this television free house, equipped with a great library (found an old copy of _The Match!_, if that's any indication), a slew of musical instruments, and, best of all, some awesome vegetarian food (the first all vegetarian joint so far. 1 Walnut Street / Hot Spring, NO. 7 28743 — (704) 622 — 7206). Negotiations can also be made to work off a meal and a place to stay. There's a number of other places to stay, but I'd recommend calling a head and staking your claim at Elmers. Hot Springs also offers a laundry, a good grocery, quick mart, gear store, and a number of cool cafes that would blow all pretentious imitations right off the map.

Fat and lazy, with a stomach full of Elmer's muffins and granola and a backpack full of provisions, it's a tough climb outta Hot Springs. Onward to Virginia. This section for me was a sort of slow down, kick back pace. I'd been making good time, putting in hard days, and was finally coming into my "Trail" body: getting stronger, getting used to the hardships, and generally enjoying myself more. The views of the aforementioned

balds, the warmer weather, and pace of it all was great. It's not necessary to carry so much food as towns seem closer together. Sams Gap, Erwin, Tennessee, Nolichucky Gorge Campground, Iron Mountain Gap, Hampton, Tennessee — it seemed like good digs were everywhere. Being just a handful of days till Virginia, specifically Damascus, VA., was also encouraging, physiologically. Think about it: to be in Virginia being able to claim that you've hiked from Georgia is a pretty significant statement.

Damascus, VA., universally known to be the friendliest Trail town sits just a few miles north of the North Carolina border. It's a quaint little town somewhat similar to Hot Springs, but with more offerings. Of note, The Place, a $2 a night hostel is just a block off the AT. The hostel is operated by the First United Methodist Church, which may conflict with Inside Front's atheist readership (as it did with me). I attached a note to my donation asking that my funds be used specifically for the hostel and not for the church. Of course, you'll do as you please. The Appalachian Inn, right down the block from The Place, is simply a fully equipped large home that can be rented, wholly, by small groups at a reasonable charge. The Appalachian Inn offers television, laundry facilities, clean beds, and a great atmosphere. There isn't a Laundromat in town, which is part of the appeal of the Inn (219 First Street — 540 — 475–3415) Damascus is also host to a great gear store, pizza place/bar, grocery, and most other services. (Maildrops sent to Damascus *Va'* 24236)

Shortly after Damascus lies Grayson Highlands State Park and Mt. Rogers, the highest peak in Virginia. Whatever you do, wherever you go, do not miss this section It's absolutely stunning! More like Wyoming than anything east of the Mississippi. Rock outcroppings, rhododendrons en mass, tons of fog, tremendous storms (if you're lucky!), and tons of places to play. The peaks are moderately high (5, 000+ feet), but are often chilly, rocky and somewhat weird and creepy. There's some new shelters in the area, a nice change of pace as most nearby shelters were quite rough.

A quick streak of consecutive 20+ mile days brought me to Pearisburg, VA., a run down industrial town where night life revolves around the Burger King Parking lot. A ton of groceries and the fact that the AT passes right through, does make it a logical stop (Pearisburg, VA. 24134). And if

you are in the mood to walk (HA!) a few miles from the Trail you'll find the Holy Family Church Hostel. Again use your judgment as to whether you feel like supporting a church or not. Donations are appreciated. The setting is great: in a quiet neighborhood on a grassy hill, a huge green lawn with a gazebo. The hostel itself is an old barn fully converted to a hikers only hostel, equipped with a microwave, refrigerator, radio, and small library (mostly romance novels).

Covering over 500 miles, Virginia is known to cause hikers to fall into a slump. After burning through a few states (GA., NC., TN.) most hikers come to expect the gratification of knocking out another state every couple hundred miles. After a couple hundred miles in Virginia, just outta Pearisburg, I was hit hard by the physiological phenomena known exclusively to hikers as "The Virginia Blues." Fatigue, poor attitude, questioning the validity of long distance hiking, and more general crumminess, are

all common symptoms. Storm through or take a break? A common question heard throughout the hiking community. In Troutville, VA., 100+ miles north of Pearisburg, after 2 months in the backcountry, I decided to take a well needed breather.

A week at home with my girl did wonders for my constitution. Good food, good company, lots of sleep, and so on. Going home did take a bit of adjusting: sleeping indoors, the constant noise of the city, air conditioning, music, bars, friends, et al. Although more or less pleasant, this transition was hugely unnerving to the point where my apartment no longer felt like my home and visiting my "old life" gave me a mild case of an out of body experience.

According to any calendar, it had merely been 2 and a half months, but any hiker will argue that such a small sliver of time feels like much longer. Something about traveling through the woods, all day, every day, the constant

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a charming castle-like joint in the middle of nowhere. Great company, swell sleeping accommodations (a mattress!?'. Wow'), a game room, and a good selection of junk food make the place indispensable. And a steal at $12 a night (Bears Den Hostel — Route 1 — Box 288 — Bluemont, VA. 20135 — (540) 554 — 8708).

From the Hostel, a short few miles to route 7, find the Horseshoe Curve Bar and Grill (3 miles West) where beer, french fries and bar food are served en mass. A good pit stop and just a day from Harpers Ferry, 1, 000 miles from Springer Mountain in Georgia.

It all came down in Harpers Ferry. A quick sleep over in town, me and my friend were back on the Trail. Just north of town the AT meets up with the C & O towpath, a flat trail from Cumberland, MD. to Washington D.C. A hot day, identical to nearly every other July day in the mid-Atlantic, while walking along the AT/C & O, in the true spirit of personal freedom, me and my compatriot decided to make a right instead of a left, where the AT split off. We were determined to indulge our senses in Capital City and even more determined to get there on foot! <

How liberating it was to throw our AT plans to the wind and do exactly what felt most exciting at that very moment. Save my first step on to the AT, my first step towards Washington was one of the most exciting times of my life.

After several days in Washington, me and my compatriot decided to part ways. He, back to the Appalachian Trail and me, in true "hair-up- my-ass" fashion, on a train to Jackson Hole, Wyoming to try my luck on some higher altitude, more rugged terrain...

And here I sit, nervous as all get go, planning another such trip. This time, the northern half of the Appalachian Trail. I leave in a week, alone.

Thinking about taking the plunge? Read these books:

The Complete Walker by Colin Fletcher

Thousand Mile Summer by Colin Fletcher

The Appalachian Trail Data Book by the Appalachian Trail Conference

The Appalachian Trail Thru-Hikers Companion by The Appalachian Trail Long Distance Hikers Association

The Thru-Hikers Handbook by Dan Bruce
A Season on the Appalachian Trail by Lynn Setzer
Contact the Appalachian Trail Conference for other books and information:

REPORT: NEW YORK

Revolution through Shoplifting: Surviving 5 fingers at a time...

by KOASEV

If you are one of those people like myself who refuses to work and makes his/her way through life by shoplifting, then read on. If you are one of those people who would like to quit their miserable jobs but don't know what to do to survive, then read on. Living in the NYC area, there are plenty of stores to provide you with the basic necessities and then some. The best place to start by far is New Jersey. CorpoRAPE chain stores are blowin' up everywhere and they can be your worst enemy while being your best friend at the same time. Keep in mind with shoplifting there are numerous factors that can affect your success...cameras, alarm sensors, security, undercover security, store layout, 2-way mirrors, etc. Just because stores have some or all of these things doesn't make them invincible but a little harder than others. Experience and practice, like anything else in life, can only help you.

Let's start with the basics first. There are stores like **CVS, Rite Aid, ** etc. that can provide you with toothpaste, deodorant, shampoo, etc. Supermarkets provide the same thing along with material food sections and deli departments. Go to the deli department, order some food (make sure it isn't too bulky), walk to a remote corner of the store, stuff it and leave — free lunch! If you are looking for vitamins GNC is the best bet. They are everywhere you look. They have all types of vitamins along with a decent line of cruelty-free shampoos, soaps, etc. There is also the Vitamin Shoppe which is a little harder due to the store's layout, and they usually have alarm sensors (look at the bottom of the vitamin — bottle for a square sticker with a | " barcode on it — remove it quietly (it can**

- make a jot of nojse and a|ert workers to

what you , , ,

store has alarm sensors and you are taking a product in a box,

be sure to look on the outside of the box, then open the box and look thoroughly inside for an alarm sticker.

Next up is clothes. The best place is **OLD NAVY.** They have been blowin' up everywhere and they have decent looking clothing (if that matters to you) that is comfortable and easy to steal. Boxer shorts, socks, shirts, pants, etc. are all easily stuffable. Just remember to make sure that the particular Old Navy that you are in doesn't have alarm sensors. There are a number of stores in New Jersey (Rt. 9 south/ Sayerville, for example) that don't which makes life easier. Another thing to be aware of in Old Navy is that the workers all wear headsets that enable them to have constant communication with each other, making it easier to monitor potential shoplifters.

If you are into reading a lot such as myself I would suggest that **Barnes and Noble** is the best bet to take books and magazines from. When taking books be sure that you scan through ALL of the pages to look for an alarm sticker.

As far as art supplies go, there are a number of spots to hit up. **Pearl Paint, Michaels, Treasure Island** and even **Staples** and **OfficeMax** carry all types of art supplies (pens, pencils, markers, acrylic paint, drawing paper, stencils, press on type, etc.). This stuff is usually extremely easy to steal except for Pearl which has gotten a little harder in recent years due to cameras and better security (undercover). Art supplies aren't true necessities but if you are a cre-

ative person then they are.

Staples and **OfficeMax** are good for phones, answering machines, computer software, printer paper, inkjet cartridges, stickers etc. Remember to look for alarm stickers in and out of the box if the store has alarm sensors. Some Staples have two different types of cameras: 1) The obvious black ball hanging from the ceiling 2) The not so obvious small white balls that hang from the ceiling and are harder to notice.

I could go on forever and write a book on the subject but I just wanted to give the readers of Inside Front a few tips on technique and where some of the best places to shop are. Depending on what area you live in or where you can get to, each store is set up differently in terms of whether or not they have alarm sensors and/or cameras, etc. Just go into the store and look around to get a feel for it. Then decide for yourself whether or not it's worth it. Take care and be aware...and please remember to never pay full price!!!

REPORT: LOUISBERG, NORTH CAROLINA

as told to us by Ernie, interviewed by Inside Front

Prologue!

When Ernie first joined our band as a roadie, he was always telling us all these crazy stories about the town he grew up in in rural North Carolina. They sounded so absurd to us, with our sheltered middle class backgrounds, that we thought he must be making them up. One day I sat down with a big sheet of paper, determined to chart a family tree of all Ernie's uncles and all their murder and mayhem, to see if the stories were consistent. They were... and since then, I've seen enough of Ernies homeland to know that he's not exaggerating. For this issue of Inside Front, I broke out the chart I'd made and called Ernie up at his father's auto repair garage, to introduce you to the wild world of life in Louisberg.

Inside Front: So how long has your family lived in Louisberg? Ernie' Both sides have been there all the way back to my great grandparents. I don't know, over a hundred years.

IE Let's start back with your great grandfather... I have here on the family tree that he was knocked out of his shoes by electric

E That was... there was some kind of yard animal — IE — yard animal?

E you know, they had chickens or whatever — in a tree, he was trying to get it out of the tree because a thunderstorm was coming, and lightning struck the tree. When

you get struck by lightning it usually knocks you out of your shoes. The awesome thing was, he had boots on, laced up. He got knocked out of his boots and they were still tied up.

IE Did that hurt his feet?

E Oh yeah, what it is is lightning usually melts the bottom of your feet...

IE And so who were his children, then?

E That would be my father's grandfather, his mother's father. IE And what was he famous for?

E Well, they were in the lumber business, mainly. He was a farmer, and then his sons went on to the lumber business and made shit loads of money, and they were pretty big time con artists, got pretty rich. One of them, Edward Philmore Hayes, he was a Korean vet, and a biker, like a really oldschool biker.' He died in a motorcycle wreck not too long after he got back from the war. He died at the same age as my uncle Phil, who he was named after, had his motorcycle accident, actually. Phil would be my dad s brother... he had that wreck the same month, at the same age: they were both 24, they even looked a whole lot alike. And, that was the day Government Issue played the Fallout Shelter, did a matinee.

IF So you went to the show the day your uncle was in a motorcycle wreck?

E: Yeah, I remember I got home from the show in the middle of the night and my parents were gone.

IB Have we heard any other stories about uncle Phil?

E. Uncle Phil is just a belligerent crazy person. He's had ten D.U.I. tickets or more...

IE Is he related to your uncle Mark, or..?

EYeah, they're brothers.

IE And they were the ones that got in the fistfight that day..? £ Yeah, well, a couple of times... they've got in fights with my dad, too. Like, when I was out of town — well, actually I was just pretending I was out of town, when I first moved into that apartment, I just told them I was going on tour so I wouldn't have to go to work — the second day I wasn't here, my fucking uncle attacked my dad!

IE Why?

E Well, he just decided he was fed up and he couldn't work here any more, and he charged my dad with a broomstick, and my dad broke the fucking broomstick over his head. When came back in to work I was like "where's the broom?"

IE So what's the story with those uncles about you waking up with a girl and there are people fighting on your front lawn..? E Oh yeah, that was when my ex-girlfriend and I lived with Mark, in the back of his house, he had a modular home with two rooms in the back... it was pretty early in the day, we had the windows open, kind of laying around, and she looks out the window and my two uncles are fighting like hell in the front yard. They were in the truck when the fight started, with a guy sitting in between them, this little guy that was a kind of innocent victim, and I had to go out and break it up with a crowbar... IE Are they both related to your aunt Diane?

EThat's their sister. She's Hutch's mom, who's about to get out of rehab Saturday. She was married to this guy named Stewart who O.D.'d and blood ran out of his ears, that was a historic

[Image not archived]

event in Louisberg, our first O.D. — that was in front of Jason's dad's house, and Jason's here right now, matter of fact. And then she married this other fucking weirdo that wore the same yellow shirt for three years, for the entire time I knew him... before that she was married to this big-time drug dealer that's in prison for life now, and seems like she was married some other time... oh hey, she dated this fucking weirdo one time, that stole a transfer truck at McDonalds and drove it with the back brakes locked, and drug the fucking back wheels like twenty miles — and when they arrested him, he stayed in jail for a couple days and then jumped out the window, the top window of the jail. He broke his leg, or his back, or something, and he crawled like two miles before the police caught him.

IE So Diane has a penchant for finding those guys.

E Oh yeah, definitely.

IE What was the name of the guy who wore the same yellow shirt for ten years? .

E Dewey... Carpenter. It was got so dirty, you couldn't tell what color it was. It had this one big stain that stuck out more than the rest... Dewey's best friend Gene burnt to a crisp, you know. This was the weirdest night of my life, I was staying with Philip in this trailer park, and their next door neighbor was Gene — they were driving to Virginia to pick up something, and Gene was in this van that had a wreck, got crushed or whatever and burned up kind of like our van did, except he was in it. And that same night, the next door neighbor that was on the other side of Gene drank a bottle of rubbing alcohol and killed himself. IE The family tree here says something about you beating up

[Image not archived]

his son with a pool cue...

E:Yeah, I beat up Gene's son earlier that day...

_IF:_ You beat up his son and then —

_E;_ — yeah, his dad got killed! Yeah, he was a real asshole, though. He was bullying my little cousin, who was like the new kid in the neighborhood...

_IF;_ OK, what about your uncle that killed your girlfriend's uncle? E^His name would be Atlas Smith. I think they were both in the illegal liquor business, moonshine, that was pretty big business back then, it was the only way for people that were farmers or whatever to get ahead and not get screwed. I think there was a long-running disagreement there, and my uncle hit her uncle in the head with a piece of wood... See, Lane will argue with this, but I have the facts here. She thinks his daughter did it, just because his daughter killed his wife, who was still alive — that happened just a couple months ago.

IF: Was this a source of tension between you and Lane when you were going out?

E: Yeah, it would come up whenever we got in fights.

_IF:_ So according to the family tree, Atlas was on your grandmother Lucille's side of the family...

E: Yeah, she was a deacon in the church.The folks in that generation were the ones in the lumber business, they would do this thing called "calling out numbers, " when the guy came to pick up the lumber they'd lie about how much they were giving him. A friend of theirs actually went to prison for it. They were making up to an extra thousand dollars a day... none of my relatives got caught, so they ended up having their own lumber company. My uncle Joe was the one that would water-ski in his suit I told you about — he would come down to the lake with his suit on, on break from work, take off his shoes and put on the skis, the boat would skid around and land and he'd

racecar driver, alot, they got into Amway together... <

_IF:_ Let's talk about your mother's side of the family. Who's significant on her side?

_E:_ Well, you've got two brothers who are twins, they're pretty much the dukes of hazard...

_IF:_ What are their names?

_E:_ Ronald and Donald.

_IF:_ Are either of them the ones that tried to land the airplane in the playground?

_E:_ Oh, naw, that was their uncle who did that... playground!?! It was a highway where they did that!This was Vernon, my mom's cousin on her dad's side, they were coming from an airshow, him and this guy Al Peebles... and something went wrong with the engine, so they were gonna land it on [highway] 85, because there was nowhere else to land it... it wasn't as developed as it is now, it was basically just woods and highway. As they were landing the wing clipped the, you know the ground wire that comes down from the top of the lightpole to the ground, at an angle to the ground... and when the wing hit that it swung the plane around into the other lane, into oncoming traffic. They hit a van, head on...

_IF:_ Am I making this up, or did they go under water or something...

E: Yeah, it was near a bridge, the van, the plane and everything fell off the bridge into the water. Vernon, ^::^^^ . : both those guys lived, but they were

fucked up pretty bad —

_IF:_ — and under water, too.

_E:_ — they were really lucky they went into water, actually, because they were on fire. On those planes, it was a two seater, the gas tank is pretty much touching you in the ass, it's pressed up against your back. Generally if you crash in one of those things, you're gonna die... but they landed it fine, it was just clipping the wire that spun them around and they hit the van.

^WWW T ^ — What ha PPened t0 the P e° P, e , n the

van?

_E :_ Oh, they died.

_IF:_ Ok, so that wasn't Ronald and Donald in the plane...

_E:_ No, no, Ronald got shot... Donald was in a really bad car wreck, too, he flipped the car eight times, and it was like the dukes of hazard car.

_IF:_ How did he get in the car wreck?

E: Just driving like a maniac, coming back from the lake.

_IF:_ And who shot Ronald?

_E:_ (laughs) His nephew! That would be my first cousin. It was an accident, it was a high-powered rifle, I think a 30/30, if I'm not mistaken I think the charge is exactly the same as an M-16. He reached into the car to grab it and something hit the trigger, it shot through the car door and into my uncle's groin area.

_IF:_ Any other stories about Ronald and Donald?

_E:_ Nothing super crazy, they're just always, they're the car wrecking, fighting twins, you know?

IF: Are they on crack, too, like..?

_E:_ Naw, these guys have their shit together... I just think they have a lot of personality, a genuine disrespect for law and order, which I've always pretty much looked up to these guys for, to be honest.They've always had their shit together, didn't fuck around with hard drugs or anything, unlike everybody else in Louisberg... they drink a little, but they don't drive around drunk like some people in my family or do really stupid shit, they just piss cops off and have a good time.

IE So those are your mother's brothers... does she have any other interesting siblings?

E Naw, they're all nice people, but nothing crazy... well, my aunt Emily, her first husband, he did two years in prison for arson, he was just really into burning shit down. He mostly was just burning down abandoned houses, but then he fucked around and burned down a house somebody lived in, and I think he did a couple years in prison while they were married. Then he got out, and I think he was driving a wrecker, and he was pulling... I think it was another wrecker, actually... and he got pinned, just caught in a pile-up wreck, and it just crushed him. I remember she showed me his class ring and his watch, and even that was mangled and squished up.

IE So was that the same thing that happened to Dewey's friend Gene?

E Yeah, pretty much. I had just met him that day, as they took off —

IE You met him that day and beat up his son, then he got killed? E (laughs) Yeah, don't cross me, motherfucker! I even killed the fucking neighbor just for good

measure, went over there and whispered "drink the alcohol, drink the koolaid" in his ear. I remember I met a really nice girl that day, too. Her name was Michelle Oakley and she was the same age as me.

IE She wasn't the same girl you woke up with and realized you were related, was she?

E Naw, we don't want to talk about that!

IE How about your mother's father?

E He was a real hard-ass, a really cool guy. Well, I say that, but except for, he was a Klansman when he was young, that's not really cool at all! But he went to world war two, and kind of witnessed the destructive power of supremacy, you know, and turned over a new leaf when he came back. He had a little'spat during the civil rights movement with a black civil rights leader here... the civil rights movement hit Louisberg pretty hard, because Louisberg wasn't quite as backwards as the other towns, this town's always had a liberal local government, even the people in town were pretty liberal... even though they weren't super aware, they kind of knew that what was going on was fucked up. My grandfather had a falling out with this Mr. Anderson, they fought for years and years, and then before my grandfather died, they became friends. Mr. Anderson's wife was my music teacher, in high school, and she was always really cool to me, and her and my mom ended up being good friends too. Around the same time, my grandfather and some of his brothers... back in the sixties, there was a traditional poker shack here where they opened up on Friday nights and served fried food and mixed drinks twenty four hours a day until Sunday night, and they had slot machines, too. This was some farmer who had fixed up a barn out in the middle of nowhere, a Mr. Brown that ran one in a little community between here and Raliegh called Broyle. It turns out that the guy who ran this place was the girl I was engaged to's grandpa. My grandpa used to go there, they'd drink and get in fights and stuff after the war. But there was this one guy that my grandpa particularly didn't like, they just never liked each other, and one night he'd been putting all this money in the slot machine all day, getting pissed off because he didn't win anything. And my grandpa came in, walked in the door, put a quarter in, and hit the jackpot. So the guy freaks out and pulls a knife on my grandpa and cut him from his temple on down to his lower cheek. Not a really bad cut, but the scar was there when he died. So my grandpa and his brothers fell on this guy and his friends, and they break the guy's arm and throw him out in the snow'. The guy had to walk home with a broken arm and no jacket pretty cool.

IE The family tree here says that he shot at a truck driver... E_Yeah, that was not too long before he died, one of the last things he did. Truck driver was just spinning in his yard in a

truck, and he came out and shot from way across the yard, in the night, like, right in the window beside the guy's head, then he shot two in the cab on the one side, and he hit them so close together they went in the same hole.

IE How did you know that they did?

E Well, see the cops showed up to investigate "so we got two exit holes, and just one hole here..."You'll notice it'll stretch a lot of the time, because you're not gonna ring it perfectly. The hole will look like an eight... you know, I taught Alexei how to do that, Alexei was a natural, he can make an eight!

IE So should I try to get you to tell stories from your own life or should we not get too close to that?

E I don't know... I don't have anything as interesting as what my family's done...

IE I think, like, the story with the purse is pretty funny for example.

E You know, that's worth telling. That'll sum things up for me. Me and this really good friend lived in a trailer park together... he was a little older, maybe a little more streetwise at the time, because I hadn't been out of the house that long. We got really broke, and we were hungry, wanted to go get something to eat, but we didn't have any money at all. And we were both pretty hefty guys, so we were pretty fucking hungry, you know? So Dan s like look, just stay right here, I'm gonna go get some money!" — because we were hoping for a phone call, we'd been calling around to see if anyone was cooking out or something and wanted to feed us. He goes up to the school of dance, up the street at the end of our trailer park, just kicks it up there on foot I think. People were picking up their kids from dance class, and he sees this car running with the windows down and no one in it, so he grabs the purse out and takes it home. He pulls the purse out "hey, check this out!" and it's my aunt Diane's purse. And I'm like "aw, god damnit!"

IE So this is your aunt Diane who was busted for cocaine or

whole world that you've introduced me to, is the sort of culture of resistance, resistance to authority and even to boredom in general, that exists in these small towns. A lot of people in bigger cities and places that aren't rural, they're totally prejudiced against rural people, white working class people from the country...

_E:_ ...yeah...

_IF:_ But it's like, these are the people whose everyday lives are lived in conflict with the police and the bill collectors and the motherfuckers, at least when they're not crashing cars or fighting.

E: Yeah, and the people here don't realize it, don't think about it, and that's the bad thing about it. I'm not saying they should be totally "conscious" and every time they do something, do it for a cause, but... a lot of people here do really cool shit, and they don't do it because they think they're doing the right thing, they just do it naturally...

IF: They don't have an analysis...

_E:_ Like my uncles — the police will always sit around at Hardees, they'll moonlight at Hardees as security guards while they're being paid by the town to be policemen. So my uncles, in return, will drive down to Hardees in their hot rods, and jump out, fucking shoot them the bird and spin out, and make the cops chase them around town, and get them fired from Hardees! But they didn't do that because "town funds were

being misappropriated, " they did it because they could get away with it, and really piss the cops off. They're forty, and they still do shit like that...

_IF:_ It's my thinking that the middle class radical type kids, you know, the political college kids, could stand to learn a lot from people in the kind of community you're talking about here... you know, try to incorporate these different groups into something together...

_E:_ Yeah, totally, because once those kids realize

getting in trouble, when you get caught, isn't all that much of a big deal, they'll be able to do shit that they just can't right now. Especially if you have rich parents you can get away with a lot of shit, and you can make a really ugly, big mark on things, you know, if you've got good backing! I did a lot of highly illegal stuff, you know, and I've never even spent a whole night in jail. I mean, I've spent most of the night in jail a couple times, but it was minor stuff... most of the stuff I've done I never even got caught for, and we did some pretty rank shit.

_IF:_ It just seems like hardcore kids, for example, might have a lot to gain from these people they call "rednecks" or whatever, just as much as from other dispossessed groups...

_E:_ Well, these people, some of them might have some pretty crappy views on some stuff, you know, the obvious... but places like small towns aren't as bad as people think. Especially the people who come from farmers' families, they realize that they're being screwed by capitalism, especially now, with the farm subsidies and all that bullshit, being told how much they can grow... it's not just tobacco, it's everything, now. To grow pickles now you have to get a contract with the largest pickle producer, they have to give you permission just to grow cucumbers and sell them, you have to get permission from the Mt. Olive pickle company...

IF: The one that's involved in all that labor exploitation!

E: Yeah, that's the one.

_IF:_ I just spent last week in the back country of West Virginia with my friend, visiting his parents. They had an independent dairy farm, but they got run out of business by the big corpora-

tions, so now they just live there and hang out with the cows, which are sort of getting wild again. I talked with his father for hours about this stuff and he was totally interested in the same things I am, community organizing, trying to fight the companies that want to move in and build freeways and fast food restaurant chains in their country, getting control back over what's going on in our lives. And he's more than twice my age...

E: Yeah, a lot of those people really know what's going on, at least as much as, like, college kids who are messing with these ideas while they're getting an education so they can go get a job working for the motherfuckers they're against!

_IF:_ Speaking of all this stuff, the girl from the house across from us where they don't have a phone is here to borrow this one, so I've gotta let you go.

BTata!

REPORT: "The Little House, " Biloxi, Mississippi

from a letter to Andrea, January 2, 1997

We're at a legendary trailer punk/trailer park in Biloxi, Mississippi... coincidentally, I just read about this place in Cometbus two days ago. We drove for what seemed hours on a bridge over the Gulf of Mexico, fog before and behind, Neurosis playing like we were traveling into the twilight zone. And we were: traveling to the punk house at the end of the world.

When we'd pulled off the highway and were wandering through the dirt road misty trailer parks in the woods, looking for the right trailer, where the show was to be, I turned and said to D — : "We've entered the David Lynch movie." When we finally arrived it was as if we'd reached the Kurtz compound.

History... there was this kid, the oldest of five children, who lived in this trailer park iso

[Image not archived]

lated in the middle of the woods of Mississippi. Somehow, he got into punk rock... his parents had two trailers, and — even more surprisingly — he managed to get bands to start coming and playing in the second one. Eventually that trailer became so beat (in the double-meaning sense, like in _On the Road_), so covered in graffiti, that it became useless for anything but shows: a crazy burnt out punkhouse trailer shell, next to the family's trailer. The funny thing is that this was the only place doing punk shows in this part of the U.S., so every band touring the nation had to play here in order to have a stop between Florida and Texas. Lost in the darkest, weirdest recesses of the deep South, it became a legend. The mother told me sometimes they had shows every other night, or every night.

One day, the punk rock son moved away. The other four siblings were girls, and the oldest of them took over booking the shows. She's seventeen now. [The mother told me that when she leaves, the youngest daughter — who is seven years old right now — has promised, very seriously, to take her place.] The trailer is a hilarious wreck. We played with a bunch of other bands, some of them pop punk bands we never would have crossed paths with otherwise. The little community this place has spawned consists mostly of post office kids (high school punks who hang out on downtown), but they have a really touching, innocent idealism under that confused adolescent rebel swagger. In addition to feeding us, the kids who came to the show donated one used marker, one stick of Trident gum, three Hershey's kisses, and ten dollars for all the bands to split up.

That was fine, for once, nobody minded at all. After we played, everyone ate a red beans and rice dish that the parents had cooked for us all. They were the nicest, most down to earth, friendly old people I've ever met, and they made enough beans and rice for an army, as happy as could be just to share.

Soon, I realized it: I am in heaven. This isolated locale, the one place all the shit in the world has not yet reached. Dozens of cats (with huge, intact claws and genitalia, very wild and thus dignified and friendly, patient with the little kids, loving to any

stranger) run around everywhere, just being healthy cats, catching their own food, going in and out of the family's trailer at will. The children don't "know their place" as children, they interact with everyone just the same — in fact, that's the magic of it here, three different generations coexisting and interacting so perfectly and happily, in ways I never thought could be possible, coming as I do from the bourgeois American nightmare (the self-destroying thermo-nuclear family) where the different generations can only be a cramp and a menace to each other as each strives for dominance. Here, instantly, everyone respects everyone else, all kinds of little kids and cats and old people and punk rockers, metal kids, hardcore kids, high school kids, old peace punks who came with the other bands, everyone instantly trusted each other with everything, shared anything! A veritable oasis of *humanity, * in the grand sense of the term. As if those old "tribal" communities where everyone in every generation was close.and supportive and pursued life* togetherwere *not just a myth, but could even become real again! A place where the animals are wild animals and the people are wild, too, let each other be free, healthy, happy animals, reproducing and doing what comes naturally and not worrying about the consequences because their community is unconditionally there for them, a community all the more rich and magical because it changes every day as bands come and go but never loses its tight-knit humanity (now* that's *what punk should be) — the people live, love, get sick, get sick, die, do good and ill, are free, are human beings, are free to* be *human animals. Old people and young people, related, even, some of them, together, getting dirty, getting tooth decay, sure, yes, hell yes, but treating each other as equals, hordes of interrelated cats rolling everywhere chasing and fighting and playing, heaven manifested on earth.*

Other places we've had to steal food, or starve. Here, at midnight, the father has a french toast-eating contest, for fun, every night, for all the bands and travelers who come through! The record is 27 pieces, there's a photo of the guy from Screw 32 on the wall, he made it to 20. We all started out and made it to 4 or 6 or 8 (7 or 8, me), the Ascension roadie ate 14 and threw up, D — wanted to break the record and get his photo on the wall ("so next time we play here a million kids will come see us!") and ate 22 pieces (more than one loaf of bread alone) before giving up (he's still recovering now, it's 3 am). I'd had no idea what this show would be like (D — arranged it by word of mouth, they don't have a phone here!), it's been the best and most memorable and life-affecting of the tour, when I thought it might just be disastrous. Christ, I almost want to move to this joyful outpost of community, out here beyond the pale of America, of Western civilization, lost in the Mississippi woods, the answer to my fondest dreams and most desperate prayers. I've walked into G.G. Marquez's world from _One Hundred Years of Solitude_.

P.S. Punk rock values are so infused into this place that when a little girl opened a door for a cat and it suddenly decided it didn't want to go out after all, she accused it of being a "rockstar"! The cats here, if they like you, bite you really hard — as would women raised here, I'm sure. You know, the kids here were playing with *Lincoln logs,*

** for god's sake, building little houses, drawing rivers on paper, being creative, for fun!* Ignoring *the*

nintendo! How often do you see that? Of course the only people who used it were bands that had come in here from the outside world, bringing their poison with them...

I'm including the above fragment because it was one the first times I'd ever really been in that kind of environment. It's a little incoherent and gushy in places, but it reflects the excitement of discovery I was feeling. And it really is exciting to think that there is a place anywhere in the United States where the generations aren't at each other's throats. Older and younger people have a lot to offer each other, but they have to realize this and leave hierarchical relations behind before they can get anything out of their interactions. Parents who think of their chib dren as being "under their authority, " who think of their interests and ideas as being less "mature, " less valuable than their own, will never be able to benefit from the youth and freshness that their kids could bring them. For these parents to decide that their son's interest in punk rock was something they should support too, by freely feeding and housing up to twenty people a few nights a week (and these are not rich people we're talking about here, by any means), is truly revolutionary. And in return, rather than just being boring and old, seeing their old friends on the weekends or whatever, they get to be part of a young and vibrant community, to support and participate in adventures... I remember when I mentioned the Cometbus article, the mother told me she remembered everything from the night it described. These are people not afraid to do and be more than they are supposed to as "adults" in American society. That is how a community must work, to work at all: everyone who participates must be willing to let the others contribute to the content of their lives, at least as much as they expect to have a say in the lives of others. When parents expect their children to abide by the rules they set and live in the environ

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ments they create, without being able to have any say back in how they live or how their parents live, they are creating an environment of coercion that inevitably results in quarrels, hatred, the abuse of all kinds we're all familiar with. That night in Biloxi I saw a little glimpse of how different things could be, that I bear with me through this fucked up world like a fragile egg, a seed, looking for fertile soil...

REPORT: SEVILLE

Sevilla, Spain Don't let Seville fool you. There have got to be more alternatives to silly dance music in discotecas than just the guy we once saw sitting on calle Tetuan, beating on a cardboard box and a bottle (which eventually broke) with sticks, and screaming in grindcore at the passersby. There is, for example, ITACA, a club where they play much better dance music (and gay porn movies) all night. Still, if you want to hear Ricky Martin sing "Maria" one more time, in Seville it is almost certainly possible.

But the best thing you could do with your time is probably to go sit by the river (preferably in the shade 11 months out of the year) and watch the water slide by. If you aren't lucky enough to know ESTHER, the most amazing person in Seville, you

might not get to discuss feminism, fairy tales, and concepts of space and time as you brush your hair out of your face (it can be windy by the river), but there will still be those awesome, if overpriced, lemon GRANIZADAS to keep you company. Looking up at the moon as you cross over a bridge can also make one feel very sophisticated and Euro, especially if one is nei-

ther of those things, and therefore believes that that's what Euro sophisticates do on their way back from dim cafes full of other enviable characters. Starting on a long trip early in the morning and buying still-warm bread from a BAKERY can have the same effect, although it costs up to 40 cents more.

Another romantic spot is the PARQUE de Maria Luisa, through which one might wander for hours, breathing in the sweet air and feeding the ducks tomatoes. It's also a good place to be taught how to dance sevillanas, although not, as I myself am evidence, a particularly good place to learn them.

ALEJANDRO will tell you hilarious jokes and play you Pixies songs on his guitar. Used to be you could sometimes find him with Raul at the CARBONERIA. We're all getting older, though, so who knows?

I believe it is on Wednesdays that you can get into most of the cinemas in town two for the price of one, but you have to put up with the dubbing. John Travolta in Spanish is unquantifiably more intolerable than the already stultifying original. But one movie theater in town does show *good* foreign films, subtitled.

The place to go for cheap food is DIA, a discount grocery store where the service is poor, the aesthetics stark, the price right, and if you want one of *their bags, * you'll have to pay for it. Spanish BANANAS, by the way, besides not being tainted by so much la United Fruit Co.-style evil (they come from the Canaries, for the most part), are unbelievably delicious. You will never look at one of those hard, mealy, bland (and super-corporate, too!) bananas in the same way again. My favorite TAPA is *espinacas, * spinach with chick peas and cumin (and, if you get the nasty cheap kind

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at ER MAS BARATO, way too much salt).

For cheap books, you can't beat BETA, but there are a bunch of great bookstores in Seville.

Other fun events are TAXI STRIKES, in which taxis fill up the main street in town and park there, honking and passing out fliers, and DOCTOR DEMONSTRATIONS, in which frustrated medics throw eggs and tomatoes at the building housing some health organization. Also keep your eyes open for free, city-sponsored cultural events, which might include a bizarre performance of *Elektra* involving several bathtubs, or Antonio Canales dancing in the ruins of a monastery on the outskirts of town.

Speaking of religion, the CATHEDRAL is amazing, Semana Santa (HOLY WEEK) would be spooky if there weren't so many people, and everyone is Catholic, but no one goes to church. The more enthusiastically followed religion is SOCCER, and the rivalry between Seville's two teams (Sevilla and Betis) is intense.

Tuna-spotting is a treasured activity, and when they're around, those university students in medieval garb (tights and all) playing lutes are hard to miss. ONCE members are much more ubiquitous, and almost as easy to spot. Americans are absolutely *everywhere.* Avoid them at all cost.

And if it's August, ignore all of the above. Just sit inside with a couple pitchers of sangria (you can substitute grape juice for wine) and a fan, and watch bullfights on TV or something.

REPORT: short-lived anarchist state at Fiume, eighty years ago

*taken from Hakim Bey's book _ Temporary Autonomous Zone_*

Gabriel D'Annunzio, Decadent poet, artist, musician, aesthete, womanizer, pioneer daredevil aeronautist, black magician, genius and cad, emerged from World War I as a hero with a small army at his beck and command: the "Arditi." At a loss for adventure, he decided to capture the city of Fiume from Yugoslavia and give it to Italy. After a necromantic ceremony with his mistress in a cemetery in Venice, he set out to conquer Fiume, and succeeded without any trouble to speak of. But Italy turned down his generous offer; the Prime Minister called him a fool.

In a huff, D'Annunzio decided to declare independence and see how long he could get away with it. He and one of his anarchist friends wrote the constitution, which declared music to be the central principle of the State. The Navy (made up of deserters and Milanese maritime unionists) named themselves the Uscochi, after the long-vanished pirates who once lived on local offshore islands and preyed on Venetian and Ottoman shipping.The modern Uscochi succeeded in some wild coups — several rich Italian merchant vessels suddenly gave the Republic a future: money in the coffers! Artists, bohemians, adventurers, anarchists (D'Annunzio corresponded with Malatesta), fugitives and Stateless refugees, homosexuals, military dandies (the uniform was black with pirate skull and crossbones — later stolen by the S.S.) and crank reformers of every stripe (including Buddhists, Theosophists, and Vedantists) began to show up at Fiume in droves.The party never stopped. Every morning D'Annunzio read poetry and manifestos from his balcony; every evening a concert, then fireworks. This made up the entire activity of the government. Eigh

teen months later, when the wine and money had run out and the Italian fleet finally showed up and lobbed a few shells at the Municipal Palace, no one had the energy to resist. *[For a similarly interesting precedent for anarchist communities, read the introduction to William Burroughs' _ Cities of the Red Night_ .]* •

REPORT: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Millions for Mumia

by Jon Ridenour

Saturday April 24, 5:30 AM — Anticipation of the coming days events sizzled in my mind, just barely peeking its nose up over the monotonous hum left in my brain after the hours of driving it had taken to get us here. Here — to Philadelphia, thought by some to be the armpit of America, a stale morsel of industrial revolution, having long since lost its luster. But this morning I knew better. A sunrise can transform even the

most dismal scene into something that is beautiful. It was the dawn of a new day, and this one was beautiful beyond words.

Weeks of forwarded e-mails describing threats of police violence and preparatory discussions about mace and going limp provoked the images of tear gas and broken bottles that now lazily meandered through my unsettled mind; I wondered if I was as comfortable with the idea as I thought. Despite the presence of that ever so definitive Tve been up for days' feeling in my guts, I was excited.

After a brief morning siesta and a short reunion with the old friends who provided us with housing for the weekend, we began our walk to meet up with one of the Millions for Mumia feeder marches, with whom we would then troop, banners high and voices loud, into downtown Philadelphia. We were a motley crew of crusty-eyed, nappy-headed punks; but things would soon brighten up. The sun was out, the sky was clear, and as more and more people gradually accumulated, a spirit of protest filled the air.

At this point, I was able to reassure myself about being glad I decided to come. Regardless of how effective our political protest would be, regardless of whether or not The Man would end up crushed by our marching feet and decimated by the unrelenting positivity of our attitudes, there is something powerful about a protest. To raise a fist in the air and experience the thrill of mass defiance, to shout out loud in a thousand voices, extending the proverbial "Fuck You" to all the abusive cops and authority addicts in the world, is an experience no conscious individual should miss. This is the feeling I came to Philadelphia for and this is what I would take with me when I left.

Some seven hours later, my friends and I stumbled back to our temporary home away from home, stomachs grumbling and pockets full of leftist propaganda; our eyes twice as crusty, hair twice as nappy, and minds twice as hazy as they had been earlier that morning. There had been no riot, no police interference, no throwing rocks, and no broken bottles, just lots of sunshine, lots of political rhetoric, and lots and lots of walking. I couldn't shake the feeling that our world was unchanged, just as racist and boring as it was when we left it that morning.

For me, Millions for Mumia was a learning experience. The organizers deserve to be commended for their hard work; but it is necessary to scrutinize their efforts and see what we can learn and take with us when we go to our next protest. For those of us who are unable or unwilling to buy ourselves access to the political system, the protest is our only weapon. Used incorrectly, the only fitting word is lame; walk right up to the edge of mediocrity and jump off. But when used effectively, the protest is a most powerful tool, capable of harnessing the power of the people, power to change our lives, power to destroy our enemies, and that's power to change the whole fucking world.

I look at the historical development of the political protest and I see a powerful tool that has changed and evolved over time. The protest has been violent and peaceful, joyous and morose; it has been effective and powerful, superfluous and a desolate waste of time. The Millions for Mumia protest demonstrated to me more than ever, that it

is now time for a new era of protest. Just as the artists and the musicians, so must the protestors continually strive to break old habits and reinvent their creativity with every banner, every chant, and every march. The protest cannot cease to evolve; lest it and all the political and social change that it makes possible die a tragic death at the hands of boredom and mediocrity.

Before I begin my systematic criticism of the Millions for Mumia effort, I must highlight two positive aspects. First of all, I have never been to a protest so big. The march drew thousands of participants from all over everywhere. I met people from far away places like France and from bizarre places like Fargo, North Dakota. The sheer numbers alone were enough to have a political impact. Tens of thousands of marching protestors did not go unnoticed by the regional media. Proof of this was on my kitchen table when I arrived back home in North Carolina. Even our city paper, known for its oversight of important social issues, which I personally deem less informative than shit on a stick, ran an article on the fourth page. Large numbers and wide media coverage were the strong points of this protest.

Secondly, even if a protest totally sucks ass from a political point of view, there is always something to be gained on a personal level. I have never been to a protest that was an absolutely meaningless experience. In this world where I learned to be a subservient fucking sheep from the very beginning, where directions and instructions are shouted from every corner and enforced with threats of violence or social alienation, I snatch every opportunity I can to symbolically wipe my ass with their petty regulations, to take the face of their authority figure and pencil in a funny moustache. What did I gain from the march? Illumination.

In order to gain a sufficient perspective on the political effectiveness of the Millions for Mumia march, it is necessary to first outline the dynamics of political power in reference to the protest. The bottom line is this (read this part slowly): protests are successful to the extent that the reference publics of the protest target can be brought into the conflict on the side of the protestors. That being said, I will try to build my argument from the ground up.

The organizers of a protest must know their target. The protest target in the person or group who has the power to change the situation being protested. The reference public of the protest target must also be identified. The term "reference public" refers to the person or group to whom matters are referred by the protest target for decision, consideration, or settlement. The reference public has the power to influence the protest target. When the reference public is brought into the conflict on the side of the protestors, that person or group will use its influence to force the target into complying with the protest demands. The Oxtent to which the reference public sides with the protestors determines how fast or slow (or not at all) the protest demands are satisfied. The point of the protest action must be to capture the attention of the reference public. There

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may be many targets and many reference publics, but this doesn't change the equation any. Individual targets must be selected and their reference publics identified; actions must be focused and decisive based on those selections. Based on this theory, Millions for Mumia fell short in several ways. Because I was unable to speak with the organizers themselves, I am in no position to report on their intentions but I will recount here the things I observed.

Assuming the protest targets of the march were elected officials of Philadelphia, it seems that the reference public at whom the march should have been directed was the citizens of Philadelphia. For it is the citizens of Philadelphia who make up the infrastructure that holds Mumia; they run the buses, deliver the mail, and brew the coffee, and thus, there is political power in them regardless of and in addition to their ability to influence their elected officials, which they can do by un-electing the sorry bastards. At Millions for Mumia, participation by the general public was conspicuously absent.

This being the case, the march should have been held on a Friday, not a Saturday. There was no one downtown who did not come for the rally. As my friends and I were leaving, we walked into a shopping district two blocks away that was full of people. There was no sign of a huge rally taking place with 20, 000 people right around the corner. For these people, it was business as usual; they were completely unaware of the radical revolution that was self-imploding down at City Hall. On a Friday, 20, 000 people marching through downtown would have caused a major disruption.

> It is true that not as many people could have shown up for a rally on Friday. However, I think a protest that disrupts normal city activity with 10, 000 or 5, 000 people is more effective than a protest with 20, 000 people who are harmlessly hanging out downtown preaching to their own converted. If there is a trade off between maximum numbers and maximum disruption, the choice must be the latter.
>
> A second point along these same lines is that more time should've been given to the feeder marches and less time spent at the rally. A good feeder march is long and gradual, twisting it's way through the city, taking a wayward route so as to be seen by as many people as possible. The feeder marches at Millions for Mumia walked straight to the rally cite at City Hall, where we then remained stationary for the next five hours.
>
> A third criticism has to do with the rally itself. I arrived at City Hall budding with fresh excitement, ready to smash the state and everything. After the first two speakers, the energy level of the rally began to diminish. When it was finally time for the big march through downtown to begin, my friends and I had to wipe the drool off our cheeks and peel ourselves up off the pavement where we had been sleeping like so many blobs of neglected pancake batter, left in the sun to congeal on the kitchen floor.

Whereas a rally is supposed to pump the crowd up and get everyone all ready to rumble, I spent a lot time feeling bored. Whereas a rally is supposed to encourage and empower the protester, I felt debilitated and unfocused. I attribute this effect to several factors. For starters, there were too many speakers. No matter how talented an orator may be, there is only so much that can be done to excite a crowd which has been numbed by hours of sloganeering and political rhetoric. Another thing that con-Krgp©^ tributed to my feelings of debilitation was the lack of audience participation. The Millions for Mumia rally was a spectator event and a successful rally is anything but. There was simply nothing to do at the rally but listen to the drone of political bravado. Don't get me wrong, there's nothing like a good fiery speech to get me pumped about freeing Mumia; but one or two will do.

> Millions for Mumia lacked the creativity and spontaneity that makes a protest powerful. A strong rally will not get stuck in a single medium of communication. The organizers of this march utilized only one way of carrying their message, constant speeches. Perhaps a better rally might have included a huge puppet show, some skits, a show of protest art, live music, a dramatization or reenactment, maybe even a comedy act or a juggler, all loosely and creatively centered around the message of the protest.
>
> Perhaps the least appealing aspect of the day was the activist shopping mall set up near the stage. All the various "revolutionary" groups had claimed their spots to set up merchandising operations and traveling salesmen had been dispatched into the crowd to distribute buttons, newspapers, and squash pie (of all things). Every fifteen minutes someone approached me and tried to sell me something. The speakers on stage talked of "fire in the sky" and "turning this mutha fucka out, " but down below there were only these wiry politicians competing with each other to see who could win the most converts, trying to sell me the new issue of their "revolutionary" paper and convince me to hop

on board their party program. By the end of the day, there was trash everywhere, leftist propaganda loosely lofting by in the wind.

Was it a worthwhile and fun experience? -Yes, absolutely. Am I glad that I went? — Sure, yea. Was it a successful political protest that will force the state of Pennsylvania to release Mumia Abu Jamal? — No, I doubt it. A few key elements were missing that were detrimental to the success of the protest. Failure to involve the general public, lack of civil disobedience and disruption of normal city activities, inability to make the "revolution" exciting, the constant presence of traveling salesmen, and the absence of essential creativity and spontaneity kept the march from achieving its full potential.

I walk away from Philadelphia impressed with the numbers, but disappointed with the method. American society is entering a new era and the protest must not be left behind. And I do not believe it will be. I know there are folks out there now, my

friends and I among them, pasting together silly new contraptions and stringing up the puppets of resistance, preparing to do battle with the status quo. To the organizers of tomorrow's protests I say this: be inspired by the Millions for Mumia march, it was incredible! Learn from their mistakes and work hard to invent new and exciting ways to bring the protest to its full potential! Strive for the utmost! I will be trying myself and I know there will be others. Together, we will make this world a beautiful place.

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Artistic Innovation, Punk Music, and Revolution

I've said this before, but I can't emphasize it enough — especially today when a war is being waged in hardcore between the purists who think it is a musical style which must remain "intact" and the kids who want to experiment with it and push the limits of the genre. The reason each of us is here in the hardcore scene in the first place is because we came across bands (whether Minor Threat, Youth of Today, or Acme) who seized us by our hearts and changed our lives, our views of the cosmos itself. These bands had such an effect on us because they were opening new worlds before us, showing us possibilities and ideas that we had never imagined. They did this by being artistically revolutionary — that is, they dared to do things that nobody had ever done before, things that literally made the world bigger and filled with more possibility. And they weren't just breaking with the mainstream and its values; they were breaking with all the ideas and art and styles that had come before. Otherwise what they were doing wouldn't have been new, and it wouldn't have grabbed us in a way that nothing else did or could.

It is no coincidence that it is the most conservative elements of the punk scene (whether that conservatism be disguised as athletic straight edge machismo or drunk punk fashion [semi-] consciousness) that want to keep us treading water in hardcore today, playing the same music over and over. They're not ready to be challenged anymore. They want to be safe, to keep everything categorized, predictable, harmless, so they won't be in danger of having to question their fragile identities or shift their footing. Is everything really so great as it is that we should just stop right here and try to freeze the music and ideas of today (or of yesterday, or of twelve years ago, for that matter) for all time? And how can you separate musical style from everything else? Aren't new musical ideas at least as important as new ideas of other kinds, when it comes to changing ourselves and the world?

It is revolutionary to make brand new art and music. It is revolutionary to make people feel new things, things they can't categorize, things they aren't ready for. In fact, without that revolution, no other kind has ever taken place — for people must have a reason to want change, must have feelings and ideas within them that refer to a different world than the one they are living in. Punk music started as a music revolution; and if it is to maintain any of its vitality, any of its meaning at all, it has

to continue to be one. Punk music *must* be revolutionary, in every sense, for it to be punk music in the first place. Otherwise, what the fuck are we doing here? We came here looking for change, for danger, for new worlds. Our music has to stay alive to be able to guide us there.

That's why the next Youth of Today won't sound anything like Youth of Today. They'll sound like Refused, or something ten times crazier and unexpected. If we want to be true to the spirit of those old bands who mean so much to us, we have to do it by seeking new music that is as dangerous and profound as theirs was once upon a time. It is the responsibility of every punk and hardcore musician to do this, to keep the genre alive by taking it to new places. Without your efforts, hardcore dies, it's that simple. I'm never reminded of this more than when I'm doing reviews. In the middle of a sea of inevitably generic music, nothing is more precious than a record that reveals all the hidden power of the ideas that were already there by adding new ones; nothing matters more than these records, for without them, hardcore would fall dead in its tracks (and be carted off to a museum, like so many other genres of music that stopped growing and evolving). Please, if you care about us, about punk music, about life itself, make those records for us!

Editor D's top ten sources of inspiration from within the hardcore community.

1. Refused live in Belgium, North Carolina, and Virginia
2. Roby Newton's puppet shows (uh, does this count as hardcore?)
3. Refused CD
4. Self Conviction CD liner notes/A.T.R. #2
5. Morser vs. the Swarm split 7"/By All Means LP
6. Deadzibel! 7"/Rubbish Heap side of split 7"
7. Milemarker and Zegota live in a number of places...
8. By All Means live in Italy/Headway live in France/Ire live in North Carolina
9. Burn Collector #8/Lyrics to Simba #12 (recording project by David from Final Exit)
10. Eyelid's and Milhouse's songs on the "Living Silent" CD compilation

Editor D's top ten sources of inspiration from outside the hardcore community:

1. books by Jeanette Winterson
2. _Illume_ by Andrea Rosenberg

3. Food Not Bombs/Critical Mass/Reclaim the Streets in Chapel Hill
4. "Revolution for the Hell of It" by Abbie Hoffman/"Do It" by Jerry Rubin
5. Diamanda Galas "Malediction and Prayer"
6. Dover live in Spain*
7. Godspeed, You Black Emperor! live in North Carolina**
8. plays by Peter Shaffer
9. books in the "For Beginners" series/"Spectacular Times" pamphlet series by Larry Law
10. "Life is Beautiful" (Italian movie)/"Pleasantville" (Hollywood movie, believe it or not!)/"Shakespeare in Love" (another movie)

*Dover is Gloria's and my favorite Spanish rock band. Their music has so much passion, desperation, and irrepressible energy in it, it can pass so perfectly from innocent optimism to tragedy, we're both crazy about it. When we were traveling through Spain, we kept coming across scraps of Dover posters that had been posted over on walls, and we were hoping to somehow get to see them before we left, since they're entirely unknown everywhere else. We had no luck until we were about to leave. Then, coming around a corner in Seville, we suddenly came face to face with a huge poster announcing a Dover show two days later in a neighboring town! We didn't have any money left, but the promotions company had been unfortunate enough to leave their phone number on the poster. I used my last bills to buy a phone card, and called them up, informing them that I was a famous American rock critic on vacation with my girlfriend in Spain and that I'd be happy to go check out their band if they wanted. They bought it and put us on the guest list, and we ended up getting to hang out with Dover before the show and then again afterwards in their dressing room, sharing their food while hundreds of Spanish people waited outside for autographs. It was great to meet the band and speak with them, they were actually really cool people, and it was hilarious to be there as "American rock critics"! The show itself was excellent, too. The heart of Dover is the singer and the guitarist, who are sisters. The younger one, who sings, has the most captivating, energetic stage presence: when she's not up at the vocal microphone pouring her heart out in that tried and true rock'n'roll way, she's running around the stage, frantic, maniacal, a big smile on her face; she's genuinely fun to watch. And their songs are great, truly anthemic. They played for a full hour and a bit, while a thousand plus Spanish people cheered and rocked back and forth in front of the sizable stage. We got to watch them from the stage, next to the soundboard, American paparazzi that we are! They played some new songs, probably their best material, off an album that is supposed to be coming

out just about now. If you know anyone in Spain, or you are visiting there and you listen to anything besides Acme, I would really recommend you try to find their new record. Promise the Spanish rock industry isn't paying me off to say this!

**Godspeed, You Black Emperor! is a symphony of exactly the kind Norm wrote about in his letter in the letters section of this issue: it's a bunch of people who make music together, people with violins and cellos, four guys with guitars with different effects on them, two drummers, musicians playing various other instruments. Seeing them play was an incredible experience; they were able to do so much that a traditional rock band simply cannot. Their songs come off as vast improvisations, beginning softly with one or two players and building to crescendos of fearsome power as one by one all the other musicians join in playing different parts. At times it was like seeing Neurosis with a full orchestra. I was amazed and I'm desperate to see others do similar things. G, YBE! also has a CD out with some similarly exciting stuff on it, you can probably find it in various indepen- dent/indie rock stores, but you need to see them live most of all.

(Editor D's bottom ten for this issue...)

1. breaking off my relationship with the love of my life
2. watching the marriage of one of my best friends come to a ruinous end
3. watching the Catharsis van burn to a heap of ashes and bleached metal (with some of our stuff inside, including all my bedding)
4. giving up on my friendship with former blood brother Paul F. Maul
5. not having enough money to keep up with our projects, let alone eat
6. being deathly ill with no heat or food or transportation
7. the Czech translator who made a joke out of everything I said (fuck him!)
8. the Black Bag incident
9. Ernie breaking one of his legs, then getting gangrene in the other
10. getting caught shoplifting in Sweden/getting caught trainscamming in Spain

Gloria's 10 Steps to a Better, More Beautiful You

1. *Weetzie Bat* by Francesca Lia Block
2. *Shades of Fear (mov\Q)*
3. Cranes, *Wings of Joy* CD

4. Dover live
5. *Where the Girls Are: Growing Up Female with the Mass Media* by Susan J. Douglas
6. eating cherries fresh off the tree on a hot summer day in Italy
7. art by Erika Nawabi
8. Godspeed, You Black Emperor! live
9. *The Hour of the Star (A Hora da Estrela)* by Clarice Lispector
10. *Shakespeare in Love, * in spite of the hype

Last-minute review-layer outer Andy's top 11 for expression over originality (I could give a rat's ass about your new way out sound, I liked Minor Threat (and YOT and Acme) because I could identify with the feelings conveyed by exemplary performances that took advantage of the qualities of their particular aesthetic, not particularily because it was 'new' to me. Style and originality are only a means to and end. If your band sucks, it sucks, even if you are sucking as no one has ever sucked before, [pc note: notice I used 'suck' (slang for felatio) in an ambiguous nature, neither implying it to be good or bad! I win! Eh, fuck you anyway.] However, if you're going to 'rock it old style', you'd damn well better rock or your artistic shortcomings will condemn you to the 'same old shit' pile.), in no particular order:

1. Detestation — everything
2. Life's Blood 7" (yes, the old one. it took me a while to bother tracking it down because their songs on "Where The Wild Things Are" weren't exactly gems.)
3. Gauze — 7" on Prank and CD on XXX.
4. Indecision live and "To Live and Die..." CD
5. Speak 714 — 'real audio' sample from new 7"
6. Septic Death — "Crossed Out Twice" CD
7. "All Systems Go" comp
8. Gordon Solie Mother Fuckers — live and 7"
9. Swarm — live (the 7" is great, but a touch too muddy)

10. Detroit and Toledo hardcore bands live and recorded. Given the personal relationships that exist between us, these expressions, where ever they may fall in the spectrum of originality, mean a lot to me and probably everyone else involved in this real community. 11. My forthcoming debate with Editor D regarding originality vs. expression and my usage of the the reviews section for critiques of the editorial regime's proclamations when he has no opportunity to respond or even proofread this. But that's what he gets for sending me this at the last minute.*

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*A11 in good fun, right? After all most 'hardcore' kids couldn't get off their fucking internet message boards long enough to put together a project like this at all. And I probably would have waited until the last possible minute as well, but such is life.

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If you are a friend of ours, and you gave us your record or 'zine to review while we were in Europe last summer, consult the introduction to the letters section a few pages back. There, you will read the tragic tale of the Black Bag incident, and come to understand why you don't see your stuff reviewed here. Sorry... what a fucking disaster. Again.

All major label releases (or releases from capitalist, major label wanna-be "hardcore" labels such as Revelation) received for review will be sent to third world hardcore labels and distributors as donations. Please keep sending them!

And now here's the bad news: there were a couple other things that didn't get reviewed this time around. We get so much stuff in here that at the end, when there were about fifty pages to be finished in week, there just wasn't time to do a real review for every single record. We only left a few out, and we tried to pick the ones that seemed to have gotten to us by accident. So if you're reading this, and we missed your record, there's already been a mistake made. If that's case, I'm really sorry, that sucks... next time we'll be sure to take care of you. It's just not possible to give every record and 'zine that comes in a 1000 word review when there are more than two hundred of each coming in.

Secret reviewer codes: b — your humble editor @ — literary genius and life-support system gloria cubana jug — greg "comes as fuck" bennick n — noodle boy — soapbox prophet, eater of worms, diseased flagellant.

.fuckingcpm "" 7": It turns out I put on the b-side first by accident, but anyway... it starts with an infectious heartbeat rhythm, a fast beat like the heart of a man who has been running from someone and now crouches panting in some precarious hiding place. The guitars dance over the heartbeat, flickering on and off like a candle in a steady draft. It's a relief after all the straight metal/hardcore bangbangbang I've been listening to in the course of these reviews. Inevitably the bangbangbang comes in again, with screaming and punk chord progressions, but it's punctuated throughout the rest of the record by more interesting parts like that intro where the age-old guitar/bass/drums combination somehow make as-yet heard sounds. Though they do play

some pretty traditional punk rock parts (yeah, screaming, fast drums, simple chord progressions), .fuckingcom has their own thing going on here; I can't easily compare them to anyone else, thanks largely to their atmospheric parts in which they manage to get their organic instruments to create synthetic-sounding environments. They seem to have a different aesthetic production-wise than most of today's other hardcore/punk bands, too: it sounds like they're going for more treble in their sound, and I think they must be fucking with the traditional punk recording mix to get some of those strange parts. The lyrics deal with pretty well-covered anarchist social issues, but it comes off like the lyricist is telling stories from her (I think it's 'her') own experience, rather than parroting abstractions, -b *Prank, address below*

A Sometimes Promise "" CD: When we were sitting in the kitchen listening to this CD discography of sorts ('we' of course, meaning myself and my secret agent 'Cynthia X') she commented, when I started bouncing up and down to the beat, that "That's exactly the type of dance I envision being done to this music...sort of like the Peanuts' dance." This is a poppy romantic emo record with distorted and acoustic electric guitars/parts alternating. Good for them for using a gong and tympani! That rules, though I would have hated to be the fucking guy who had to carry the tympani into shows

every night on tour... I like the music for the most part, and the lyrics, while not out to inspire revolution by any means, are poetic and filled with love and lost love. This falls into the realm of emotionally charged bands like State Route 522, Waxwing, etc, and is good, with varying dynamics and catchy riffs throughout except...(goddamn it, why does there always have to be an 'except'?)...except, for the vocals, which sound out of tune and a bit whiny and uninspired. Cynthia said about them that "I wish he would sing more often...I'd like that better." Cynthia is really perceptive when it comes to reviewing. After she made that last comment, she then said "There is a wok full of water balanced on the sink, so be careful" which I can only assume is a comment on a level higher than I could ever possibly reach as a reviewer, so I leave you now to interpret her words for yourselves. JUG and X

$7 from Association of Welterweights; P.O. Box 1431; Ojai CA 93024 _Aclys "Helduntergang" CD:_ Beautiful color layout, but everything's in German, so I can't tell you much about their lyrics or ideas. The music comes in with a bang, literally, a sample of bombing that segues well into some explosive modern German hardcore, blazing further progress down the road that begins with a signpost reading "Acme." They use a fair bit of chaotic melody, bursts of blastbeat with a clear ride cymbal, high shrieking, double bass sometimes and tight, complex drumming throughout. Hey, the second song cuts out the chaos at one point in favor of a clearer, cleaner melodic part; that's exactly the sort of variety they're going to need to maintain interest through fourteen more songs. Let's see if they do it. The seventh song has a great opening where they don't kick the full quality recording in until a few measures into the song. There are similar pretty melodic lines in the third song and most others, that's gonna get them through an EP, but a full length? There's plenty of energy and skilf here,

they just need a bit more catchiness and they'll be right there. That is to say, this is a great record, if you had it and you shared my tastes I imagine you'd put it on fairly frequently, but you wouldn't ever find yourself singing the songs to yourself. That's the difference between a good record and a great one, a good one is exciting to listen to but a great one infects

you, takes you over, remakes you in its own image. Anyway, I'd love to see them play, I'm sure they're incredible to watch. — b

Per Koro, Markus Haas, Fehrfeld 26, 28203 Bremen, Germany

Ahriman "" CD: Totally d.i.y. home-burned CD here. Stylistically, they're working in the territory opened up by West Coast bands like Gehenna and Unruh: gruff, feral vocals, dirty metallic music (heavier on the dirt than the metal, unlike their colleagues Fall Silent), dark and scary atmosphere (when everything works right, at least). I don't think they've gotten to the level of either of the aforementioned bands, but that's a tough order in the first place. The high points for me came in the fourth song (back-and-forth vocals that really upped the intensity level) and the sixth song (a break with a weird guitar noise that brought in the next part)... though on successive listens, I realized there was more variety and exploration going on than I'd thought at first. The vocals rely on the hiss/growl thing that I think sometimes keeps screaming vocals from sounding as human as they need to in order to work, but the singer is not unqualified for his role by any means. The last song uses an acoustic guitar that doesn't really appear elsewhere... I think at this point it's less predictable (and better for the sake of variety) *not to* use one of those, actually. But they've probably figured that out. — b *P.O. Box 70911, Reno, NV89570*

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Angels in the Architecture "One Ten" CD: OK, I don't like this. It's would-be pretty, melodic rock music with not-too-polished melodic/melodramatic singing over it, lots of semi-acoustic stuff, occasional rock guitar, not particularly interesting arrangements or songwriting or riffs, probably some "post-

[Image not archived]

hardcore" kids who liked Sunny Day Real Estate and didn't realize that it's not so easy to make that kind of music really work. I'm trying hard to have something else to say, but I'm not the man to talk about this kind of music, especially when it *doesn't* work. I will say this: after years of resistance, I was finally forced to listen to that first Sunny D.R.E. record and admit that it's powerful stuff... but that *does not* mean I have to say there's any reason for records like this one to exist. God, the lyrics are bland, everything about this just makes me suffer. — b

1%, P.O. Box 141048, Minneapolis, MN 55414

April 7": Lyrics and titles in German, so I can't tell you much about content on the spur of the moment here. It starts with a sample that I think is from Star Wars, if that's any help, but all the other samples are in German, too. April begins with the German hardcore assault of noise and distortion and screaming, then they pull back and add some Slayer-esque metal melodies, before blasting off again. The next

time they change course it is to incorporate high harmonics in between the low chords, and they manage to construct a pretty fearsome mosh part out of that arrangement. The second side begins with overwhelming double bass, screaming in the background, indecipherable chaos from the guitars, and although it gets a tiny bit clearer at the first transition for a second, after that it's almost unabated smash and crash insanity. The recording itself isn't unclear, it's the riffs and arrangements themselves that are designed to be absolutely overpowering. They use tom rhythms, double bass, lots of tempo changes, blastbeats, guitar riffs that alternate between discordant high notes and earth-shaking low chords, every weapon they can get their hands on to assault the listener. There's so much of this going on in Germany right now that it's getting hard for me to distinguish the best records from the good ones... lots of them do really great things, I just wonder which ones will still be just as important to people in five or ten years. Despite the high intensity level and musical mastery April demonstrates here, I doubt this will be among the top ten German hardcore records people remember from the late '90's, just because there are catchier bands in the genre, -b *There are three labels given on the back of this record, one of which has two addresses listed, and one of which (a label which uses the famous photograph of international terrorist "Carlos the Jackal" for*

their logo) gives none... faced with such confusion, I'm gonna give you the address of my friend Dennis, who I know is dependable, who is part of one of these labels: Scene Police, D.P.M., Auf dem Stefansberg 58, 53340 Meckenheim, Germany

Arise "" 7^{W}: Arise was an interesting phenomenon, one of the few American metal/hardcore bands (Starkweather being another, similar one) from the mid-'90's that was experimenting with the genre, trying hard to take it to new places. They managed to find their way to a new place, but nobody followed them, for some reason, so they've been largely (and undeservedly) forgotten. That new path they carved out through unexplored territory ended on a cliff ledge, I guess, and there's just a skeleton left there, now, the wind whistling these songs through its teeth. There is only one song on each side of

this record, each one a long exploration of missing links and evolutionary dead ends of twisted, manic, compulsive metal. The first song begins with a spooky acoustic part, played in a weird key that makes my skin crawl. When the distorted guitars come in, they refuse to play one riff but instead wander edgily through variations on a number of themes. The second song gets down to business faster, leaping into one contorted rhythm, and then another, the singer spitting words like foul-tasting venom. He had a unique vocal style, wrenching every syllable from his throat like a thorn pulled from a wound, hissing, growling, the high, constricted wails and moans inflicting suffering upon the listener as well as himself. The lyrics, too are strange, written with a different logic and form than any of their contemporaries'. I don't think this will happen, but I hope that looking back on the '90's, people in the next decade will remember Arise and Starkweather more clearly than bands like Overcast, -b *Infidel, P.O. Box 1160, Vineyard Haven, MA 02568*

Birthright "Out of Darkness" CD: If you could build a time machine, would you choose to go back to the time when vegan straight edge dinosaurs ruled the land, putting X's on either side of their band and song names with straight faces, considering a string of e-chunk riffs to constitute a song, writing songs with choruses like "these words run in my veins" 'explained' by texts like "these are more than just words, they are what I believe... they make me what I am." Personally, I wouldn't. But I think Birthright would: they've got all that stuff going on here, even the guitar harmonic divebombs that came into popularity with Vegan Reich and were driven into the ground by the time Green Rage made a whole 7" out of them. OK, I've got to give this to them, their music isn't quite as predictable as my description thus far would give you to believe, but they were Earth Crisis's contemporaries a few years back and they haven't wandered far aesthetically since then. There are only three little studio songs on here, the others are taken from a live recording that sounds like it must have been taped from middle of the crowd. The gap between those two recordings is filled with a recording, I believe from the famous Syracuse New Year's Eve show when the Path of Least Resistance cashed in their fifteen minutes of fame to play their only show, of a call and response chant: "What do we want?" "Animal liberation!" "When do we want it?" "Now!" I have a couple vegan animal liberationist friends

who were at that show, and they told me, in separate instances, how scared they felt by the apparent single-mindedness of the kids in attendance. I want animal liberation right now, too, you know. But I also want to move beyond a situation where any slogan can sum up what we feel and care about, where we never chant in unison... it feels so good to feel like you're part of a fearsome mob, but that's the root of any kind of fascism or majority rule. Our animal liberation must be part of a broader movement to liberate ourselves and our planet in every way, to stop thinking and living in ways that involve dominating each other. I think a part of that is moving beyond politics that can be summed up in catchphrases, and I think that an increasing understanding of this in the hardcore community is one of the reasons that the single-issue vegan straight edge band is largely a thing of the past now. — b

Good Life

Breakfall "Words So Softly Spoken": — Timing in at 14 plus minutes for four songs, this is a good mix of old and new hardcore styles. From the old, we get patterns in the guitar work and vocals which are recognizable from past hardcore bands and releases. From the new, there is a heavier guitar sound, with fuller distortion and gruffer more aggressive vocals. Mixing the two together seperates this from the norm, though I do wish the songs themselves were more aggressive and intense: I want this band to tear my head off musically and lyrically, and I know they can do it (as is evidenced by the occasional break/ catchy hook/different choice). I wanted to hear more of the creativity they've scatter throughout the record on a regular basis. Lyrically, the words are a bit vague but remain throughout in the personal vein. Personal lyrics are hard to interpret for me, and maybe an interview with the band would shed some light on what is going on here. Hey! There is an idea zine editors: get in touch with these guys and

find out what they are all about and if they have recording plans for another release. I wanted to hear and feel more of the band as people, really getting a feel for what makes them tick, but it wasn't there in these four songs. I have faith though. There's enough metal here to keep the metalhardcoreheads interested, and enough HC to keep me going. The hints are definitely there, and I want to be the one to review their next release because it'll rule if they let themselves continue to move against the grain. This is the award winner for longest label address. JUG

Strength in An Age of Weakness Records; 65 Lisles Hill Road; Glenarm; Ballymena, Co. Antrim; N. Ireland; BT44 ODT

Bridgewater "In One Act" 7^{W}; An interesting release. The record is presented as a play actually, rather than as a two sided record...meaning that the entire project is deemed a "one act and the three songs, rather than being identified as such, are instead referred to as "scenes". This motif is extremely effective, as it creates a vessel in which an idea can be presented as the sum of individual parts, rather than having a concept represented as fragmented bits and pieces. The music here is melodic and uptempo with vocals which alternate between being sung in emotional desperation and screamed in physical agony. Lyrics are somewhat vague throughout "the irony manifest itself in silhouette / to stone I seem my fault / my being", which was a bit frustrating, especially after being presented with the

> **_By AH Means "Fino a qui... tutto bene!" 12":_ This is one of the more important records to come out this year, for me. I'm thankful that there are still bands like By All Means who take their role as radical d.i.y. artistS/revolutionaries seriously, as the lyrics, politics, and explicitly d.i.y. nature of this release show. The intro starts out a little slow, with speaking (a sample?) in Italian that is unfortunately wasted bn me; but it soon shifts gears, doubling the pace, and an African percussion section comes in behind the music, playing at a thou* sand beats per minute, lifting us into the stratosphere at twice the speed of sound (any other sound, that is!). The songs themselves are not Written far outside the tradition of modern hardcore punk (battering slow parts, spooky and tense like the night as you drive to your armed liquor store robbery, fast parts like an automobile spinning, skidding out of control, blastbeats like locking brakes and car accidents), but the riffs and songs themselves are all new — and when they add the double bass behind the finale chorus at the end of a song, it is as if I have, never heard it before. Their best moments are absolutely anthemic, songs that will play in my head behind the barricades and before the magistrates. The vocalist executes his role with grim determination, his deep, roaring baritone ringing out as if over a battlefield. The production is grimy, thick**

and coarse in the best punk tradition, without anything being obscured. The gui* tars aren't tuned down past "e, " unlike so many other bands these days, and that takes a little getting used to, though it doesn't hold them back any more than the slightly discordant tuning. As for packaging — and this is one of the really awesome things about the record, the extensive writings, the ideas expressed in the insert — they use the same Situationist slogans and Raoul Vaneigem quotes that are becoming common in political hardcore circles, but they go far be* yond that. It comes across that they're writing about things that really matter, that are real parts pf their lives, that go beyond the realm of abstract politics and enter the world of personal struggle and life: not only in their texts about their struggles with the neces* sity of life-wasting work in the capitalist economy, but especially in the writing about the constrictive gender and sex roles that are forced upon us, the way our wild and unique desires are caged, , reviled, denied. When they write about trying to create new lifestyles, new ways of relating, thinking, acting in the world, I feel like they really mean it. Their explanation of why they sing (and write, prima* rily) in Italian, as a gesture of resistance to the colonialism of the English language, is similarly touching, -b

By All Means Autoproductions c/o Matteo Verri, CP 6, 41100 Modena 7$_t$ Italy .

gyMJfe^imjtoJaLSc^^

All Means' singer is huge, not tall but thick set, arid tattooed from the soles of his feet to the top of his scalp. He looks like he left the foolish, self-destructive society of the white man behind a long time ago, looks genuinely otherworldly. When they performed, he sat, barefoot, legs crossed in the lotus position like Buddha, sweat streaming over h1s marked and colored body, hunched forward to roar out the single notes of his vocals. For us, it was more like witnessing the performance of an ancient, solemn ritual than watching a hardcore vocalist sing. And the rest of the band leaped around him, jumping and spinning and stamping and swaying, the guitarists breaking strings incessantly, always pausing to repair them at lightning, well-practiced speed before proceeding. They never managed to get in tune the whole show, and it didn't matter at all. Between songs the singer spoke, deep and serious, and the freshfaced young Italian anarcho-criminal beside me translated for me as he spoke of their political goals

and ideas, his experiences in pur fucked up, prejudiced society (and scene), etc. The drummer, too, was incredible, as the drummers of all great bands must be, and at the end of the set they finished With a bold, violent improvisation. Finally, as the guitarists took down their equipment, the drummer continued beating his drums, with slower and slower frequency, until it was one random hit every twenty seconds, then thirty, forty, as we all waited, tense and teased.

conceptof the play structure. Not that I .

want simplistic lyrics or concepts, but to place vague lyrics in such a challenging packaging wasn't the strongest choice for this record...there is a lot more . room to fill if you are going to use the theatrical metaphor to its fullest potential. Simply calling a record a one act play is trite unless the value of the music as play shows though clearly. What I get from the lyrics here is a struggle for personal emotional freedom. Maybe I am up too late. Maybe I have listened to too many records tonight. Maybe I am missing something. The band should feel free to write me if I am in fact not seeing something, and I would be happy to forward back to Brian D their response for printing in the next issue of this haphazardly thrown together useless excuse for a rock and roll magazine. Or, readers can expand this review for themselves by writing the band directly and asking about the concept: Bridgewater, 7005 Beech Avenue, Baltimore MD, 21206–1212 or (bridgewater.xxedgexx.com) JUG' *SA MOB, RO. Box 1931, Erie PA 165070931*

Burn It Down "Eat Sleep Mate Defend" CD: Musically, I think these guys are working some of the ground explored earlier by bands like Deadguy, only with less complexity and challenge. They use a lot of chunky parts, alternated with places where the guitarists hit open chords and the drums play at a straight midtempo. The singer has a deep screaming voice, sometimes he pauses to speak (sometimes with distortion on his voice), and I imagine you can imagine pretty well what this sounds like by now. The recording is good enough to keep this from sounding bad, and there are enough changes and urgency and competency here to make it all work well enough; but there's not too much innovating or emoting going on, the band is not bringing themselves into much danger. At least the songs end before they get boring, and there are places at the end of the third and sixth songs where they get chaotic enough that they almost cut the safety line that ties them to the musical tradition they work from. There's a tension also in the lyrics: B.I.D. are another Christian band that believes that • even though they are singing about Christian stuff like "being more than our bodies, " what they have to say is relevant to everybody. I'm not so sure. Any- . way, if this is the only record you've ever heard in this style, you'll probably really enjoy it; but if you have a Coalesce record sitting around somewhere, this probably won't replace it in your stereo.

Escape Artist, P.O. Box 363, West

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Chester, PA 19381–0363

Canvas "" CD: This is good. It's fairly simple heavy screaming modern hardcore stuff, but it has a good powerful recording, and energy enough to connect; and every time you think they're about to get boring, they stop and do something you didn't expect (example: the way the first song ends with a hanging, flanged chord). The second song starts with the grainiest, thickest bass sound I've heard in at least ten reviews, and the singer's shrieking voice is trebly and raw enough to work in the same way the Acme guy's voice did. The guitars too have a really powerful, thick, weighty sound. They're

not afraid to use blastbeats when they have to, either, which is a welcome relief from bands who couldn't abandon that moshy midtempo drumbeat if their careers depended on it (and I hope soon they do!). I like the way the blurry, irrationally cropped photos in the insert work, too: they suggest craziness without giving anything away. This is a compilation of different recordings, but they don't show much change in quality until the last song, which isn't as well-mixed as the others. Here's a last note: the ninth song begins sounding like a Slayer version of S.O.D.'s "March of the S.O.D., " though I don't think it's deliberate. — b *Household Name, address at the foot of the Medulla Nocte CD review* _Caustic "" 7":_ It's to their credit, I think, that their first song is entitled "on november eleventh nineteen ninety nine the wenises will begin their attack which will eventually result in the eradication of the entire human race" (and their other song is called "Luigi and the Wise Guys"). On the other hand, I swear I just heard the riff that opens this record at the beginning of another record two reviews ago: chunk chunk, chunk open chord, chunkchunk harmonic chunkchunk harmonic. Sing it to yourself and you'll realize just how overplayed it is. After that it gets somewhat better, their song structures don't prove to be as predictable as their riffs themselves — there are some interesting arrangements, and a lot of changes in mood and texture, that all go smoothly. Their singer's speaking parts bother me, they seem uncomfortable somehow; on the other hand I like his voice when he screams, he knows how to use it to do some powerful roars and long, high screams. Near the end of the first song he tries some horrible melodic singing, like Damad if Victoria didn't know how to sing... he does the same thing at the beginning of the song on the other side, actually, maybe he thinks he's trying to incorporate emo melodic vocals into this? Or perhaps it's bands like V.O.D. that are leading him astray? Hm. If he can get it to

start working, they'll be quite an original band (provided they lose that generic riff!). I hope that happens, I can tell they have real potential here, and I'm not just being nice. Even the lyrics (poetic, vague, filled with an ominous sense of foreboding) are well done, and that's pretty rare. — b *D&A records, P.O. Box 1959, Kingston, PA 18704*

Chalkline "In the Present Tense" CD: Finally, an emo band that asks the question that has been on all of our minds: "where have the mighty scholars gone?" And they answer it for us: "replaced by indecision!" they allege, slandering the intelligence of one of New York's only remaining decent bands. OK, OK, I'm being a fucking jerk taking things out of context, but what the fuck am I supposed to do with lyrics like "we have a proclivity for predetermined thoughts and it's scary, where have the mighty scholars gone?" After reviewing fifty other fucking CDs that run the gamut from half decent to ab-

solutely derivative and terrible, when I hear some guy singing those lyrics at me in a polished sugar-sweet rock voice, there's nothing I can do to maintain my sanity except make fun of them. Where have all the mighty scholars gone? Give me a fucking break! If that's really important to you, Mr. Chalk Line Mother Fucker, I'll give you the address of the philosophy professor I did my Nietzsche thesis under once upon a time, and you can go argue with him about Heidegger's misinterpretation of Platonic ideas. Sounds like fucking fun! Almost as fun as listening to this emocore CD with its aforementioned high sugarsweet vocals, constant midtempo major key electric guitar riffs,

occasional predictable emo acoustic parts... these poor kids, I just picked up their CD for review at the wrong moment, I guess; not that I would have really liked it before, but I wouldn't have been so full of venom. Still, it can get frustrating wading through a sea of mediocre music, hoping desperately to have your faith in hardcore and life in general saved by some CD, only to keep running into bland CDs like this. I'm sure you unfortunate music consumers can relate... This is smoothly done enough, like I said, too smooth, that's the problem. All sugar and packaging and gloss, zero calories, for me at least. At least it's d.i.y., unlike most music in this fucking style. And by the way, no, the rest of the lyrics aren't much better. — b

Shandie, P.O. Box 1032, Mentor, OH 44061–1032

Chapter "The Bloodthirsty Hate the Upright CD: Here's another discography of a band that was ahead of their time, let's see if it holds up now. As with the Corrin discography, I'm actually terrified by how current this sounds, it means we haven't really gotten anywhere in the last couple years, at least not in USA we haven't. There are a lot of fast, death metal style double-picking riffs here, with double bass parts here and there, some generic chunky hardcore riffs, and the rare acoustic moment. The vocalist does a lot of that high, torn screaming thing that became so dreadfully common shortly after these records first came out, but there are also a lot of more experimental speaking and whispering parts laced into the songs (not all entirely successful, however). Chapter's lyrics were above average ("a culture of the damned, a

tourniquet on the land") and that helps here, at least. The recording should pack more punch than it does, though it's not unclear by any means; the samples are a little loud too...OK, I've finished listening to it, and my verdict is that Chapter's music feels less important to me now than it did at the time, mostly because of the weak production and occasional dearths of tightness in the performances. Some of the same kids are still making hardcore music now, in Creation Is Crucifixion, and that's what we should be listening to, not the music they made when they were still cutting their teeth as hardcore musicians. — b

Eyewitness, P.O. Box 1, 27340 Criquebeuf, France

Coalesce "Functioning on Impatience" CD: There should be hardcore graphic arts awards, I think that would make sense at this point. And the people from Second Nature should get one for this layout, it's so beautiful, I'm sure all the other hardcore record labels are salivating with jealousy. The insert booklet is done on translucent vellum (I *think this* is what vellum is) with anatomical illustrations that come together when the pages are laid against each other like in a textbook. As for the music — well, Coalesce never got quite so far as to be music for me. Clearly, there's a lot of hard work and precision that goes

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nous I always felt like I was having my brain sandblasted without my heart being touched at all. They come closer to injected variety into their writing on this record than they ever have before, starting the first song with the vocals alone (though I've also never liked the flat, monotone way their singer intones his words) is a good idea, and there are some places in the other songs where the guitars do something (funk noise, high notes...) besides the repetitive grooves I've come to expect in ceaseless barrages from these guys. The second track here is an extended noise experiment that doesn't really take me anywhere emotionally either. I guess their aesthetic is just completely different from mine: I tend to go for abandon, for madness, emotional extremes and excessiveness, and Coalesce really seem to value accuracy and sheer "heaviness" above all else. Otherwise, how could their singer sing the same fucking note over and over for three entire records without ever getting tired of it?? — b *Second Nature, P.O. Box 11543, Kansas City, MO 64138* _Comrades "The End" 7^{H}:_ I've always wanted to like Comrades (how could you not want to like a straight edge grind band- the first one of their kind, too, pre-dating Monster X-that played in hockey masks and disguises?) but hadn't had much luck until now. It's going a little more smoothly for me this time, I think. This 7" begins with a spare sludge part, everything dragging, and then picks up dramatically, gathering steam... then the vocals come in, and they've always been the main sticking point for me. Bad grindcore vocalists always concentrate more on having deep, scary vocals than they do on expressing emotion with their voices, and that always seemed like the case with their singer; I'm not sure if I'm ready to change that opinion yet, but his singing bothers me less here. The music itself is not just blastbeats, it also contains slower parts, even a little groove/mosh stuff here and there. The recording isn't too great but works well enough, which is impressive since

the liner notes claim is was done for the equivalent of $45. At the end of the first side they cover the "Firestorm" riff by Earth Crisis, ending it with a nasty noise-to express their disgust for those kids, I'm sure. When this works, it is in on account of the pure animal aggression in the music, which I can't describe as well as the band member who wrote the liner notes did when he excused them for not printing the lyrics: "How can be written the hate, a visceral hate that has always been part of my being, on a piece of paper? Isn't it better to snarl, to hit, to beat blindly?" Fair enough, -b *S.O.A., address in here somewhere*

Corrin "Plutonian Shores" CD: I remember really liking Corrin the first time That's partly because once we discovered metal in '90's hardcore we had a hard time getting past it to try other things, but it's also because Corrin was not only cutting edge at the time but also made good music. What we have here is complex, well- recorded, dramatic metal/hardcore, not at all trapped by the tendency of hardcore bands from the American Northeast to center their music around moshable riffs and machismo. The riffs and guitar embellishments (including tactful solos, even) are interesting enough that their perpetual slow- to mid-tempo doesn't get dull, the shrieking vocals are well-executed, the songs are long and do a lot of exploring without getting boring. The samples are integrated well, with echoing background guitars to provide atmosphere and coherence, and the quiet metal/acoustic parts sound original, not requisite. At the best moments (and those quiet parts are most of them), they evoke windy churchyards at night, starry skies over silent hilltops, mortal terror in darkness. They even do a Cro-mags cover near the end, revealing their own versatility (and the universality of the Cro-Mags) by making it sound like a good modern '90's hardcore song. — b *Infidel, P.O. Box 1160, Vineyard Haven, MA 02568*

Cracked Cop Skulls "Why Pussyfoot When You Can Kill?" 7^{W}: Poor C.C.S., they thought this recording was going to come out on a Japanese LP compilation that didn't work out. Poor us, it's not very good, and it came out in the Western hemisphere. The vocals are the main drawback, if they had any energy this would probably be OK, but they don't. It sounds like the vocalist has doubled all his tracks, but he's just yelling in an absolutely uninspired, emotionless way, so it makes it worse if anything. The music is just simple, almost-fast old-fashioned British hardcore punk, the bass has a nice fuzzy distorted sound, but it can't rescue me from the boredom inflicted by the monotonous vocals. The lyrics aren't terrible, they touch on some things I care about too (the way everyone has forgotten the threat of the atomic bomb, for example), but... -b

S.O.A., address elsewhere within _Dawnbreed "Luxus" 7^{W}:_ You know, until the very end of the first side, when the singer is still singing but I can ignore him because the band is doing something awesome (striking heavy chords alternated with fast bursts of high, discordant noise), I liked this whenever the singer wasn't singing and hated it when he was. He's singing with distortion on his vocals, which I hate, and his delivery sounds so deliberately pretentious, so rock'n'roll sardonic, ugh. The band does some

indie rock jangly stuff when he's singing that bugs me (though it does have some of the nervous energy of old rock and roll music), but when he stops in the middle of

that song, they do something crazy with a slide guitar that sounds really weird and spacey, and every once and a while they punctuate his pauses with a heavy groove this that works well too. The song on the other side is, for the most part, even more jangly and unbearable for me; it has a break in the middle with some edgy melodic stuff on the barely distorted, messy guitars, that ends with just a powerful bass drum going (like in a rave song?), that's pretty good, but I couldn't get into it otherwise. These guys are definitely innovating, fucking around, taking risks, but they're not doing anything for me, at least, yet-their atmosphere of pretension and.irony gets in the way. And, hey Dawnbreed, where the fuck are the lyrics? Or do you not care about that communication stuff? -b

Stickfigure, P.O. 55462, Atlanta, GA 30308

Dead Eyes Under "Cursed Be the Deceiver" 10": This is an example of the new generation of American east coast hardcore bands following in the footsteps of bands like Overcast, who took the metal/ hardcore thing to its logical extreme at the end of the '90's. Here we find a lot of the same conventions and aesthetics that characterized Overcast on their last record (a heavy, thick mix, a proliferation of slow- to mid-tempo moshy riffs and drumbeats, "scary" samples on the theme of death and terror, a willingness to occasionally play guitar leads), plus a few details brought in from other influences (occasional Napalm Death deep vocals, for example). Like their predecessors, they have occasional moments of beauty and brilliance: there's a great moment in the last song on the first side where the lead guitar climbs higher and higher, finally flailing out into the void with a divebomb as the mosh part crashes back in. They slow the tempo down quite effectively in a song on the second side, too, and then add a pipe organ, which is courageous and works fine-l'd love to hear more of that, in fact. If their singer was able to express a bit more emotion with his voice, beyond just sounding "evil" and fearsome, that would help propel D.E.U. to the level of making moving music rather than just rocking music. The band has the necessary skill and tightness, they seem to be on the edge of learning to construct tightly written songs, and the singer has decent vocal control and technique. But the emotional range here is just too limited right now, they need to put a more human face on their music, if that makes any sense. Just being scary and metal by itself is not enough; unless people can associate themselves with your music in some way, they won't be frightened by the scary stuff in it. -b *+/-, address nearby*

Detestation CD: The Detestation LP and various EP tracks all on one CD from the now-defunct Profane Existence. I don't want to compare this to Nausea, since it might seem like a knee-jerk reaction (Detestation being another crust band with a female singer and all), but unfortunately I have no choice. I really loved Nausea, I thought what they did was fucking incredible, and my guess is that Detestation feel the same way... feel the same way so strongly that they're trying to carry on the Nausea torch by doing exactly what Nausea did. But, as so few bands realize, the only way

to carry the torch for an innovative band is to continue innovating where they left off, and while Detestation has the energy to keep up, the innovation is what's miss

ing here. That's why crust is fucking dead, in my opinion, by the way: it got too easy to just do the same thing over and over and fucking over. Anyway! Yes, they play fast, simple, raw hardcore punk, like Nausea in their simpler and more straightforward moments, less metal drama than Nausea though (the beginning of the last LP track is one of the only moments of this); their singer sounds a whole lot like Nausea's Amy, too, with her slightly nasal, attitude-filled vocals. The recording is just fine for what they're doing, perhaps the drums could be a little louder/clearer during the faster parts, but it doesn't matter, music like this can work pretty well without a good recording anyway and this one's fine. The lyrics are good, they're very specific and critical and at least show that Detestation are sincere. Here are some of the better moments: "daily life is a battle with forces that conspire to turn life into a long bleak stretch of unfulfilled desire" "A really smart guy once said to me 'why do you always fight? When are you going to grow up and start to do what's right?' Those eighteen words of wisdom that filled my ninth grade head made me decide right then and there that I'd fight till I was dead!" — b

Profane Existence, P.O. Box 8722, Minneapolis, MN 55408

December "Praying, Hoping, Nothing" CD: It must be a Pantera side project band. Hmm...its got the full production, the anguished dude screaming gutturally, the metal-as-all-git-out rifftastic guitar attack, and then...a higher pitched voice screaming too. Nope, it couldn't be them...Phil Anselmo never hits the high notes. Really though, this does strike me as being Pantera influenced. Lyrically, a bit vague, with lyrics blurry on the page and a bit hard to read, with topics which seem to address social human issues tying into religious references to sin and heaven, etc. I would have liked the lyrics to be printed in a way which was easier to read. As it is, they run from line into line, with no discernible breaks. Overall, the layout / lyrics are not where these guys put their money or time. The production here is really good, and metal heads should flock to this, but for words and ideas I'd go elsewhere. JUG

Negative Attention Records; 2905 NE 190 St #302; Aventura FL 33180; USA

Diavolo Rosso "Groove Down to the Riotrock" 7": Punk rock from a label I am getting very interested in. This is another thick vinyl release, and this one has the best layout I have seen yet: a really well done combination of Crass-like politics with well scanned photos and a cut and paste feel throughout, though it looks totally pro. The centerfold is a collage, which earns punk points. The music is doomy and gloomy tuned down fast grindy punk (how's that for a description!) which breaks down further into dirge parts (a la Cathedral, you metal heads). Lyrically it is standoffish punk, written and sung half in German and the rest in English, with lyrics printed for all tracks. The back inside cover of the multiple page cardstock insert says it all "Thanx to those who deserve it...The rest of you out there: !!!FUCK OFF!!!" Hmm...I am just a reviewer, and hadn't done anything for the band before this record came out, so I guess that message applies to me! Allright then you jerkoffs../ xk you too! Yeah! Fuck off you

fucking fucks! Fuck you twice! Three fucking times! Fuck you! Fuck you! Fuck you!!! ITIFUCK YOU!*!*! Whew...that's the spirit...that was pretty fuckin' punk. Ok: write/email this label and order whatever you can so you can get a discount on shipping from Europe (if you live in the States, that is). I like this, and get the feeling that whoever is behind its release is serious about what they are doing. JUG

Bad Influence Records c/o Stefan Fuchs; Ludwig-Thoma-Str. 14; 93051 Regensburg; Germany; stefanfuch@metronet.de

Disturbio Menor "Heridas Abiertas" 7": During the slower intro, the weak distortion of the guitar sound and the imperfect drum production bothered

me a bit, but once the vocals came in and the music doubled in tempo I was all set. The second song is dressed up with moments of hypnotic, melodic drama that work even better next to the simple, old-fashioned straight ahead hardcore that comprises the rest of the music, that might be the high point for me. Their mosh-part rhythms work less well than the rest of this, I think, thanks to the production, which can't offer the force that would flatter them there; but their fast stuff sounds great to these ears, as do all the other things they try (and it's wonderful that they don't limit themselves to only two approaches). The singer does help carry the day — in the first song on the second side he sings with melody over the fast punk music, reminding me a little of Kriticka Situace, which is great-and he always has the energy he needs, yelling, talking, or singing, to keep my attention. The lyrics are excellent, it's awesome to get a Chilean perspective on imperialism, capitalist "progress" in the third world, and Christianity, and they're printed in English too so I can check my poor Spanish. — b

Sin Fronteras, P.O. Box 8004, Minneapolis, MN 55408

Eagle Bravo "8 Three Dimension Full Stereo Songs" 12": There have been bands experimenting with in post-Fugazi school of emo/rock/whatever in North Carolina for a while now (Hellbender, for example) and Eagle Bravo came out of that tradition. I missed them while they were around, but to their credit, they've left behind a record of songs in this genre that don't sound to me like anybody else's. I think Fugazi wanted to encourage creativity and exploration when they sort of broke off from the pack and started doing their thing, but so many bands have just imitated them that it's a relief to hear a band following their lead but not ending up in exactly the same place. The vocals are infreguent, punctuating long periods of nervous, impatient music: droning guitar riffs, intersecting with and diverging from bass melodies and high guitar leads, pausing for discordant guitar noises, adding strange tunes and noisy textures, changing over to more traditional emo/rock riffs sometimes, and then changing back. They have the same mix that a lot of the lower budget bands of this style go for, more middle than treble or bass The

vocalist has a sort of torn up yelling style, it's not too sharp or abrasive, but sometimes I still can't understand a word he says, even with the lyric sheet. The lyrics are generally disgruntled, abstract enough that I can't always trace the stories he's talking about, but I can get a general feel for the personal and social conflicts he so obliquely describes. It's a one-sided twelve inch, by the way. Maybe it's not too space-

or vinyl-efficient, but it's kind of cool to run my hand over a blank side of a record, expecting grooves and not feeling them. — b

Gridsector, P.O. Box 172, Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Elison "Fall" 10": It was bound to happen: a European band with a singer who calls himself "Mosh." I was afraid that I wasn't going to like this any more than the last record I reviewed from this label, and the bit-mappedlooking logo on the cover wasn't encouraging, but hey, this is quite good! It's the recording that makes the difference, partly. This just sounds so thick and ugly and powerful... at some points, they're just playing straight ahead riffs, that produced in the '80's hardcore way would sound like rehash shit, but mixed and produced like a heavy '90's hardcore record, those parts sound great. I feel as though there's a layer of vicious noise across the top of this whole record, kicking and stabbing at me the whole time I'm listening to it,

awesome. Of course a good recording is nof what it takes to make a good record, the band is definitely doing their job right too: their music isn't as traditional as I made it sound, they incorporate a lot more noise and chaos, rhythms that really fucking pound, transitions that all work great, songs that never let up, firing from both barrels. Their singer has a good, strong screaming voice, it has the same sharp, distorted sound as the rest of the recording, and it works really well all together. Yes, this is a good, ugly, adrenaline- pumping, sandblaster of a record. The lyrics are the only part that could use much improvement, but when they begin the second to last song with tea-kettlesqueal feedback over tom rhythms, that's the last thing I'm thinking about. In fact, I think this record just ge id more intense and innovative the longer I listen to it. And there's a band on their thanks list called "Gun Attack Yards From Home." — b *Fat For Life records, address below* _Empire State Games "" 7":_ The problem is that I don't like a single band that plays this style: the jingly, soft pop rock music, the abstract lyrics about relationships, the artsy packaging that says nothing at all (yeah, how fucking postmodern), the pair of two-minute songs on one 7" and nothing more (hey, how Revelation!)... so I guess I'm not qualified to review this. The other problem is that I don't think anyone who reviews, has reviewed, or ever will review for Inside Front likes this kind of music. Sure, some of us like some soft music, some love songs, some emo stuff, whatever, but not pop drivel like this disguised as emo music. And the only thing I can think of that makes all that OK is that I doubt very many of our readers like said genre either. So sorry, E.S.G., that nobody here can give you the sort of well-reasoned, in-depth review that you might think you deserve, but I don't think we're your target market anyway. — b

Makoto, P.O. Box 50403, Kalamazoo, Ml 49005

Endstand "" CD: I liked this from the start on the merit of the lyrical content alone. But we'll get to that in a minute as there is more going on than just lyrics. Vocally, think of the harsh attack of Negative Approach: gurrutal, but higher pitched at the same time. At some points, he reminds me a bit of Jake Converge. Musically, creative and interesting...not following any one style, but overall solidly hardcore and guitar riff driven. The guitars aren't too heavy at all times, just coming in for the occa-

sional punch, but Endstand don't need to rely on a heavy sound to make their record interesting. Let's talk lyrics for a minute. The first lines caught my attention...from the song "Freedom": *do you really think /1 should stop signing politics and just sing about fighting / and how life is hard / well I surely won't stop this / cause I have a freedom / freedom to voice my opinion/and I'm going to use it.* Then the next song contains a line which always makes me smile, no matter how many times I see it, and no matter how much credit is really due to the Amebix and to those who came before...from the song "Denial": *I refuse to take a part / need no gods or masters / just a mind of my own.* I know, you critical psychopaths, how can I praise them for their use of the Amebix lyric when the very same line contains a rallying cry to be original? Well...ummm...uh...shut up, jerks. Moving on, there are songs on here about uniting behind political causes and destroying fascism. A good EP, and it has six songs at 15:15. Really nice packaging too: a cardboard case with an attached plastic matte see-thru tray for the CD, and a little pocket inside the front cover for the lyric book. Creative and groovy, all you hardcore

Inside Front reader dudes and dude-ettes. JUG

Impression Records; Erich-Muehsam-STr. 35; 09112 Chemnitz; GERMANY _Enemy of the Species "Last Human Family" 12":_ Unpolished, political, apocalyptic d.i.y. hardcore — apparently from the fucking U.S. of A., for once! Wow! I'd give a lot to see more of that. The riffs show some metal influence, but the playing and songwriting and recording are all quite punk, and there are no solos or anything. They don't just play straight hardcore punk all the way through, though, they're not that kind of band: they dress up their music with plenty of less predictable stuff, slow sludgy dragging intros, sudden transitions, etc. They occasionally use shouted group vocals, which are a surprising contrast to the throaty screaming lead vocals — fortunately the backing vocals sound more like something from an early D.R.I. record than from a Youth of Today record (i.e. they're not overplayed/cliched/boring). The lyrics paint a picture of industrial destruction, ignorance, apathy, middle class nightmares in a plastic paradise gone rotten to the core, to which they oppose small sparks of optimism and open-mindedness. Over all, it's pretty rough stuff, but it's not so bad, and we need this band more in the U.S.A, right now than anywhere else. They put a big smile on my face by putting an umlaut over the "o" in their label logo, too. — b

Army of Headless Clones, 531 Main Street, #1513, NYC, NY 10044 _Equation of State "Exploded View" CD:_ More sincere, political hardcore from Canada. This particular CD is pretty rough hewn, thanks primarily to the muffled mix and low vocal levels. It doesn't sound like what they're doing is without validity, it's just a little harder for me to make out than it could be. The music itself is a little rough, too, generally midtempo blurry guitar riffs, slightly jagged transitions, not-too-prac- ticed screaming, a generous helping of noise and chaos mixed into everything. Their songs are not without interest, and they have a pretensions, personable feel to them, but E. of S. isn't yet poised to transform hardcore music. Still, don't get me wrong: I think we can use a lot more sincere, messy records in hardcore, and a lot fewer slick, would-

be commercial moshable metal records. I hope Equation of State thrive and prosper, and smooth over the wrinkles of their music as they go. Their lyrics (which touch on a variety of personal/political issues, all with subtlety and awareness, and occasional catchiness: "I did not anticipate this opposition, they're eating broken glass and calling it tradition.") and the way they've included a piece of personal writing from each band member also recommend them, in my book. — b

Subprofit, P.O. Box 34029, Scotia Square R.P.O. Halifax, N.S., B3J 3S1 Canada

Facedown "Beyond All Horizons" CD: This is quite a polished work, musical and otherwise. The recording and playing are all first rate, the songwriting is tighter than, say, the Spineless CD I just reviewed, there are no real flaws to speak of here, and some tricks and flourishes that only confident, skilled bands would attempt. They even do the '80's thing at the end of the first song where the solo comes in behind the singing at the end of the song, haven't heard that in a while... they do it confidently and smoothly too, although I just can't get over what an old-fashioned thing to do that is! With the exception that I'm about to discuss, the music on here can be identified as coming from the Belgian hardcore scene by the chunky parts, the medium to fast tempo, the occasional metal riffs, and most of all those trademark screaming metal vocals (they're punctuated by a fair number of speaking parts too).

Not that this record couldn't possibly have been recorded elsewhere, but there are some really Belgian parts on here, no one could deny that. And there are two elevator-music pop love songs on here, they carry them off with as much assurance as their screaming metallic hardcore, but god I can't help but fucking hate them! They're not just pop love songs, they're fucking elevator music pop songs, and that's more than I can handle. I guess its great that they're fighting assumptions of what should be on a hardcore record, I just wish they could have done it with reggae or jazz or some other style with a little more substance to it (that should prove to be a controversial statement!). They do a techno song at the very end of the record, which works better for me. All together, I have to grant that their music is extremely polished and well-done; but for whatever reason, this isn't a record that's going to stick with me and change my life, it's just lacking that certain something, though I can't pin down what it is. The introductory essay extolling the virtues of open-mindedness is great to see, and they write eloquently enough about the other important subjects they address in the lyrics (rape, animal exploitation, freedom...) — so I'm quite glad they're around, even if they aren't deeply affecting me with their music. — b

Genet records, address below

Fall Silent "Superstructure" CD: My friend had told me that this CD was, for him, what Coalesce would be if their music expressed any human emotion, and I'd wanted to agree, in part so that this review would be easier, but there's a lot more than that going on. Fall Silent has always done the Coalesce parts (since before they *were* Coalesce parts), the repeating grooves in the low end, but (although the guitars stay in the low end for pretty much the whole record) there's a lot more here musically than repeating grooves and strange timing: there are plenty of fast parts, blastbeats,

even, disorienting guitar chunk patterns and occasional droning open chords too. Levi's vocals are what really set this apart, of course, he has a really high screaming style that is unique in delivery and passion alike. His lyrics are right on, too, touching on all the subjects I'm thinking about: the hypocrisy of mainstream (and countercultural) life, the work/slavery problem, trying to find real meaning in life and cling to it, the slow-motion apocalypse we're all bringing on ourselves (referred to here as "the Great White Death" when it is creeping up, and "The Day of the Locust" when it strikes)... and here's a prizewinner of a funny line: "Why has Nevada been Californicated?" The production and playing are unbelievably polished, this really is a masterpiece in those regards, and as a full length it has a much longer attention span (it doesn't wander or get bored with itself) than their first 12" did. Even their little break (a Journey cover?!) is so much better executed this time around (compared to the gimmick cover on the last record, which got old fast) that I actually enjoy listening to it (and I *do* noHike Journey); it rocks in the way that the best Van Halen songs rock, and it turns out Levi is actually a good singer now, as well as screamer. Plus, the production is so much better than Journey ever got it's ridiculous. More notes: sometimes they mess with scratching (yes, hip hop scratching), not to much effect yet, but I doubt there's anything this band can't do if they try. *Apocalypse* Wowsamples abound. Levi's message to all of us (decrying mediocrity, demanding that we all offer our efforts to replace it with creative projects of our own, and emphasizing that this record is proof that top quality Work can be done d.i.y.) in the liner notes comes off really sincere too. — b

Revolutionary Power Tools, P.O. Box 15051, Reno, NV 89507

Forced Into "Profit Not People" CD: Wow, this has the drama that it needs to work. It's not as fast as you'd think it would be (which is too bad, I think!), but it's still intense, animated, and though the riffs are simple enough they sound tense and rugged and keep you right there with the band. The singer has a great high shrieking voice and the rough mix flatters everything. The songwriting contains just enough unpredictable parts (the echoing guitar line in the third song, for example) to rescue this from being generic (good!) and the band sound like they're really letting loose. Lyrics touch on feeling disconnected from the real life suffering shown on the TV news, smashing racist thugs with violence ("with an open mind we'll crush everything you stand for [?!], we won't back down again, this time you're the prey"), sexual abuse and incest... there's a Malcolm X sample ("we're nonviolent with people who are nonviolent with us"), and one boy who plays guitar is wearing a shirt that reads "feminist" in one of the pictures, I think that's cool. So all in all, quite good, though I wonder if they really live up to their occasionally violent rhetoric. — b

Bridge, Box 1903, S-581 18 Linkoping, Sweden

Freakshow 'The Earth Speech" 7": I like this one. Really thick black vinyl, unlike the crap we are used to seeing here in the States now. Recorded in 1995 according to the insert, but just now making it to my desk. I know the Seattle post office is notoriously slow around my neighborhood, but four years? No wonder my phone service keeps getting shut off when I think I am paying my bills. Four songs here, making up a

themed record overall. Very melodic, towards the "emo" side of things at times but continually driving (sort of like Government Issue now that I think about it), with a lower pitched vocalist/singer who sings about (in order of the songs): destroying the earth for the sake of profit; patriotism and the subsequent blinding of the masses to real human lives (this coming in a song called "Proud Pedantry" so they gets vocabulary points there for sure); activism -vs- passivity (a song which raises my eyebrow for the line "let's use our ideals and put aside passions"...I would suggest that without our passions, our ideals are weak or nonexistant. Passions fuel activism and intensify it a thousandfold); and finally religion...this last song winning the "Lyric of the Hour" award for the line "let's burn the churches / all of them on fire". Hooray! I second the motion. Just make sure that there is no one inside other than Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior when you start your barbecue. Save me a roasted leg...though the barbeque sauce would probably drip right through the holes in his feet. Anyway... JUG *$5 ppd; Daniel Ferrero; RO. Box 506; 29640 Fuengirola; SPAIN*

Good Clean Fun "Shopping For a Crew" 7": Wonderful, brilliant, and totally funny. As creative and timely as Crucial Youth was in the 80's when they came out as the "ultimate" straight edge band to mock the slew of cookie cutter boring as fuck edge bands at the time, Good Clean Fun pokes fun and satirically addresses crew mentalities, vegan revolutions, kickboxing, and eating too much sugar. You need to see and hear this record, if only to balance out the serious approach so many other bands take today. The packaging is really good too...it is done up like a box of cereal, with the

"Nutrition Facts" on the back adapted to band related facts. I actually don't even want to spoil it for you by quoting lyrics or telling you about the packaging in exquisite detail. What I will say is that if you are critical of hardcore today, as it relates to any or all of the above issues, that this record will at least arm you with a smile rooted in criticism, which is often the most potent weapon you can have. I wish more bands would or could take a step back and laugh at themselves and at this "scene" every once in a while. The result would be a freshness and vitality not seen or felt in the genre for years. What I do want you to know about this record is that the comedy/criticism is really creative, and that the music itself — with its '88 style singalongs and other similar facets, is pretty good. Worth your $3 for sure. JUG

Underestimated Records; P.O. Box 13274; Chicago IL 60613

Griver "2 Songs" 7": Well-played, tightly- written, textured emo/punk music. The first song moves at a quick pace, never really changing tempo but maintaining energy by leaning harder on the intensity lever and then pulling back off it (the traditional way to do that being to alternate between muted and open chords, and yes, they do that here). The vocals are all torn high screaming, which I prefer to the somewhat melodramatic speaking vocals (another emo inevitable, I guess) that go with the acousticy part at the beginning of the song on the second side. Yeah, the second song uses more dynamics, going back and forth between the lighter sad, messy melodies and more distorted sad messy melodies on the guitars, and using more variety in the vocals (going back and

forth between, you guessed it, the lighter sad, messy melodies and the more painful sad, messy screaming), but I like the first song more. It also has better lyrics, in my opinion-at this point it's very difficult to make emo lyrics about relationship difficulties (which comprise the second song) original enough to seem real, no matter how sincere they might be. The lyrics to the first song have more to offer, to me at least: "feel the radar. This constant drone is home. This is all service, no product." -b

Point the Blame, 10738 Millen, Montreal, PQ, Canada H2C2E6

Groundzero "Seldom Does Hope Exhaust Despair" CD; Begins with feedback and cymbal noise over a fearsome, unintelligible sample, then they shout the name of the first song ("fallen angel") and the drums come in, playing that kickboxer's rhythm that pegs these guys as a band from the northeastern USA. Yeah, I can see a bunch of young men hitting each other to this, half-naked, fantasizing about how tough they are... I suppose that's not necessarily the fault of the band, they may want to express more than just machismo even though they draw on a musical tradition associated so closely with that. The acoustic parts accompanied by morbid speaking parts (and, occasionally, singing parts) bolster that theory; I think these guys really want to make subtle and emotional music, despite the proliferation of chunky, midtempo tough-guy screaming dance parts throughout their songs. I don't feel like they've quite got the finesse for it yet, you can feel them pushing to be expressive in their own right but they're not quite there yet. In the meantime they do a fairly complex take on the metal/ moshcore genre, songs about pain and suffering and feeling alienated from peers, family, society, decent recording and mix, dynam-

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ics, etc., although their songs are going to be a little unwieldy until their abilities catch up to their ambitions in terms of how much drama and emotion they're able to get across. Anyway, it's good to see a band from this scene hoping to do more musically than just provide a soundtrack for little boys to prove their mettle. As a side note, the order of the songs seems to be different than it's listed on the back cover and in the lyric sheet..? — b *Seize, 55 Porter Avenue 5E, Naugatuck, CT 06770*

Harvest "Transitions" CD: By the time I had managed to peel off all the plastic wrap and the little bar code sticker I was already having a hard time liking this. But the music, though slick, and slickly recorded, helps me stick with them. Jt's midtempo metallic chunky modern hardcore, with deep screaming vocals and the predictable metal mix, but it has guitar leads too, which helps keep it from being as boring as its contemporaries. When the chunky music all stops and the singer shouts in the pauses, I swear I've heard this before, but it's still well done at least. Sometimes their singer's inflections make him

sound like a NYHC singer, which is a little strange in context, but in general he carries off his job well. I don't really think the world needs another metallic danceable hardcore band to keep the genre running in place any longer than it already has, but if we had to have one (and it *was* inevitable, of course) I guess it might as well be Harvest. They do what they do with perfect finesse and competency, it just doesn't need doing

that much, does it? If something new doesn't happen soon in hardcore music like this, I'm gonna fucking panic. The packaging is really slick, filled with photos of the string section rocking out, but it doesn't offer any more clues as to why they feel a burning need to do this. This is actually a compilation of previously released material, but the quality doesn't degenerate noticeably as we go back in time with them. Actually, I think I like the older material better, it has a bit more raw urgency perhaps? Or maybe this style of music was itself more vital in 1995? — b *Trustkill, 23 Farm Edge Lane, Tinton Falls, NJ 07724*

Haywire "Mad Cow Disease" 7": Speedy, old-fashioned British punk here, with enough feeling in the shouted vocals to make it work (much better than the otherwise similar Cracked Cop Skulls 7" did, for

example). The second song even ends with an old, old-fashioned punk reggae part, and the final song (the title track) has a verse reminiscent of the Exploited circa Troops of Tomorrow, their best record. All three band members sing, and the variety in their voices works nicely, although I'm ashamed to admit that thanks to my Yankee heritage I can't understand a word these limies are saying even when I read the fucking lyric sheet along with the record. [I remember when we first got to England after touring Europe, I'd never been there before I and I was absolutely unprepared for the experience of audiences shouting unintelligible insults continuously at us between songs, which I guess is what people in England do when they like a band..? I finally asked one crowd if they could understand us any better than we understood them, but I couldn't understand their answer. It was easier to communicate with people in fucking Finland! So listening to this record reminded me of those lovely days.] Anyway, thanks to the lyric sheet, I can tell you that the lyrics aren't bad at all, quite issue-specific in the case of the first and last of the four songs here, which is good for political punk like this. Besides the mad cow disease/veganism issue, they address environmental destruction, animal slaughter, and poverty/class issues, -b

Blind Destruction, Box29, 82 Colston St., Bristol, BS1 5BB United Kingdom _Hiqh-score "" 7":_ I'm sorry to say that I don't really like their music, because I agree completely with most of their political ideas. They have songs about working to change the disproportionate numbers of men and women in the

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hardcore community, fighting fascists and other enemies of freedom, and why it doesn't make sense to simultaneously be involved in hardcore and be a career soldier in the army, and they've included essays by the band members (in German and English) expanding on these and other topics. So I wish I could be more excited about their version of the fast '80's generic hardcore thing (crew backup vocals, breakdowns, and all) but it just doesn't have anything to set it apart from the other faceless masses of bands in this

genre. It doesn't lack energy, exactly, but it's just not catchy enough. Anyway, regardless, I'm glad they exist, even if I don't like them. They're spreading good ideas, and maybe one day they'll do something I like, -b

La Familia c/o Sebastian Stronzik, Soesterstr. 66, 48155 Muenster, Germany

Indecision "Most Precious Blood "CD: These guys/girls pump out tons of songs. This is their new CD here in my hands and I hear through the grapevine that they are going to go into the studio soon to record yet another

project of some kind. This record has a lot going for it, in ways which traditionally, many hardcore records do not. I get a ton of recordings to review which are pleasing to the ear but which do nothing for the brain, but here, Indecision has tried to bridge the gap between the two. The record sounds great (meaning 'well recorded', and almost too perfectly recorded at times — the final product is so polished that it has moments in which it loses its feeling, but do not get me wrong...this sounds excellent) and the thirteen (!) songs give a good idea for where Indecision is going musically and lyrically. For those who have not heard the band before, Indecision is a band which embodies a number of different styles/choices, but uses them all along with their own creative additions. Are you looking for fast hardcore? Chunky guitars? Sing alongs? Metal styled guitar work? Straight edge? Add to all of that creative and challenging lyrics, high pitched unique vocal sounds, innovative song structures and no songs about straight edge(!) and you get a refreshing style overall. This CD is themed towards a critique of religion, tradition, and culture — with highlights coming at Track 11 "Crucifix Escapist': "Having served my time in your paradise / of torture and de

spair / to play the harps of sin", and on the back cover of the lyric booklet, which is an essay about the focus of the band. It covers the idea that hardcore is immediate and vital to the band, because it is an extension of their lives, which are immediate and vital as well. Excellent. Here's a quote from the essay: "Life is fluid. Life is spontaneous. Life is not a procedure. Life is not a machine. Life is erratic and impulsive. Think about the spontaneity of emotion of life and love. The emotional release that is music. Music is our therapy." Ok, so sentence fragments are more difficult to read comprehensively than full sentences, but the content is there. Other points of note on this CD are a bold layout with photos of the band and religious graphics along with the superimposed slogan "tradition is the enemy"; and a guest appearance by Rob Fish from 108/Resurrection (which I mention here not to perpetuate any useless culture of personality, but rather because the guy has one of the best voices ever and he co-wrote the song which he performs on the CD with the band). Overall, a challenging CD, and one which I recommend finding. JUG

Exit/Wreckage, P.O. Box 263, New York NY 10012

Inflicted Spoon "Their Money or Your Life" CD: OK, I'd better put this on the table at the start: not only does this band have a ridiculous name, but it says "no war but the class war — no crack but the ass crack" on the back of '.neir CD. Anyway, that said: some of the best bands of the early '80's were the British bands (like CRASS) who explicitly didn't care about music except as

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a vehicle for political ideas. Ironically, they ended up making great music anyway, because what they were doing was so honest and heartfelt. That's what's good about

this band, too: the music doesn't seem to be too important to them, they play the same simple three-chord punk that people have for over twenty years (punctuated very rarely by a ska-ish part or a Dead Kennedies surf lead) as a soundtrack for their political ideas, and it works just fine. Their songs are actually catchy enough (if roughly performed) that, plus their obvious sincerity, this isn't a bad CD. The lyrics (which examine a lot of issues in detail from a generally anarchist/ activist perspective) are the central thing here, you have to be looking for political punk commentary to enjoy this, but it's definitely here — to a much greater degree than it has been in any crusty dis-band in the past decade. And the fact that they're trying so hard, that they care so much and still have their idealism intact, is itself inspiring.

— b

Inflicted Spoon themselves (d.i.y.l), P.O. Box 11362, Raliegh, NC 27604–0362 _John Holmes "El Louso Suavo" CD:_ From what I gather, the people in this band are all weathered old British punk types, and for them to still be making music this current and relevant is a pretty amazing thing. As far as British hardcore stuff goes, this sits somewhere in the field of Hard to Swallow (fast parts, occasional weird time changes, some lead guitar lines and punchy rhythms... but not nearly as spastic or deranged) and Stalingrad (equally gritty and bitter, with some of the same merciless pulse in the slow parts, but more human vocals and a less supernatural atmosphere all around), though as you've gathered from my disclaimers it's a little more raw and straightforward. The music is tense, jumpy, ugly, skidding from one part to the next like a runaway truck with no driver and a payload of bricks. There are two vocalists, one with an old fashioned shouting voice ('80's punk like Antisect/etc.?) and the other with a more modern constricted, claustrophobic choking style. The all-around attitude is viciously depressed, full of bile, malice, sickbed regrets and resentment... one song starts with the most depressing sample I have ever heard, about growing older, losing your edge, your abilities, your mind. This probably doesn't sound like a really fun listen to you positive youth kids, and it's not; but I suspect it's meant not for you but for the older, more desperate, embittered ones who aren't quite yet ready to throw in the fucking towel. — b

Flat Earth, P.O. Box 169, Bradford, BD1 2UJ, United Kingdom

Judgment "Haunt in the Dark" 7": I don't know how the fuck this ended up in the review box, I think it was an accident, so I'm not going to go into much depth here... but anyway, if you like Motorhead, this Japanese band does everything that Motorhead did at their peak (Ace of fucking Spades!), only with a better recording and that infectious Japanese weirdness. The same incoherent rebel glory lyrics (they even gain something in this strange English), the same rocking high-octave riffs, the proud riff raff choruses, the rock/metal overstatement that can feel so good once you get used to it. Super fancy gatefold cover. Yeah, if you like Motorhead and Japanese punk, you've probably been waiting your whole life for this record. — b

H.G. Fact, 401 Hongo-M, 2-36-2 Yayoi-Cho, Nakano-Ku, Tokyo 164 Japan _Lanyard "Realms" 7":_ I was already to jab at this for having no lyric sheet when I realized

that the reason there is none is because they don't have a vocalist!!! This is essentially a jazz styled quintet which plays as if they have a melodic singer waiting in the wings. The music itself didn't transport me to any new realms, but any band with two drummers, a guitarist, a bassist/ theremin (what the fuck is a theremin?!?) player and an alto saxophonist gets big originality points. Still, I wish there were more than two songs on this record so that I could have been swept away by it, no joke intended. As it was, it took me two songs to even get into it, and having to flip the record over halfway through just shook me out of whatever realm they were trying to create with their sax/bass jazz lines. Melodic and rarely catchy, but strong when the guitar kicked in to add heaviness to the mix. Side two is more creative, interwoven and dreamlike than side one. A full length of side two styled songs would kick ass. It ranged from the distorted guitar backing up the other instruments, to quiet cym- bal/sax lines which lead the piece out into silence. For my dollar I would find a copy of any Iceburn full length before I would touch this one, but maybe they have other longer releases out or in the works to check out and get into. JUG

One Percent Records; P.O. Box 141048; Mpls MN 55414 USA

Linsay "" 7"; This is an older Linsay than the one I heard on the split 7" with the Cole Quintet earlier today, I suspect: a less complex one, a less accomplished one, a Linsay that is less prepared to take risks. The songs on that split hit me with non-stop intensity, into the red from beginning to end, while these sometimes work their way up there but spend more time trying to find the right buttons to push. Here their sound is a little less current: they change direction less frequently, play less complicated, more predictable riffs that depend more on guitar chunk, take longer to work their way through their intros and arrangements, incorporate less noise and variety into their German hardcore. Their singer's voice isn't quite as high and terrifying, either. Had I heard this first, I would have thought that they were a good band, but I don't think I would have been prepared for the sublime fury of their songs on the split. So, if you're interested in Linsay, go there first, -b *Per Koro, address elsewhere in these reviews*

Loxiran "" CD; Here's all Loxiran's stuff on one posthumous CD. You can definitely tell they're from the wave of later-'90's German hardcore that some (myself included) believe rescued hardcore from becoming predictable and passionless. Their songs have the characteristic chaos and surprising transitions of other Per Koro bands, and a similarly powerful recording (I think these bands are all recorded by the guy from Systral). But thanks to their singer's pleading voice, which he uses to do more than just scream over and over, their music has a more human face than many of their contemporaries in the crazy-shrieky-noisy world of German hardcore. That doesn't mean its necessarily better, I think they lack the fury, the classic catchiness and amazing innovation that made Acme and Systral what they were/are, although their personality does help me enjoy them more than Aclys, for example. Their genuine interest in communicating is underlined by the fact that not

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only are the lyrics to the songs of the album proper printed in both German and English, but the lyrics to the 7" songs (which are also included at the end here) are also printed on an extra insert, along with English explanations thereof. The two lengthy live tracks they've included sound good, too, and have at least as much wild intensity as their studio work. Lyrics deal with a lot of stuff from the "personal is political" standpoint, touching on apathy and "p.c. fascism, " for example, without getting too defensive. — b

Per Koro, address near the beginning of the record reviews (under Aclys) _Malefaction "Man Grows Cold" CD:_ A couple days ago, I reviewed the Tet

Offensive demo, and now I come across another great political Canadian grind band... I wonder if these kids all know each other, or what? Malefaction use samples to punctuate between one song and another, which is tired at this point, but the music between doesn't sound tired or heartless at all. The riffs are catchy enough to maintain my interest, the low and occasional higher roaring vocals sound impassioned enough, and the myriad tempo changes keep everything going well. Not the mix but the CD mastering is a little unclear, I think, but it doesn't really hurt them. The lyrics are much better than the samples, which don't seem to have anything to do with them; the first song is entitled "Real Beauty Cannot Be Photographed" and the second to last "An Entire Generation Destroyed." After the fifth song there is a snippet from a live recording in which the singer (of this or another band?) does the Iron Maiden thing of dividing the audience into two halves, which compete to shout "oh yeah" the loudest what the fuck? And the CD ends with them shouting 'fuck you everybody, goodnight!" and an explosion that is better recorded than anything before it has been. So my conclusion is that Malefaction are a good grindcore band, and if they continue to improve musically and they start to show a little more focus in the way they present their music to the world they could do a great record. Of course, maybe they enjoy being a little silly and unfocused... — b *Out of Enslavement, 484 River Road, St. Andrews, MB, R1A 302 Canada* _Manner Farm "'We' l$ a Difficult Concept For Us" CD:_ Do you want the good news

first or the bad news? Think about it for a minute, and let me know. Ok, times up, the bad news: rumor has it that Manner Farm are breaking up by the time you read this. The good news? Manner Farm is intelligent, thought provoking, ideologically revolutionary and fun to listen to. They will hate this review, as they are quite anti-ego, and would probably just rather I say "Manner Farm exists. They exist and play music." But, that is not to be, as I am in control of the keys now. Ha ha!!l Musically, think of these six songs as a cross between the starts stops and changes of a Propaghandi with the fast three chord punk of Bad Religion. Vocally the same comparison can be made, with Ivan the singer talking/screaming and remaining relatively intelligible throughout. Lyrically fucking profound and directly political. Combine poetry and passion with politics and personal anguish and you get Manner Farm. From the song "Cardiacally Arrested" (about heirachy between species): *Life is NOT your industry / Life is NOT your resource / No one is egalitarian who calls themselves 'master'/*

And there is no kind way to crack a whip. And then from "Montreal" (about sexual roles/sexism/rape): *PAPE/ that makes me want to cry/And every rubberneck, every billboard, every magazine, every tv screen, every office building, every mudflap, every dollar bill, every diet pill, every inch of skin, every kitchen, every suit and tie, every*

marriage vow, every clenched fist, every bit lip, every connection, every erection / cartoon neon flashes through my mind and the hornets sting my eyes / and I see snarling men everywhere / in alleys with knives. Need I say more? There is a full page essay for each of the six songs, and the ideas presented are clearly communicated, direct and intense. Class war, rich and poor, alive or dead, and on and on and on. Fuck! I don't even know where to start with it, as there is so much here. Live, they usually play for 40 minutes, of which 15–20 is talking, discourse with the audience. They are on tour right now throughout the USA, and I hope you get a chance to see them

before they are gone forever. I love this band. JUG

no address given, but contact me and I will try to put you in touch with them: Greg Bennick/Manner Farm; 427 Eleventh Avenue East; Seattle WA 98102; USA; xjugglerx@aol. com

Manual Seven 'The Shattering" 7": Their singer is great, the best I've heard on a Profane Existence record in years. He carries off the high inhuman shrieking thing with the very best of them. The band plays fast, sometimes messy and loose, but unpredictable in their songwriting: I keep expecting them to just play fast punk chords, and they'll throw in these sad, tragic- sounding guitar leads to keep me off balance. Good for them. Hey, they even hit me with a blastbeat at the end of one song! The last song is the best one, it has the most energy and the catchiest chorus. The recording is clear enough, but the production sounds somehow empty; I think the guitars lack the bass sound they need to make this heavy. With a thicker production it would work better, I think, but M.7 may just not care about that stuff. The packaging reminds me of Prank records stuff, like the His Hero Is Gone layouts (same font, for example) only the lyrics (generally dealing with the stress and misery of life in the capitalist economy... "another day another dollar") are harder to read over the image behind them. Too bad Profane called it quits just when they were starting to release records of current music rather than the old crust rehash. — b *Profane Existence, address elsewhere inside*

Medulla Nocte "A Conversation Alone" CD:

This comes in with a definite hip hop feel, the heavy guitars and drums doing a metal groove thing and the singer shouting "step back with a vengeance..." The singer has good presence, that's going for him; he often does a sort of hip hop inflection with his voice, I'm not sure how much I like it (at this point it has some bad associations connected with it, Biohazard or something...) but he carries it off well enough. The production is good, powerful and overloaded, perhaps reminiscent of the most recent Slayer record. The band plays pretty simple stuff, pounding metal groove like I said,

they don't manage to ever get boring though. There's enough energy here to hold your attention through, whether you like it or not. Hey, there are backing vocals (shouted chorus backups) sometimes too, they fit in just fine, even though this isn't Youth of Today by any means. When I first heard this band, it sounded like the guy from Oi Polloi singing for Slayer, and I was really excited about it, but I'm not getting that at all this time. You might like it, it's tough and powerful and filled with attitude, it just isn't expressing any of the emotions I'm feeling these days I guess. — b

Household Name, P.O. Box 12286, London, SW9 6FE, United Kingdom _Minion "" 7":_ For the most part, this is more straightforward than the really

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because that seems to be the company they keep. The first song, though at one point they do stop and bend one guitar note up (exactly the same way Acme once did, yes indeed), is largely fast hardcore stuff with chunky hardcore riffs and everything. The vocalist sounds like he might be using a little distortion on his vocals, though they don't lack rage and energy. There's a part in the second song where they mix in some really beautiful melody for the second half of the song, without having to shift gears too much, and their screamer sings for a little while. The third song is slower, more modern and moshy, with grindcore- esque parts (deep growls and blastbeats) to punctuate it. The b side has three more songs that cover the same general territory, although one of them in comprised almost entirely of blastbeats, which surprised me a little. The insert artwork is whimsical, playful, it employs comic book images of gas-masked aliens, among other things. I've decided, after listening to this, this it is after all a very good record, it certainly has more energy and urgency than almost every record that came out in the U.S. this year; I guess I was just expecting a little more innovation, after the last record I reviewed from this label, -b *Paracelsius, address in the split 7" reviews* _Motorsaeqenservice "Du Hast Gottes Saqen" CD:_ Dear god, this is one of those little 3" CDs I'm in love with, so of course I'm instantly inclined in its favor. And this is what the Toxic Bonkers CD should have been, a European grindcore record that out-Assucks Assuck! They have an incredibly heavy, bright recording, that's what does it, and their playing is tight and flawless. Their grindcore writing and performing have just enough surprises to keep ahead of being generic, too, which helps (an occasional flamboyant guitar slide here and there is all it takes to keep the traditional hyperspeed drums/deep growling vocals/heavy groove parts equation working). There are no lyrics included, nothing but fairly silly images of disembowelment, so this is just something you listen to for fun, but indeed it is fun! Especially for me, just putting the little 3" CD in the player makes it worth it. The last three (of eight) songs aren't as well recorded, and consequently don't work as well, but there's enough music here to provide for my needs. I'm not sure how much of it is just the cute little CD size, but I'm definitely glad to have this around. — b

S.O.A., address by the less-positively reviewed Toxic Bonkers CD

Next to Nothing "To Have Courage, But No Conscience" 7^{M}: I don't know if this band is doing what they're doing as a direct result of the stuff kids like Earthmover

have been doing next to them in Detroit for the last few years, but I think of them as a part of the

Earthmover guy runs, which is awesome, and they're all nice midwestern boys, after all. For the most part, this is energetic and sincere traditional hardcore (fast parts, mosh parts, simple riffs, no leads, screaming vocals, lyrics about liars, bad cops, and self improvement), though there are parts (a mosh part that incorporates snare drum rolls near the end of the first side, for example) that take the genre and try to help it forward. And it is fucking awesome when the second side begins with a full four measures of snare drum roll, that really grabbed me. This is a good, solid record, they do what they're trying to do well... now they need to pick up where Earthmover left off and keep this style of hardcore alive by bringing new ideas to it. They have they raw energy and excitement to pull it off. -b *+/-, P.O. Box 7096, Ann Arbor, Ml 48107* _No Contest "Where do we go from here?" 7":_ This is one of those 7"s that uses up more than half of the first side for an intro before the vocals came in. It's not such a bad intro, pretty fast and simple, it just goes through a surprising number of changes before the singer finally joins in. He's got an old-fashioned yelling hardcore voice, reminiscent of Ray from Warzone, that doesn't go badly with this simplistic old hardcore stuff (lots of fast parts, feedback with the bass leading in the next part, a chunky part here and there like the old youth crew bands would do, a slower moshy chorus in one song..., and one solo like the old Agnostic Front would do). Song topics include betrayal, shit talking and how its not a good thing, unity, and keeping the faith of rebellious youth. This doesn't sound as old and tired as it could, I don't see these guys as part of the new school wanna-be "old school" revival so much as I imagine them believing that style of hardcore never died. If you need another record in this genre, this might not be a bad choice, it's done well enough. The photos of them playing to kids with electroshock punk hairdos in Pist and C.O.C. shirts are fun, as is the cover photo of a kid hopping a fence. — b

The label is called Slaughterhouse records, but Tm not sure if this is their address, the band's, or both: 137 Morgan PL, Kearny, NJ 07032

One Day Closer "Songs of Silence" CD: Nine songs from this Dutch old-fashioned speedy hardcore band. I'm not sure if they would describe themselves as "old-school" or not, this sounds a lot like the stuff that was coming out (especially from Europe) in the early '90's, which lots of fast parts and not particularly complicated mosh parts often involving tom drumming. Spawn, Unbroken, Undertow, Chokehold, and Mainstrike are all on the thanks list, and that should give you an idea of what's happening here musically too. The singer

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more interesting than this. There's nothing really missing here that I can put my finger on, there's just not enough here for me to get really thrilled. The fourth song has a breakdown part that's memorable enough to help it stick out, and similar things happen every once in a while in the others; I think the rest of the music just has too much in common with ground that has already been trodden to dust by other bands

to really matter at this point. The lyrics too are not poetic enough to get away with dealing with the topics they touch on (inner searches, struggles, memories...) without again fading into the mass of other hardcore bands. It's hard with so many fucking bands making music to stand out and offer something everyone needs, but that's what you have to do to keep your hardcore vital, and One Day Closer is *almost there.* — b

Coalition, P.O. Box 243, 6500 AE Mijmegen, the Netherlands

Outlast "A Ramble in Passion" 7": The intro essay on the layout of this record is worth reprinting in its entirety. "In these standardized times, where basically nothing is surprising, passion is one of my last reliable feelings of what's right. To live out my desires and to not just let the days float by. In a society where the word obey is the most common one, there is not too much room for creativity. That is why this is our ramble of passion. One of my only passions. Music. And I wish it was more than just music in every mutation of this form. The same way it is in our safe little punkhardcore scene. 'Cause I strongly believe it is more than music here. Most of the other music is just a string pulling consumerism act, where they exploit your feelings and makemoney out of the human need of belonging to a group...I awake in sweat...longing to feel every feeling, just to taste life...to grasp a bit of it. So, I'm on a ramble for passion." Right on. The music throughout this record is relatively standard straightedge sounding late 80's hardcore with a smaller vocal sound than I expected. Lyrically the record addresses: cliques within hardcore; the pressure towards "adulthood" (just a note from me: than one of the most debilitating things in this genre is people referring to themselves

as "kids" all the time...this *should be* music for adults, by adults...aren't we sophisticated and creative enough to accept that role? It doesn't mean "selling out' or being washed up... but rather just taking responsibility for yourself while staying 'young at heart... which in itself is a societal construct! We should continue to be ALIVE at heart and responsible as well!!!) The packaging is really polished and precise. Someone with computer access and skills had a hand in this...so it looks sharp. The best part for me is that essay piece though. I really hope they keep that idea in mind and follow this up with an LP in which their music and lyrics are as revolutionary as their ideology. JUG

Bridge Records; Box 1903; SE-581 13; Linkoping; SWEDEN

Point of Few "" 7": This record surprised me... this band is like a younger Intensity: they're less polished, but they somehow manage to make the generic '80's hardcore thing work like a fucking charm, just by playing as hard as they can and not being afraid to be catchy. I never thought I'd like another fast, simple song with a chorus like "you should keep your distance... you should keep your promise..." but here I am, wanting to yell along with it (and, god forbid, even point two fingers in the air!). One thing they have going for them that none of the '80's revival bands do is a noisy, overloaded production: this helps give them the roughness in their sound that they need to

complement the simplicity of their music. They may not see themselves as quite the old-fashioned hardcore band that I do (after all, one of their songs opens with

a sample and an acoustic intro thing), but the emotions I'm feeling listening to this are the same ones Side By Side made me feel, and if I'm barely restraining myself from shouting along to a chorus that goes "we (we!) can't (can't!) sit still!" ...well, it's pretty clear what's going on! Besides, even in the world of straight edge hardcore, the sample/acoustic intro thing goes back farther than Judge. Hey, they also have a song against Christmas and the consumerism that it's come to represent. Cool! -b

Goathead, Postbus 324, 7900 AH, Hoogeveen, Netherlands, or Discontent, Veldkampstr. 1, 7913AL, Hollandscheveld, Netherlands

Poison the Well "Distance only makes the heart grow fonder" CD; Begins with a poorly edited sample that sounds like it was taken from an after-school special or made-for-TV movie. The music comes in suddenly, and it's a relief, it sounds good, well-recorded and spirited, powerful. They're playing largely midtempo late-'90's hardcore, a generally metal inflection to it, some melody in the guitar lines here and there, moments when the singers stop screaming and do a harmonizing singing thing. There doesn't seem to be much difference between the singers' voices; I suppose having two singers is most beneficial to them during the harmonizing parts, which are tasteful and haunting enough to work. Their songwriting still depends on the same e-chunk riffs that kept Morning Again running in place, but it goes beyond them into a world of prettier melodies, thank god. You know, they use a sample at the beginning of the third song as well, and it has that same annoying hum behind it, as if they got it from a TV with a poor connection... I wouldn't mention this except that it's annoying and I think they could do better. For the layout art, they rely heavily on the Renaissance artwork that has already been completely used up by hardcore bands earlier... for example, the inside of the tray card has the same fucking temptation of St. Anthony illustration that we first saw in (I think it was) Bloodlefs "Husk" 7". Now, these kids are also from Florida, they should know better. Shortly after that the same picture was used in ads for the Hatebreed/lntegrity split 7" that took three years to come out, and then in a million other records. Anyone who has ever seen an art history book *OR* flipped through someone's '90's hardcore 7" collection has seen all the artwork in here a hundred times. The Discharge photos of starving children and bodies were the bane of '80's punk record covers just as stolen art history illustrations are the cliche of the '90's. Let's see some fucking originality here! — b

Good Life

Prohaska "Cordoba Achtundeunziq" 7"; This is quite an interesting little record, and I only wish I was fluent in German so I could make my way deeper into it. Basically, this is a concept record (a concept band, even) using football (soccer, we call it in the U.S.A.) as a metaphor for, let me quote the insert, "personal as well as political topics... we follow our self-proclaimed Cordobacult — somehow an Austrian fairy tale about a soccer game in 1978. We believe soccer symbolism can be understood everywhere, but to really be alive each of us needs to create his/her own fairytales. We want to encourage you to do so and we want to ask you to get in touch with us. Soccer is the

truth." The insert contains a fair bit of writing on this topic, from various individuals, all in German. The music is far from the most important thing, it's more of a

vehicle to deliver their concepts. Stylistically, they're very much in the vein of the modern German hardcore bands (high shrieking, metallic music, etc.), not exceptional really. Before and after every song there are samples of a football announcer shouting (in German, of course) about a game in progress. It's interesting and a little daring for them to fuck around with the themes of mythologizing and football together, since both are so closely tied in to nationalism and the far right wing in Europe. But it's true that we all need to create our own mythologies, to attribute our own meanings to the stuff around us, even if it's just football... if life gives you lemons, make lemonade, right? And so many bands are trapped in traditional hardcore mythologies (straight edge, outsider machismo, rebel youth, political radicalism and revolution...) and metaphors (religious imagery and values, Inverted or not, for example) that it's great to see this record appear to shake all that up.

Paracelsius, address elsewhere within _Rain on the Parade "Body Bag" CD:_ Wow, check out these lyrics! "Hardcore and metal will never gel, so we're sending your sound back to hell! Send it back to the longhairs in a bodybag!" What the fuck? There's another place where they suggest that there's some connection between bands using more than "three chords" (and kids enjoying it) and paying $30 to see a show. I'm amazed that one of these new school "old school" hardcore bands would actually go so far as to suggest that their sound is somehow more d.i.y. just because it's generic and unoriginal! This review section is filled with bands making complex and innovative music in a completely d.i.y. manner; in fact, these days it's actually the generic bands (Floorpunch, Better than a Thousand, etc.) that seem to exist to cash in on the music and styles made popular by *real* innovators over ten years ago. I don't know what the fuck these guys are doing, looking for a cause I guess... but seriously, aren't there more pressing problems in and out of hardcore than "longhairs" and their music? I haven't actually seen a real metalhead in years now, and all the people playing the complex and challenging metal-influenced music these guys are so scared of have had short hair since the Judge LP came out. Actually, I'm thrilled this band exists, since they're so easy to poke fun at! There's another classic on here called "Eating Crow, " in which the singer expresses his regrets about joining the cult of straight edge: "Looking back, I shouldn't have said it, the commitment was too deep. But what the fuck did I know? I was fif-

**_Refused "The Shape of Punk to Come":_ For those looking for new musical ideas to keep hardcore alive, this is a whole Christmas of gifts, enough life's blood to keep us going for ten years more. For those looking for new political ideas and approaches to keep their resistance from going stale, Refused not only bring up new issues with more complex analyses (and obscure references) than we've seen anywhere before, but they invest their politics with so much exultation, so much headstrong youthful rap-

turous glory, that suddenly being anti-capitalist and radical seems even more thrilling and giddy than teenage love affairs and dance parties. For those desperate to shake off the creeping weight of time and disillusion, this record is hard, tangible proof of how much is possible, how much living and loving and fighting and discovering is out there, how much huge unexplored world still waits for each one of us, if only we have the ambition to stay alive, to keep pushing, to dare to demand what we want at every moment! This is fucking it, right here, the most important record for the close of the decade. Jazz drumming, digitally engineered feedback like songbirds and whistling kettles, electronic instrumentals, live clips, Van Halen bombast, screaming audience samples (taken from the Slayer live CD, no less!) behind musical fireworks never before achieved (bringing out the whole tension between rock music, spectacle, popularity, media, everything), radio announcer introductions, transitions no one in any genre ever dared consider, ever, one thousand innovations a minute, a recording with more subtleties and secret spaces in it than any major label record that ever came out, more emotional range than any band that has ever come before, rage like burning buildings in riots, beauty like sunrise over the fjords at five in the morning when you've been up with an illicit, irresistible lover all night, passion and resistance like no broken-windowed high school has ever known, rock like the world has never fucking seen or felt it. I can't tell you. You have to go there yourself. But this is the record that saved hardcore for me, that saved me for hardcore, that did it fucking all. Now let's take it further! When Dennis screams "we lack the motion to move to the new beat!", a challenge if I ever heard one, with these beats pumping in my adrenaline glands, these distorted guitars in my brain like the voice of God herself, I'm ready to do anything, betray anyone, run into gunfire, spit in policemen's faces, make love to strangers on public streets, chase down politicians with burning torches, *naked, * go without sleeping for weeks, sing and dance and scream and cry and triumph until everyone in the world is transformed and every moment of our lives is the most crushing, soaring poetry that has ever been written in blood, cum, sunrises and fire. Fuck yes. — b**

Available for shoplifting in corporate record stores everywhere, courtesy of Epitaph and Burning Heart records! There's also an EP available from Burning Heart with two unreleased songs and a techno dance remix of the punk song Refused Are Fucking Dead.

Refused, live in Belgium and North Carolina: To make each moment matter, to make every one beautiful, to break out of the old world in one glorious instant of unfolding wings, like a bird

from a shell. What band do we not need that from, and yet which ones offer it to us?

In Belgium, we were waiting for Refused to start, and the hip hop over the sound system suddenly stopped. A sample (Allen Ginsberg?) plays, evoking the beatnik world of coffee and jazz rhythm and poetry, and a techno beat starts. Refused dance out, "effeminate, " in their crazy uniforms, and

teen. Made the promise, took the oath, eight years later I'm eating crow. Time to be a man and admit my mistake, time to put an end to the charade. You wanna talk about 'true til death'? I'm not thinking that far ahead." That's so hilarious, that we now have youth crew anthems about breaking the edge, what the fuck!

Soulforce, M.L.P., Apartado de Correos N. 18.199, 28080 Madrid, Spain

React "Disturbing the Souls..." 7^{W}: I don't like studio tricks like fading the music in when the band is already playing, but once React gets going they do OK. The black and white Celtic layout didn't lead me astray, they are exactly the kind of old-fashioned straightforward punk band that Profane Existence was releasing in its last days. And they are no less generic than the others, although they have enough energy to make for a good listen all the same. The other thing they have going for them is that really deep, dirty, rough and heavy sound that the best of the last crust bands had. Modern day hardcore punk bands like His Hero Is Gone brought something great to the genre when they interpreted and adapted this thick, grimy sound, and it works quite well in its original form here, too. Both Reacts vocalists (yes, a deep male singer and a shrieking female singer) have good voices, there are good dramatic Antisect parts here and there (at the end of the final song, for example), and the songwriting is tight (although how could it not be, with the formula having been run over and over and over for two decades?)... but it's hard for me to get any more excited about this record than I would about a Johnny-come-lately '80's straight edge hardcore record, you know? Still, if you don't have enough records by late-style crust bands singing about anarchist/ punk issues (anti-fascist/racist, freedom for everybody, fuck state control and war), this fits the bill just fine. Here's a final note: at first I listened to it on the wrong speed, and with that extra velocity and unexpected higher pitch in the vocals, it was fucking great, it didn't even sound wrong... -b

Profane Existence, P.O. Box 8722, Minneapolis, MN 55408

Retconned "" 7": I'm really not sure how this ended up in the review box. This band, if they are one in the first place, is messing around with the whole electronic music thing. It comes off as sarcastic, I think, more like Milemarker than like the Curse of Yakub or another band that takes their computers seriously, but I'm really not sure. I mean, they can't actually think this sounds *good, * can they?. There aren't actually any hardcore ideas being played with here

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(that’s why it’s weird we’re reviewing this, since that’s the “art movement’ we cover), not musically at least, it’s all weird grating electro-noise stuff, and the packaging has no lyrics or other information either, just a webpage address. And I’m sorry, you privileged fucks with web access, I don’t really have it, especially not right now (going couch to couch to review these records on my friends’ record players), so if there’s something awesome about your band that I’m missing because it’s hidden quite postmodernly in electro-land, too bad, the rest of the impoverished/com- puter-illiterate world will miss it too. The singer’s obnoxious take on Nine Inch Nails rock vocals is stomach-turning at best, and god, yuck, ugh, bleagh. That’s all I can bring myself to say. If this is the dehumanized, emotionless, pretentiously mechanized music of the modern age, and it may well be, we’re fucked. Grab a weapon and take to the hills (if you can find any hills left), dark days are here, -b

No fucking address, either, I guess these kids have totally left us for the virtual world. I wonder if they’ll cry into their computer terminals when they read my nasty review on some webpage message board somewhere, sorry to be such a jerk, but your technology revolution has left half the human race behind, and we kind of miss you. www. mindspring. com/˜omniac

Reveal ‘Through the eye of perfection evolution dies slowly” CD: Having just ranted at length about the thrice-stolen artwork of the Poison the Well CD, it’s a wonderful thing to see all the great original artwork in this layout. Thanks for that, Reveal! I also like the way they list their band as consisting of themselves and about twenty friends, that’s cool... who plays what is revealed (uh, sorry) by photos of instruments with names by them. The title of the record seems a little convoluted and reminiscent of the titles of other records on Good Life, they probably could have been more focused there. Anyway, I know you’re waiting impatiently to hear about the music. The CD begins with a frightful sample (“there is no light without darkness, ” etc.) over feedback and eerie tom drumming, it’s well-executed if familiar. Throughout the CD the guitarist does a good job of varying his sound with echoing acoustic parts, harmonics, metal shrieks, single string riffs, minor key open chords, etc., so he doesn’t lose our attention; the singer too has a good understanding of how to use dynamics to keep his screaming vocals from getting too repetitive. In fact, at one point in the sixth song he sings a bit, and (unlike almost

suddenly we ail know that something is about to happen that has never happened at a hardcore show before. They grab their instruments and come in with the music instantly, in perfect sync, smashing that old world to bits, flying off the monitors, swinging the guitars wildly, leaping and kicking and dancing like madmen, Dennis swinging the microphone stand through the air and smashing it against the stage until it is bent into a knot, pieces of drumstick flying around David's ears, the air suddenly electric, as we have stepped out of the world into a place where every little detail matters, where everything is magic and you don't dare close your eyes for an instant, no. It is like a one night stand with the lover of your whole life's dreams and desires, and you wouldn't let a single detail escape for a thousand years of riches and fame.

David: he grins wildly like a blacksmith's deity, beating his sticks to literal splinters against his drums (at the end of each drum part, he lets the whittled or split drumsticks fly up from the drums on the final hit, grabs another pair, adjusts a cymbal with inhuman focus, and comes in with perfect precision, not a thought in the world but the music), his grimace a dare, a challenge, defiance to us mere humans, even, (he stares right at us, blankly, when Dennis takes five minutes to fake an orgasm onstage, while everyone stands frozen in shock,) his head and body always bobbing in time with the music, one arm raised before the next explosion to say "this is it, now or never, now we will fucking do it, no more silence, holding our peace, tonight we destroy and build anew like never before." On the most important hits, he leaps up in the air, crashing down upon his drums exactly with the beat. Between songs, he spins the sticks in his hands like wisps of smoke, tapping out little songs and melodies on the cymbals like none of us have ever seen. When Refused finished playing in North Carolina, he stood up from his drums, thinking he had the energy to stand, and staggered back, to crash against the wall behind him, nearly unconscious. Yes.

**And the rest of the band, all flying around, Dennis doing tricks with the microphone stand, outdoing every rocker there has ever been, the guitarist coming centimeters from Matt's head each time, never hitting him, perfect control, what can I say that could capture this for you? They made time stop for an hour, they made everything matter like it never had before — and they did it with *joy, * not just pain, setting us all free from our demons and our stupid, earthbound superstitions that we would find beauty in our

> suffering rather than our pleasures and triumphs... they showed it to all of us, that the greatest courage of all is required to do what it takes to achieve real happiness, to seize life, to turn to the object of your secret lust and say "I have always wanted to kiss you, " to fly off of tables when you're supposed to be sitting still, to scream opera when you're expected to mumble formula hardcore vocals. To fall in love with the wrong people and the wrong movements and the wrong music. To take your dreams and follow them into the fires, with such passion that no destruction can blot out what ^u do. Yes!**
>
> **Refused is dead, you will never see them do this, but you can see it happen, you can see the same passion, if you make it yourself, *if you do it yourself.* Never again settle for mediocrity, for a moment's tedium! Live without dead time, love without constraints, fight without cowardice, lift us all up, lift us fucking up. We're waiting for you.**

ing. And the drumming is also competent, far from just running through the same standard beats the drummer knows how to use fills and buildups to complement the music. The average Reveal song contains a fair bit of midtempo metal with chunky guitar riffs, etc., as you would expect from neighbors of the H8000 region that spawned Congress, Liar, and their kin; but their mastery of dynamics and variety in their music protects them from getting lost as another faceless modern hardcore band. The lyrics aren't too abstract, which is a danger for bands who want to be poetic but aren't yet sure how; still, they could be a little more profound, I think. We've actually toured with this band a bit, so I knew them before this CD, but I was pleasantly surprised at how well done this CD of theirs is. Here's my constructive criticism, if you Reveal guys ever read this: this CD shows that you have a good grasp of how to make music. Now your job is to evolve a more unique style, and to learn how to perform intensely enough live that your musical talents come across as emotions. I have no doubts that you can do this. — b

Good Life

Rotten Sound "Psychotic Veterinarian" 7": R.S. is an incredible grind band from Finland, not unlike their fellow countrymen Umlaut. They have a great recording, featuring a really powerful snare drum that still punches even during the fastest blastbeats, and a great drum/ guitar mix all around... that's one of the most important things for a grind band to have, otherwise the music just doesn't come across right. [The other really important thing is raw, wild energy, which is why R.S. is a good grind band and all those Relapse pseudo-grind bands with their great recordings still suck.] They employ the low/high roaring/screaming vocals, and don't go anywhere with it that no one else has been, but it still makes for good listening... and, like every good grindcore band, they fancy up their songs with occasional unexpected/ eclectic parts. The content here is pretty low, pretty dumb actually, although funny sometimes (the

first song is called "Chainsaw is God, " that's as good as it gets). Exploring the theme introduced in the title, between each song somebody imitates the characteristic noise of a different animal, followed by an explosion. Juvenile, but it's still a good record, -b

S.O.A., address at the foot of another grind band review

Roundhouse "Lashing Out" 7^{W}: You know those vocalists that listen to a lot of Breakdown and Madball, and try to

every other hardcore band that tries this!) it's beautiful, rather than annoy- sing deep and tough like their heroes, but it doesn't come easily for them, so

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in order to get that low, tough scream they have to sort of slur their speech and it comes out sounding like they have cotton in their mouths? This guy has that thing going on. The band are playing the kind of music that you would expect to go with those vocals: it has fast parts with three or four chords repeated open over a one-two beat, alternated with chunkchunkchunk chunkchunkchunk mosh parts. The lyrics don't have anything actually dumb in them, they seem to be attacking ignorance and even misogyny at one point, although they're not specific enough for me to really be sure. If the singer can work on building up his voice a little so he can carry off the vocals better, and the band tighten up their playing and writing, Roundhouse's music will work better, -b *Free Spirit, P.O. Box 1252, * Madison Sq. Station, New York, NY 10159 _Saddest Day "" CD:_ Moody, bittersweet emo/hardcore with a great recording (especially for this genre and locale) and great packaging (even for this genre: homemade cardstock and fabric cover with velcro, plus a 'zine with bilingual lyrics, explanations, and manifestos) from Brazil, super diy and political. There's plenty of real, openwound emotion in here; if the songwriting was a little more catchy, so the songs could stick with you better, this would be a great record. As it is, it still makes for great listening, and it just plain feels good to listen to a record made by sincere kids. None of the topics were actually things I hadn't thought about before, but they're all important: making hardcore more than a leisure-time activity, how to survive miserable times with love of life intact, the plight of the dispossessed in capitalist society, the controls technology itself exerts over modern life .. As to the music itself, there are two singers, both with shrieky voices, one higher than the other; the songs are fairly long and exploratory, with droning guitar lines and melodic leads, soft acoustic parts, and more aggressive chunky parts here and there. I guess I've made it sound like good records like this are a dime a dozen in this review, but they're really not — something this well-done and well-presented is a rare find, so if this sounds good to you, try to track it down. — b* Doublethink, 83 Bryant Street, Pittsfield, MA 01201

Scalplock "To Hate is To Cure" CD: This is another CD worthy of an entire page worth of reviewing which will instead have to succumb to the restrictions of last minute deadlines. 28 political songs timing in at 39:16. Imagine the higher pitched screech of a death/grind styled vocal (but not too far over the top, I am hearing a Negative Approach style in here as well) over metallic punk, and you have got their musical angle down. Most of the songs are in the same exact feel, and this is an easy CD to put

on as back ground music, but one look at the lyric booklet which accompanies the CD would prevent this band from ever being cast onto the back burner. All of the songs are political, dealing with capitalist domination; ethnocentricity; indigenous rights; violent revolution (not always my first choice of action, but valid at times nonetheless); American imperialism; population expansion; peasant uprisings...fuck! There is a lot here to digest. The layout is really slick: glossy with political photos which look like they got permission from some major publication to print, because they look really sharp, laid out in a style which Crass made famous years back. There is an intro essay as well which describes where they are coming from: "Revolutionary objectives, and their implementation, must begin with suppression of Western Capitalist influence..." This record has some parts which make me leery: the M-16 rifle on

the cover is a bit unnerving, but I guess that is the point. I wish there had been some addresses inside where people could contact the band directly, and get more information about what they have going on politically and how to get involved. Then again, if you are out killing people and inciting violence, you probably don't want to let that be known.

Insurrection Records; P.O. Box 2576; Colchester; Essex co3 4ay; ENGLAND _Section 8 "Throw a Spanner into the Works" 7":_ Yes, this is another fucking '80's style hardcore record, with the same exact flourishes and beats and riffs I've heard on at least five other records this issue, but I still have to give them some credit: they have eleven songs on this 7"! That means they know how to keep a song down to the minimum length it needs to be; so, no fat whatsoever in their songwriting, nothing boring or extraneous. They've got plenty of energy, good, conscious (if nonspecific) lyrics, a clear enough recording, and their singer sounds like he really means it when he's yelling until his voice tears. Their bass sound is pretty trebly and weak, but that's not really important in their case, they don't need much force in their production for the adrenaline to come across. Thinking about it, there may actually be kids in the hardcore scene today who never listened to Youth of Today or their contemporaries, so maybe it's OK that bands like Section 8 (that can play that style competently without adding anything to it musically) exist for their sake. If you heard all those bands, you probably will think this is a good record but not put it on too much, if at all. On the other hand, as their lyrics say, "my memories were not good enough, so I just had to experience them again..." -b *Bridge records, somewhere in Sweden* _Separation 2 10":_ Separation know how to write a good, short, to-the-point punk rock song, and their lyrics are their finest point, placing them squarely in a tradition of motivated, motivating political bands. They're not going to like this very much, but in places they remind me of a much more straightforward, more punk Refused: I'm thinking especially of their first song, when the singer shouts "Oh yeah!" and the guitar drops out, leaving the bass and drums doing something groovy, before the guitar comes back in with those three notes in a row that Refused often use. I just spent fifteen minutes going through Refused's last CD looking for the place where Dennis shouts something and the guitars drop out, leaving the bass and drums doing something groovy — I

couldn't find it right off (maybe it's on the CD before that?) but it's not so important anyway, I guess. And all this is not at all to say that Separation lacks an identity — they have other songs that don't sound like any of the other Umea bands, faster punker songs that do different things with melody, and those songs comprise most of this record. The lyrics, as I said, are the thing here that's really important to me, I'm not nearly as excited about this music as I am about them: here's "History in Fourteen Seconds" in its entirety: "Every day the new is told through the same discourse as the old, so if we care then it's our role to make sure that is never sold back to us. Yeah." And some more excerpts: "If you fail to see the obvious limitations of only screaming at those who already know, then your efforts won't make that much of a difference and a sore throat is probably just as far as you will go." "We're thankful you're having us and we're glad you don't stand still, but hopefully we'll challenge more than just your dancing skills. You see we're more than you expected us to be, and we'll proceed as soon as we have nothing more to speak..." "It's not for me to forget my dreams... and I'm sorry to say that instead of living your life I'd

[Image not archived]

{ rather dance the night away." -b *Phyte, address nearby*

Shockwave "Warpath" 7": Ah yes, Shockwave. Smiling bombs drawn in the famous Mike Ski style on the cover with a backdrop of snow camouflage...! steadied myself for the inevitable. Flipping over the record, I found more camo, with the SA Mob logo superimposed over a Path of Resistance crew photo of a gang of kids wearing matching Shockwave hoodies, baklavas

and gasmasks (that's right, GASMASKS!). Four songs: "Devastator"; "Kickback"; "Bombshell" and "Warpath", all of which sound like Jamey Hatebreed

singing for an Earth Crisis/Hatebreed fam-

ily reunion of somekind. This appears to be all serious, and that is what makes it most ridiculous. A tongue-in-cheek record, sort of the Grudge of tough-guy for all you old schoolers out there. My only fear is that true macho nerds will take this seriously and agree with the singer who laments "I'm not going to sit and suffer anymore / I'm getting armed to the teeth and I'm declaring war". I find it ironic that there is little differentiation in the lyrical content between the current icons of hardcore and the joke bands of hardcore. Either our revolutions are totally ineffective and have been reduced to comedy, or our comedy is completely accurate. Not sure what else to tell you about this. Not funny enough to merit purchasing over the Good Clean Fun record, but it would be nice as background music to a day of weightlifitng. JUG *SA MOB; P.O. Box 1931; Erie PA 165070931*

Sight For Sore Eyes "" CD: This recording starts with some pretty, distant major key harmonics, and dashes into some fast, melodic hardcore tinged with a sort of tragic optimism. The vocalist is singing melodically, and the music is definitely recognizable as fitting into that "rocking melodic hardcore" genre, but it's well written enough to not fall in and get lost in the genre the way so many bands do. The first song is probably the best, it just has this bittersweet beauty that makes this work like almost no other

melodic hardcore that I've heard. Thaf present to varying extents in their other songs as well, and they work or don't work to those various extents. I swear, I usually don't like this kind of mu-

sic at all, but the emotion here is genuine enough and comes across deeply enough that I'm actually really into this. Speaking only musically, this is among my favorites thus far of the records I've heard from Brazil. There could be more variety, I find my attention wandering around the fifth of the ten songs, and I keep wanting to go back to that first song. The lyrics deal largely with emotional relationships between people, without much poetry but with some sincerity. They're much less explicitly political than the other bands I've heard from Brazil. The verdict: if you're interested in finding some melodicAemo- tional" hardcore stuff that is actually good, this is worth it, primarily for the first song, -b

Liberation, Caixa Postal 4193, Sao Paulo S.P, 010061–970 Brazil _Skycamefalling "...to forever embrace the sun" CD:_ I didn't expect to be excited about this, but I have to grant that they're really good at what they're doing, and it's not just rehash either. In the course of just the first song, they demonstrate a remarkable versatility, successfully navigating from aggressive, metallic hardcore to much more haunting melodic material, the singer screaming at one moment and adding eerie background singing at another, and all of it works. Their singer knows how to do his part, too, he sounds like he really cares about the words he's singing, which is rare these days. Their

riffs and arrangements keep their freshness through the rest of the CD, they use more melody and beauty in their metal than most bands, which sets them apart. Their guitarists know how to use a variety of tones, too, which helps a lot, and like almost every band in here with a really positive review, their drummer is doing more than just keeping time. The fourth song is an extended echoing acoustic guitar soliloquy of a quality, length, and seriousness that few other hardcore bands today would dare attempt. With clumsy song titles like "Of Adornment and Disgusf and 'The Fall of Cain's Countenance, " I didn't expect to like the lyrics much, and I'm not unusually im-

pressed by them, though there are a few gems ("we have become the gods to destroy ourselves"), and the fact that they're sung with feeling helps. If only this band had come across as having brains and hearts in the interview I read with them, I'd be probably be really excited about them right now. Hey, here's something: the layout looks great, and it's because their friend took all the photos for it. — b

Good Life

Slave One "" 7": My copy of this skips like a schoolgirl, and just for fun, I have been sitting here listening to the steady pop of the skips in the first groove of the record as it goes around and around and around at 33RPM. It has made me think though: what if this is their music? What if they are the most original minimalists in the history of punk? What if it really isn't skipping afterall and I am actually listening to the rhythmic popping of their intended message?! My interpretation of

what this is supposed to represent could read something like: *The heartbeat of revolution is inevitable.* Interesting, but there is a record to review here. Excuse me., I have been at this too long today. Ok, moving over to the stereo now to give it a little tap...urn...somebody must be playing a joke on me because now the steady pop every few seconds is a bit lower pitched and almost silent. Hmm...the *heartbeat can fade, but it is never fully extinguished.* One more little tap...and...voila! The higher pitched tap returns. Fuck this.. Moving the needle onto the middle of a song produces what sounds like a stuttering band. Not a stuttering man, but a stut-

ented, or at least well produced. This is skipping constantly. I will move on past the vinyl and review the other components. The layout is a yellowish piece of paper (forgive me, l am colorblind...really!) photocopied and difficult to read, but I can see that the lyrics are personal and vague (in meaning as well as visibility). There is a photo behind the words of a person laying dead with their face smashed in, which I hope isn't intended to represent me for having done this shitty review, but what the fuck do you want me to do? At least I tried. Get in touch with them and ask if all the records sound like

this, which I really doubt. This might be the most accurate review I have done in this issue for all I friggin' know. JUG

*slaveOn ~Ra B**ox 123951;Ft. Worth TX 76121; kjyOOOI @jove.acs.unt.edu* §pit Acid "" 12": This is a German record from a few years ago that I guess Conquer the World has rereleased (or is just distributing??) in the U.S. Their hardcore definitely has a personality of its own; there's a lot of melody in it, but a fair bit of bite as well. They manage to fill out the full length with enough variation and new ideas to make it work all the way through — there are slower parts where the melody and singing is emphasized, faster parts with rougher singing and plenty of sharp edges, chunky parts with speaking, and on the first side even a great part with blastbeats and screaming. The

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craziness and ferocity that characterizes so many of today's German bands can be seen here in an earlier, developing form, in between (or, often, complementing) the melody. I could see these guys playing with Belgium's Blindfold when they were around, but I think Spit Acid would have blown them away. The insert is a good, lengthy booklet, with the lyrics in German and English and various explanations/ other writings in German, illustrated by a cut and paste layout that uses drawings from political artists like Eric Drooker. — b *Conquer the World, P.O. Box 40282, Redford, Ml 48240 or Per Koro, address elsewhere within* _Sottopressione "Cosi' Distante" CD:_ This band plays a simple enough old-fashioned hardcore, something like their label mates Strange Corner, but they have more speed and more energy, enough to kick them over the threshold into the world where music that matters is made. The singer yells with some melody in his voice, he sounds like he cares about what he's doing, and the speedy simple riffs propel him forward just fine, just as he propels everything else.

Yeah, I've listened to most of the CD now, and my interest has only grown. The lyrics are sung in Italian, with translations printed next to the original versions, and they're good lyrics too, they have that poetry that Italian lyrics often have. It's a kind of unaffected lyricism that I just haven't seen from punk bands of any other nation: "in a few seconds a hell of splinters chokes down the reason..." "concrete chasm, chewed up by a crowd of ghosts..." OK, the record's over, and I have more energy and optimism about the punk aesthetic now than when it started. Thank god energetic bands who play like they mean it still exist, thank god bands like Sottopressione still exist. — b *Vacation House, address close by below* _Spineless "A Talk Between Me and the Stars" CD:_ You can hear in moments of this CD (for example, the haunting melodic intro and the black metal riff that follows it) the struggles of the H8000 "edgemetal" scene to transcend the musical style they have carefully developed over the past few years. They don't quite make it with this CD — after that promising beginning, Spineless goes back to the Belgian formula of fast chunky metal riffs for most of the record. But this isn't a purely water-treading record forthem or their scene, and that's worth something. Another promising feature of this CD is the first song, which is in French. I think enough of the people who will get this CD can speak French (even I can understand a little) that this is a move that, rather than merely preventing half their audience from understanding their lyrics, will encourage people to recognize the value and great potential of languages besides English in hardcore. The vocals sound a little funny throughout the record, a little distant and distorted, which is strange, since everything else in the mix is well-balanced and fits together smoothly. I like the speaking and literary references in "Afraid to Live, " their ode to the question of mortality. There's a strange song near the end called "At War With Emo, " I can't tell exactly how they intend the title; here are some lyrics, in case you can figure it out: "Look at me. Hear what I say. Feel my warmth. Take care of me. Or play with me (or just notice me)... you ask the birds to sing with you. You ask the trees to play with you..." It's tempting for me to stop there, but I'd better sum up: I've always liked Spineless more than most of their Belgian contemporaries, because they take a couple more risks, and because when they do the generic Belgian metal thing, they often do it better. Here there's a mixture of effective generic metal, new experiments that work, and new experiments that don't; but it comes out well enough to be worth a try, I think. — b

Sober Mind, P.O. Box 206, 8500 Kortrijk, Belgium

Static 84 "Another Funeral" 7": First and foremost, what the hell is going on with this thick European vinyl today??? This fucking thing is like an inch

thick and weighs twelve pounds. Ok, an exaggeration, but it is really neat to have a record which feels heavy and chunky rather than sounding that way for once. This is a good record...it reminded me a great deal of 411, in that it is mostly midtempo with scattered fast parts, and has vocalist who speaks his notes in a style approaching conversation when he is not singing them. With slighty better production, and this is not at all bad for a 7", you would easily be able to make out what he was saying. I can almost hear some "whoa whoa" backups in this, though they are not there, but

the music has that catchy feel to it. The lyrics run the gamut between the personal to the remotely political, meaning that there is nothing all too specific, but social commentary on humanity/society and how "end of human being would be a blessing to the world", which I think is a bit silly. I am not into the extinction of any species, including my own, but I know what these guys are getting at. Maybe we could just select a large group of human beings...no, I don't like the implications of that either. So, there are six songs here, and a layout which is pretty sharp: a cardstock folded sheet which combines drawings and clear photos. Worth checking out if you can find it around...I haven't seen it much in the States. JUG

Bad Influence Records c/o Stefan Fuchs; Ludwig-Thoma-Str. 14; 93051 Regensburg; Germany;
stefanfuch @ metronet.de

Stormshadow "Black Power" 7": This comes with a thick booklet and even a photocopy of an essay introducing anarchism by Emma Goldman. The booklet contains, among other things, quotes from Howard Zinn, Henry Miller, and Rupert Pupkin ("king of comedy"?!), lyrics/expla- nations/lengthy essays for all their songs, and spunky cut-and-paste artwork to illustrate it all. All that inclined me favorably towards Stormshadow, and they didn't let me down with their music: they're not the most talented, tight, or polished band, but they're trying new things, there's a sense of freedom in their songwriting that carries over into the emotion in the songs themselves, and that fits well with their anarchist ideas. Their standard approach is a sort of bouncy, messy hardcore romp, but they mix it up with plenty of other stuff (offbeat ska-style chords, jazz/swing parts that are carried off much better than you'd expect, pop punky parts, more weird stuff). The bassist has a gruff screaming voice that's kind of funny to me (funny in a good, entertaining way, like a muppet), and it's contrasted nicely by the high yelling screams of the guitarist. Samples... hm, they use the same sample that works so well at the beginning of the ABC NO RIO benefit CD, but they didn't use it quite as effectively, and it's always just too bad when two different groups use the same sample. Oh well. The song topics are all awesome, let me go through them: the first one is just a celebration of the passion of punk rock, right on. The second is about the racist crusade the American legal system is carrying out against young non-whites, and its accompanied by an appropriate essay about the issue. The third song is about Orson Wells, whimsically enough, and how the corporate movie industry tried to squash his attempts to pursue his artistic visions, so he followed them on his own. D.I.Y.! There's a song about anarchism, a typical anthem about empowerment accompanied by essays from two band members about, you guessed it, anarchy, and why it can work. "Viva la Vulva" is an anti-sexism song (well, more than that, really, it's better to say that it's a song in favor of awareness of gender issues in general), and it's followed by a song called "Race Myth" that should cause a little controversy (for in the course of asserting that our conception of race is a construct of the ruling class, they deny that race itself exists). The final song is a song of appreciation for the

bassist's father, who almost died of a heart attack. It's heartwarming to see family ties and affection being cel-

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ebrated on a hardcore record... I'm a little jealous that he has them in the first place, really. Not many of us do. — b

Ch-Ching records, P.O. Box218, Edison, NJ 08818

Strang_e Corner "Schism" CD:_ This sounds like it came out a good ten years ago, when the Cro-Mags were high on everyone's list of influences. Simple guitar lines, fast music, yelling vocals that sound a little like loud speaking, all lacking urgency somehow. The guitar is mixed low, it sits back behind the loud vocals and the drums, but that wouldn't be enough to rescue this if it were different. There are plenty of slower parts, occasional double bass, but it all sounds really old-fashioned. That's not

a bad thing in itself but it isn't so great here. *⌈m=^=* If you're so obsessed with the era of the **I** Cro-Mags dominance in hardcore that you **I** can't get enough of bands that draw on **I** their aesthetic, you might not mind listen- **I** ing to this. Otherwise, well, you know. I **I** guess in this day of hardcore pretension **I** and melodrama there's something appeal- **I** ing about the honest simplicity of this **I**

record. To not end this review on a nega- **I**

five note, I'll quote some lyrics that I think **I** are great: "hey you, little atom, what do **I** you want? I know you are defenseless, but **I** you have made the world a slave... you **I** create energy useful to science, but we **I** stupid men don't seem to understand the **I** price we'll have to pay for every fucking **I** favor of yours. You don't look anyone in **I**

the eye, and if someone tells you to go,]

you destroy plains mountains towns and **f** seas..." — b

Vacation House, Via S. Michele, 56, 13069

Vigliano Biellese (Bl) Italy

Stricken For Catherine "Letters Not Sent' CD: This CD begins with a repeating |5ulse on the bass, and then the acoustic guitar comes in over it, doing the pretty emo J music thing. Soon enough we get distorted guitar and a guy singing melodramatically/ **I**

melodically over it. I think this is what emo **I** music today sounds like: mid-tempo, pretty **I** (or would-be pretty) melodies, extremely **I** quiet wandering acoustic parts, etc. This **I** isn't as bad as I was afraid it would be, it's ' rescued by their willingness to let go and **1** make some noise and chaos in the midst **I** of their pretty music. Yeah, that saves them **I**

from being pure pretension, they seem to _I _ _

actually be feeling something and trying ^

to get it across. There's some tension here, and the lyrics (while often straying into the domain of pretentiousness themselves) sometimes do decent things: "you meant something more than a friend, you need disciples now. I'm not sorry for this situation..." So OK, I'm not much of a fan of this musical style, and I'm sure that's coming out in

my review... but the fact is that while they're trying hard, I suppose, and have some original musical ideas, their songwriting is just not good enough yet to persuade an emo non-believer to take their music seriously. That says something itself. Music becomes music exactly the moment it transcends genre, I think... not that there's no reason for genre, genre exists so that people can learn from each other in their struggles to make a particular kind of music work; but when music works it rises above boundaries. So S.F.C. is onto something, but they need to follow it through a little further to start getting positive reviews in magazines like Inside Front that have traditionally not been emo-friendly zones, -b *Espo, P.O. Box 63, Allston, MA 02134*

~~Subhumans "Unfinished Business" CD:~~ Six songs and an intro from the early days of this classic punk band. I grew up on the first four Subhumans 7"s, they were pretty much punk gospel to me, so I was glad to get my hands on this stuff... predictably, the best tracks are the four written back in 1981,

they're up to par with anything else the Subhumans did back then, especially "No Thanks." Many of the songs are recent recordings, whichamaz- ingly sound exactly the same as the old recordings in production and amps and everything — !? No band today could get that sound if they tried with both hands and a whole van-full of "vintage" equipment. I think the older recordings have a certain invisible something that sets them apart (again, No Thanks, " and the live "Song #35"), but this is all good stuff. If you haven't heard the Subhumans before, I can't even start to describe them here, I just have to say that between their subtle and never-dogmatic politics, their simple

_n_ yet never stagnant music, and their up- **I** front sincere attitude, they were deserv- **I** edly one of the most influential and well- **I** remembered bands of their day. Start with

I the "Religious Wars" 7" if you haven't heard **I** them before (as fast as you can, too); but **I** if you've got the early records, you should **I** probably get this, even if you thought they **I** softened up a bit in the later '80's. And hey, "Motorway Song" (apparently an outtake **I** for one of those old 7"s) really does cap- I ture how maddening it can be to be lost on the highways looking for the show. — b

I *Bluurg, 2 Victoria Terrace, Melksham, Wilts SN12 6NA England*

J _Svart $no "Smock'n Roll" 12":_ Everything **I** that's good about this record is what was **I** good about the best, roughest punk bands **I** from the '80's that didn't give a fuck and **I** went all out. The music is rugged, fast, **I** punch-drunk, not too much variety but **I** plenty of raw go go go, and the lyrics **I** (yelled in throaty Swedish) are unambigu**I** ous, unpretentious, candid and bold. I'd **I** much rather listen to this than try to enjoy **I** the polished musicianship on some soulE less modern metallic hardcore record, **I** even if said record included a brand new **I** way of playing leads over mosh parts or **I** whatfuckingever. Here's what S.S. has to **I** say on the subject: "you should not drink **I** light beer if intoxication is the goal, check **I** the label on the bottle if you want to have **I** control — with music it's just the same, in**I** sincerity won't do, consume a fake prod**I** uct and stand there like a fool." They also

I have a song about using voodoo dolls to

I bring down the defenders and figureheads _ ^ ^ ^ — — *m*_ of the system: "I have a doll and I can

shape it anyway I choose, when it takes the form of the head of state, he is bound to lose. I like politicians and people who are rich, the doll becomes just like them and they will start to itch. My doll is a weapon when it's used against the wealthy, I hit my doll with a hammer, for them its not very healthy." Hope it works, mere punk music hasn't brought those motherfuckers down yet... — b

Prank, address not hard to find... it's even in this issue somewhere, I bet! ~~Talk Is Poisqn "" CD;~~ Here is Talk Is Poison, ready to rescue us from the pretension and sterile shrink-wrapped perfectionism of the run-of-the-mill hardcore bands of the late '90s. They play fast, their riffs are simple and their songs average significantly under two minutes, they sound like they jump around even in the studio, their guitarists do those '80's guitar shrieks to bring in new parts, they're not too stuffy or uptight about playing every note perfectly, and — best of all — they actually sound a bit like they might be struggling to play this fast. I haven't heard bands that sounded like they were speeding at the limit of their ability for many years, and it really counts, I think. These aren't the catchiest songs ever written, though they're not entirely forgettable; if they were any more catchy, this record would be a fucking instant classic, in my opinion. The lyrics are as raw and insistent as the

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vocals and the rest of the music, which is perfect; they don't really warrant reprinting here, but they work fine with the rest of the package. When I think of really "old school" hardcore, this is the sort of thing that comes to *my* mind, and I think we could use plenty more of it. — b *Prank, P.O. Box 410892, San Francisco, CA 94141–0892*

Thumbs Down "Crossroads" CD: This is absolutely by-the-numbers old-fashioned simple hardcore/punk stuff. It's perfectly executed, but how could it not be, this style of hardcore was perfected by 1988 and hasn't changed since, much to my consternation. It takes a band like Intensity to take a

genre this old and stuffy and breathe new life into it, and Thumbs Down doesn't have quite what it takes. I mean, this record is good, nothing goes wrong in the course of it, the backing crew vocals are all on time, its well recorded etc., but there are other records I would put on if I wanted to hear this kind of music, old records that still have more freshness to them. Example: the riff that comprises their eighth song ("No Retreat, No Surrender") was the Exploited's song "Alternative" ten years before today's generation of hardcore kids got their first punk record... there's just not much more left that can be done with this old-fashioned, dated musical style that hasn't already been done, and that's all there is to it. T.D. are good at what they do, and all it would take for me to enjoy their next record would be for them to develop one characteristic to set them apart from the herd. I hope they do! — b

Genet records, address not here... try nearby?

Toxic Bonkers "If the Dead Could Talk" CD: This is a Polish grindcore band, with double bass, mosh parts, a distorted bass which makes a brief (one note) appearance

at the beginning of the fifteenth track, the guitars mixed too quiet, a deep-voiced growling singer and a more mid-ranged screamer, and a pretty funny fucking name. This isn't bad, and it's the kind of obscure record that I'll listen to on principle just to perplex my friends, but I don't think anything happens here that hasn't happened already (and more smoothly, no doubt) on an Assuck record. Actually, I think every single thing that has ever happened on an Assuck record happens here at some point, political lyrics and topics included, which is pretty impressive when you think about it. Their Polish nationality makes some of the issues strike closer to home than they do in Florida, no doubt. If their recording was just a little smoother and heavier, I would have no reason not to listen to this instead of Assuck when I'm in the mood for grindcore. As it is, though, I don't listen to Assuck much, and at sixteen tracks, this starts to really drag for me. — b

S.O.A. c/o Paolo Petralia, Via Oderisi da Gubbio, 67/69, 00146 Roma, Italy _Uprpved Truth "" 7";_ I am a dick. I listened to side one of this once through on 45 RPM and was pretty into it...it sounded it like a melodic GISM with higher pitched vocals and speed metal guitars. I'd started my review really positively. Then, unfortunately, I discovered that the record is actually a 33 RPM (it says it right on the record, but I was oblivious to that). Now, it sounds just bizarre. There are three songs here by this German band, and for a 33 RPM that is actually pretty cool, as the third song has a side to itself and times in at the average length of two songs for any other record. It is an opus of sorts, but I'll get to that in a minute. This is a difficult record for me to get into, but I am trying. The first song is about people who lie (appropriately called "Liar") and it reads like you'd expect, except for one verse which says "I love your music / hate your approach /1 love your voice / but I hate your speech" which I found sort of interesting. Song number two is about being driven to despair by "chaos" in one's head, ultimately deciding to give up and

kill oneself, which I didn't find interesting at all. Song three, the opus, has the least lyrics of all and repeats them throughout. Something about despair within wasted days and years. The music repeats as well, sort of a droning heavy metal with wandering melodies played on super fuzzed out guitars. The final words on the record are a sample of a woman's voice which says • "I've been begging for help." I don't get it when played at 33 RPM, and though I don't get it at 45 RPM either, I like it better that way. JUG

$3 including postage to: Mark; 815 18th St. #4; Sacramento CA 95814, USA _Vanilla "Social Evening and French Divorce" 12":_ I've always heard about

the French school of emo, but never really heard any of it. I guess this is it (the tonguein-cheek cover reads: "'Social Evening and French Divorce' is a challenge to mature musicgoers... from the pioneers of the 'Paris Redwine Emo'"). I expected it to be softer than it is, actually, and I was pleasantly surprised to discover that they keep their music up to the same energy level as, say, Fugazi. Earlier Fugazi is probably a decent comparison for this — the aesthetics seem to be the same here, with the jangly melodies, the throaty singing, the well-orchestrated changes and arrangements, the poetically coded lyrics, the not infrequent experiments in format and instrumentation,

the mix that features more mid-range than most metallic hardcore. There's definitely emotion in this music, and if music like this was more to my taste, I would probably listen to this a fair bit. It's not, of course (all I want to listen to is Nausea, the Amebix, Systral, Stalingrad...), but I can tell there's something good going on here. The vocals don't even sound too forced or melodramatic to me. Hm... I wonder if these guys ever played with Monobrow Jones In The Spring? — b *Conquer the World, not a particularly dependable label in my experience, RO. Box 40282, Redford, Ml 48240*

Versvs "Trece" CD: Seven songs at 24:54. The best lyrics of any release so far today out of all the stuff I have reviewed! Thank you, great spirit of hardcore for sending me this offering. I was about to lose my fucking mind in personal lyric drudgery. Politics mixed with hardcore topics mixed with personal frustration...angry and gruff like a bulldog...this vocalist sounds like Rick Ta Life on a day when he's having a sore throat, throaty and distorted almost to the point of being unintelligible. Lyrical examples from each of those styles are as follows (each song is printed in both English and Spanish(?)): from "There's No Justice": *A period of prosperity in a corrupted system /justice raped by the power of money/ Torture and force abuse / those are the laws of fear...*from "Versus": *I against you /1 against your fucking ignorance/your false tolerance /your system based on lies /your hypocrisy /your disrespect /your methods of punishment/that's whylconfrontyou today...from* "Daily Revolution": *Revolution in your mind, in your daily life / Resurrection of your soul, of your hope / Maybe you won't change the world, maybe there's no future, but by breaking the rules you're winning the war.* So with those in mind, I can tell you that the music is NYHCish and spuer heavy/slow to mid tempo and is peppered with an occasional spoken part; beginning and ending with sound samples of singing. I think that some songs are stronger than others, and at times it falls into the mediocricy of the genre, but a rare record does not. This is a solid release, and is definitely worth checking out. It is the first release from Outlast Records, and I am looking forward to the next. JUG *Outlast Records; P.O. Box 613; 29080 Malaga; SPAIN*

Voice of Regret "Open Eyes" CD: Uh oh, it starts with a sample (albeit in German), and then when the simple chunky hardcore comes in (introduced by a bass that doesn't have a very powerful sound, I might add) the singer

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yells "yeeeah." This is generally simple hardcore with a few faster parts, lots of chunky stuff, and the guitars mixed far too low beneath the drums and bass. The singer yells, speaks a little, occasionally receives help from that shouting backup chorus we all know so well, generally doesn't do anything to set himself apart from the crowd. The riffs aren't original at all, they're generic enough that I can't even pin down influences. So this is pretty lackluster in general, yes. I do like their record label's name, I think it's awesome. And it's cool that the singer gets to list his instrument as "voice of regret' next to "guitar" and "drums." — b *Fat For Life Records, Vjekoslav Kolenda, Gen. Guisan-str. 29, CH-6300 Zug, Switzerland*

Wallside "From the Sky": Ten songs at 27:38. Screams from the depths of the singer's guts like the desperate cries of a dying man...chaotic music with enough cohesion to make it flow from part to part with a degree of poetry. Ten songs which sound pretty much the same, musically and vocally. Lyrically, I am lost. Maybe I don't interpret poetry well, but nothing here makes much sense to me above and beyond the sound of the screams themselves. That is really frustrating and makes this record difficult to get into. Okay as background music if you are into noise with occasional jazzy bits and flowing melodic distortion, but dull and frustrating when I try to interpret who they are or why they have taken the time to form this band. I will call it "personal lyrics", which is oftentimes another way to say "confusing emotive poetry", which isn't necessarily bad, but is rarely extraordinary. Cynthia, making a surprise reviewer appearance for this CD, just walked in and said "He's got this insane little voice." True, so very true...a solid voice though, and fans of noisy HC will be really into this. JUG and C'lA

*Makoto Recordings; P.O. Box 504031; Kalamazoo Ml 49005; _ makotorec @ hotmail. com_*

Beyond Description/Detestation split 10": This is the best looking Wicked Witch record yet, the black, white and yellow cover with the punk art (Japanese and American punk skeletons beating each other with guitars) looks gorgeous! And it's a good record, too, the sort of record that even if you don't listen to it every day, you're glad you have it. Beyond Description play punk rock, yes they sure do, fast, noisy, simple riffs, raw-throated yelling vocals, occasional group choruses, adrenaline and formula to spare. They're not doing anything new, sure, but it's still great to listen to, and somehow being Japanese helps (here's some great Japanese English for you: the entire lyrics to one song are "confusion, chaos of shits"). There's an obvious fuck up in one song when the bass brings in the next riff by itself and flubs a few strokes, but that just proves that this is real punk rock. I didn't really get into Detestation bearing the Nausea banner forward on their CD, but a record like this is somehow a better context for them (you know, big vinyl, punk layout, foreign release, etc.) so I was able to stop hoping for innovation and just enjoy their speedy, dirty punk. And wait, hold on, there's a part in one song where everything stops but one guitar doing a spooky triple-chink part by itself, that hasn't been overdone yet (in *this* genre, at least), and its a high point for them on this record. The intro the fourth song is a welcome moment of restraint and tension, too. For the most part, I agree with their lyrics (how could I not, they being the typical anarcho-punk anti-capitalist/religion/ho- mophobiafare) without finding them especially interesting, although I do like the words to "Tempest, " a prayer to mother earth to bring destruction upon her exploiters and miners that rises to a dramatic, bloody conclusion. If the

band would dare to leave the verse/chorus crust formula behind for a song, they could have made that an anthem of real power by building the music to the same frenzied crescendo that the lyrics reach. Oh well. I still enjoy having this record, looking at it at least as much as listening to it. -b *Wicked Witch, P.O. Box 3835, 1001APAmster-*

dam, Netherlands _Burning Inside/Dawncore split 7":_ I love this 7". I love Dawncore's side, and I'm a bit perplexed by that, because this is exactly the traditional NYC-style tough hardcore that I'm fed up with everyone else playing. Somehow here it's fresh and exciting, maybe it's just that I know the band and when I've seen them play they've been completely open and emotional and going all out, but if this music wasn't good on its own I don't think I would be able to enjoy it as much as I am. It helps that their recording is so fucking good: everything sounds crystal clear, powerful, heavy, it makes all their fast parts and pounding mosh parts really work. I love the Burning Inside songs too, which is a little less strange, since they're a little more varied in the writing and styles. They tend to play faster, they throw in rhythms and leads that I haven't heard in hardcore like this before (the second song has a part that sounds like it was adapted from American rock from the 1960 s, not unlike some of Jane's Addiction's better moments), they have more unexpected transitions. At the same time, this is music you could mosh to, music you might have a hard time *not* moshing to, in fact, if you like to mosh at all, and it's super catchy too. Their recording isn't quite as clear and forceful, but their songs have enough raw energy that this can't hold them back. They can do the same group chants at the choruses that hardcore bands have done for almost two decades, and it somehow works, it doesn't seem tired at all but actually evokes the feelings of community and love that those group vocal parts were originally meant to. That same feeling of community is there for me in both bands' thanks lists, too, which are all fellow Hungarian bands, even though these kids know enough Western bands that they could easily have used the thanks lists to show off their networking and connections. Both bands' lyrics reflect similar values and beliefs, it's reassuring to read them and feel like there are still hardcore scenes where a premium is put on togetherness. There's a great moment after the first Burning Inside song, I guess it's a recording of a guy laughing in the studio after something went wrong... I'm usually just annoyed by things like that on records, but this guy's laugh is so open and infectious that I was laughing along soon too, it was awesome. — b

Zoltan Jakab, 2120 Dunakeszi, Rozmaring u. 30, Hungary

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Bred on Deception/Purgatoria split 7": B. on D. has one of the most unusual-sounding punk recordings I've ever heard. It's grindcore played on without guitars just a bass, that sounds something like the badly distorted guitars on the Minor Threat record, weird as fuck... the vocals (alternating the deep grunts and high shrieking of all grindcore bands, the only predictable thing here at all) are so much louder than the rest of the instruments that it's almost like they're not there, especially In the first song, and you can't really hear if there is a drummer or just a rustling noise in the background. The first song has a break in the middle filled with alien laughter, and finishes with a scream that is cut off before it ends. There's a weird circus music interlude with lounge singing in the second song, what the fuck! This wins first place fpr pure weirdness this issue. The songs are entitled "America the Beautiful" (chorus:

"this country is being run by the one percent ruling class all for profit and power, it's time we kick their ass"), "Anarchism Is Progress, "

Transnational Propaganda, " and "Why I Want To Hit People." This side of

ately playing the blues lead over the riff that Discharge used to save for the

the record might make it worth it for record collectors, for sheer weirdness quotient alone. Purgatoria is more traditional mediocre grindcore, much better mix, though the drums are still a bit quiet. I wish they'd included their lyrics, since their last song (of seven) is called "fag bashing black metal." Hmm, I wonder if B. on D. wants to sound like a normal bad grindcore band, or if they have a crazy aesthetic of their own with which they've come to destroy music as we know it? — b

write B. on D. yourselves, at Pentograma, 13023 Kagel Cyn., Pacoima, CA 91331

Endstand/Aurinkokerho split CD: Lots of great music coming out of Finland this year, and Endstand is one of the best. They play fast, simple, straight to the point hardcore that somehow really works, thanks to the urgency and new slant on these old U.S. traditions (circa Gorilla Biscuits) that their Finnish perspective offers... Intensity and very, very few other bands today are doing this with equal success. These songs all have the boundless energy of, say, old Uniform Choice, and the singer's obvious anger adds a sharpness to them — which is given further depth when the • slightly mournful, major key guitar leads come in in the background, offering an element of regret to his rage about (song 1) overzealous vegan militants (song 2) "king of the scene" hardcore kids... lyrics: "more hardcore than you... yeah, you fucking rule" and (song 3) the European Union: a "United States of Europe, " he alleges, not without reason, claiming that whatever little democratic power still remains in the hands of the people in the smaller countries will soon be gone as they melt into one huge, faceless mass like the U.S.A. Aurinkokerho starts with a short instrumental intro, ending with a strange, apocalyptic noise that I'm damned if I can recognize. That's my favorite part of their music, after that they play simple three chord punk rock, with sweetly sung vocals — not poppy shit like some labels sell like pigswill in the U.S.A., but still not as exciting to me as Endstand. — b *Endstand, PO. Box65, 11101 Riihimaki, Finland*

Excrement of War/Deformed Conscience split 12": The labels are on the wrong sides of the record, so I was confused for a second, but now I've figured out what's going on and I can tell you: Deformed Conscience is fucking awesome, the pick of the litter of the latecomer crust bands. So many of them lack the real pissed off fury that it takes , to make this stuff work, but not D.C. It

**A, W.O.L./Headway split 7^{M}: I was excited to hear Headway here, they are one of the few hardcore bands right now that really conceive of themselves as artists and try to express themselves and expand the medium accordingly. Their singer has developed a unique style, in which he alternates between some of the harshest, most acidic shrieks I've ever heard and mournful banshee wails more shockingly personal than any other singer would dare venture in public. The band explore strange, broken melodies, following hypnotic, everchanging guitar lines as if they were grooves, occasionally building up to explosive transitions; the final product is stark, abrasive,

bleeding emotion, like sleepless mornings in tears when your idols and illusions come crashing down. There's a jazz sensibility to their music, in that it never repeats itself but is made up rather of infinite improvisations on themes, and it even comes off in the studio-it still sounds like they are performing, rather than recording, here. The lyrics, too, are pure poetry, ghostly and feverish, desirous and despairing. The AWOL side has more in common with the mainstream of French metallic hardcore that bands like Stormcore set the precedent for. They begin with an acoustic part alternated with distorted guitar chunks, and then go into a series of well-arranged mosh metal riffs. But before you think they're just another tough guy hardcore band: their singer works magic to set them apart. His screaming style has a lot more in common with Julien from Headway than with the guy from Madball or some other macho boy trapped in the cage of his own gender limitations, and this makes their metal/hardcore emotional, makes it important, makes it really work and matter. When they get going just past the middle of the song, playing a fast metal riff (something like Metallica did in their best days, only with the production of a French hardcore band, if you can imagine), and then pull out the speed so the riff continues over half-tempo, pounding drums, as the singer rips his throat out and brandishes it at us, I'm shuddering in amazement. From there I'm locked in, and their music does exactly what the best metallic hardcore of this decade has done (early Integrity, definitely Starkweather) with fury and poignancy and pain. Altogether, their song is at least as good as the Headway song, and this is a top notch 7". -b *Mosh Bart, 28 Rue Du Puits Mauger, 35000 Rennes, France***

Headway live in Montpellie_r, June 1998:_ Headway is the only band I've ever seen dare to do an Acme cover, and better yet, pull it off. They poured so much soul, so much raw angst into their performance, that it hurt to watch, it tightened up all my muscles until I shuddered as I stood. They ran all their songs together in one long improvisation, the violence of — emotion ebbing and flowing with the orchestration of the music, the singer sometimes taking out his saxophone during the quieter moments to really take us somewhere else, and then as the intensity built again kneeling upon the stage, one arm bent as far behind his back as it could go, every tendon strained to push out the bitterest screams, to squeeze his whole being out of his body and into the air, hanging in long shrieks around us, so personal that we almost felt as if we should not be there to see it. The rest of the band, too, screamed, into the air, oblivious to and disinterested in the microphones, not trying to capture and save up that emotion, to present it nicely, but just to push it out, to flood the world with so much of it that amplification would never matter again.

shows here from the first instant of the record, when they come in immedi-

climaxes of their songs. It shows in the * unrelenting vocals, filled with passion and anger, never tired. It shows at the end of one song when they just make noise and bang out drum rolls for a 4 minute, with no regard for anything but being loud and mad,

before finishing the music off. And it shows too in their songwriting, too, I suppose, which is as tight and to-the-point as their playing. Now that I'm deep into their side, I've noticed that their drummer does a lot of rolls — that really keeps things going foe me, more power to him. And their lyrics are nice and specific: fuck McDonalds, fuck everyone who works with major labels, fuck capitalist wars over oil, fuck apathetic bastards, and fuck you if you're in the service of any of the motherfuckers. And fuck, it turns out I like Excrement of War just as much! My friend Andy, who comes from the hardcore scene and doesn't know much about the grimy, bitter glory of crust, was telling me how much he likes the Detestation CD. I should make him get this record. E. of W.'s singer is at least as into it as D.C.'s, she has a great deep screaming voice, and the band behind her has all the energy they need too — and, oh fuck, they just went into an '80's blues metal solo over the verse riff! Fuck

Fired Up records, in Minneapolis, ' I think it's done by somebody from Profane Existence — and this is a fucking shame, but their address isn't on the record, and I can't find it anywhere else! Try contacting Profane E.

Handful of Dust/Sonq of Kerman split ZL. It's the final days of putting Inside Front together, and I'm looking for any excuse to be able to skip reviewing these last records, but I couldn't skip this one, because it matters. Handful of Dust is amazing, unlike anything else I've heard come from the hardcore community ever. They use keyboards, but not like other bands — their keyboard is a central part of their music, and their keyboardist is not only skilled at his instrument but actually an original player and composer. At points in the beginnings and quiet parts of songs, he's playing the haunting steady tones that the Amebix would have used if they could have afforded half decent equipment; ' other times, he interjects sudden jolts of static, other unexpected sounds to add crazy hallucination textures to the vicious and unpredictable metal music, ' even samples that interact in terrifying ways with the vocals. Hell, the vocalists too are doing stuff I haven't heard before: they use high, droning singing, in-

terspersed with metal shrieking and speaking parts, all expertly executed, to take this record to places we haven't

[Image not archived]

seen hardcore bands go (yes, metal bands, but not hardcore bands... assuming H. of D. *is* a hardcore band). And H. of D. uses some of the broadest-ranging dynamics I've heard, going back and forth between starkly quiet parts and violent, frightening metal madness. Their lyrics are abstract in that "scary" metal way, nothing unusual there. Song of Kerman get some jumpy Neurosis (circa "Enemy of the Sun") fast grooves going on, with the bass and toms leading, at the best moments of their first song. The screaming vocals aren't quite as all-out as I'd like to hear, but they're almost there I guess. The other song is an artsy, not entirely successful experiment with nerve-grating feedback, pretty piano, and a reading/speaking part (a piece of a William Lloyd Garrison essay, "intelligent wickedness, " addressing the oppression of women by men). The lyrics to the first song seem to have been taken from a poem by Laura Otten, and

there's a generally feminist leaning to their whole project here, which is nice to see from hardcore boys.

— b

Moo Cow, P.O. box 616, Madison, Wi 53701 _Indecision/Knuckledust split CD:_ I imagine this is one of the last recordings of the old Indecision since they have now finally joined once and for all with Milhouse. If you haven't heard the old Indecision's brand of straightforward late '90's hardcore, you're probably still doing OK, although they have achieved a lot of popularity just for being an honest, hardworking band with catchy choruses and their heads in the right place. Their second song here is a cover of the Cure's immortal fluffsong "Just Like Heaven, " in which they actually use an organ and guitar lead tones something like the original... I'm not sure if it works, since the singer is still doing his high screeching thing, and since they're nof going to be the Cure doing this song, no matter how hard they try, they might as well resolve themselves to being Indecision playing the song, that might work better. The drummer does the best job in this song as far as that goes, his doubletime punk beats work great in the song. Their other three songs here are from a live radio show in New York, they don't sound bad at all, and they start pretty

well: "INDECISION!!!" yells the announcer, and someone in the band audibly says "dork!" before they start playing. Knuckledust makes a good partner for Indecision, they're doing the same general thing with their music — fast, simple riffs with chunky parts, yelling (non-metal) vocals — with somewhat more energy than Indecision, too, I think. They benefit from more speed, a vocalist who not only sounds worked up but has the vocal strength to back it up, good samples, and a CRASS cover that they play as if it is their own (in contrast to Indecision's daring but not entirely successful experiment earlier). — b .

Household Name, address everywhere you look

Jane/Shaft "Chorus of Doom" split CD: Jane begins with an acoustic guitar part (with a rhythm and lead, no less) embellished by a sample in German. The music comes in soon enough, modern German hardcore (that is, metallic, fairly fast, a guy screaming in a deep torn-throated voice) with occasional double bass, chunky riffs, nothing brand new but smoothly executed enough and with a good enough recording. The second song contains their contribution to broadening the horizons of hardcore: a quieter part, with a trained singer doing her thing in the foreground (and their screamer still doing his thing somewhat unnecessarily in the background). She's really good, really beautiful voice, and had her work been better integrated into Jane's music this would have been something really special. At points Jane sounds more

influenced by Belgian "edgemetal" than the German Per Koro crazy hardcore stuff, if that means anything to you. OK, now Shaft: they're playing in the same vein as their CD-mates, the differences being more raw immediacy in their recording (although the vocals are too loud...), deeper, possibly more distinctive vocals, and less complexity in the songwriting (no fancy acoustic parts, for example, and much less double bass). They have a rough, grainy, sandblasting guitar sound going for them, but they're a

little less polished all around than Jane and it holds them back. A blastbeat part in their second song is the only thing that ultimately rescues it from being forgettable, and their third song has no such saving grace. It's not really central to this CD, but it's worth pointing out that the layout here is absolutely terrible, you can read everything but the band photographs and backgrounds are so badly put together they make me not want to even look at the lyrics. — b

Alveran, P.O. Box 100152, 44701 Bochum, Germany

Kilara/Hellchild split CD: Here's an announcement for the music world: the track listing on this CD is fucked up (how do you screw something like that up?), and it's actually Hellchild whose songs are first. That should resolve some confusion. I haven't encountered Hellchild before, but they live up to their name here, playing a pounding, hypnotizing groove punctuated by enough weird stuff (a heavy metal solo in the background during the first song, a part where the guitarist messes with his on/off switch in the second song, a skillful Venom cover for the third song) to keep it vital. Their singer has a really distinctive, really deep growling voice, and the recording itself is crushing. Now, Kilara. Their 7" was one of most intense records to come out in the last five years, and I thought their recordings sort of peaked with that. But I like this better than I liked their subsequent full length: it has some of the riotous energy and lack of restraint that made the 7" so dangerous. I think, in retrospect, the main problem was they just stopped playing fast enough. Their slow stuff on here (their third song) is heavy and powerful, scary, and it doesn't ever drag, but it lacks the velocity to really run someone over. The second of their three songs is a traditional southern acoustic ballad about the destruction wrought upon their homeland by industrial progress, they're even whooping in the background at the end, good for them. Let me talk about the layout of this CD for a second: it has very little to do with the bands, centering almost entirely on reproductions of some photographs of a church made out of bones in the Czech city of Kutna Hora. It turns out at the end that the photos are actually "available for purchase" (a mere $75 for ten prints, it reads in a boldface print, so we consumers won't be able to make any mistakes) and "suitable for framing, " which I think is pretty tacky. It's just funny to me how worked up Americans get when they come across something as foreign to them as bones. I've been to the church in question, it's interesting enough, but it's hilarious how adolescent we Westerners act when confronted with something (like mortality) that our culture fails to address. Every black metal band in Eastern Europe has had their fucking picture taken in this church, and my impression was that at this point everyone there regards the church as pretty trite. But death is still a commodity in the USA, so buy away, buy away. — b *Rhetoric, P.O. Box 82, Madison, WI 53701*

_Morning Aqain/25 ta Life split CD promo(?):_A three song, 7:59 second CD? I was skeptical at first, but this disc actually surprised me. This is a Good

Life promo, and if you can look beyond the fact that the only real reason this record exists is to sell you something, you will find some interesting stuff. The Morning Again song (that's right — song) is relatively standard Morning Again music (Unbroken with

Slayer influences), but with substantial lyrics: "insecurity becomes overwhelming / as a nation goes under the knife / to carve away a mirror's reflection / I'm not your billboard lie". One song though?!? It was the 25 ta Life songs (that's right...songs...TWO of them! Whoa...) that really surprised me. This was a totally new direction for these guys, musically. The vocals are higher pitched and nasal sounding, like those found in Redemption '87, and the music itself is like mid eighties NYHC along the lines of Side By Side. Whatever you can imagine 25 ta Life to sound like, just throw those preconceptions out the window in terms of the music. Lyrically, they once again discuss hardcore pride, and unity, and staying together ("Don't be afraid, take control / Get involved in da scene / Hardcore unity, the spirit remains"). I loved their two songs, and just to prove to myself that it wasn't just my ear failing after hours of demo reviewing, I played them for others who thought too that the songs were interesting for 25 ta Life. I guess the one question I have about this CD comes in the word choices used in the quote I just printed from 25 ta Life. Now, I know that I grew up in Connecticut, and not on the streets of NYC, but I have to wonder, why is the word "da" used to replace "the" in the line "get involved in da scene" but then not in the next line, "Hardcore unity, the spirit remains"? I am confused here.

Should the word not be replaced here as well? Or possibly, perhaps the two different usages of "da" imply that the word "the" has different meaning when used in each of these sentences. I will ponder this one and get back to you sometime... JUG *Good Life, P.O. Box 114, 8500 Kortrijk, Belgium* _Motherfucking Titty Suckers/46 Short split_ Z; The M.F.T.S. songs sound like early Circle Jerks to me, maybe, only rougher sounding, less distorted guitars, less straight punk songwriting, and... a lot funnier! These are songs about being a post office kid, you know, those teenage lost punk kids that hang out in from of the post office downtown in every city across America: the first one is about how the kid's dad doesn't like to listen to G.G. Allin records, the next about being in love with a girl who is just using you for drugs, then about smoking dope, and trying to get laid by girls who aren't interested... and at the end, you hear the singer (who sounds

stoned, drunk and lost through all the mumbled lyrics) say "alright, that's good enough, man." The fucked up thing is that these songs are actually catchy, as is the band's fuck-all attitude. It's almost as if they're not post office kids after all, but more experienced musicians pulling one over on us... 46 Short sound like old Black Flag, maybe. I was having a hard time imagining any other band sounding right on the flipside of those M.F.T.S. classics,

but they do OK. The singer does that speaking instead of screaming thing some early '80's bands could get away with, and for me the high point comes at the end of their second and last song when another guy joins in with him actually screaming. — b

Caught Red Handed, address coming soon to a theater near you

Opstand/Spazz split 7": Occasionally when everything else stops and a guitar leads off by itself, I feel like it's the 1980's again and start to smile... but for the entire

rest of their side of this record, I was wondering what the fuck everybody sees in Spazz. I've heard so many other bands play this fast old-style hardcore/grind stuff better... their heroes Larm (in whose honor they've written a song called "Wooden Shoes, " a not particularly enlightened glorification of stereotypes about Holland... and Dutch hardcore), of course, or Opstand, for that matter. Or maybe I'm just prejudiced because Spazz sings about stupid shit like cutting your hair off when you start to go bald ("Scalpfarmer: Scalp of Strength/ Shaved till (sic) Death") and Opstand's lyrics are well-thought out and address real- life political issues. I mean, there's definitely a place for fun and satire and even frivolity in hardcore, but it has to actually be clever, and I don't think Spazz is on this record... so I'd much rather be reading Opstand's essays about racist scapegoating in France and the connections between domestic violence and hi- erarchy/power dynamics in our society, and listening to their furious shrieking hyperspeed grind, than listening to Spazz's fairly lackluster take on the same style and looking at the picture of Donald fucking Duck on their side of the insert. At least they know and respect the European heritage of the music they play... And, the packaging: although neither band did a very aesthetically pleasing job on their insert layouts, the cover (that Coalition must have designed) looks gorgeous, -b

Coalition, P.O. Box 243, 6500 AE Nijmegen, Netherlands .

Simulcast/Talitha Cumi split 7": My favorite thing about this record is the packaging: the band names are actually typed on the otherwise blank cover with an old-fashioned black- and red-ink typewriter, and there's an envelope glued inside with a message written on it by hand, as if it is a personal letter from the band to the listener. The overwrought letter inside begins "Lieber Musikfreund, " (beloved music friend, if my poor German serves me), and goes on to (eventually) talk about social conditioning, etc. Talitha Cumi has a slightly gentler, smoother-textured take on the screaming German hardcore style than

most of the bands I've heard from there this issue. Their second song begins with a long, possibly emo-influenced intro, quieter and with more emphasis on melody and texture than when the chunks and screaming come in. They're going to be hard-pressed to stick out from today's crowds of good German hardcore bands, but they're accomplished and comfortable with what they're doing. Simulcast starts out with real emo music, undistorted guitar melodies

[Image not archived]

and spoken vocals, before powerful guitar chunks I'd expected come in, and then, oh fuck, they do something crazy and new! The guitars quit the low register entirely, double-picking a riff at the tops of the highest strings on the guitar. The rest of their music, though it's filled with the same old chunks and screaming, also incorporates new ideas, unexpected arrangements and combinations of musical conventions that don't usually cross paths. Their

second song is like a heavy emo song, with singing in the foreground, screaming behind it at the high points, and hardcore-distorted guitars playing pretty chord progressions. It's actually quite good, almost catchy, not new in the

world of emo songwriting but delivered in a way I haven't heard before. — b _Strikeforce Diablo / Twelve Hour Turn “”_ ZL Really nice, two songs from each band. To start, they have the most creative approach I have seen in a long while to the “Side A / Side B” alternative which has been tradition for year in punk. There is a photo of a guy driving a powerboat on the label side A (I assume) and a different guy on side B (there are no words, just the color photos of each man, one to a side. The guy on one side has a shirt on, and the other guy doesn't. On the lyric sheet, the Twelve Hour Turn side is called “Shirts” and the flipside of the sheet is for “Strikeforce Diablo” and is labeled “Skins”. Ok...onto the music. Shirts side first with Twelve Hour Turn. Think about the constantly changing intensity of Seattle chaos/noise kings Botch, and mix that sort of hardcore with the emotionally charged mid tempo melodic to slow stylings of a Seven Storey Mountain. This is lyrically strong. The first song “A Letter To My Uncle” is a poem about the writer's uncle, who has apparently suffered a stroke. Really human, • heart felt, and desperately emotive with music which comes close to matching the feeling of the words. The Strikeforce Diablo side is a bit different, bit still in the vein of the medlodic. It is darker, a bit heavier and more driving, with less potent lyrics, but better music than the first side. The only drawback is the packaging, which is basically a plain white cardstock sleeve. I would have liked to have the sleeve match the music in feeling...plain white doesn't cut it considering some of the subject matter here. JUG

Push Pull Records; P.O.Box 471 Allston MA 02134

“The Caligula Effect' CD compilation; The first song, by Encyclopedia of American Traitors (a band I'd unfortunately missed until now), is awesome: it's a noisy epic

the struggle between labor and capital, complete with wild, shrieking vocals. The second song is by a defunct Virginia band, Nit-Pic, with nasally vocals and rough production and delivery. That's followed by a more '90's metal/ screaming hardcore song by Canephora complete with samples galore. Bessemer Process is on here, they were one of my favorite bands last issue for the absurd lyrics on their 7” (here they're featured with one of the hits from that 7”, specifically the one in which the singer announces “broccoli can cure every disease but you still won't get me to eat my greens”). Oh god, and then it's melodramatic emo with those unbearable melodramatic emo vocals, courtesy of Madison... their guitar melodies aren't bad during the rock out parts, but the rest of it is pretty hard on my ears. Their lyric sheet includes an unexplanation of the song, including such gems of insight as “Maybe someday the writer will understand what his heart has poured into

this song.” Enemy Soil seems to have recorded their grindcore song decently enough and then put a layer of static over the whole thing out of sheer perversity. And then we reach the point on the compilation where everything starts to blur together. After this point, the only songs that grabbed me were by December (noisy, groovy, rugged metalcore with a doubletime part at the end and deep, tough-sounding vocals), Carlisle (they started out totally emo

acoustic, but when the song proper came in it was screamy, trebly chaos), Hand of God (they have a good song about not buying corporate soda), Bear Witness (whose metal/hardcore song is more polished than most of

the material on here), Manual 7 (with more pure energy than most of the other bands on here, which is more important that being polished... their song here is the last one on their 7" reviewed above), and Reversal of Man (with an apparently previously-released song that starts out a lot more emo and melodic than I'd expected, before unleashing their discord and disorder upon us). The bands I haven't mentioned already are Fuse 12, I Bleed For This? (who have a catchy harmonic riff going for them, at least), Amalgamation, Built In Enemy, 12 Hour Turn, and Stillguard (the standard-issue generic "old school" hardcore band for this compilation); some of them weren't so bad, you might be able to get something out of them, who knows. Overall, this is a decent introduction to a bunch of d.i.y. hardcore bands in and around the screamy/noisy genre, there's a lot of mediocrity here and a few good songs; the drawback of compilations like this is that it can be really tough to sort the good stuff out from the bad. It's important to note that this is a $4 CD compilation that was *not* released by a record label to promote it's own bands (or by a 'zine to promote the bands of the labels that advertise in it), that's fucking awesome. Hey — I thought I was done reviewing this, but the very last band, Pigdestroyer, is a grind band with more vigor and viciousness (and a better recording) than anyone else on this 60 minute CD. So if you get this CD, get it for the first and last of its nineteen songs. — b

Catechism, 3512 Carson Drive, Woodbridge, PA 22913

Erie Hardcore Scene Report compilation CD; A substantial documentation of the Erie/Lake Effect hardcore scene, brought to you by Mike Ski, tattoo artist extraodinaire and singing virtuoso of Brother's Keeper. Nine different bands:

Brother's Keeper (the second best tracks on the disc in my opinion, showing a different side of the current sound: more stomp and deeper vocals); Disciple (current Brother's Keeper-ish, but not a clone by any means); Abnegation (death metal with lyrics about burning churches and killing priests); Neverfall (good recording quality showing through here...I liked the bass sound). Other bands include: Digression, Mothership (moronic Christian hardcore with lyrics in one song identifying "my strength is all I need to keep me alive" followed in the next song by "jesus died so we might have life/he will take away all your strife"...is this is a joke band??? Take away all my strife? You dumb fucks, I want my strife and suffering. Only in a delusion inspired utopia would we find a world in denial of pain. I not only disagree with you, but I find you and your entire breed of misguided sheep in denial of life and enemies to the collective human consciousness); Out of Hand; Breakiron; and the best tracks on the record: from Sumthin' to Prove (Idiotic

Headway's example, perhaps). The final band of the compilation is Stormcore, who became quite a skilled band near the end of their career, ushering in the metallic hardcore sound that so many French bands play now — b *Overcome, P.O. Box 7548, 35 075 Rennes, Cedex 3, France*

moshcore with some of the...um...uh...best...no wait...worst lyrics in history: "you're goin' out just like a bitch, so take your whack new jack ass back to school motherfucker 'cause you just got beat, cornin' up short of six feet deep". Comedy...with Mike Ski providing the beat downs. Overall, a good account of this part of the country ex- p

pressed through demo and older tracks from some bands you might not have heard otherwise. Packaging is a glossy cardboard sleeve with a little booklet inside. JUG

SA MOB; RO. Box 1931 Erie PA 165070931

"In This Other Land" double CD compilation of French Hardcore: Wow, a double fucking CD! This is a great way to be introduced to France's often overlooked hardcore scene, which really does have some great bands in it. The press-pack-style introductions to the bands might seem a little strange, but Overcome is no Epitaph records, I just think something got lost in the translation. The first CD begins with AWOL, who are as captivating here as they were on their split with Headway, with their high, wild vocals, crazy metal (plenty of atmosphere and all), and skillful use of samples. Kickback follows with a version of Breakdown's song (their namesake), followed by "Paris' Most Wanted" by Diamond D. Their Breakdown cover isn't bad to listen to, but they should remember that pure machismo alone won't make for good music or art (it usually just interferes, of course). From there, Underground Society (more traditional polished metalcore stuff, influenced by Belgian bands like Congress I'd warrant, quite well done), Children (who begin with a Beethoven rip off, but otherwise are like a less polished Underground Society, perhaps, with less metal in the songwriting), Right For Life (significantly weaker production, simpler, more old-fashioned hardcore style, with Warzone-style yelling vocals), and Drowning (deathmetal/hardcore, with some promising moments but some wrinkles yet to iron out... and those emotionless metal grunting vocals have got to die off, already!) finish out the first CD. The Headway song at the beginning of i the second CD is the same one that was on the Inside Front #11 CD. The amazing Headway are followed by Trapped In Life (who begin in absolutely Belgian metal fashion, every kickbox musical convention perfectly executed and repeated in the first twenty seconds of the first song...), Primal Age (it starts as European-styled "old school" hardcore with a lot of influence in the playing and I singing from their more metal colleagues... but by the end of it, I'm think-

**~~- Living Silent" CD com_p__~~ilation:_ There are three reasons to find this CD, and they are good reasons indeed: The first is Eyelid s incredible song, which I herald as an instant classic, the soundtrack for everything wild and passionate and rebellious I've done this year. In some respects, and this is one of the reasons this song is so incredible, this is the most cutting edge song I've heard from an American hardcore band in a long time: it sounds like these kids must be listening to European bands like Refused, and learning from them. The song begins and ends with a repeating guitar noise that underlines the tension between the music played live by the band and the noises produced by their echo pedals and electric equipment, awesome, and everything in between is revolutionary in terms of sound as well as content. The lyrics themselves are filled with the kind of irrational, romantic lust for destruction and creation ("the

destructive urge is also a creative one") that makes my heart pound in my chest, makes me want to run out into the streets throwing rocks at policemen and kicking in bank windows, falling love with the wrong people and shoplifting and getting caught up in crazy crusades: "we want the world, and we want it on fire!" the vocalist screams at the beginning. He even ties their song playfully into the history of the rock genre, by playing with references to Jimi Hendrix ("Let me stand next to your fire"). This rocks, in the very best sense of the word, shakes up my world so much that I feel like it could shake up everyone eise s too. The second reason to find this CD is the wonderful Milhouse song, a madman's nursery rhyme, a twenty-four second in- sult-to-injury assault, that attacks and disappears faster than a rabid rabbit. And god, to hear a song of real outrage, about a real human relationship that went sour, and that actually dares to be personally insulting (taking the emotions *outot* the "musical world" of playacting and putting them back *here, * in the real world, where they belong), oh, what a glorious thing! The third reason is the Unearthed song, which is remarkable for combining echoing, droning melodic vocals with abrasive hardcore music, it's really something new and challenging. Those three songs mean more to me than any of the songs on one hundred other CD's that came out this (dreadfully boring) year in hardcore. Indecision are also great here, though the Milhouse song does everything they're do- I ing only better (appropriately, the two bands have now become one). The Surface song doesn't offer anything new musically, but I enjoy listening to it; and the Former Members of Alfonsin song, though musically nothing to write home about, has some really good lyrics (about greed and business among hardcore bands) going for it and feels really sincere to me. The other bands on here, who don't warrant much description, are Turnedown (melodramatic rock, ugh!), Midvale, Waxwing, A Sometimes Promise, Sharks Keep Moving (all jangly emo, devoid of feeling), Treadmill (rockin' , hardcore stuff, uh huh), Defect (midtempo chunky hardcore with angry vocals), and Adamantium ('90's hardcore about betrayal, with distorted vocals, possibly something like Coalesce?). — b**

Status, RO, Box 1500, Thousand Oaks, CA 91358

1 "Kiss M_e With Your Feet" A Documen-_ **I** _tation of the Westside Hardcore Scene_ **I** 7" compilation: The cover of this 7" is **I** hilarious, it uses 1960's images and **I** packaging to cast the typical hardcore **I** 7" comp in a completely different light. **I** It makes this record more appealing, at **I** least visually, which is good, since apart **I** from that this is one of those local compilation records that good for the kids who know the bands but don't usually go much farther than that (I got #230 of 500). The first band, Appeal to Reason, starts with a really strange tempo change, unless it's just that my record keeps skipping... after that they play a simpler, less intense, sort of a beginners'

I German *90's hardcore (slow ana fast parts, screaming, etc.) but dressed up by a few more unexpected changes. The second, Hakle Foicht, is much more straightforward and old-fashioned: the singer yells like '80's singers did, the band plays simple riffs with one-twoone-two fast drumming, and the one thing that sets them apart is the way the guitar pauses at totally unexpected moments while the rest of the band keeps going. The Amber song begins with the vocalist screaming by himself, and it's kind

of touching how he runs out of air before he's finished, so he ends with a sort of gasp... a band like Coalesce would have done another take, lest their recording sound "imperfect, " but it makes them sound more human that they left it as is. After that, Amber plays a sort of tough/German hardcore hybrid that has a multiple personality problem, they seem to be trying to do too many things in succession that don't seem to rationally fit together, to me at least. They have screaming NY tough guy parts, then guitar leads, singing parts, chunky mosh parts, a couple clumsy tempo changes, deep whispered vocals behind the lead at one point, followed by a simple speedy hardcore part, I'm totally disoriented at this point. And they didn't print their lyrics, which is too bad, since the first two bands' lyrics were quite good (A. to R. sings poetically about the struggle for life and passion in the dry, drab modern world, and H.F.'s song is a compelling anti-fascist statement). Pencilcase begins the second side with a crew shout: "West Side Hard Core!" They're playing older-fashioned hardcore too, although they don't sound

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ing metallic modern hardcore with old school influences, hm), Seekers of the Truth (who are more obviously old-fashioned, with simpler riffs, yelling and gang vocals, and other holdovers from the days of Y.O.T. and the Cro- Mags), and Hang Up (more unusual, experimental hardcore, following

. anything like Youth of Today-their melodies and rhythms are different-and their chorus is chunky with a harmonic in it. There's a place where everything stops but the guitar, which is punctuated at the beginning of each riff by the bass drum before the breakdown comes in (you know the hardcore tradition I'm talking about)... but their bass drum is

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produced so big and boomy that it sounds like a big kettle drum being hit with a mallet. Disease has a song that sounds for the most part like older Chokehold or some similar early '90's straightforward fast & slow chunk band, but there's a metal part in the middle (similar to the second Unbroken LP, or, better, Mean Season?) In which one guitar plays a repeating melody while the other strikes open chords for harmony. Loxiran are the heroes for me here, they have a twenty second track at the end which isn't listed on the cover: nothing but screaming, abrasive noise in two bursts. It's awesome! -b *Construct c/o Karsten C. Ronnenberg, Nizzaallee 77, 52072 Aachen, Germany*

"Solidarity" benefit CD for ABC NO RIO: There are thirty six fucking tracks on here, so I'm just going to talk about the ones that stood out for me. The introductory song, an ABC NO RIO theme song by Plan A Project, starts with the most powerful sample I've heard in years, sounds of riots and a violently impassioned voiceover about taking your life back from the fucking machine. Submission Hold's song takes no prisoners in its assault on hardcore cliches, employing a flute and a variety of styles of vocal delivery in the struggle. Milhouse just might be the best band from New York in this decade, and their absolutely straight-faced Judge cover only supports my theory. Automaton still doesn't sound as heavy or clear here as I always thought they should, but I like their politicized progressive grindcore all the same. Also present are the Judas Iscariot, Boiling Man, Foundation, Wardance Orange, Devoid of Faith, Pisspoor, Lifeless Existence, and Fanshen (all playing aggressive dirty screaming hardcore stuff, and most of them quite well), Anal Sausage and Profits of Misery (horns rendering their already absurd punk music hilarious), the Degenerics, Dead Nation, Diskonto, Astronaut Catastrophe, Distraught, and Defiance (playing more rough, traditional punk... god, "traditional" punk, is that what we've come to?!), and then, for good measure (??), weird techno noise with absurd lyrics, like Skabs. And then there's other bands too, yeah, that's a lot. The final two are React (live at CBGB's) and Aus Rotten (playing an old Nausea song, with Neil from Tribal War singing, which I guess makes sense, since he sang for that band once upon a time). The Nausea cover is awesome: it's an overloaded live recording, but it has all the raw power of the very best punk, and you just can't beat Nausea, period! Anyway, the music is secondary here (although with so much of it everyone is bound to find something they like) to the message and the particular cause of keeping ABC functional for all ot us... and so there's plenty of great reading material in the insert, a few different pieces offering histories and perspectives on ABC, including something by Chris from Slug and Lettuce. The articles are well- written and really educational, they make this worth it ail by themselves. — b

Deadalive, Post Office Box 9 7$_f$ Caldwell, NJ 07006

BRIAN DINGLEDINE — post Equal Vision Records phone conversation voice mail message 11/16/98 — As is the case whenever Brian Dingledine encounters semi or full corporate rock and roll, I found myself today listening to a message from him on my

machine. Brian's technique on this message is absolutely excellent. In true explosive fashion, he started off calm for the 'intro', if you will, in which he said "Greg? Its Brian...! just talked to Ian from EVR and I just want to tell you something between the two of us" and then immediately exploded into a fury with the words "I fucking hate that guy!!!" I was immediately engrossed, as was Cynthia my girlfriend, who reacted strongly, later admitting that she was frozen in fear. Brian quickly immersed himself in the standard form of his typical "intense phone message", moving through the expected four stages of communication which make up any such message: First, full sentences filled with anger...then moving into full sentences highlighted by variations on the word 'fuck'...moving from there into sentences consisting almost entirely of variations on the word 'fuck' then

onto half sentences devoid of complete thoughts and then finally: word fragments back to back, completely incomprehensible and replete with venom. All in all, this phone call highlights the best of Brian Dingledine. I give it my highest recommendation. For a copy for yourself, call and demand to talk to Brian immediately, saying that you are a representative of a major record label looking for sympathy because sales are down. JUG (Seattle CrimethInc HQ)

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The Al Burian Experience "Special Message for Young People" demo: This is the sort of hilarious, absurd project that everyone should have a friend who undertakes. Al took all the free tapes those big corporation motherfuckers leave in record stores to promote their difficult sellers (um, Vanilla Ice, anyone?), taped over them, made color covers at his copyshop job, and took them back to the record stores, where he tried to sell them for $1 each (though all Al's various friends and enemies just assumed they were in the free bin and inadvertently shoplifted them all). I think I was the only one that actually bought one, just because I ran into Al on his way to drop them off; but I don't really mind, since this is the only demo I've actually paid for in about five years and it seems appropriate enough that the one I pay for be the biggest joke. The music is Al singing in his best slick angsty Nine Inch Nails voice over a casio keyboard... the lyrics are where it's at: "I tried so hard to kill you but you wouldn't play dead, I tried to insult your intelligence but it just went over your head..." I'm not sure if this is the case, but I sure hope Al had at least one friend who felt genuinely insulted by this. If he didn't, he's not trying hard enough. Al's been trying to get people to hate him for years (witness the Ray Kappo-[late Shelter era]-style photo of Al looking cool on the cassette jacket), but it hasn't worked, and I think that either testifies to the insincerity of his efforts, the dull-wittedness of his colleagues (i.e. us), or both, and it sure is a sordid situation. Anyway, the moral to the story is this: before we die of boredom from modern music, all your musician motherfuckers must run out into the streets and do your own little ridiculous side projects like this! — b

307 Blueridge Road, Carrboro, NC 27510

Cockroach "Lost Generation" demo: Oh yeah, real punk rock! Screechy rough shrieking vocals, circa the mid-eighties, fast simple guitar lines and doubletime drums,

a mix which isn't polished but is exactly as clear and forceful as it needs to be, super-energetic playing on the part of the band, the occasional unexpected part to keep things interesting, good songwriting and manageable song-lengths. This is great, good work! There's a song called "Riot at Johnny's Place, " another one (the namesake of the demo) about the Dutch government complaining about the shiftlessness of their youth and then trying to shut down everything they try to do. There's nothing more to say, if you like the Circle Jerks or G.B.H. you'll really enjoy this, great demo, -b

stox 1, 5981 ND Panningen (lim), Netherlands

Curb Dogs "Demo *97 ": I think I am getting this tape about a year too late...maybe they have a Demo '98 out now or an upcoming Demo '99 for you to check out. This six song demo starts off with a pack of snarling dogs (literally...as a sound bite — and no pun intended there) and continues on with the same sounds now being made by the bands music. They play a sort of thrash metal crossover hardcore hybrid (think Agnostic Front when "Cause for Alarm" was released) with sing along back ups and alternating slow doom tempos for an apocalyptic feel. The vocals are really throaty, inspiring my reviewer compatriot Cynthia (see Since the Fall demo review for identification credentials) to comment "It doesn't sound like his voice could possibly make if — but it did without a problem. Lyrically... the re are some great moments on this, relating back to that apocalyptic sense I mentioned before. From the second song "Weight of Time": "when I take a closer look at me / and realize I'm not who I want to be / it's like snoozing in a dreamless sleep / but there still is some faith in me". I also like the intelligent approach to religion taken with "your gracious god is everywhere / so what's the matter

why doesn't he care / preaching to us about a distant paradise / while you make hell on earth for me", which identifies a central issue with religion, that it prepares us for a next life by ignoring and denying this life. These ideas are tied together in the next song after that which identifies: "day by day we're moving to a subconscious beat / we're just slaves to an inert machine", which is slightly dangerous in that it separates an "us" from the "inert machine", as if we are essentially powerless, when actually we, as in people are the most significant part of that societal machine. We are not distanced from it. We are it, and in that is our greatest potential power. So overall, good job. I have one constructive critique though: the next time in the studio, fade your songs out when doing your mix down. You obviously care enough about the songs to record them well and mix them down in the first place, and a fade out or edited ending rather than a awkward tape cutoff will really tighten each song up, making them individual assaults. JUG *Curbdogs; c/o Jose Venegas; nordstr. 227; 8037 Zurich; Switzerland*

Dead Thirteen "Sleep My Little Dead" demo: This begins a little roughly: the drums come in, the singer does a microphone check, one guitar come in, the other does (a little late?), the whole thing seems a little discombobulated... ok, now it's started so what do we have here? The mix is a little blurry, the drums and bass could have a bit more power in their sound. The drummer sounds like he's fucking up here and there. The singer does some speaking that is mixed a bit too loudly and could sound

more confident; otherwise, he's screaming with a New York metal hardcore band voice. Musically you can tell this is from the northeastern USA, it has that steady midtempo drumbeat that has been carefully perfected there for people to kick and karate chop each other to. Between songs they have snippets of themselves fucking around in the studio. There's one song, a fast punk number about being white trash, where the shouted youth crew chorus is "forgot to pay the rent!" — that's pretty funny, maybe I should have come at this demo with more of a sense of humor. I just can't tell how much I'm supposed to take them seriously otherwise. They need to tighten up musically (there are twelve songs on this demo, which would be good if they were all ready...), tighten up their playing a bit, get a bit more focused, get a better recording. But demos are for figuring that stuff out. — b *Slave Union, 58 Grace Street, *

Contessa "" demo: This is possibly the best demo I have heard all year. Mix the angriest moments of rage from Black Flag with the chaos of Deadguy...add the pain of Catharsis with .and this Is the best part: vividly expressed passion, through the performance itself, and the result is Contessa. The lyrics don't hit me as much themselves as the way they are sung. This is an extremely rare twist on the way bands usually come across, which is that the lyrics are impacting but the performance leaves a lot to be desired. How much do I like this tape? Enough that I got in touch with the singer from the email address on the demo and interviewed him for this review (answers have been edited for spelling and grammar, but give the guy a fucking break: he sihgs like he has a million anguished souls inside his guts): 1. Could you give me a short overview which concisely tells me what some of the songs on the demo are about, what each means to you, and why the song was written? The lyrics are personally written and close to my heart simply because I cant sing an essay. I have political views and feelings but rarely will you hear me say something directly about that. "Sap" is about my observations on relationships, mine and more specifically my friends. It says that we play too many games and say too little — and most of what is said goes unheard or is taken another way thus creating tension and self doubt and helpless feelings of desperation. Love truly is a harder path. "Feast" is a slightly political song written in my personal way. It compares big biz suits to a pack of vultures ripping and tearing their prey apart at the first sign of weakness. In the world of big biz the weak are destroyed. If the big guys cant have what they want, no one can. They will continue to take even when they will never need more than what they have. People starve because of this system while food rots in storage. Go figure.[s] Dreams in the Dead of Night : I have suffered, as well as millions of others, with mental illness. My own problems are being worked on and I am winning the battle. 1t is an oppressive world, and even more so when you do not have the mental capacity to deal with so called " normal" problems. Take a moment to think: what would it be like if you could not deal with or

comprehend simple feelings or speech? The song deals with an emotional battle raging inside myself just to go outside everyday. 2. Why differentiate between the "personal" and the "political"? Can you see any connection between the two? Personal and political I guess are linked in many ways. I guess personal gain motivates greedy people in power to do actions. For myself my personal actions in the music scene and at work or at home effect those around me and it could be seen as a political thing. I think you have to work on your own little world before you can change the one around you. 3. Ok, tell me. what do you listen to when you are feeling like everything is falling apart around you? What songs bring you back to appreciating beauty and revive your passion for life? Ok the what I would listen to when I am in need of something to make me happy Mostly I love old blues like Lead Belly and Brownie Mcgee and Sonny Terry, Josh white Sr., Big Bill Broonzy, as well as Mississippi John Hurt plus many others. Then I go into the others: Black Sabbath "Master of Reality", Pissed Happy Children, Los Crudos, Rorschach, 400 Years, Aggression, old Social Distortion, old Necros, Blast "POWER OF EXPRESSION", Raw power the old stuff, and the AVENGERS — man, I love her voice — it soothes me and makes me all crazy as well. Some of the music may seem dark and depressing but it has an op-

posite effect on me.

So there It is: the words of Contessa

straight from the singer's mouth. To give you an idea of what it is like to listen to this tape, I will give you Cynthia (music critic/compa- triot/ empath) who commented (without being "into" hardcore/punk, mind you) that this tape really reached her. She said "This has passion" which, coming from the non-punk-initiated, should say worlds to you, dear reader. Later, during one of the tape's more intense parts, she commented, "Holy shit! I like it! Its nice!" She followed that critical gem up with "This really stirs me up" and then "This is one of the few hardcore bands about whom I'd say that I'd like to listen to more." There you have it. The power behind the music and vocals is what drives this band for me and I give it my highest recommendation on those accounts alone. JUG

$4 US within the USA, $4.50 in Canada, and $5 for the rest of the world payable to Carl Bedard at: Fist Magnet Records; 38 denier Road; Apartment B; Aylmer, PQ; J9H1X8; CANADA

Waterford, NY 12188

Down My Throat demo: This is surprisingly good for a demo. The recording is first rate, thick and heavy, the playing and songwriting is good, everything's . good. Musically this stands in the tradition of hardcore that extends back through bands like Earthmover to Judge and the like: it's quick, a little metallic without losing its tense simplicity, lots of danceable parts, a lot of changes in each song without it seeming

wandering, an entirely modem sound that draws on both so-called "old-school" speed and straightforwardness and '90's chugga-chugga without being limited to either. Yeah, this is awesome. The singer has more of a yelling voice than the screaming that most singers do these days, but it doesn't detract from the forcefulness of this record. The riffs themselves are really good sometimes, even. The lyrics are probably the least original part, dealing with a lot of stuff about pain and being made to suffer by those nameless backstabbing others, but they don't hold this back at all. God, I hope the other demos I have to review are this good. — b

Liljelund, Melstenintie 9 D 1, 02170 Espoo, Finland

Eternal Brotherhood "Demo *98": From Japan, these guys sound very much like Agnostic Front circa the "One Voice" CD. Tough punchy NYHC (in this case STHC for Setagaya Tokyo Hardcore) with strong, full production. Not bad at all. The vocalist has a deep voice, again the benefit of good production (that we can actually discern vocal quality) and the music is non-standard...with enough diversity in approaches and attack to make it continually interesting. A question...why, why, why do foreign bands often sing in broken English? While the use of English is awkward here, some of the lyrics are good regardless (we'll get to the English misusage, always a joy, later on...). The first song is about domestic violence: "taste the bitterness of it / the damage you've done to her", but the last line, directed towards the attacker "it's not the end but the beginning / c'mon hit your card" left me feeling a bit like I'd gotten suddenly caught in the Twilight Zone. The third of these four songs is where they really . started to lose me lyrically. The music upheld its power throughout, but the translation of lyrics from Japanese into English left the point of this song a mys- . tery to me. I think that its a song about unity or unifying their crew. They say: "How many follows you? / Eternal brotherhood / You won't open your heart / Cast away worthless pride / and perverseness help each other / its time to make massive posse". The meaning

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behind this song escaped me until I realized...of course! How could I have been so stupid and shortsighted? Here I was thinking that they were talking about crews and mobs and gangs ...but I had been wrong! These guys fooled even me. I realized that "make massive posse" is being used here as a sophisticated euphemism for lovemaking. It dawned on me that this song is actually an invitation to a scene group orgasm. I felt more comfortable with that realization, once I understood what was going on. I can't wait. On the last song, they blew it all...from the first song, intelligent and interesting, to the last where they resort to emulating the one man whom no person can emulate: Rick ta Life. Rick is Rick and there is no other, so why jump on his back and do

his thing. Damn...and you really had me going for a little while after song #1, even though song #2 had a "da" in there as a warning of what was to come. From the last song, "Game": "you play with loaded dice / and play da devil with game / you more than fuckin' stupid / nothing to change your way... I know your destiny/already hit da breakshot /1 see you down for life /difficult to change da game." Uh huh. Ok guys...we all can read that you thank half of NYHC in your thank you list, but to do this 25 ta Life rip off is a bit much. I'd like to see you stick to the political/social and keep your brains thinking and creative. Da last thing we need is foreign bands takin' English grammar lessons from da NYHC. I really will be looking forward to hearing your next release. JUG

Eternal Brotherhood; Ken-One; 1-3-21 #202 Sakurajosui; Setagaya, Tokyo; 156–0045; JAPAN

Falling Action "" demo: For this demo, I once again employed the use of Cynthia X, Reviewer Extraordinaire. There gets to a point at the end of the day when my ear starts to turn to mush, and that is when I call in the intensive artillery...in this case my partner-in-crime Cynthia, who saved the day and this review as well, from descending into total oblivion. Cynthia nailed this tape right on the head when she commented that the singer is trying to articulate his words so much that he has lost his passion. I stopped and thought about it, as I had been trying to figure out why this tape wasn't hitting me throughout as I had hoped it would, and that was exactly the reason: the singer is talking/singing right when he is supposed to, the musicians are right on with their fast sxe hardcore musicianship and breakdown parts, the sing alongs are there and 20 people deep, the lyrics are about sincerity/ insincerity and holding true to beliefs...and in the midst of all that, I often find myself searching for this band's identity. I have heard a lot of bands like this and I want to know where their, meaning Falling Action's, passions are and what drives them to play the music they play. I listened to this tape about three times all the way through, to the point where I started to know the songs myself, in order to find that energy and individual spirit...and by the later listens it started to grow on me. But I want a band with this much potential and this much energy to kick my ass from the start of the first song, not by the end of the third listen. I want them to lose their fucking minds and hear all of their instruments break to pieces against the walls of the studio...the forms here are too restrictive. The use of a ride cymbal in one song, which caught my attention, isn't enough to show me who they are. Hitting their old school sxe marks has had its price here, and I want to see them hit beyond those marks on their next release and really take some risks. JUG *(Falling Action address misplaced)*

Fatal Justice "" demo: This is the band which finally sent Cynthia over the top. Alphabetically, this one comes up near the beginning, but chronologically, I put this cassette in about three months after I started my first review. Cynthia, new to HC/punk, suddenly lost her mind when this came on. Death metal vocals often have that effect. Vocally, we have what sounds like at least three tracks going at once: a guttural death growl, a screamed track with higher pitched vocals, and a spoken

sometimes singing underlying track. In between some songs, there is the sound of an ominous wind: very metal, and darkly blackly broodingly twistedly evil. Don't get me wrong...this isn't a death metal demo. It just has those influences lyrically and musically at times. Musically, its got blast beats and speedy guitars a la speed thrash like At the Gates, but with much poorer recording quality — good for a demo though. Its replete with harmonic Atari video game sound mayhem, and an occasional melodic clear channel guitar line. Lyrically there are a couple of highlights. The main gem is the song "Black Monk" (title a mystery to me as well) when the singer states "Stab me in the back with a blood covered knife / my blood flows away / I'm fighting to survive / No one hears -1 wait till the black monk appears". Now guys, we all know that getting stabbed in the

back with a bloody knife is a sure way to risk not only HIV infection, but also Hepatitis C, which is a nasty little bugger of a disease. Now, I know you mention the word "daemon" three times in this same song and that spelling is incredible evil, but like the rhythm method, that in itself just doesn't offer enough protection. Take care of yourselves and at least use a clean hypoallegenic knife when getting stabbed in the back. Especially if you expect the wound to be serious enough for all of your blood to flow away. Consideration must be given to the person stabbing you as well in a situation like that. I recommend an HIV test every six months just to be sure. That way, both the stabber and the stabbed can suffer confidently. JUG *Roelof; By de Leyweg 32; 8412 5H Hoornsterzwaag; The NETHERLANDS* _Final Exit "West Teg" demo ("sessions '85-'89"):_ Wow, this comes complete with a parody of the liner notes from that first Lost & Found reissue of the Judge "Chung King" sessions. This is Final Exit playing demo versions of the oldschool classics that ended up on their first CD. It sounds pretty good, and the wild energy is still there in places; it's not as good as that CD was, I'd say, so it's not quite an essential item, but Final Exit was one of the best bands of this decade in my estimation, so this demo is a great thing to have if you can find it. The vocals might be a little less impassioned, which is a drawback, but there's more noise and feedback at the beginnings of the songs, which I always think is a plus. The version of "Mutilated Scumbag" is awesome, it's barely recognizable. — b

Zedog Productions c/o Lina Zedig, Glimmergangen 21, 632 34 Eskilstuna, Sweden

_Gocce Nel Mare "" demo;_What if I told you that this demo came with a 90 page booklet? What if I told you that the lyrics to this band are printed in Italian and English for the most part and come with essays in English about the songs, along with literally dozens of pages of text in Italian? What if I told you that the music was original noisy franticly desperate punk rock with a female singer and male backups with lyrics about the uniqueness of the individual and female empowerment among other things? I hope that at that point that you'd bust out the IRC's and send away for more information on this. If you know ANYONE who speaks Italian, have them get in touch with me right away so that I can have them translate this entire book for me. I love this tape. She speaks, rather than screams most of the time...and when she does scream, it is desperate and strained, as if in agony. Throughout this recording (song

number unknown, as I haven't been counting) there is an undercurrent of intensive political awareness and also of a vegan lifestyle. Most of the zine/booklet which comes with the demo contains an interview with ALF representatives as far as I can tell. I wish I read Italian! I am going to keep this review a bit short and to the point, and tell you that if you send away for one demo this issue, throw a coin in the air and decide between Contessa and Gocce Nel Mare. Both are excellent, and well worth exploring. I love this demo, and hope to see more from them in the future. Can Trial play with you when we come over to Europe? Get in touch with me, please!!! _Xiugglerx@aol.com_ JUG

Cane Records; c/o Jacopo Volpe; Via S.Marco No 17; 36100 Vicenza; ITALY
Hangfire Disaster "" Demo CD: This CD, above all else, introduced me to new concepts in DIY. The demo is only available on CD, for $1 (that's ONE dollar, kids) and that price is for both postpaid and in person. The CD has an insert about DIY CD recording from which I learned that the cost of producing CD's at home (if, and that's a big IF you have a personal computer) are lower than doing cassettes, and are completely more reliable as a format. Its interesting how the music of the proletariat changes with technology: demo cassettes used to represent DIY and all you needed was a crappy stereo. In a few years, when the price of computers capable of doing the job drop to a level where more people have access to them, CD's will be as everywhere as demos. I appreciate that as a reviewer, because when a tape sucks and I throw it across the room, it breaks into numerous aggravating pieces, which I inevitably step on later in the evening. In the case of CD's, they lend themselves well to being thrown dozens of times, and the enjoyment can last for hours, with no painful residual side effects. Luckily for Hangfire Disaster, I won't be throwing their CD across the room anytime soon. Fast punk/hc here with vocals which are actually relatively easy to understand, even without a lyric sheet. The lyrics themselves challenge the listener in a number of different ways. How about this passage from "Take My Name Off the List' (a song inspired in part by "The Lisf by Filth!): "Stay together in the face of greed / avoid hyperbolic synecdoche". Hyperbolic

[Image not archived]

what?!?! Okay, you psychotic maniacs...! have to actually bust out the dictionary for this one: syniec'do-che (si-nek'doike), n. (Gr. synekdechesthai to recieve jointly) Rhet. A figure of speech by which a part is put for the whole. Next time, why don't you just use the ancient Greek "synekdechesthai"??? You know that I am only kidding...I love the word choice...it made my brain scream in terror for a moment. I saw this band live here in Seattle and they actually talked about specific politics! Not just "Hey...make a change...blah blah blah" but actually cited Seattle City Law by ordinance number and explained their thoughts. JUG *Hangfire Disaster, *

newpues@u.washington.edu, (425) 6700482

Harbinger ""demo: No lyrics and no tape cover., hmm...well, all I can tell you is that this is a poorly recorded cross between Killing Time and Botch with an angry guy screaming gutturally. The levels change suddenly and continually as if someone

kept hitting buttons on the recording console during the session. The levels overall are too high and the music is all overdriven and fuzzy. Well, since this was sent to me on a recycled tape I checked out the flipside for what was there, and after listening to it I think I will review it as well. The flipside has a guy doing an infomercial on it aimed at potential stock investors. He is advertising his get-rich-quick scheme which includes a package of books, up-to- the-minute info paging systems, workshops, and seminars almost (and the key word here is "almost") guaranteed to make you a richer person through timely stock investments. Ok, motherfucker, let's think about that for a minute. You are some supposedly rich and brilliant investor who has devised and consolidated a strategy which will make me and all of my friends rich and brilliant as well. Tell me this, Mr. "Sell Stock Strategies For $34.95"...why, if you have made billions with your strategy, do you have any need for wasting your time in a recording studio producing a full length tape trying to convince me to part with my measly $34.95? If your strategies worked, you wouldn't need my money, as the interest alone on your trillions would make you more in a day than I make in a lifetime...and if your strategies don't work, then you are a liar and thief. Even worse, if your strategies DO work and then you still went into a studio to record this idiotic tape trying to capture my pocket change, then you are just a goddamn moron. Is that the best thing you could think to do with your time and money? If I had billions like you supposedly do, I would be using that money to do something helpful and creative (...visions of CrimethInc World Headquarters filling a 90 floor downtown Manhattan skyscraper...or maybe a black CrimethInc Blimp to chase down and destroy with heat seeking missiles that dumb Goodyear balloon as it flew over the Super Bowl...or maybe solid platinum drums for Alexei from Catharsis...or maybe a Trial tour helicopter for each band member to replace our broken van, which was always crowded by the end of tour anyway...all of which are good options for me to consider for the future). And all this is aside from the fact that stock information, insider trading plans, does not go to the poor or uninitiated common person...it is for the already rich. Like you are really going to be able to get me up to the minute critical information which the soon to be skyrocketing wealthy company CEO's are just dying to have me know. Sure. I bet there are fleets of friends of theirs who get that information long before the public, and longer still before me. Whatever. You are a

nerd, and your stock tape sucks. JUG

Harbinger; no address given; Ryan 253-850-1084

Last in Line "Welcome to A-10 Country" demo: This tape has a little bit of everything on it. From a fun demo cover (you somehow got this one to the right reviewer, guys...I am a Dawn/Day of the Dead fanatic — anyone else might not have appreciated it!) to good music and even better vocals to a bit of comedy as well. The music here is like a faster, more harder edged Redemption '87, meaning raw vocals over fast true old school hardcore. Listen to me...I have turned into an idiot.."true" old school...what the fuck does that mean?!?! Well...what I mean by that is that this tape hits me in somewhat the same way as the old old school bands like Negative

Approach hit me. They have that snotty critical sound which formed the foundation for the music of resistance, what was then a real alternative (instead of a current day mainstream "alternative") to the bubble gum crap being played on the radio. I miss bands who sound like this, even though at some points on this tape I found myself thinking that I had heard it all somewhere before — of course I have...my favorite bands from the early years of listening to this music were bands who sounded like this: critical of their surroundings and raw. I listened to this tape twice all the way through and the second time through it really caught my ear. Lyrically, they look at those around them and wonder where their focus and direction is as they drop their ideals and accept apathy. Best parts: the cover of Negative Approach's "Tied Down" (which they do really well, sounding quite a bit like the original, especially vocally...which is notan easy accomplishment; the Reagan Youth cover ("Degenerated") and the hidden comedy piece the end of the tape. Thinking about this tape overall: it was both thought provoking and entertaining at times, which is all I could ever ask for in a demo. Go for it, guys...I want to hear a 7" soon. JUG

Last in Line; c/o D.J. 413-568-9758 or email: Iastin98@aol.com

Memnoch "Epitome" demo; Begins with a (melo)-dramatic sample of a man speaking of freedom and the fight for it. The sample could have been a tiny bit quieter in relation to the music, that's an error younger bands often make. Anyway, on to the demo, which is surprisingly well-recorded and played, I mean really well- recorded and played. Everything that's good about this is exactly what was good about bands like Congress and Vitality from the Belgian "edgemetal" scene: fast, catchy, spooky, hypermetallic hardcore with good production and a high energy level. The songwriting is quite good, nothing extraneous here, most transitions are absolutely fluid, plenty of variety. The hissing/ screaming vocals are well-executed, although, as often happens in this genre, they could have a little less restraint and a little more passion in them. A lot of these singers get caught up in trying so hard to scream well and powerfully that they forget that the most important thing is to express emotion, and you have to be ready to do unusual, unpredictable things to do that. Anyway, that would be my only advice, this is really good. Great powerful guitar sound, well-written lyrics (a rare thing) about important topics (another fairly rare thing) centering generally on the damage we're doing to the planet, I've gotten really lucky with demos so far this issue. Yeah, I'm still listening to this, it isn't getting old at all, this is gonna replace Congress's "Other Cheek" for me. — b

B. Brunsch, Grenzstr. 23, 01689 Niederau, Germany

Radio Unfriend-ly Advance promo CD: This is a local Seattle band who are just getting started. I offered to review their promo CD, although lyricless and layoutless, on the grounds of their DIY ethic alone. Since I can say little about the CD itself without lyrics (other than to describe it as speedy pop punk throughout — at one tempo for most of the time — with higher pitched sung vocals, sing alongs and three chord guitar work — all of which made me think of 90's punk mixed with the early 80's...pop punk meets early Seven Seconds?!?!?!) I will let the band speak for itself:

from the bands handwritten 'promo sheet'. "Radio Unfriend-ly is a three piece fastcore band from Seattle.

Marek is 15 and he plays drums. Tyler is also 15 and he plays guitar and back up vox. Kevin is 20, plays bass and lead vox. We are all straight edge, but we're not a hardcore band, so we have a little trouble fitting in to different scenes. We're putting out an 18 song full length CD on January 8th. It is coming out on our own label called Make Yer Own Damn Records." I talked to Marek the other day and asked him a couple of questions, his answer to the first of which is one of my favorite answers in band interview history. First question: why do you write your name like that? "One time we just wrote it like that and we just kept doing it. Our name is really dumb...its generic and stupid...and we thought this would help." How can people get in touch with you to find out more about your CD? "They can write to us and send stuff or they can send money...like three bucks...for a tape of our music." So go at

it...maybe at least write them a letter and let them know that you appreciate their DIY spirit, even if you don't have any money to send. Think about it...supporting the committed young bands will just about insure that we have interesting and hopefully even inspiring music to listen to when we are old and gnarled revolutionaries. Big points here for courage and commitment. JUG *Radio Unfriend-ly; 317 16th Avenue; Seattle WA 98122*

The Real Enemy "Twin Cities Straight Edge" demo: A politically aware straight edge band! Finally!' Goddamn...if I putthis in and heard another band talking about the same old fucking stupid "we can make a change" crap without any solid plans or ideas of their own, I would have sold my microphone and picked up a guitar, changing permanently over to folk music. The Real Enemy made my day. Starting with creative handmade/silk screened packaging, this five song demo really shines throughout. What I like about this demo, aside from the fact that their songs are creative and engaging, is the underlying connection I sense to them understanding their punk rock roots...not "hardcore pride" or "youth crew" or any of that junk, but an awareness that this is the music of rebellion and of those dissatisfied with the status quo and willing to do something about it. All of the lyrics are super imposed over political woodcuts and

graphics which describe their politics, and the package as a .whole is solid: the graphics go beyond the lyrics, describing topics not necessarily found in their song topics, which implies that these guys run deeper still than the five songs on this tape. And an anti-Nike song...good for you for actually taking a stand and singing about the topic. Bonus points for having a political quote printed on your lyric sheet, and extra bonus points for having that'quote be about loving oneself and how that is lost when hating other human beings. This is a four track demo, and as such, the quality is not the best possible, but I appreciate what they are going for and strongly recommend supporting this new band. JUG

The Real Enemy; 2035 Montreal Ave.; St. Paul, MN 55116

Since The Fall "Reading , PA Hardcore" demo: I was honored for this review to have the help of my girlfriend Cynthia: she happened to be with me when I started

the tape going and so was able to give me her thoughts on it as well. Never mind that she'd never heard of hardcore before we started dating a few months back, and never mind that she would rather listen to R. Carlos Nakai or Pink Floyd than Trial or Catharsis...she's starting to enjoy more and more of this type of music as she explores it. (...and while we're on the topic, how many of you diverse punk hardcore rockers have ever even heard of R. Carlos Nakai? Native flute player...with more emotion and intensity in a moment of his silences than what we often see in full songs of our aggression. Check him out...) After all, is this music we play...this supposedly "revolutionary" music...only for ourselves? For hardcore/punks? For those who already understand and accept it? I would hope the fuck not. That would be the antithesis of what I would consider a revolutionary approach for any genre or art form. Anyway...it is with those thoughts that Cynthia was invited to claim the notso-prestigious title of "Reviewer" here. Onto this tape: It reminded me quite a bit of the San Diego hardcore kings Unbroken, which is to say desperate screaming put to metal hardcore featuring hot guitar licks and tricks. It is too easy to say "metal hardcore" and have that describe 60% of the music out today, but add the guitar tricks and you have something which we can separate from the pack. The vocals here are more raw than what we experienced with Unbroken however, and are much more diverse, in that the singer approaches his lyrics by singing at times — actually doing vocal scale styled singing. A bold choice. I respect that, even if I didn't like it myself. Musically, these guys have skills on their respective instruments, and it all comes together occasionally. Cynthia was quick to note in the first song that the tempo changes from fast to mid were to her liking: "I like this part, " she said, "It's danceable." Next week she'll be kickboxing and destroying all of you fuckers, so watch out... The tape has a lot of that: slow tempo dancefloor mayhem...but the part which struck me

[Image not archived]

musically was all of the guitar dive bombs and whammy bar insanity thrown in from time to time. At one point, two guitars did simultaneous dive bombs into whammy bar attacks which resulted in five seconds of what sounded like a room full of Nintendo game systems all going off at once in a video game laser gun sound orgy. Cynthia commented: "That's really rock, " and then went on to flip through the rest of the tapes at hand. So, overall, I gave it two or three listens, but without lyrics included (a definite minus), I wasn't really hit hard by any of it except the Yngwie Malmsteen axe wielding. And why does it say "Reading PA hardcore" if you're from Connecticut? Who knows. Onward...

Since the Fall; P.O. Box 74; Farmington CT 06034–0074 — send SASE for lyric sheet and stickers .

Sippwic^ "" demo: Whoa. This tape scared me...and I like that. Reminiscent throughout as a cross between...get this...Kiss it Goodbye and Gehenna...this West Seneca NY band delivers a bunch of songs which are ugly sounding and particularly engaging. Vocally, I actually thought of Deicide (but without

the same intensity of vocal effects...its more on the side of Deadguy with two vocal tracks from time to time). Lyrically they are proclaiming rage through non specific terms, which I like because it makes me think and feel and wonder for myself rather than having my emotions and theirs spoon fed to me. Take all of the above influences and sounds and mix it together with what was the most troubling part: that the whole project has the feel of being some collective joke among the band members and their friends. The band members are introduced on the insert next to their respective instruments as "Joey-Kids; Noj-Pizzas; Todd-Garbage; Rusty-Water; Luke-Do- nuts". I don't get it, but I also don't feel that I need I have to in order to enjoy the music (the four songs of which take a long time to get through...very complex and involved). The band instrument list might very well be like the approach taken by Endeavor who made up strange names for serious songs in order to be taken a bit more lightly. Maybe all of their hometown friends understand...which is disturbing because I get the feeling that there is a whole cadre of these dangerously insane people in West Seneca who are members and fans of this band and that in itself, aside from anything else effecting their mental in/stability puts me at a profound disadvantage should they ever decide to organize further and attack CrimethInc Headquarters while I am there discussing high-brow political theory. These are people attempting to, and on a certain degree succeeding in, creating cutting edge music. Avoid them physically, but somehow try to buy their demo tape. I could see them on tour with Converge and being not a match for them or even trying to be, but rather standing as an excellent complement in their own right. JUG

Sipowicz; 104 Bernice Drive; West Seneca NY 14224; 716-685-0932; self-eye@aol.com

Strikeout "Grievous" demo: God, another awesome demo from Europe! Plenty of variety in the songwriting, very cutting edge German hardcore sound, usually speedy, plenty of breaks and changes, "danceable" parts here and- there, unusual metal flourishes and strange noisy parts to spice it up, screaming singer leading the charge. There's enough drama here to make the songs exciting, to make the music seem to matter. The mix could be a bit clearer, but it suits this music just fine. The lyrics are excellent, too: "pressure is growing above me, I hope the sky falls and kills all their methods of statecontrol, our words have no meaning cause demos have no say." I wonder where all the great demos from the USA are? Are we completely behind the Europeans in making good music, am I failing to keep up with what's going on in my backyard, or are my tastes just disconnected from my peers? — b

The Tet Offensive "Vote of Non-Confidence" demo: At least I think this is a demo, it's so slick (and shrinkwrapped, which is unnecessary and eco-un- friendly) that it's hard to tell. OK, that aside, this is awesome. Its strange, sort of deranged, noisy modern hardcore stuff, really unpredictable songwriting, tempo changes between nervous speed and throbbing pound, excellent recording that really flatters the music. Great use of the snare drum in unusual rolls, etc. The vocals are high and screechy, they might take some getting used to, but I'm just thrilled to hear somebody with

an original voice, I've heard that one deep tough voice everybody fucking tries to have til I'm sick to death of it. The lyrics, song explanations, song topics in general are fucking awesome, they deal with a wide range of super-aware local Cana- dian/ internationally relevant issues and deal with them well (corporate monopoly on funeral homes, bureaucracy and third world hunger, Canadian education "reform, " American military/cultural imperialism...). This band is right on in every way and I expect to see them do great things, -b

3075 Council Ring Road, Mississauga, ON L5L 1N7 Canada

Unavowed "Anathema" demo: This tape came with a photocopied promo sheet (D.I.Y.!) and a vinyl sticker. Hmm...the band's promo sheet acknowledges that people often don't know how to classify them (either metal, old school, or as tough guys) and that fits me as well. They don't come across as tough guys (although there was no lyric sheet here so I have no idea what they are singing about and might very well be on their way over to my house to kill me as we speak). And actually that was a strange choice: to include a vinyl sticker and photocopied bio but no lyric sheet. They don't come across as old school for the most part, unless we are talking about what their bio refers to (early 1990's NYHC). But the metal tip...ay., there's the rub! Cynthia (reviewer of the year) said "This sounds like heavy metal." Don't get me wrong...I like this tape, but is a metal fest. The guitars have that DRI metal sound which is more fuzzy than crunchy, with an occasional hot lick thrown in. The singer sort of talks in a low throaty voice instead of screaming from his guts, which is interesting to my ear, but not inspiring. If you mixed DRI with Dan O'Mahoney on a really pissed of day you'd have an idea as to what you were getting into when buying this demo. This isn't a tape which made me want to eat my fucking car, but overall isn't bad at all. I hope they get the label they are looking for with their promo sheet. Labels get in touch! JUG *$3 worldwide to: Steve Smillie; PO Box 141048; Minneapolis MN 554141048; 612-696-9111; oneprcnt@visi.com*

Unproved Truth "Interludium" demo": Really fancy packaging includes an airbrush-painted cardboard box, containing the tape (featuring a full-color cover) and a separate lyric/art sheet for every song. Their songwriting is weird, kind of sprawling, the different sections don't go together as smoothly as they could. The music was recorded on a four track, which shows in a really trebly, weak drum mix. The mix is overloaded enough that everything changes a bit when the weak, yelling vocals come in. One song features a sample of John Lennon talking about the controversy that surrounded him mentioning how much more popular his band seemed to be than Christianity, it doesn't seem to be connected to the rest of the song in any way but there it is. I'm glad these guys have worked hard to do interesting packaging for this demo, they need to work harder on their music now I'd say. They don't seem to be in danger of sounding too much like everyone else, they just need to clarify and polish what they're doing. — b *J. Bartsch, Laerchweg 1, d-86971 Peiting, Germany*

Unrest "" demo cassette: This is a European band who won me over right

[Image not archived]

away with the fact that they describe themselves as "straight edge hot jazz emo punk". In addition, they sing in German, and one song in French, and NOT in English. In fact, to get the English translations of their songs, you have to send away to their address for them. This tape's music consists of chaotic noise...sounding like the result of a room full of musicians who have just switched instruments to try each others for the first time at a jam session. As such, the sound and style is raw and strangely appealing, although rough and unpolished. Sound quality is four track at best, but I have the feeling that it went right to tape, without a recording device, onto a tape recorder of some kind, which also oddly enough tends to accentuate the improv segments of the music rather than distracting from them. Without the lyrics in front of me, I can try to describe the content as best I can from inference and graphics alone but I want to give apologies in advance to the band and to readers if I am inaccurate in any way. This appears to be an anarchist band, and they have taken the time to fill their photocopied insert with graphics depicting revolution. In fact, the only English words on the tape, other than the title are the definitions of the words "revolution" and "revolutionary" which appear reprinted from a dictionary. Good to see those words printed in English. Maybe some Americans will take note (subtle cynicism is detected in the background somewhere...). I liked this tape a lot actually, especially the last song, which came out and was gone in an instant, Los Crudos style. Find it if you can. My copy is numbered 10 out of 100. JUG

Custom Records; Bachstr. 11; 32756 Detmold; Germany?

^Asia_n Punk. Lives" compilation tape;_ A tape compilation from the Far East, featuring two or three songs each from ten bands. It starts with Argue Damnation, which have the same fast music and messy mix of Youth Strike Chord, only worse, and their screaming singer isn't as good. They add a second guy with a deep voice on the second song, that makes it more interesting. They're followed by the slower, messier, older-fashioned punk rock of Human Waste from the Philippines. This is the most feedback-drenched, most nearly unlistenable recording I've heard in a little while. At least their liner notes are endearing (they write about what kinds of music they have been listening to, and mention that their first demo was called "Immature Bunjee Jumping"). They're followed by New Found Heritage, whose slogan is "hardcore is hardcore!!" and play a funk-inflected breed of simple newer- fashioned hardcore. The next recording, Social Outrage, is live and messy yelled punk, not too clear, but not as difficult to bear as Human Waste. That side of the tape ends with the much clearer silly sugar-sweet pop punk of the Pregnant Men, who beg "don't turn away from me, " but god, it's impossible not to. Beginning the next side, Disobedience sets a possible record for distorted, indecipherable recordings. What I hear doesn't sound bad at all (maniacal shrieking, fast punk noise, old-fashioned punk guitar solo) but I'm not able to hear much I can make sense out of. The Abrasive Relations first song alternates between singing over an old-fashioned fuzzy punk guitar line and a melodic guitar lead; perhaps it's the sort of thing you could have found on the Peace comp, years ago? Their second song is a hilarious Christmas carol of a song, played to the tune of

"If you're happy and you know it clap your hands, " with lyrics that go on like this: "you can stab me in the back but I won't die, you can batter me really hard but I won't die, you can even use cyanide or you can set me on fire but whatever you do remember I won't die." OK, we're approaching the end, but first Bench have to play their comparatively clear, melodic punk stuff. One of their songs is a ska version of 80 s pop song "Take On Me, " for Christ's fucking sake. Beyond Description rescue us for a moment, with their wrecked, noisy roaring punk (lyrics include "even if it should rain pitchforks, rise! more power to your elbow!"). They have a funny recording that makes their drums sound like big empty buckets, but it works in their favor. The final band is the Bollocks from Malaysia, who have more energy and speed than I expected, not so bad after all. Overall I didn't get too much out of this tape, but it's great to see d.i.y., internationally cooperative efforts like this. — b

Sprout records c/o Tsuyoshi Konno, 1-10-27

S™h^ "I- Tu^ ^{D}m i;'™»8'Paniculari» ^ ™ " Poison "' a few others. I have a feeling we share ideas on originality and expression that are closer than our opening statements would imply. I Trlw ™ ZftTo^ mamfested tn every individual anyway, after all, we aren't all clones yet) and expression are important for making really worthwhile music. ThSe arc bands (like Voorhees) that *? a* **h b d f NA; ? bU raiSe 'he, ntenS, ty eve t01116 po, nt ^ ^ can stand out on lheir own_ However' ^ere are also bands that only tap into a past formula (complete with fashion identity bullshit) iK u m eS you^rew" Sds^Bnn^ h D -'»' ^ "t ^ ins P'ra, ion'° kec|' sumdin 8 on m y own ^ "» l 10 "o'1 "U1 a 8roup of people that dress and think and act and listen to the exact same music as I do. And to he anti metal youth crew kids, Bnnging It Down was so metal it might as well have been Metallica when it was released, you don't have any idea what you're talking about. So I think both myself and Herr Editor want to rcln^n^i^ ^Ury r\ nH bOth ^ mUS, C a"d ^ f C°P'e performing '^ ^uil P°sin S a"d wasting everyone's time. The constant hardcore to metal to hardcore cycle keeps everything fresh and vital rather than stagnant so I suppose I can tcomplain about the complaining too much. Argh, this is turning to shit, all I've done is lay out reviews for three days, I can't think coherently anymore... * S°1 SUpp0Se**

_A.T.R. #2:_ This is fucking where it's at, right here. This is exactly and flawlessly the 'zine I was waiting to see come out of the hardcore community this year: it's super politicized, deals with abstract and specific issues without ever getting boring or alienating, and above all, passionate and inspiring, very human. The first issue of this 'zine had only one of those qualities: it was intellectual, that was it. There were places in which the writers tried to put themselves forward as human beings, but it was always lost behind the fog of unintelligible (if not nonsensical) language, abstraction to the point of vacancy, and horrible photocopying. This one... well, I haven't seen a 'zine this special since Icarus Was Right. Contents run the spectrum from explicitly political to intensely personal, but the political stuff is all about people in the end, not

ideologies, and the personal stuff never loses its edge of analysis and self-awareness. Included, for example, are journal entries from Erix experiences (in a disintegrating love affair and as a survivor of a hate crime), discussions about gentrification (and our role in it as punks/ artists) and masculinity/competition, Erix manifestos on such things as how to teach "radically" ("to be teacher AND class clown"), and why we need to replace the mass media rather than try to use it, and the other half of the Dennis interview Eric did that appeared a few pages ago in this issue (illustrated by a pull quote — "I think revolutionary people are romantic" — and an old illustration, Don Quixote jousting at windmills). Even the layout is lovely, sober and restrained yet classy and stylish. And as I read the final words, a promise to and from all of us to live, to overextend ourselves into life and explode out the other side into new worlds of freedom and passion, written in a poetry that I didn't think Eric or anyone else was capable of, I feel that this is the most beautiful and complete 'zine I have ever read. Complete, like a living organism: with a vibrant pulse, wide open eyes, a razor-sharp brain, and, right in the center where it belongs, the heart. I closed the back cover and stood up, renewed in mind and spirit, ready to go out into the world and overthrow empires, to slay princes and rescue dragons. — b

Eric Boehme, 118 Raritan Avenue, Highland Park, NJ 08904

Alliance #1: If I say this is one of those unsure newsprint first issues, with writing and layout unpolished, and general mission as yet undefined, will you know what I'm talking about? They've only become common in the last couple years, but they all share some common features: small review sections (this one has a typical 9 'zines, but an impressive 40 records) of erratic quality (case in point: one reviewer says Endstand sounds exactly like a faster Earth Crisis!!!), interviews done in pizza

Burn Collector #8: It is my opinion that Al Burian is the best narrative writer in the punk underground today. His prose is so spirited, so masterful, so full of pathos and subtlety, that I'd put his work on a level with my favorite authors of all time (Henry Miller, William Burroughs, Jeanette Winterson, although Al has more in common with the first). This (along with the earlier B.C. issue that chronicled the greyhound bus trip of epic proportions) is his crowning glory to date, estab- ☒ lishing him firmly as the successor to Cometbus in this genre of the 'zine world. In 'zine terms, this is the length of a paperback novel, recounting Al's various adventures, misadventures, and non-adventures during his most recent stay in Portland, Oregon. Um, looking at what I've written so far, this review seems ridiculous, and you're probably incredulous, so the only choic e I have is to try to let Al's writing speak for itself:

> ***When he tells jokes he delivers them flatly, never scanning the room for reaction or reveling in whatever social one-up they might give him. He's a workman, matter-of-fact, or, in another sense, superheroic: it's like God gave him a power he never wanted, the***

X-ray ears which allow him to hear the implicit punch lines of life, and he recites them, but almost grimly, as if he's an ancient oracle who can't help but tell us what's written on the cave wall, knowing we'll probably cut his head off one day for giving us what we asked for.

and:

No time to waste. I've a town to be run out of. "I'm sorry about this!" I scream through the murk at Andrew. "What?" He screams back. I turn over a table, spilling bottles of half-swilled warm beer everywhere. I jump on a chair, and then tackle Holzgum's hapless housemate, wrestling her to the ground. Then up on a table and dance maniacally — people are enthused, no one gives a fuck. It is impossible to crack these people. You can set their houses on fire, disseminate genital herpes, kill their pets, nothing affects them. It all just makes you more the kind of person they want to know. It makes you great to have at parties. I'm struggling in quicksand. The more I try to alienate them, the more I try to engineer my own social downfall, the more parties they invite me to. Maybe they're one step ahead of me, reverse-psychologizing me. I have to admit, it's about the worst punishment I could receive.

— b**

Al Burian, 307 Blueridge Road, Carrboro, NC 27510* _Burn Collector #9:_ This is a more pensive Al, a more philosophical Al, a very seasonal Al, just right for gloomy winter days (figures Inside Front couldn't bring it to you in a more timely manner). Still cynical, still eccentric (or maybe just *weird}, * but not the wild romp of slightly depressed hilarity we have sometimes seen before. This issue includes more tales of landlords, bad rock music, Reagan, and Greyhound trips with bizarre busmates, all of which are apparently fundamental parts, if not of all of our lives, certainly of Al's*. The storytelling is strong, as usual, although it feels a little unfocused at times. This is an entertaining, self-mocking, reflective, and startlingly enough, finally life-affirming journey through the mazy pre-dawn streets of Al's head, sometimes disorienting, sometimes profound, sometimes just what you needed. — @ *same address as the other Burn Collector

parlors with bands like (in this example) the Bouncing Souls, and wandering columns by the apparently very young. In a surprise move, this one also includes a couple pages of poetry. The other inter- ' views include Kill Your Idols, Shutdown, and Inside, and Scott from Tripface writes a piece about why he left the band. There's nothing in here that really grabs me (except for Adam's remarkably candid column about a disastrous afternoon with his girlfriend, which happens to perfectly describe countless afternoons I've spent myself)... but I don't want anyone to think I'm negative or critical of 'zines like this existing. In fact, I'm thrilled they do... the only way to learn how to write, or do anything, for that matter, is by doing it, and 'zines like this are the training grounds for the writers whose 'zines I will be enjoying next year. I hope. Prove me right, Alliance. — b

Alex Lichtenstein, 119 West Third Street, West Islip, NY 11795

Camp Vomit #1: Little tiny 'zine about life as a staffer at a park. It includes one comic (psychedelic, near-indecipherable artwork, low on storyline, high on weirdness, plot left unresolved for next issue) and one article (about the summer all the fish died and the staff had to clean them off the top of the lake). This is a first issue, and it's correspondingly rough in all regards. — b *Fil., 325 Palm Street, Canton, IL 61520* _Days Anew #1:_ This is a great first issue. One of the best and funniest things about it is the radical/political articles (one is entitled "A Brief Look Into Our Civilization, " another defuses the myth of representative "democracy"): they deal with all this serious stuff, capitalism, hierarchy, etc., but they're illustrated with photos

of hardcore kids jumping around with guitars! This sort of underlines the hilarious juxtaposition of serious analysis and youthful rowdiness in our community, and I get a kick out of it. The article about multinational corporations is followed by photos from Nike sweatshops, which make the difference between abstractions and real human issues. The interviews (with Sweden's Separation and Refused) go into detail, and the editor doesn't fail to press the bands (without being a jerk) when need be. There's an article in German about Food Not Bombs, and I'm glad to see that starting up in Europe. The layout is gorgeous, ar- # tistic and readable at once, believe it or not, and the photos are well-shot too. The only drawback — a tendency here and there towards simplicity, lack of depth — should be gone by the next one. — b

Rolf Thiele, Schnorrenberger Allee 45, 53909 Zulpich, Germany

The Defenstrator #8: (Newsprint, Tabloid size, 8 pgs, free) A great way to communicate within the activist scene, The Defenstrator is packed with tons of informative articles. This issue focuses on

[Image not archived]

Mumia, Death Penalty info, Anti-police brutality demos, action against Nike, pirate radio, and more. A much needed voice on issues people should be made aware of, it's great to see something like this out there, free for everyone. If this comes out regularly, I would expect to see a definite positive effect on the activist community, and hopefully more people willing to act for change. This newsletter is based in Philly, but has reports from all over the country, making it valuable to just about everyone. Ask for a bunch and put them everywhere for all to see. -n

the defenstrator, POB 30922, Philadelphia, PA 19104

Dial Tone #3: Interesting, if sometimes vague or incoherent, or both, politi- cal/ social/cultural discussions, very much from the author's perspective. Although it's not thorough analysis or very focused, it's got some good parts. Plus, it made me get in a debate with one of the line cooks at work on Heidegger, good and evil, and whether or not an atheistic world=a better tomorrow, as Dave would have us believe. The main thing that bothered me about Dja_LTone_ was that it didn't seem to bring up anything we didn't already know. Coca-Cola controls the world, our

two-party system is a joke, religion is dumb? It just doesn't seem to push these ant farther, or to put much of a new spin on things. Perhaps I'm demanding too much of him — but if I could tell where he was headed, I might know what it is fair to ask of him. Still, the lightly cynical humor and the ideas themselves are worth taking a look at, to refresh your memory if for nothing else. —

@*Dave Laney, PO Box 94, Chapel Hill, NC 27514*

Doqprint#11: (Offset, Full-size, 80 pages, $4 ppd) I'm not sure if I've read Dog Print before, but I've certainly heard of it. Nonetheless, I am impressed with this issue and am glad I got to review it. The layout and pictures in here are amazing, the interviews and column are both interesting and insightful, and overall this looks like a very mature zine. Interviews include Three Studies for a Crucifixion, Slap a Ham Records, Amber Inn, and Refused. You could really tell from the interviews

that they were done in a friendly environment, and therefore they seem more like real conversations than the normal back and forth stale Q&A I'm used to seeing. This issue also includes a Laceration/The K Shipley 7" ep, which was not sent to me, so without having heard it I probably shouldn't comment on it should I? — n *Dogprint, POB2120, Teaneck, NJ 07666*

Eloquence of a Pariah #1: OK, this is another hardcore 'zine, and it fits the bill as such; but since it's one of the last five before I'm finished with the issue, let me use this opportunity to ask: does there really need to be one more formulaic hardcore 'zine? Why more interviews, scene reports and record reviews? Sure, there should be some 'zines that do this stuff... but there should be lots of other 'zines that do lots of other stuff, and those are sorely lacking. It seems like the people who want to do interviews, scene reports, etc. should arrange to do them for the 'zines that exist for that sake, and everyone else should concentrate on finding new ways to break the mold, before it breaks us. Anyway... this one fits the mold well enough, with record reviews (Morning Again and Cave In are among the editor's favorites), scene reports (from Singapore, which I guess is still a little surprising in a 'zine from the Western hemisphere), interviews (Skycamefalling, Enemy of the Sun [formerly Kindred], Nora, Hans of Liar, the guy who does that solo militant vegan band Statement, and Andromeda from Florida), and a decent computer layout. The interviews are smoothly executed and usually reflect something of the interviewees' personalities, although they don't venture into any really profound territory. I'd just like to see more unusual, unpredict-

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able content. The title of the 'zine itself seems to promise more than was delivered this time; maybe next time this 'zine will offer us the confessions and indictments of our pariahs... that sounds more interesting to me... -b *Weimortels 73, 3920 Lommel, Belgium*

The Fifth Goal #1: (Photocopied, Half-size, 40pgs, no price) What "the fifth goal" is, according to this zine, is the one goal we as humans are able to pursue with our large brains. The four other goals... eating, sleeping, mating, and defending comprises the whole of animal life and most of human as well. So ultimately the fifth goal is to question our existence, which is done in this zine with the reiteration of Krishna's transcendental bravado. The writing in here is fairly dry and second hand rhetoric, which is not too terrible to listen to, but I'd rather just read a book by the holy swami himself so I can see all the crap people leave out when they restate their principles. What I'd rather see, if someone is going to write about Krishna consciousness, are stories about attempted deprogrammings, the alienation from society, or even how Krishna consciousness was personally found and accepted within that

person's life. After all, the end product of questioning existence should be to live your life according to the answers you find, right? In doing so, tell the rest of the world what you experienced, rather than giving us a lecture, -n

The Fifth Goal, POB 970085, Orem, UT 84097

Formula #4: This is a somewhat roughshod but attractive 'zine of the super-artsy variety... for example, it arrived sealed shut by an abstract color photograph sticker, giving it an aura of profound secret and mystery. Inside there are a lot of fairly abstract photographs and images, some powerful, some too blurred by the mediocre copy quality to work. There's an interview with Ian from Fugazi that is perhaps the best I've ever read with him (and interviews with him are almost always really interesting), it makes this 'zine worth reading all by itself. I can't even begin to describe all the important subjects that are touched on in this interview, with such insight and restraint... The interview is followed by a great piece of terrifying prose (evoking the formless horror of being anonymous, invisible, lost in a hostile world that you can't pin down, describe, define...) In addition to that, there's a (shorter) interview with the guy from Vermin Scum, and a heartfelt (if illegible) paragraph extolling

the merits of Drone Theory. — b

RO. Box 43535, Baltimore, MD 21236

Happy Not Stupid #9: This arrived today, the last day I can write reviews... and it's damn good, so I'm reviewing it, having just barely read most of it, but I can't offer too much detailed criticism. The ideas and perspectives are quite mature (as in both "grown up" and well thought out), which was actually a fucking relief (to read about the lives and ideas of people over thirty makes them seem almost human, makes me feel like / might still be human ten years from now!), and the writing itself is excellent, it draws you through it rather than making you fight syllable by syllable. Most of the best text consists of personal stories, from a subtly anarchist perspective (that becomes more prominent in the straightforward political news/information later on, which I was not as excited about), very open and personable, frank and forthright about sex and romance, awesome. There's a good article entitled "You think murderers should go free?" refuting a common "argument' (misunderstanding? ignorance?) against anarchism, I enjoyed that too. Reading this guy (and the better examples of the letters section) writing so frankly about his life, talking about real life things that happen every day rather than abstractions, not even trying to simplify them, just letting them be what they are, without failing to maintain a level of insight and analysis, was awesome.

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The book/'zine reviews were exemplary, too; I would like to direct a few editors of al most-real ly-good 'zines to this section, to show just how useful and interesting reviews can be. — b *P.O. Box 8145, Reno, NV 89507*

Holy Noise #3: Swiss 'zine with coverage of scenes you don't get to read about in many other hardcore 'zines. Interviews include Natural Mystic 'zine from Argentina (in which the editor talks about why he prints photos of naked women in his 'zine), Spanish band Shorebreak, United Front (a 'zine from Australia... the interview is followed by a scene report from their area), Body Bag (a "ska-core" band from Geneva), Reflections 'zine (the big one from Holland), Drive to Play (the d.i.y. tour booking kids from Switzerland), Cash for Chaos (Brazilian band), Contrition (German underdog

metalcore band), and Trial (in which Greg brings us up to date on such Seattle events as the death of Kurt Cobain and the breakup of Soundgarden). The record and 'zine reviews also cover a lot of bands/ 'zines that you don't see reviewed or interviewed in many European or U.S. 'zines.

Near the end there's a travel diary from the editor, that could have been more personal. In addition to all this, there's a manifesto from a group called the "Sense of Guilt' collective, calling for an all-out assault on capitalism and offering ways to go about this. It's a good article, and I'm entirely sympathetic to their goals... although I thought it was funny when they said "we want to centralize the struggle against all authority"! — b

Renaud Meyer, impasse des jumelles 17, 1287 Laconnex, Switzerland

I Hate The World That I Think Hatas Me #2: Hilarious title. I've seen a much older 'zine done by this guy, and this one is so much better. I mean, this is a really good 'zine! Not infrequently, I get some abysmal Second Nature-clone 'zine in the mail with reviews worse than the ones we always hated MRR for (and worse English than my letters from Malaysia, though it's inevitably done by a kid from New Jersey) and it almost makes me want to smash up my Judge records and give up on the vast potential of hardcore. This is the antidote I need those days: the writing is good, lots of it, with a really personal atmosphere, so you feel like you get to know the editor as you read... but it's not entirely self-absorbed, it has everything to do with the rest of our community and the world. The 'zine begins with an article refuting various hardline claims and doctrines, and continues with an article about the working/living conflict. At the center of the 'zine is a diary of two weeks of travel, music, and adventure in the editor's life, which is executed well enough to be interesting, and it's followed by more articles: critiques of the way our society constructs our sexuality and gender roles, the value of egalitarian discussions, plenty more. There's even a tiny letters/responses section. The reviews are excellent, he does a really impressive job of describing both music and 'zines. It's from Sweden, so of course there's a very serious consideration of the artistic merits and shortcomings of the new Garbage record right next to the review of the HeartattaCk #10 compilation LP, but that's a part of what they have going on up there... The English here is almost always perfect, occasionally there was an error that confused me for a moment, but otherwise, yeah, this is a top notch little 'zine, -b

Andreas Hagberg, Fjardingsmannav. 15, 643 32 Vingaker, Sweden

_I Stand Alone #11:_1 was a little hesitant at first, because I had the impression that this 'zine set the standard for standard, by-the-numbers late '90's straight edge 'zines... but I did find things to enjoy in it after all. The best feature is the interview with Kent from Ebullition, who always has interesting things to say (here he talks about his worst skating accident, and why it's not really progressive to try to get McDonalds to serve vegan burgers, among other things); he sets a standard of maturity and perseverance that all of us would do well to follow. The other interviews range from fairly interesting (Dan of Kid Dynamite, who talks about his experiences playing

in punk bands over the last 10 years) to sort of interesting (Scott of Buried Alive, who tells a heartwarming story about the kids from Next to Nothing giving his band 7"s to sell so they could break even on their tour, but kind of panics when he's asked what hardcore means to him) to not so interesting (a Louisville band called Out, who deny that music can ever have a social impact and say of Los Crudos and Drop Dead "I could never listen to a band like that" ...basically, they seem like they want to rock out for the sake of rock, but I'm not convinced that they're up to doing that, even, from reading this). The By the Grace of God tour diary was really interesting, it captured some of the weirdness and excitement and frustration of touring, and should also provide good evidence of why hardcore bands shouldn't tour with pop punk bands. In addition to all that stuff, there's an article about how people from the hardcore community have integrated themselves into the working world which features a fair number of perspectives, though none of them particularly radical, and doesn't offer much useful advice or analysis about how to take what you love about hardcore and apply it to the rest of your life. That's an important topic, I wish it was addressed more in 'zines, and a few paragraphs from Civ about how he can do what he wants because he's a tattoo artist (but most other people won't be so lucky) is not enough. Back to the contents... I don't relate to a lot of the reviews ("any band that names its CD "Recognize" has to be good") but there are a few good lines here and there ("these guys make Ernest Hemingway seem like a well-adjusted individual"). The layout can be a real draw

back. It's often neither clear or creative. But we all know how hard it is to get dependable graphics help... — b *P.O. Box321, Buckner, KY40010*

In Case of Breakdown #4: (Photocopied, Half-size, 36 pgs, no price) I'm not sure exactly what to say about this one, it didn't interest me much at all. This definitely has a personal feel to it, and I can see some merit in that, but sometimes people really don't have anything new or interesting to say. I don't know if that's because some people are boring, or because we'd rather stick to what we think will be accepted within the confines of punk as a subculture. I would've loved to have heard about life in Singapore, the HC scene there, and US influence on the country, but I guess Prit would find that boring to him. Prit discusses issues such as Emo, new school HC, aliens, and growing up. Also included are two interviews with a couple Singapore

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metal bands, whom didn't seem to have much to say. All in all I suppose this might hold some interest if you live in Singapore, or are a friend of the author. — n

Pritc/o I.C.B., BLK263, Bishan St.22, #04-269, Singapore 570263)

Innocence Regained #2: Photocopied, Half-Size, 40 pages, Free?) This is the sort of zine I'd expect to see more of from the HC/Punk scene. It seems like a real rarity to find zines like this coming from a movement where an individuals opinions and viewpoints can be shared freely without removing the individual from the equation. I really enjoy reading zines that lets me see how political/social issues are dealt with on a personal level and how they affect someone's life. Topics explored include mass transit, cops, work, rape,

straightedge, living in the city, and more. Innocence Regained is what happens when people wish to express themselves without having to worry about making a pretty zine, what you get is a zine that seems much more real. Issue #3 will be a split with Negative Burn, which could already be out. — n *Innocence Regained, POB 13274, Chicago, IL 60613*

Interbang #7: (Newsprint, Full-size, 62 pages, 2 bucks) Out of all the zines I received to review, this Is my favorite without a doubt. Straight forward political commentary and articles, no fluff or pomp in here. You can really tell Ben put a lot into this issue, it's got just about everything you could want. He interviews Red Guard from the Urban Guerrilla Poets, in which he gives us his world view and an interesting account of a David Duke protest in Cleveland. Ben's writings are always clear, to the point, and from the heart. He talks about everything from Homophobia to Hardline, from nonmonogamy to hip hop. Ben's passion for activism and change really comes through on every page and I highly recommend this to anyone. Apparently number 8 will be the last issue of Interbang, but according to Ben, we can expect future projects from him. — n

Interbang, POB 671, Ravenna, OH 44266 _Jesus Come Back #1:_ Don't be fooled by the title... this is basically a 'zine about hating the Promise Ring (the first thing I read in it was that the original title was "Jesus Come Back and Rid This Fucking

Earth of the Promise Ring). That's not the on/y thing in here, of course; that's just the recurring theme throughout what is otherwise a small, traditional (but not poorly done) hardcore 'zine. The first column is pretty fucking funny, an entirely straight-faced commentary on the (now very tired) trend of hardcore bands/labels ripping off their logos from big corporations, that reveals how stupid the whole thing is without having to say so. The better two of the remaining four columns touch growing older without growing apathetic and being a hardcore kid in the marines. There's a press-packet-style "profile" on the Mr. T. Experience (that even the editor notes is out of place at best), a Jimmy Eat World interview (in which the interviewer rightly grills the band on why they chose to work with a major label), a few record reviews, some ads (including one for the Cincinnati Academy of Design?!), and a Make-Up profile (I wish there was more to this one...). And maybe in the end it turns out they don't hate the Promise Ringers that much (not as much as they hate Boy Sets Fire and Falling Forward!), since they do run a movie trivia quiz with them, -b

524 Hudson Ave., Milford, OH 45150

Love Eternal Lost Infernal #4: The tough guys speak. In this case, it is the Italian tough guys, and they don't seem nearly as incoherent as the US ones do when they try to do 'zines. And perhaps it is really unfair of me to cal! them "tough guys, " since they didn't choose that name for themselves... but it's hard not to, because even though their actual explanations of why windmill dancing, etc. belong in hardcore seem well-reasoned enough, they're preceded by phrases like "or you'll be 6 feet under, fruit!" (it's worth remembering who brought the word "fruit" into hardcore: One Life Crew) and followed by "how to" articles advising mobs of straight edge kids to beat

(preferably ten on one!) punks who dance wrong to a bloody pulp. You know, I don't actually think the guys who do this 'zine mean to come off violent and

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fascist; I just think they haven't yet figured out that you can be anything in hardcore but a tough, macho guy without joining the ranks of the pretentious emo kids they despise so much. There are other options (you don't have to just choose between the two "name brands" of identity available in our scene), and if they really mean what they say about supporting "positive and creative" things, I'm sure they'll eventually move on from the violent dancing issue and bullies' language to more important issues. Anyway, in addition to the content I've referred to, there are columns about animal rights, the way work exhausts you and makes it hard for you to spend much time pondering, some short reviews, and short interviews with Disciple and Legion. There also seems to be a disproportionate number of ads in here. — b

Antonio Gnani, Vicolo del Forno, 4, 43044 Collecchio, Parma, Italy _Mad At The World #1_ (Newsprint, Full-size, 48pgs, $1.50): Lots of interviews in here, so I'll just list them first: Agnostic Front, Breakdown, The Templars, Slapshot, Awkward Thought, Bottom of the Barrel, The Degenerics, The Subjugated, Nekhai Naatza, Oppressed Logic, and Tribal War Records. These interviews make up about two-thirds of the entire zine, which leaves little room for much else. The interviews themselves were only mildly interesting, and after you've read your sixth interview, it seems like a chore to get through the rest. Interviews are probably my least favorite part of any zine, and I usually only read ones where people actually have something to say, which is usually not often. Zines for the most part advertise themselves on what bands they have interviews with, and usually those interviews are the main focus of a zine's existence. I think this is probably do to how much emphasis we put on music in hardcore, instead of what we're trying to express with that music. While I think it's important that people interview these bands/labels/zines to allow them to elaborate on what it is they're expressing, it shouldn't consume the entire zine itself. "Less is more" can definitely be said about interviews in zines and certainly about band interviews in particular. And if you still insist on including a lot of interviews in your zine, why not add variety and interview a broad spectrum of people? What

about that "crazy" guy on your street corner that yells at you when you walk by? What is he so mad about? What about that kid sitting in the corner of the club? Maybe he has something interesting to say. Hardcore is not made up solely of bands, zines, and labels, there are individuals that are involved in different ways whose viewpoints are just as valid, but not heard nearly as often. Don't fee! you need to fill your zine with interviews simply because that's what people do, write about what interests you and people will still want to read it, regardless if it has one less band interview in it. — n

Mad At The World, c/o Dan Scheme, 10 Garvey Dr, Jamesburg, NJ 08831, USA

Make Your Own 'zine #3: I'm going to admit something. Although I've found a lot of exciting stuff going on in faraway places like South America and Eastern Europe,

I've had a harder time finding things I'm really thrilled about in the Asian hardcore scenes. Either the kids there haven't quite found their stride yet, or else I'm just getting the wrong stuff from them. I know it's probably harder to be involved in hardcore there than anywhere else... anyway, the exceptions usually come from the Philippines, and this is one of them. Not only are the ethics of the editors fucking right on (they also do a distro called "make your own distro, " and spread d.i.y. ethics with everything they do), but there's a wide variety of international perspectives in here that anyone could stand to learn from. There's a lot of emphasis on environmental and anima! rights issues in here, as one of the main goals of this 'zine is to raise awareness of that subject in the Philippines (there's a "scene report" included here on the young anima! rights movement in the Czech Republic, too). One of the better features on that subject is a guide to d.i.y. first aid for pets. There's also an article entitled "The Modern Filipino Woman, " which discusses the emerging self-sufficiency and assertiveness of Filipino women and the cultural backlash against it... later, there's an article by Carissa (of

USA 'zine Screams From Inside) detailing the history of prostitution in the western hemisphere and offering a proposal for how it should be legalized and regulated for everyone's safety. Interviews include a really interesting, in-depth exchange with Chris of BCT (a USA punk tape-trader who's been active since the early '80's), a really short one with Filipino band Santilmo, and another with an anarchopunk band from Hong Kong called Blackbird. There's a scene report section (mostly from the Philippines), and a free classified ad section (like Slug & Lettuce), and to top it all off a "gig review" accompanied by some indecipherable photos, one of which is of a band called "Stupid Egg Piece" (in which one member is wearing a shirt that says "DIY not hard stuff). Altogether, this heiped me broaden my horizons a bit as far as the international punk scene goes, and I'm glad to be in touch with them, -b

M.Y.O. c/o Gani and Adie, 146 A. Dela Cruz St., Tayabas 4327, Quezon, Philippines

Monkey #4: (Full-size, Offset, 91 pages, 2 bucks US) Interviews include Earth Crisis, Mainstrike, Slugfest, Spazz, Disrespect, and Catweazle. These interviews were generally good reads (probably great reads if you like any of those bands), and the band photo's were real nice and clean. The guestwriter's column on Christianity in the Dutch SxE HC scene was the real gem in here though, but most of the other writings were fairly uninteresting and pointless (Monkey's Fashion Corner??). Even though the Earth Crisis interview did very little to change my opinion of them, what made it enjoyable were the arguments the editor brought up to discuss with Karl. We still however see the same aversion tactics used by Karl when asked about his "hardened" lyrics, here's an example, "I think it's kind of bizarre though that lyrics like that are viewed upon as harsh." What?!? How can they not be when the lyrics spell out a black and white world where "if you refuse to change, then you are guilty and must be destroyed"? People don't eat meat cause they're "evil", the meat and medical industry have a strangle hold on the collective consciousness of America, and ensures we all grow up to be good-natured meat eating citizens. Our culture is being manipulated to

the point where people don't know what life to live, and instead follow tradition and what gives them the most temporary pleasure. As long as there's a financial incentive to exploit animals (as well as humans) the process is going to continue, recognizing capitalism and a marketed culture as the great debaser is a far greater accomplishment than demonizing the average American with such ridiculous and absolute logic. — n

Sperminator Productions, Vlasslraat 12.b, 9712 KT Groningen, The Netherlands

Negative Burn #3: OK, this issue is from fall '97, but the kid just sent it to me so I guess he's still doing the 'zine and wants you guys to know about it. It begins with a number of pages of writing from the editor introducing us to himself and his ideas about straightedge, d.i.y., relationships, bureaucracy, homophobia, and some other topics. It's all written from a somewhat young and idealistic viewpoint which is refreshing if not profound. There are three pages of reviews (focusing largely on new school "old school" bands) followed by an interview with North Carolina oldschool band Reinforce, which set the stage for an interview with Nick Baran, the Buffalo new school "old school" hardcore guru. And that's pretty much what we've got here. The mediocre xeroxing quality doesn't *usually* interfere with reading. — b *205 Bedell PI., Fayetteville, NC 28314*

Nuevo Extreme #4: Este 'zine no lleva mucho (unas columnas, tres entrevistas, y resehas mediocres), pero es bien escrito en general, e interesante. El que Io escribe, Joao, habla mucho, y si no quieres escuchar mucha informacion sobre su vida y sus opiniones sobre "la escena" en Santiago de Chile, mejor que no Io leas. No quiero decir que Joao tiene una vision limitada, con un enfoque que incluye nada mas que el mismo y su comunidad exclusive de punks en Santiago. Tambien escribe sobre las contradicciones inevitables en las actitudes, el estilo de vida, y la posicion social y economica de cualquier persona que tenga mas que medio cerebro, y temas parecidos. Las columnas son buenas tambien. Lo que no recomiendo es que compreis el 'zine para leer las resenas. No son insoportables, pero no son nada especial. No entiendo por que los 'zines siempre tienen que estar ligados con la musica. Si fuera que todos los tios con 'zines nos estuvieron describiendo entusiasticamente sus discos favoritos — eso lo entendena. (O si estuvieron atacando a Ten Yard Fight, como Joao.) Pero incluir unas resehas solo porque es el formato tipico de

un 'zine, o porque Initial Records se lo pidio, no tiene sentido. Mucho mejor dejarnos con las otras partes de _Nuevo Extremo_, las cuales me gustaron. Espero que tengais la misma reaccion. —

@*c/o Joao Da Silva, Casilla 120 Correo 12, La Reina, Stgo., Chile*

Paper Tigers #1: (Photocopied, Half-size, 52pgs, $2) There's a lot of really interesting articles in here, no reviews or ads, just good writings. The first article contained herein is the author's personal opinions on leftists, which he derides for their lack of action and ideological futility. In fact his hatred is so strong that he begs them to, "...hold a gun to the part of your brain that contains your leftist conditioning and pull the fucking trigger". In doing so it seems like he's putting himself in an ideological vacuum, where his own experiences and trials create the whole of his philosophy. He

seems to resent them because they haven't grown up poor, needy and in pain like he did. They should therefore stop trying to figure out what the fuck is going on within the context of their lives, and just open themselves to the suffering of the world and learn the hard way. Ok, but I think there are more counterrevolutionary forces out there that deserve your anger and attention than the ideologically paralyzed of the world. Maybe they would be more receptive to your criticism if you didn't tell them to simply kill themselves. It's just a thought.

Anyways, the rest of the articles are captivating enough to make this an overall good read. There's a 13 page piece on the writings and speeches of Lucy Parsons, there's a series of articles on Chiapas, and an article on the connections between Freemasonry and institutional racism in American History. As an added bonus, we get an education on where and what guns to buy, which was interesting to see. Definitely pro-gun, the folks at Paper Tigers are ready to fight for their freedom against those who would steal it. If this sounds appealing then maybe this is the zine for you. -n *Paper Tigers, POB 2945, Tulsa, OK 74101–2945*

Placid Island #1: (Photocopied, half-size, 30 pages, 2 stamps) Despite it's size, and the fact that most of the articles were pirated from other zines, I was impressed with the effort nonetheless. Borrowed articles include; "Teach Your Fucking Self' from Profane Existence, an intro to Chiapas from Grundig Fanzine, and the "How Ethical is the Work Ethic" from I.F.#9. These are all great articles, if you haven't already read them. The original articles were intelligently written with personality and just the right amount of cynicism. I was particularly surprised to see an article on H.P. Lovecraft, a pulp-horror writer of the 1920's whom even Stephen King listed as a major influence. If you don't remember his name, then you might remember his most famous creation, the squid-like god Cthulhu from his short story 'The Call of Cthulhu". Also included in this zine is a short bio of Lovecraft, which sheds some much- needed light on his life and writing career, although by no means complete. While Lovecraft was an Anglican who at one time praised the Aryan race for its "vast superiority to the rest of mankind", his writings are virtually devoid of his bigotry, especially those from his later years. "All my tales, " he wrote in 1927, "are based on the fundamental premise that common human laws and emotions have no validity or significance in the cosmos-at-large." Lovecrafts stark reality of cosmic alienation, and his ability to illustrate his own madness continues to fascinate me, and I'm glad to see some exposure of him to the HC/Punk community. — n

Placid Island Fanzine c/o Josh Gregal, 290 Chestnut St., Hammonton, NJ 08037

Reality hard core XXX straight edge biuletyn #8 (2): This is in Polish. There's a lot of text in it, including interviews with Congress, All Out War, Racial Abuse, and others, show reviews (including the Italian band Miskatonic University and the fucking great Hungarian band Dawncore), some articles and news from Dischord records (and two other big labels that have even less to do with hardcore than they do). The reviews are quite lengthy and cover a lot of international territory from east to west. The ad's

are all for cassettes, since CD players aren't easy to come by in Poland. Looks like a good 'zine serving the Polish hardcore community. — b

Marcin Kopczmnslei, Chabrowa 12a/15, 44–200 Rybnik 15, Poland

Reskatpr #1: This is done in the Czech language, to spread information about hardcore in the Czech scene, so the main reason for us to write about it here is to point it out for people in other communities who want to communicate with people there. Its full-size, very "professional" printing and layout, and in addition to a whole lot of reviews includes interviews with Indecision, Ken Olden (of Battery and Damnation A.D.), Ensign, and Sunshine (by far the lengthiest, and with a local Czech band, thank goodness... part of it

[Image not archived]

Retrogression #14: First off, I want to say that Retrogression is a great magazine. It's filled with writing, a remarkable amount of it, in fact, almost all of which is intelligent, eloquent, and challenging. The best thing about Retro is that it makes you think, of course — there are so many claims made, so many positions taken, on so many issues, and with so much energy and assertiveness, that you find yourself constructing arguments and counter-arguments as you read whether you like it or not. Probably the highest point of this issue is the interview with Submission Hold — it goes into a lot of depth about gender issues, among other things, and the members of the band have a lot to say and come across as being really sincere. This interview was done in person, which works out really well (editor Dave spells some of the words according to the band's Canadian accents, which is the sort of personal touch that can make a "political" 'zine like Retro great), especially compared to the interview with the author of "Alice is an Island" 'zine, which was done over the internet and consequently lacks a certain... something. Other important features include the vast letters section (filled with bickering...), the similarly vast collection of smaller essays and thoughts (fuel for more bickering...), and articles including a critique of the so-called International Socialist Organization. There's also a lot of straight political information from a U.S. left-wing/liberal reformist perspective (which senators voted for what bills, etc.), which is less interesting than the rest of the 'zine because it lacks the personality that Dave's other writing has. The reviews are quite long, correspondingly few in number, and were clearly taken seriously, which is important... but I think it makes a lot more sense for them to do 'zine reviews than record reviews, in a magazine like this and in fact I found their 'zine reviews much more useful.

Now for the constructive criticism... there's a lot of complaining in here about how "dumb" punk kids are, how they don't want to read 'zines (Dave's in particular) and don't care about anything but fashion. Being frustrating with punk rock isn't new, people have been getting jaded and giving up

on it for decades. I think this usually stems from expecting punk to do everything on its own to save the world, which of course it isn't going to do. Punk isn't a deus ex machina, it isn't an army of superpolitical robots. It's just a bunch of kids looking for something more than mainstream society has to offer, some of them aware of this and making progress coming up with other ideas of how to do things, others not yet sure what they want. Hardcore isn't going to make capitalism and all those other evil forces go away all by itself; but it *is* a great tool you can use to work towards things getting better. It's worth something to have a community where you can talk to other people who are dissatisfied in the first place — communities are hard to come by these days — and if they're not all 'zinereaders and left-wingers, well, that means you're not preaching to the converted, right? Once you realize that punk isn't perfect, but has a lot to offer if you want to bring people together and get them to start thinking about things, you can get over adolescent disillusion and start getting things done. But rather than seeing the apolitical fashion-consciousness of the kids around him as an opportunity to do political outreach to people who need it, Dave just writes them off in frustration. It may indeed be true that he's not having any luck reaching them with Retrogression; but if anything, that just means that (as far as hardcore goes) Retrogression is a failed experiment, and

it's time for him to try something else... because the alternative is just accepting that these kids are always going to be unthinking jerks, isn't it?

Dave even goes so far as to offer hardcore punk as proof that an anarchist society could never work (because us punks allegedly are all such jerks that it's easy to see how hopelessly fucked human nature is) and that we must always have a government to make everything work. Obviously he hasn't gotten to know the hundreds of awesome punk kids I know who work together practically and cooperatively, people who grow their own food together, build their own houses, and always take care of each other. Perhaps if he could look beyond the silliness of the larger punk shows (which have never really been great examples of non-capitalist interaction anyway) to see small-scale anarchism in action in these people's lives, he could get over his cynicism and start to be idealistic enough about our species to not accept bullshit statist cliches about "human nature." Human nature is not set, it is the result of environmental conditioning... and we can make whatever kind of environments we want to, if we try. Rather than just accepting that everything is fucked up and settling for legal squabblings over the mere details of our misery, we need the idealism to seek great changes in our lives. This issue of Retrogression is an example of what happens when you start to let that idealism slide... you get jaded and bitter, and that prevents you from being able to get what you want, -b *RO. Box 815, Norton, MA 02766*

Rumpshaker #4: I've been thinking lately that one of the things our scene really needs right now is more good 'zines, to set an example for younger kids of how hardcore can be more than just music and dancing. I

think that some of the really good 'zines we have right now can be intimidating to the younger kids who want to be involved with the counterculture but don't know what the fuck "anarcho-syndicalism" is. Rumpshaker (despite its terminally horrible name) is the 'zine I've been waiting for: superwell written and put together, well-distributed, intelligent and sensitive and politically right on without being overbearing at all. It's a traditional hardcore 'zine, without aspiring to be any more than that, but it's just so well-done that it sets the example I was hoping for. The interviews, for example, are some of the best I've seen, and it's hard to do good interviews. I felt like I learned a lot about CR and Lifetime and why both bands broke up, and I didn't even know I was interested in learning anything about Lifetime! Other bands include Endeavor, Converge, Devoid of Faith... most of these are really extensive and go into a lot of detail. One really awesome interview is with a former cattle rancher who became a vegan environmental activist, that was really inspiring, especially in the otherwise "standard hardcore 'zine" context There's a lot of hilarious whimsical stuff in this 'zine, too, which is the perfect counterpoint to the more serious stuff: two satirical articles about hardcore (a hardcore "choose your own adventure" game parodying the social rules and rites of the scene, and a comparison of hardcore kids to deadheads), interviews with hardcore "celebrities" and their mothers (Sick of It All, Rick Healey, the Promise Ring guy), and an interview with a professional baseball pitcher who sings in a hardcore band. There are some reviews, of medium length, though not as many as I expected. Throughout all of it, editor Eric keeps a tone of ethical d.i.y. values, without ever raising his voice or sounding preachy. Anyway, yeah, this is great -b

Eric Weiss, 72–38 65 Piace, Glendale, NY 11385

[Image not archived]

interesting, and the articles were likewise, but nothing too earthshaking. If

you haven't already seen Second Nature, but it seems like something more like something I'd read in a waiting room than something I'd want to read. This is apparently the "Anonymous" issue, which might explain why this is so boring to read at parts. Too cold and distant for my tastes, but some people like that "Professional" feel that a lot of mainstream HC fanzi... oops, I mean magazines are good at. Seems like all this paper and space could be used for a better purpose than this, like political commentary, information on issues we should be aware of, or something completely different like an article on how to streak, oh wait... uh, never mind. I guess you gotta sit through what you don't like till you find the nuggets of delight hidden within, -n

Second Nature address elsewhere _Skinny #12_: This 'zine, thank god, is not as whiny as my high school journal was, although it's a similar kind of writing. Melissa, though, is writing for an audience, and is not going to remove her heart from her sleeve just because of that. If you aren't open to her writing, it might strike you as being a

little immature, a little self- indulgent, certainly amateur, and prone to funny uses of words and strange metaphors ("You're a crumb, lying on the rug, just hoping to be sucked away to some place more fulfilling and real, via the Hoover"). But the 'zine is full of good ideas, or hints of them, and that makes it absolutely worth it for me. And I'm just glad to see people *doing* things. My favorite part of the 'zine was actually the illustrations, carefully culled from a ridiculous textbook. And Melissa is fully aware of the contrast between her writing and the clinicality of the pictures: "My tears come from pain, " she writes next to a diagram of the lachrymal gland. So do mine. Except when I laugh really, really hard. —

@*Melissa/Okie Dokie Distro, PO Box 890701, Oklahoma City, OK 73189–0701*

Skyscraper #1: (Newsprint, Full-size, 40 pgs, no price [send a buck or some stamps]) Skyscraper seems modeled after zines like Punk Planet and HeartattaCk, but should find it's own style eventually. Apparently this is done by two brothers with a few contributions from various sources, and could probably use more help and input. The great this about these guys is that they really seem like they want people to give some input and add their own voice to the zine. They really have a good perspective on where they want to go with this, and feel everyone should come along and explore what this can be. Not wanting to limit themselves to the HC/Punk culture, they really want to expand into any and every realm possible, not just interviews with bands and labels. Despite that vision, this issue has interviews with bands and labels, and writings on punk and politics, but with interesting content nonetheless. Interviews include Bottlenekk/GSL, Scott from Bloodlink Records, Still Life, and Botch. In the Bloodlink interview, Scott talks about alternative technologies, owning your own house, and talks a bit about how

of punk, and attempts to dissect the anatomy of it within a business context.

I'm glad to see people finally waking up to the consumer nature of punk as a

subculture, and hopefully we can create more meaningful ways to interact rather than by just selling and advertising to one another. I expect to see a lot more from future issues with a wide variety of writings from everyone who wants to be heard. — n *Skyscraper, POB 4432, Boulder, CO 80306*

Slave #2: If this 'zine starts come out more frequently and getting better distribution, it just might be the thing we've been waiting for to keep intelligent/politicized hardcore alive. There's lots of great stuff in here. The best part for me is the running emphasis on the visual arts in punk (from the unique layouts to the punk artwork reprints to the centerfold of political stencil images that their friends put up all over their town). The interview with Boy Sets Fire is OK, but doesn't get really interesting until an argument begins about whether kickbox dancing is always a bad thing. Boy S.F. don't seem very interested in listening to any perspectives that conflict with theirs, there... The other band interviews (Reversal of Man, New Day Rising) are equally, uh, decent. They're not bad or boring, exactly, but it's tough to do really great band interviews! The other stuff is more interesting: a useful do-it-yourself guide to screen-printing, some really educational political pieces (an interview with Greg Jackson of

Black Autonomy, introductions to the Regulators [an old American Revolution-era anti-government movement] and the results of the Cuban revolution), and three extensive book reviews (one of the books is by Noam Chomsky, that should give you an idea of what to expect). OK, now advice for how to improve the next one: first, it needs to be organized better. The contents here aren't really arranged by theme or anything else, and it makes it hard to find your way through, let alone pin down a solid response to this issue. And though there are

a bunch of music reviews, and they're not badly written, they don't do any 'zine reviews! There are a fucking lot of good little 'zines out there, and given the content and approach of this 'zine it would make sense for them to have 'zine reviews occupying the middle ground between the book and record reviews. I feel like too many good 'zines concentrate more than they should on record reviews and soliciting records label ads, just to get free CDs and money... that sort of pins our scene down to having to read about fucking Victory bands even in smart d.i.y. 'zines like this, and there's really no need for that. The same goes for the shit record label ad on the back of this issue. Anyway, a new Slave will be out the same week this issue comes out, and I expect it to be better than this one, so definitely write them to get one; as I said, I think Slave will play an important role in keeping hardcore intelligent and effective over the next couple years. — b *PO. Box 10093, Greensboro, NC27404*

So, Why Worry? #3 (Newsprint, Full-size, 32 pgs, no price): "Straight-Edge Grindcore Hatezine" is the self-description given by the author, but a better description might be "Extreme Music with Personal Rants Fanzine". Lots of band interviews, but there are also quite a few pieces of personal writings, which seem to jump from subject to subject with very little consistency. He

definitely comes across as an easy going guy who just loves his music, which explains the large number of interviews. Ok, so here's the list: Seized, Forced Expression, We Should Die, Disassociate, Opstand, Strong Intention, Hemlock, Brutal Truth, and Seven Foot Spleen. My favorite has to be the Hemlock interview, here I'll give you a taste... Q: How is it determined if one should serve the Dark Master or become fuel to his fire? A: We are NOT enslaved by any "Dark Master", we are Sumerian warriors on a "Satanic Crusade" to destroy the light. Hemlock will come before Christ and MURDER love. All "mosh metal" idiots are fuel to the fire. So are fools who torture animals, ESPECIALLY them.

For those who don't know, the Sumerian pantheon of gods is the one used in the "authentic" Necronomicon, which is probably where they got their names and motif from. I wonder if these guys ever tried to summon one of the gods before, there are instructions in there for it after all. I think thafd be great act to do for a show if they were somehow able to cast some spells and really raise some hell! But alas, all the Priests of Marmaduke are probably too busy entertaining at children's parties and barmizvahs to come and show some HC kids the power of the Ancient Ones, -n *So, Why Worry?, 1107 S. Bruce, Monahans, TX 79756–5511 USA* _Status Magazine #7:_ (Full-size, Offset, 64 pages, Free) Reading this was a real confusing experience. I

felt like I was being " sent mixed signals, there are some good columns and interviews, some shitty columns and interviews, and a whole lotta ads. In fact, the first thing I noticed after flipping through this was the sheer number of ads, which accounted for about half the total number of pages (maybe that's why it's free). The first few columns were well written, politically minded, and original. The rest of the columns however were pointless, inane, and unjustified in their inclusion. Lots of interviews for the music lovers in here though, including: All, Midvale, Enewetak, Converge, Indecision, Waxwing, and The Judas Factor. Most of

the interviews focus entirely on music, with only a few interesting questions here and there. Overall, it's a good read if you like any of those bands, especially since it's free. A few suggestions if I may: focus more on politics, the insight is there, use it; ask interesting questions, don't just talk about music (remember HC is more than music, don't hide the politics in a few columns). I think I'd pay a couple bucks for this if it lost some ads and had some better articles and columns to read. Oh yeah, and there's some record and zine reviews in here too. — n

Status Magazine, POB 1500, Thousand Oaks, CA 91358

Value of Strength #5: (Offset, Full-size, 96pgs, $4 world) Ok, lets see here... Extinction, All out War, H20, Liar, One King Down, Clouded, Morning Again... yup, this is a hardcore fanzine. The layout of this is very slick, with nice band

photos and a full color glossy cover, it definitely has a professional look to it. Vegan Straightedge point of view with an honest desire for change will probably make this very appealing to the hardcore mainstream who are always looking formore band interviews, animal rights sermons, and of course pho-

> tos of band members looking cool and angry. I'm glad I progressed out of my "Earth Crisis stage", and started seeing the true potential for hardcore as an expression of individuality, instead of another identity to adopt. So I probably didn't enjoy the interviews and writings as much as I might have in the past, but I can definitely see the attraction this will have for others. There's also an interview in here with a member of Upstate Hardline, who does a good job of explaining the philosophy of it's movement, without seeming like a reactionary militant ass like most of them do. Oh well, I suppose if you're new to hardcore, and would rather buy into the stereotypical viewpoints, philosophies, and the pre-set identities that are waiting for you within, this might hold some interest. If you'd rather define for yourself what you think is right or wrong and the limitless potential of hardcore without competing with everyone else for status and image, then save your money, -n
>
> *Value of Strength, kloosterstraat 53, 6369 AB Simpelveld, the Netherlands*
>
> _Vortex #1:_ Despite years of reading about it in 'zines like this and getting letters from kids, I still don't have a good feel for what is going

on in the Singapore hardcore scene. I'm waiting for a 'zine that will help me get a real understanding of what hardcore is like there... This issue is sort of spotty in quality: a mediocre interview with local young band Swan is followed by a much better done column (which wanders between commentary on gender and nationalist issues, Orwell's _1984_ and Salinger's _Catcher in the Rye)_, which is followed again by a tiny little interview with Tony of Victory Records (his evasive, three-word answers are about as interesting as you would expect, although it is hilarious that when asked what book has had an impact on his life, he answers "_The Road Ahead_ by Bill Gates of Microsoft"!). There are scene reports from Texas (I?) and Switzerland, more short interviews (Hereafter, the Moderates, Anaconda, all from Singapore), and an article on fighting sexism by the author of the earlier-mentioned well-written column. — b

Andy Leong, Blk 12 Toh Yi Drive, if 10–391, Singapore 590012

War Crime #10: (Newsprint, Full-size, 64 pages, 2 bucks) I don't know why I haven't seen this before, I feel like I've been missing out. This issue has a lot pack in it, like info on Jabiluka (a contested uranium deposit on indigenous soil), The 1999 Primate Freedom Tour, curing headaches naturally, as well as updates on various political prisoners and more. This focuses on serious political activism, but still includes record and zine/book reviews. It's definitely refreshing to read a zine without band interviews I'd rather not read, and one that is focused entirely on relevant political news that everyone should be aware of. Expect to hear more from War Crime in the future. — n

War Crime, POB 2741, Tucson, AZ 85702

Eloquence #3/Wellfair #2 split issue (Photocopied, Half-size, 64 pgs, $? (one dollar probably)): This is a split zine from two people collaborating across the ocean. Eloquence is from Austria, and Wellfair is from Seattle, and both have their own unique style to them. Wellfair is a travel journal detailing, although not in great detail, Huey's various exploits around Europe and parts nearby. Despite the fact that the order of the pages are all screwed up, which I realized after reading the second half of the journal and coming to the correct starting point, I enjoyed reading this. You can definitely tell that Huey had some amazing experiences while traveling, most of which are beyond words to describe, which is the problem with journals. Unless an author can translate the true magnificence of a trip into words to put in a journal, it almost seems like you're reading a script for some movie. So while Huey didn't do this as well as some might have, he did do it from his heart and from his own mind and it was an enjoyable read because of that.

Eloquence is a different zine altogether from its partner in crime, which gave some variety to the whole thing. This is the more familiar personal type zine with an assortment of writings, reflections, and even an interview with Hal al Shedad. The writings

are on various topics of interest to Daniel, and seem to follow a journal type format with some narration of real-life happenings related to the subject.

While I know zines like this might seem a dime-a-dozen, the true value these hold is just in being able to create something from yourself. The simple exercise of one's ability to actualize their individualism through the sharing of personal writings is an intrinsic value often overlooked in HC/ Punk, especially when we see so many of them out there. The discovery and exploration of our identities, cultures, and communities seems to me like a very important part of hardcore, so while personal zines like this one might not have appeal to everybody, the role they play in that quest for the self is invaluable.

Eloquence, a.baumgartnerstr, 44/A1/015 Vienna, Austria — Wellfair, Huey Proudhon, POB 95516, Seattle, WA 98145 USA or _hueyproudhon @ hotmaiI. com_

BOOKS

Against Civilization: Readings and Reflection?, edited by John Zerzan (Paperback, 215pgs, $9.95 ($11.50 ppd)): Ten thousand years ago, a new culture was born within the fertile lands of the Near East, one that would quickly overtake the world and create a universal standard of life. This culture sought to elevate mankind above his surroundings, above the animals, plants, and habitat with which we had lived peacefully with for millions of years. The world was transformed from a chaotic and wild wondrous place to one of security and order, under the guiding principle that mankind is the pinnacle of creation and evolution. A mask had been created by this culture, one which disguised the earth with the ugliness of cities and the scars of our wars. Now, as we reach the edge of an apocalypse we ourselves have invented, this book hopes to uncover that mask and discover who it is we were and how we got here, before it's too late.

Zerzan takes us through the stages of civilization, painfully forcing us to remember an entirely different way of life, and how we've forgotten it. Through the writings of such authors as Rousseau, Thoreau, Perlman, and the Unabomber, we see a multitude of theories and visions on the inner workings of an all-consuming Leviathan that has pushed us to near self-extinction. While some are a bit esoteric at times, most explain in plain detail the

true nature of civilization.

Understanding that the world was not always the way we see it today, and that it is only within the last fraction of human existence that we have seen these changes, is vitally important in rediscovering and redefining our culture. Although it is prophesied we will ultimately destroy ourselves, it is possible to avoid the seemingly inevitable conclusion of this horrific chapter in human history and begin to write our own. -n
Uncivilized Books, POB 11331, Eugene, OR 97440

Carnival Of Chaos: On The Road With The Nomadic Festival, by Sascha Altman DuBrul and others (Paperback, 128pgs, $8ppd): Originally published as a zine, Scott

at Bloodlink thought to publish it all in a spiffy bound book, but still has that crude cut and paste layout that has become the hallmark DIY style. The Carnival of Chaos was an idea conceived within the minds of a group of anarcho-punks in NY city. We are taken from its initial inception through its culmination as a traveling circus of society's drop-outs, visiting city after city and luring other discontents to join in the festivity of life. Things don't go as planned (though there was not much to begin with) however, which is what makes this an exciting read. Sascha and the rest of the sometimes gloomy band of adventurers pull out every scam in the book to keep the merriment going including trainhopping, hitchhiking, dumpsterdiving, and whatever else necessary.

While some might consider such an undertaking to be pretentious and overly idealistic, I would hope to see more people gathering together and trying something new and exciting. Whether this was a success or a complete failure can be debated (as I'm sure it has), and even though it turned out to be something none of the members anticipated, new territory was charted and new worlds were discovered within our lobotomizing Amerikkkan death culture. This is definitely worth reading if you can get a copy, but don't be content on just reading, the ultimate goal is to inspire others to action. This book accomplishes that goal with flying colors, -n *Bloodlink Press, 4434 Ludlow St., Philly, PA 19104 or scottb@martinet.com* _Marlin.22 Exotic Wepon System_ (Paperback, 120pgs., $20ppd) I'm very suspicious of this company and their publications. Most of their books seem to be intended to take advantage of idiots who know nothing about martial arts by offering to explain the "Eastern Death Touch" in 80 illustrated pages or would-be militia members by offering military information of questionable authenticity at best. The Marlin .22 Exotic Weapons System book offers very detailed (perhaps beyond the comprehnsion of most people without engineering experience) machinist's drawings, photographs, and instructions for converting a standard (and cheap and readily available) Marlin .22 calibre rifle into a "poor man's MP-5" capable of firing 1500 rounds a minute. Without attempting the project myself, it's hard to say how feasible it is. It does look to be considerably more difficult than their ads claim, though. You won't be putting one together while the Feds are breaking down your door, that's for sure. The practicality of this homemade submachine gun is also questionable. The book advises you not to put a clip in until your ready to start firing as a jolt or impact could engage the firing pin and discharge the entire clip. Speaking of, at 1500 rounds per minute, you would empty a 30 round clip in .04 seconds! And what the hell good would that do you? I suppose publications like this which shed some light on the inner workings of firearms will be good to keep around if the revolution ever makes it off the college campuses and into the real world, but I think I'll just get an AR-15 while I still can. -FC

Paladin Press, P.O. Box 1307, Boulder, Colorado 80306

[Image not archived]

Subhumans "Next Time Round" video: The last concert video I saw was Guns n Roses (don't ask, please), but this is a totally different animal. Certainly it has

nothing to match those glossy close-ups of Axl's short-shorts- encased legs. (That's a good thing, by the way.) The image and sound can both be a little rough (and the funny accents don't help, of course), but the video has energy. Jon, the man with the cam, is right to warn you to take an intermission, however: the video is 2 hours long, which can start to drag without a break. It follows the Subhumans through several shows during their 1998 tour of the United States. Besides footage of 28 songs, it includes conversations with the band that answer some basic questions, and also explanations of some of the songs. The whole thing is accompanied by a cute little booklet that includes lyrics for all of the songs (except "Happy Birthday, " which you should know already). The Subhumans continue to amaze me because they were such an intelligent, super-politicized band, especially considering the era of punk rock they were coming out of, and because even now, after a long sabbatical and a little bit of aging, they aren't afraid to try again. Dick says at one point, "Punk can be a mature outlook on whatever, " and it's exciting to have the Subhumans back again, even for a short time, to provide an example of that. Punk can be really discouraging when all the older, more mature people who might provide some inspiration and guidance keep "graduating" to careers and real life and other depressing institutions like that. Maybe if there were more older people showing us that punk rock is a sustainable lifestyle, the community would be able to work more effectively toward world revolution or whatever it is that we collectively desire. Perhaps that's the idea we should all bring away from this video. Or maybe we should just keep in mind Pete the roadie's advice: "Always make friends with the big kids who hate Nazi skinheads." — @ *Alternative to Industries Productions, c/o Jon Foy, 5023 Cedar Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19143 ($10ppd)*

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Brian suggested I use any remaining odd space at > the end of the reviews to talk a bit about one of my main projects, my record label (+/- Records). I've been laying low for a few months, finishing up my degree, but I will be very busy this summer (and presumably from now on; with no job and no school, it's all punk all the time). First up, we're finally sending in the Dead.Eyes.Under cd to be pressed in the full packaging. After numerous problems it will definitely be worth the wait. We are also repressing the Next2Nothing 7" which was released as a cooperative project between the band and the label (as are many of our releases). In the immediate future, we need to have the Bloodpact / Varsity 12" out in time for the bands to tour together from July 1st to July 12th. Both are fast edge bands from Michigan, Varsity are positive while Bloodpact are a bit more Negative (get it? haha. eh, fuck you). After that we will be rereleasing the Trial 'Foundation' ep with all sorts of bonus material, the highlight of which is a commercial radio interview with Greg and Timm which is pretty fucking inspiring, to say the least. The Earthmover 'Themes'" 10" and CD will be repressed eventually as well. The CD might have all the demo and comp tracks, we'll see. Bloodpact might tag along with Extinction for part of their European tour. The Extinction 10" is approaching the anniversary of it's recording date without seeing the light of a real release due to innumerable layout difficulties. Someday, we promise. Yes, Earthmover broke up. Members are in Full Assault, Bloodpact, and Walls of Jericho, and we have projects of varying degrees of secrecy in the works with each band. Anyway, here is what we have available right now. We like to trade with other labels and we help CrimethInc. and Element out with trading a bit as well and have an extensive distro list you can see on our website. Get in touch and we'll try to work something out. We might be a little slow with the mail as we continue finishing school and then traveling for the remainder of the summer, but we will get back to you eventually, promise, thanks.

kids@plusminusrecords.com

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Slave #3: First 600 with free Kilara 7" (thunder lizard). Features interviews with Refused, Submission Hold, Ire, Fort Thunder artists, and artist Erika Nawabi. Also includes articles on shoplifting, chipmills, and organizing unions. $3 ppd in usa/$4 ppd world (wholesale $1.50)

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5T!LL RUMBLE

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^ ASgming soon: Cathars,
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> Youth is a time when you should be reevaluating the assumptions and traditions of older generations, when you should be willing to set yourself apart from those who have come before and create an identity of your own.
>
> But in our society, “youthful rebellion” has become a ritual: every generation is expected to revolt against the social order for a few years, before “growing up” and “accepting reality.” This negates any power for real change that the fresh perspective of youth could have; for now rebellion is “just for kids, ” and no young person dares to maintain their resistance into adulthood for fear of being thought of as childish.

This arrangement is very much to the advantage of certain corporations who depend on the “youth market.” Where is your money going when you buy that compact disc, that chain wallet, that hair dye, leather jacket, wall hanging, all $ those other accessories that identify you as a rebellious young person? Right to the companies that make up the order you want to stand against. They cash in on your rebellious impulses by selling you symbols of rebellion that actually just keep _ * the wheels turning. You keep their pockets full, and they keep yours empty; they keep you powerless, busy just trying to afford to fit the molds they set for you.

CrimethInc.

“The opium of a new generation.”

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0380^^ else, something altp- gether different? Would you lite to not pay at all, to never pay again for land and food and even water? 100% off, everything MUST go! Have you ever had dreams in which everything was free, and you could eat what you wanted and go what you wanted and do what you wanted? Have ^^SS^ you could ..share freely witittm|^&3 else, without worrying about spend-: in^youfWsOurces^efficient^

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Inside Frontal 2

This magazine and 6" record are available from the CrimethInc. address for $4 postage paid inside the U.S.A, and $5 outside of it. Wholesale rates ($3 USA/$4 world) are available if you order a few copies. We depend on grass roots, do-it-yourself independent distribution, of course, so help if you can. Never ever make a check out to "Inside Front" or "CrimethInc." Leave them blank and hide them well.

There is a CrimethInc. webpage, organized and executed on free library computers by a homeless punk kid, if you want to read more of our ideas or track down other information about our projects. The address is included below. However, we'd much rather you write to us personally. You may have to wait a little while for a response, since our lives are increasingly chaotic and unpredictable, but we'd much rather be in real-life three-dimensional contact with you, even just in the form of a letter, than just have you look passively at our stuff in cyberspace.

For this project, the CrimethInc. Workers' Collective included a whole bunch of people who will not be identified here for various reasons. What are you, a fucking cop?

Inside Front #13 will be released at the beginning of the year 2000, to coincide with the massive economic, social, and political upheavals that hopefully will result from computer problems come New Year's Day. If those upheavals don't arise from computer problems, this issue will be there to bring them on. It will include a CD compilation of new hardcore bands, and the usual Inside Front stuff, plus some not-so-usual stuff. Please feel free to send music and reading material for review, letters to the editor, etc. to us for it.

A list of other CrimethInc. projects and commodities can be found in the first few pages of this 'zine. If you want to circumvent the (sometimes slow) CrimethInc. mailorder, or you want to do trades, write to:

Plus Minus Industries

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NUCLEAR ANNIHILATION
nuclear annihilation
mass irradiation

lots of other bad shit now we're fucking dead

in the second world war, we created weapons capable of destroying hundreds of thousands of people in one blow — and we used them, too. in hiroshima and nagasaki we turned men to dust, we burned the skin off of teenage girls so that maggots grew in

their crippled living bodies, we gave grandmothers and babies radiation sickness, now, at the end of the twentieth century, we have thousands of times the murderous capabilities we had then; but, desensitized by decades spent on the brink of annihilation, we have completely forgotten just how close it is. thermonuclear war crouches in the shadows, in the ready missile silos, always with us, biding its time until we least

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this so-called innocence that you. fetishize is that ail there is to life in your eyes?

ana Pm not convinced that's what's right for you

is right for lucking me

Pm tola my rignts end where another's rights begin but with our lives all interconnected, how can you draw the line?

your value system — does it hold up to scrutiny?
I may want what you v/ant ' , .

but I think your methods and motives are fucking chilaish bullshit

so I am tola my rights ena where another's rights begin but you've got no right to judge for me

ana I'm drawing tne fucking line

"aeep in the heart of man, the prohibition to kill another being...break down the rest

your *xs£ £u£x.* respect for li
be a conquest o'*-Tx^/^tuq -

does your "respect for life still have to be a conquest? is it perhaps just another route to domination over others, a means of placing yourself in a position of righteousness and power, rather than a departure from the system of power and hierarchy? do you still talk about "sin" and "innocence" and "evil" when you speak out against oppression and exploitation, do you talk about a new world order that you and your fellow holy warriors w ill establish? as long as we still languish under the "world order" of some group, "compassionate" and "respectful" or not, we cannot be free or equal, look at yourself, your values, and the motives for your struggle: are you ready to relinquish power, to let others be what they are, to refuse your position of privilege and coercive authority? or is your revolution really just another attempt to set up your morality over everyone else as the new law? even as we attempt to fight their system, we often replicate it in our own efforts, let's leave conquest and domination of others behind, no gods, no masters!

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the problem, it is. rather. the concentration of so much e S'a'CS "'CrnSC, 'cs who P'»"cr in the hands of one nation-espcciallv this no, .'''"'''''^ P•litical_ and cultural callv brutal. so politically manipulative. and\o cultural^ T''''''''' t^h'Ch * S• CCOnom " ir left the united states .is the onh world sun * bankrupt, the end of the cold

^-dardizing force over the rest of the wo XT"' ^ " '^ 'hc> "^ ' hiMo, ?. „e must resist the american nightman X muTrT *' '^ lhrouS^hout l^t foodl'chains oVpiaZ X<^ " '• 'hC d^, i —

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•'I despise the foul stench of mustache that precedes the boys in blue." attributed to nausea.

in these days of worldwide corporate destruction and exploitation, you cannot buy products in the marketplace with a clean conscience if you care about your fellow human beings, animals, or the environment, you have to be a thief to be an honest man.

but, well aware of our outrage at their crimes and an almost universal dissatisfaction with the vicissitudes of their greed-driven capitalist system, these corporations are continually improving their security measures — so that one day we will be forced to either participate in their slaughter and oppression, or be captured and destroyed, the primary force they bring to bear against us in this campaign is that of state power: the legal system, which is enforced from day to day by police officers, these motherfuckers may once have been human beings with human hearts; but the system forced them to accept the repugnant role of legal enforcers in order to satisfy the needs for financial gain and hierarchical power which it has conditioned them to feel, clad in uniform, acting as the faceless representatives of impersonal, disinterested authority, supporting a system that would destroy us all, these unfortunates hardly seem human any longer, remember that they are really no better off than we... but be willing to fight them whenever necessary; when you can, while vou can.

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BhING THEM MN
(ori$_6$inaxiy periormea by the baa brains)

this is our renuition oi the twenty-iirst seconu 01 the baa bruins' "joshua's son^V a lifeless anthem against manumentai power in ail its iiestutions*

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SIDE TWu

intro

UoS* out of north america **eve** of destruction here come the pigs bring them down _ paint it black

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USA
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Issue #13 (2000)

Subtitle: Final Issue
Date: June(?) 2000
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You can download the CD compilation that came with Inside Front #13 **here**.

The End of
INSIDE FRONT
final issue, lucky #13 at the beginning of the new millennium
Includes 14 band hardcore compilation on compact disc, breaking news from the internal front of the war against Western civilization, and provisional blueprints for the next steps of the revolution of everyday life...
...and the beginning for Hardcore Punk

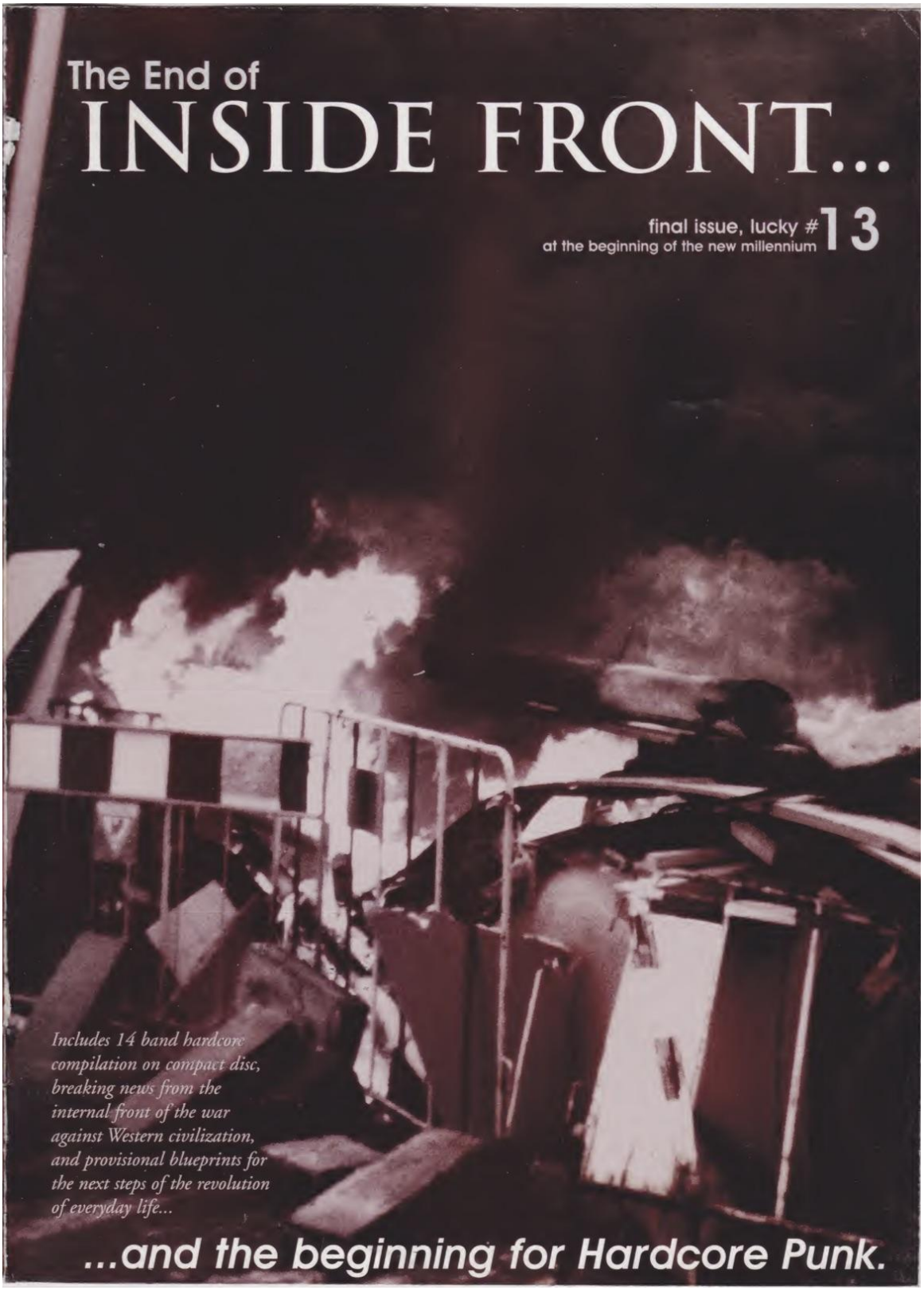
H©y punk boy-4 was listening to your band, and I wanna know: Where's the content? Ae you content?

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The End of
INSIDE FRONT...
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at the beginning of the new millennium
Includes 14 band hardcore compilation on compact disc, breaking news from the internal front of the war against Western civilization, and provisional blueprints for the next steps of the revolution of everyday life...
...and the beginning for Hardcore Punk.

Editor's Introduction to the Final Issue

Confession and declaration of war

I am a wild animal.

No, I don't feel comfortable paying for food. It makes my skin crawl, my stomach clench up — it seems like a really alien, superstitious thing to do. It makes much more sense to me to hunt for it, to find it in dumpsters or free bins or take it by force or stealth from the ones who don't care about my welfare. I can't imagine signing a contract and paying rent to one of them, pretending I think that's a sensible way for people to interact; I would much rather travel constantly, or sleep on the couch where my friends have established a collective space, contributing what I can... or sleep on benches and rooftops, if it comes down to that. I can't sit still or act fake long enough to work at one of their jobs when there's so much out here in the real world to do. I can't lie to myself enough anymore to lie to anyone else by participating in the farce that is polite society under capitalism. What they call delayed gratification looks to me more like gratification abandoned.

I am a spoiled child.

I would rather starve to do death, freeze to death, end lonely and incomprehensible to everyone than change myself. I know what I am is inconvenient for everyone, and frustrating, too, since I'm doing what many people would like to but feel they cannot; but there's nothing anyone can say that will persuade me I'm wrong in any way that matters. People talk at me about adapting, being reasonable, realistic, but none of it seems reasonable to me. I think that what I am and what I want is beautiful in a world that sorely needs beauty. I'm not crazy for wanting every moment to be wild and right and fair and honest. I won't let anyone tell me I need to stop listening to my heart. Even at my blackest moments, when it seems like I really have been abandoned by everyone and everything and I have jettisoned myself from the cosmos for no explicable reason, I would simply rather perish than compromise. Whether this is a good thing or not, it's how I feel and I won't back down.

I am a human being.

When I see people cleaning tables at restaurants or bellboys carrying heavy bags, my first impulse is to help them: my instincts, laziness aside, are to assume that what they're doing is of value to humanity and that they deserve assistance — even if they're

really doing senseless paid make work, and it's "not my job" so I shouldn't worry about it. It's not easy for me to suspend my compassion when I meet homeless people or others in need. I even have a difficult time remembering that when a solicitor or a police officer talks to me, I can't trust them to respect my needs or have my best interest in mind — they do *seem* like human beings, after all, at least when the pigs aren't dressed in their star wars costumes. I can't make excuses or joke smugly about exploited labor, people being bombed or beaten or starved to death or raped, animals in slaughterhouses. I can't put my humanity on hold like everyone else seems to have learned to.

I am an experiment.

I know I can't survive too long in this world the way it is. If I am to live another twenty six years, I will have to evolve — devolve, that is, which I have sworn not to do — or else the world will have to. I have everything at stake in transforming this place... and so do you, unless you think that people like me deserve to die, unless you're ready to excise everything in yourself that resembles me.

Disclaimer for the hypercritical

I think in the seven year history of this 'zine, one of our greatest contributions to the hardcore community has been our emphasis on the subject of lifestyle: that how you eat, what you wear, where you live, how you spend the typical days of your life is more important than what you do on Friday night, or what musical taste or ideology you subscribe to. Of course, there have been people who have misunderstood our attempts to open up new possibilities to others by taking an extreme position for ourselves ("never work ever") as an attempt to legislate what is right for everyone else, who thought we believed that we had the "one true way" that every cliquish, infighting radical group claims to have. That was never our intention. There is no one right way to revolution (or making the world a better place or what ever you want to call it), and there's no best way to live in its service. We *all* have our roles in this society, which separate us from our potential allies and divert our energies into role-playing; the question is not which role to choose (professor, outlaw radical, etc.), but how to *subvert* your role in order to create volatile situations in which new, unpredictable, . wonderful things can happen.

That being the case, the only remaining question is which lifestyle would be the most personally fulfilling for you, and there are some great reasons to try the one we've embraced, I assure you. People always become defensive (myself included) when somebody is doing something they feel drawn to but have feared to try; nobody wants to admit that they're not already doing what they want, or that someone else has a good idea they didn't have. As for the questions of whether my lifestyle is responsible ("but when you're sleeping on the couch somewhere, doesn't somebody else have to pay the rent?") or sustainable ("do you really think you can do this for the next thirty

years?")... it's important to remember that everything is a compromise until the whole world changes, whether you're depending on a little help from your friends who have different resources or participating in the economy of exploitation and destruction. To look for a "sustainable" life as a participant in an unsustainable global system is sheer madness; relying on the assistance of others to work towards a better world for everyone makes plenty of sense as long as you really are pledged to give your all. After all, the American ideal of the "self-sufficient" individual is just bullshit: everyone is totally dependent on everyone else in this society (for self-sufficiency you have to look to small farms outside the First World), and the ones who seem the most "responsible" for themselves are often simply the ones who have been the most *irresponsible* to others, taking from them to take care of themselves. Don't tell me that's not what a manager who makes twice the salary of his employees is doing, when they all have to work just as hard.

And another thing — work-free living isn't something that just a few parasites can do until the excess that feeds them runs out. The more people who do it, the more possible it is to create really autonomous lives, with the shared resources and energies of everyone adding up to a sum greater than the parts. One work-free kid in a city can shoplift food and get new shoes from the trash on campus when the college semester is over. One hundred kids in the same town can start collectives or squats, start gardening instead of stealing, start organizing bigger projects. And one thousand kids could occupy and collectivize housing and schools and workspaces, start to really take social resources back into the hands of the people. We're not just parasites. We could be the start of a new world.

Finally, after all those points, just remember this: this magazine, and all the other projects we've done with CrimethInc., would literally have been impossible without all the time and energy that we put into them instead of into working — even when that meant sometimes sleeping on the couch somewhere where others were paying rent. Imagine all the good things you, or your friends who still have to work, could do if more people took this approach to life, if more people were *able* to take this approach to life. While we are still at the mercy of their system, let's put all the energy we can into building up the framework for work-free living (Food Not Bombs, the squatting movement, dumpstering, bicycle cooperatives, sharing resources...) so that this option will be more widely available, and we couchsurfing revolutionaries won't always be occupying this no-man's-land between generosity and dependence.

A snapshot from my life, the past four days

(as of Sunday, almost midnight, June 11, 2000)

I've been going back and forth between Chapel Hill (pretty, quiet college town where my lover and student activist friends live, where it's easy to focus on writing and reading) and Greensboro (dirty, post-industrial dead end Southern city where

some of my best friends and co-conspirators live, where I go to hatch plots and answer CrimethInc. mail) for the last few weeks, trying to catch up from being gone on tour most of the last year. Last Thursday I caught a ride back to Greensboro to see a show at the new communal warehouse my friends had organized while we were gone.

It was Submission Hold, Antiproduct, and a band from Arkansas with a Native American name my ignorant tongue cannot pronounce (Tern Eyos Ki). They started the show (after a hilarious performance from a punk kid with an acoustic guitar and a maniacally rudimentary sense of humor) by introducing a song about holding on to the fantasies of your childhood through the crush of the "adult" world, and charged forward with so much enthusiasm that we all caught it — and suddenly punk was brand new again, perfect and beautiful and offering the whole world to all of us. We hung out outside after their set, eating from the free buffet of vegan food our hosts had shoplifted in mass quantities to celebrate their first show (when it started running low, some of them dashed off again to procure more!), or wandered around inside, dancing to the Black Flag over the speakers and admiring the handiwork of our friends, how much they had been able to build and create in this empty warehouse in just a month. Then we watched Antiproduct and Submission Hold, two bands also fronted by confident, tough women like the one from Tern Eyos Ki, and it was beautiful for me to see our community live up to its pretensions about fighting sexism and gender roles: the men present all listening, confident enough themselves, for once, to hear other perspectives, to share the space and power of our scene. After the show I went with Jon and Moe to Birch's house, where we ate vegan apple pie that Mark had dumpstered, dreaming and scheming wildly into the dawn.

Friday evening, after answering a day's worth of mail, I went to see a friend of mine from outside the punk community, a single mother who lives on welfare in order to spend her time assisting battered children and women suffering from spouse abuse or alcoholism (since there are almost no paid positions available doing that — another big argument against the bullshit "get a job' mentality, which assumes that it's better to be paid for doing something useless or destructive than to spend your life working on positive things for free). Its always wonderful to talk to her — she keeps me grounded in real life, telling me about the struggle to help individuals who are suffering from our fucked up status quo, when it's so easy for me to get lost in the abstractions I'm always working in. After that, Jon and I climbed a series of ladders and steep shingled inclines to the top of a building on the university campus, to brainstorm for the new Harbinger in the windy exultation of 3 a.m. — and then when we got back to his apartment, he left to put up fliers for an event the next evening, which is what I *really* want to talk about.

The fliers read, simply, in huge letters, "U.S.A. IS A MONSTER 2:00 A.M." Jon had been supposed to book a show for this noise band for months, and never got around to it, until a week before the date he'd promised them he realized he was in trouble and started trying to come up with a solution. He hit upon Zack, the devil-

may-care graveyard shi(f)t worker at Handy Pantry, the all-night convenience store in this neighborhood.

Zack is one of those beautiful lumpenproletariat guys who knows who his enemies are and gets jobs just to fuck with his employers. I heard that when he was tired of his last job (night shift at U.P.S.), he took a package being shipped by a chewing gum company, set it down in front of a surveillance camera, opened it up, took out a piece of gum, and, looking straight into the camera, began chewing it. The next morning when the manager found the opened package still sitting there, he checked the tape and saw Zack staring him in the eye, smacking his gum.

Jon went to Zack and told him that he'd forgotten to book a show for a band that would be arriving on Saturday. Zack drawled "well, I'm working every night this week, " and it was arranged: U.S.A. Is A Monster would play at the Handy Pantry at 2 a.m. on Saturday night.

Now, Handy Pantry is not some out-of-the-way convenience store. It's in the middle of the main drag by the college campus, a center of Greensboro night life (such as it is!), next to all the coffee shops and restaurants and sharing a parking lot with Kinko's... and with the university police station. This last one is about two hundred feet away, and you can see it through the windows of the convenience store — so we weren't even talking about a risky proposition, we were looking certain catastrophe in the eyes and offering it a formal invitation. I think that's what appealed to us the most about this idea: more than any of the Reclaim the Streets or Critical Mass actions in the past year, more than the noise parades or any of the nocturnal breaking, entering, and exploring we'd done, this was something crazy enough that the outcome couldn't be foreseen or even imagined. We had to do it just to thrust ourselves out into that dangerous space where *everything* is a surprise.

Word of the show spread long before Jon put up the fliers, and by last night every mouth was whispering about it. Jon and I went to a going-away party for Mark, who is off to spend the next month teaching art in another city, and then went to a show in nearby Winston Salem, at the collective warehouse there (which is four years old and much more developed than the one in Greensboro, really incredible and inspiring'), at which we were to meet U.S.A.I.A.M. themselves. They showed up around midnight, just when we were starting to worry, and we went out in the parking lot for a briefing.

They seemed like good kids — trying as hard as we were to act like this was a normal thing for them — but, to our surprise, there were *eight of* them, including two drummers with full sets, and a keyboard player with crazy electronic equipment. It wasn't going to be easy to run their stuff out the back door when the pigs came in. They followed us back to Greensboro in their van, and I spent the ride talking Jon out of his apprehensions: "This is our chance to put punk rock where it was never supposed to be, where it's still dangerous. This is payback for all the nights we've had to walk around watching this town do nothing, man — this is revenge for that flag they put on the moon!" When we arrived, he turned to me, reassured, and declared "we're going to make Greensboro history, man."

I agreed. For the sake of everyone in this little, dead end town, there is no choice but to make Greensboro, as we've all known and loathed it, *history*.

There were about sixty people from widely varied backgrounds (punks, art students, homeless people, a middle-aged professor "interviewing" people with a microphone that wasn't plugged into anything) lined up sitting on the curb as we loaded two drumsets, four amplifiers and speakers, a vocal amp and borrowed microphone, and assorted other instruments and equipment into the store. The drummers had forgotten sticks, or lost them at the other shows or something, so they ended up just beating on the drums with various junk foods (beef jerkies, soda cans and bottles, popsickles), grabbing a new one whenever one substitute stick broke or shattered. The first notes of soundcheck were so loud that I couldn't believe they were even going to get to play a minute.

Everyone pushed in, packed between the aisles, and the noise began. The band were leaping around, smashing things and falling over like they might have at a normal house show, but here it was totally new and dangerous, visceral, and music that could have been standard somewhere else was suddenly the fiercest, most vehement thing any of us had ever heard. At a normal show the band are the ones taking the risk, but here everyone was at risk, just by standing there in the store — and not just because of the threat of the police, either. There's no way I can describe what it felt like to step out of reality as it had been and into that space, to fuse two separate parts of my life (the passion of punk rock, the lifelessness of convenience stores) that were never supposed to meet... everything was electrified, tense and intense, ten thousand years of culture turned on it's head in an instant. Amazingly, the band finished one song, the members all switched instruments while the scream of feedback tore the air, and they shot into another one, knocking against the shelving, smashing into the drink coolers, pulling the cardboard display posters over their heads and banging into people — all of us looking nervously back and forth between them and the police station out the window. A couple civilians who had come up to buy cigarettes joined the crowd in total wonder. Some people were throwing junk food, candy, breaking things, wrecking the place (this was the most controversial topic afterwards, since the kids doing this were largely bourgeois children of the suburbs who had nothing at stake and weren't worried about Zack's welfare or anything else) — others, and this was much more beautiful to me, realizing that we owned the place for a moment and they could do whatever they wanted, were picking up candies and other commodities, looking at them, and them just dropping them, realizing just how valueless they all were at *any* price, especially compared with the lightning of what was actually happening. The band switched instruments again in the middle of the song, banging out random notes and screaming nonsensically — someone from the audience jumped behind one drumset, and started playing along as natural as could be — others joined in — and then looks of terror spread through the room, as we all saw the flashing lights of an arriving police car.

And you know what? We got away with it. The pigs pulled up, paused, and drove off for some inexplicable reason, basically giving us the go-ahead to take the city over (if we can do this so easily, then what next?). "Should we get out of here?" shouted a

band member, clutching a cymbal stand. “Naw, man, they’ve just headed off to get the Black Mariah, ” drawled Zack — “keep playing.” The band played for another twenty minutes, until everyone was satisfied that we’d done what we came to do. Still spinning in a delirium of adrenaline, we hastily packed all their equipment out the back door and into the van, while the locals drifted slowly off into the night, exchanging grins of disbelief and delight.

In fact, just as I was writing this last paragraph, Zack stopped by Jon and Will’s apartment (where I’m staying tonight, while they drive to the airport up in New York to pick up Zegota’s new bassist, Ard, imported directly from Holland for their upcoming world tour without so much as an audition) to tell me that though the pigs prank called him at the store afterwards (“you’re in big trouble, son — some underage kids who were drinking at your store drove into a tree and died [total bullshit!]. You need to give us the store tapes. Don’t lie to us, boy...” and Zack replies: “I’ll lie to you as much as I want, officer — but I don’t know what you’re talking about...”), he just talked to his manager, who said: “no, you’re not fired, the store was clean this morning.” As I expected, they need us more than we need them — we will win.

Tonight I have a whole apartment to myself, despite not paying rent for the last sixteen months or working for over six years, and I sit here listening to my favorite vicious punk records, stuffing myself on dumpstered food, writing the introduction to our hardcore magazine on my beleaguered little laptop computer, the last surviving vestige of my bourgeois origins — quite conscious that I am enjoying a moment of heaven. Tomorrow Matt and I will drive out into the rural wilderness for Catharsis practice, then Zegota returns to show their new bassist around, who has never been to the U.S. before, and to screen fliers for the benefit our bands are supposed to play for the warehouse space. Then on Thursday night at midnight, we have a date to meet Liz and some of her friends, fifty year old middle class women whose children have grown up and left them, who feel invisible in society, who see themselves represented in the media as helpless and clutching, who have reasons of their own to find common cause with others seeking adventure and transformation, but did not know where to find them — until they met us. They are to bring the picnic snack, and us, the adventure: a 16-story building, abandoned and easy to break into, with a roof that looks out over the rest of the city. There, we’ll sit beneath the stars and build bonds between our different communities, talking of which resources each has to offer the other, of what the next step to revolution is — a revolution that is becoming more and more real for us, for all of us, every day.

The Last word (we can only hope!) on complaining about "the scene"

An interesting characteristic of communities is the way no one actually feels like a part of them, even the people in their center. Alexei and I had a disheartening experience in Brazil when we were both reading HeartattaCk: it seemed to us like there was all this awesome shit going on in the hardcore scene, but that we were totally left out of it. "I think it's great that they have this community going on, " said Alexei, "but I don't feel like a part of any community. If you put all my friends together in one place, they wouldn't be able to get along or even understand each other."

After I'd thought about it for a while, I realized that the hardcore community is actually nothing more than a bunch of people like Alexei and I and our friends, connected to each other in the loosest of ways. In fact if you were to pick two people who are undeniably close to the core of this thing called "hardcore" right now, it might well be him and me. So what's going on here?

The truth is, nobody feels like any community could be big and deep enough to contain all that they are — and that's OK. But we have a disturbing tendency to project our own fears and insecurities onto our community: everyone feels comfortable in it but us, we are secret outsiders, the community is like a Frankenstein's monster with a will of its own, doing things *to* people rather than being a place where people do things... people talk about the scene as if it is a force separate from the humans involved in it, as if it could suck without our participation in that sucking, as if it could alienate us without our participation in that alienation. And so everyone complains ad nauseam about how the scene is getting worse, it's not like it used to be, it has all these flaws, etc. etc. etc.

At this point, that really is the *least* original, the least creative thing you could possibly do. Punk has always sucked, it's always been getting worse, that's been the . word ever since about 1977 — so seriously, what could possibly be the use of complaining more, except maybe to state for the record that it's not good enough for *you, * either?

I think it would be much more positive for us to admit that punk does whatever we do with it, that that's all it is, and to claim responsibility for it rather than blaming it as an outside force. As soon as we recognize that punk is simply a tool we can use as to do whatever we want, rather than worrying about whether it's cool enough for us.

These complaints have their roots in the old voter/spectator mentality, I think: you want to pick the style or scene that is the coolest, and assert your identity by passively swearing allegiance to it. At first, as a teenager, punk seems to be perfect, so you buy punk records and attend punk shows, calling yourself a punk just because you watch what people who are really involving themselves in punk are doing. Maybe at age 21 or 22 you get disillusioned with punk — it's lost the novelty it used to have, it doesn't seem as profound as it once did — so you move on to the rave scene or something.

You call yourself a raver or an indie rocker, but it's all bullshit — you've just been a consumer, a spectator, all along.

I no longer expect to have my world changed just by buying a new punk record. I look to other styles of music to bring me inspiration, since I feel like I'm pretty much up to date with what punk has to offer (though if you're in a punk band, please surprise me!); but hardcore punk is my community, no matter what music I listen to — it is here that I get to do what really matters: *participate.* You're going to get jaded wherever you go, if you go as a spectator, but if you pick this community as a place where you can try out your own projects and live out your own adventures, you'll find it to be endlessly rewarding, no matter how many morons are involved in it.

I think I've had such a good experience in this community because I realized this about seven years ago, around when I started this 'zine. Since then I've found myself complaining less and less about the scene, even though I spend more time involved in it than just about anyone else I know. It's common sense — hardcore *(your* hardcore, the only one that matters) is what you make of it... so get going! It can take you around the world and back a hundred times, introduce you to the craziest, most beautiful people on this earth, thrust you into moments of adventure you'd never dreamed of — and no halfwit in a Madball or Blanks 77 shirt can interfere with that, unless you let them.

And now I'd like to take just a paragraph to celebrate briefly my love of punk rock. In this community, I can express every side of my character, I don't have to leave anything behind: I can scream and destroy and hate blindly with Gehenna, I can be articulate and idealistic with Trial or Zegota, I can revel in the simple pleasures of wreaking havoc with my friends as we wander the town late one night or I can indulge in sweet solitude reading a 'zine by myself. I can be intellectual as all fuck, debating post-Situationist social theory with a graduate student over the internet, or I can strike up a conversation about the Misfits with a teenager drinking on the job on third shift at a convenience store while I shoplift potato chips. I can enjoy a communal dinner with welcoming strangers on the other side of the world, or organize a demonstration with mohawked local activists here in North Carolina. I can travel and have a home anywhere; I can write, or dance, or even learn to juggle or speak French, and I would have awesome people to do it with. Here's to punk. Punk fucking rocks.

The end and the beginning, or Inside Front — and hardcore punk

This is the last issue of Inside Front we are going to do. There are already a hundred 'zines that can take over from here — Slave, F.B.I., even Heartattack is quite good these days — and I feel like we've finally realized the potential of this project, finally made Inside Front what it should be. Rather than stop here and hit a plateau, trying

to make this into some kind of periodical, I'd rather leave it as an example of what is possible, effectively collectivizing its legacy to be carried on by everyone else who thinks there's something good about what it has done. I don't want to risk ever getting stuck doing something that becomes boring or predictable or irrelevant, and there are so many more things we want to do from here — so don't worry, you'll still be hearing from us. After this issue of Inside Front, which should come out about the same time as the third Harbinger and our first book, *Days of War, Nights of Love*, we've got new records, new pamphlets and 'zines and books and tours and actions planned... in just my own case, I can think of about a hundred projects I want to try, all just waiting for the space to materialize.

From here, whatever was worthwhile about Inside Front is in your hands. We're not ending our work with the magazine in defeat or exhaustion — to the contrary, we're more involved and active than ever — but because it has taken us as far as it needed to; now we find ourselves standing at a vista from which new horizons can be seen, and we have to make new vehicles to carry us to them. This isn't the end of hardcore being relevant to our lives, or of life being relevant to hardcore, or of our contributions to either of those things. But Inside Front is now *yours*, yours to improve on, yours to apply and add to. I m absolutely confident that from these seeds, a hundred greater forces will grow, and we who have nourished this project to this point must simply let go of the reigns to let it become what it must now become — which *you* can see more clearly than us, I'm sure!

For further reading, listening, acting...

The third issue of our free propaganda tabloid *Harbinger* is now available. If you want a copy to read, or a big stack of them to distribute in your area, please send a postage donation to:

BOOKS

At this writing, we have only one book published, but we have others coming by the end of 2000. The Paul F. Maul

Artist's Group at CrimethInc. Far East is handling single and wholesale mailorders and distribution of these.

Days of War, _ Nights of Love:_ This is "Crimechink for Beginners, " the definitive work of our first half decade in action and far superior to anything we'd done before it. It's 292 pages, fully illustrated, the works. *$8 USA*

contact the PFMAG:

CrimethInc. Far East

These are available from Gavin at Stickfigure Distribution. He does single mailorders, and wholesales inside and outside the U.S.A. as well. The single order prices are included here; email or write him for wholesale information or foreign postage costs.

Inside F_ront #12:_ 136 pages, with rhe already classic eleven song 6" by Finland's wildest Motorhead fans, Umlaut. Features a lengthy retrospective/interview with Refused, an interview discussing hardcore imperialism and the third world with Brazilian band Point of No Return, a new take on the old tradition of scene reports (including the Appalachian Trail and Louisburg, North Carolina), an analysis of the Reclaim rhe Streets protests, and a whole lot more.

$4 USA

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Or visit the CrimethInc. webpage for more information, news, farther reading etc.:

www. crim ethinc. com

paulfmaul@crimethinc. com

***listening, ***

acting...

Inside Front #10; with 7" of Swedish hardcore from Outlast, interviews with Stalingrad, Systral, and Culture, and articles about the drawbacks of capitalist economics in punk and how to survive without selling your soul to "the man." *$3 USA*

Inside Front #9: with 7" of Belgian hardcore by Liar, Congress, Regression, and Shortsight. Interviews with Congress and Timebomb, articles on work (what's fucked up about it) and how to do d.i.y. tours. *$2 USA*

Zegota "Movement in the Music" CD: The Zegota 12" on CD with revised packaging. It's remastered, so it sounds a lot better than the vinyl, too. Zegota is one of the most innovative and idealistic hardcore bands today, and this is a simply beautiful record. *$8 USA*

Ire "What Seed, What Root?" CD: This is Ire's swan song, their last twisted, savage masterpiece of wreckage and reckoning, in which their earlier ideas and experiments reach their final, awesome form. If Neurosis had gone the direction we hoped they would back in the early '90s, it would have been something like this. *$10 USA*

Catharsis "Passion" CD: To sow seeds in barren soil if there is no more fertile ground. To bear the fragile worlds within through the ruined one that surrounds. To lift us up, to bring empires down... *$10 USA*

Catharsis "Samsara" 2x12": The "Samsara" album takes up three sides, the old 7" is on the fourth. Cheaper than getting both of the older CDs (the first of which is out of press, anyway), it includes all the material before the new record that the band still plays.

$12 USA

Kilara "Southern Fried Metal" CD: The kings of southern noise. Incomparable weirdness and fury. *$8 USA*

Timebomb "Full Wrath of the Slave" CD: Italian, vegan straight edge, anarcho-commu- nist black metal. *$8 USA*

"In Our Time" 12" compilation: Damad, Systral, Gehenna, Timebomb, Jesuit, Final Exit, Congress, and an insert discussing the standardization of our world under capitalism... and what to do about it. *$8 USA*

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Trial "Through the Darkest Days" CD: The worlds most sincere, intelligent political straight edge hardcore. *$10 USA*

*Coming Soon:* Another CrimethInc. compilation (the follow-up to the "In Our Time" record, including Zegota, Undying, the last By All Means song, Bloodpact, the Black Hand, more).., a new Zegota record... the Umlaut full length... a new Catharsis record.

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If you wish to write any of us a letter, ask for whatever further literature we have on hand for you to read or give out, get patches or posters or stickers or Catharsis shirts or sweatshirts, or offer ideas/coop- eration for our next actions, please write us at the original CrimethInc. address:

CrimethInc. Central H.Q.
2695 Rangewood Drive
Atlanta, GA 30345 U.S.A.
wwtv. crimethinc. com

Letterbombs

**Dear Inside Front, **

I have been thinking a lot about the role that [North] American culture and American individualism have in American radical ideas. The U.S. has a tradition of a very individualist anarchism, that kind of anarchism that says "I m gonna live in the forest, I'm gonna live there by myself." Its an anarchism very influenced by the way that American society sees itself. Everything in U.S. culture is about individualism and this has a strong influence upon anarchist ideas there. People see anarchism as a way to

free yourself from society, not as a way to build a new society to live with the other people. I think that this is a reflection of the whole heritage of American society, the myth of the self made man, is a thing that only can happen in a society that is very Capitalistic and with enterprise values like American society has. I dont think that people from other cultures see themselves as a totally isolated individual in the same way that Americans see themselves.

I saw this when I talked about the Arauto (Harbinger) ideas with people here that came from poor areas and poor backgrounds. They cant relate those things with themselves because they don't see themselves separated from their community, they think in terms of their community in they think to fight with the community. They can't think in terms of my personal happiness and freedom are the most important things in the world and I'm gonna fight for them. As I can't bee happy if the others arent, Im gonna fight for everybody's freedom — because the don't see their own personality as so separated from the rest of the world like people in the U.S. do. People here who are more middle class (like me) can relate more with this question because they are more Americanized. But I hadn't stopped to think about that until I started to talk with more poor people. I think that this individualism came together with the other values that make it possible for capitalism work so 'well" there. Values that came from the Protestant heritage. Don't you think that making a radical change in everything isn't just seeking to build a way out based in the same vision of the world that your society has, but changing everything, including the way the people see themselves in the world? What do you think about that? Can you do an exercise of imagination and start to see yourself as a part of something?

Yours, Fred .

*Dearest Fred — *

What you have to remember is that people who live in the West are not just individualists because the culture of capitalism has programmed us that way — we are also individualists because there is no healthy alternative culture here that could have raised us as a part of it. Most of us radicals here bad to make a painful break with our society, since that society is itself hostile to freedom and happiness. In a culture of violence, it makes sense to reject that culture and the society that embraces it. From there, of course, you have to create another community, because human life does not take place in a vacuum (you are whatever your interaction with others make you — so to make yourself into something better, you have to arrange to have better interactions with others)... but people in the U.S. and Western Europe are very suspicious, and rightly so, whenever someone

starts telling them about the virtues of identifying yourself with your community: remember the ones in the West who have done this over the last century were all people trying to trick us — Hitler, Stalin, Ronald Reagan, the religious right, etc. In a "sick" (oppressive) society, the "healthy" (life- and compassion- and liberty-loving) people will have to be individualists, to start out.

That doesn't mean we don't need community, but it does mean that creating real, healthy community again is a long, long process. For us, it makes sense to consider our personal desires, because as long as there is still something "healthy" about us, those desires will be in conflict with the values of our destructive civilization. Those who are fortunate enough to belong already to genuine communities, in which they need not differentiate between their own needs and those of their companions, are very lucky (I myself live in one of those communities, but it only has a few thousand people in it, and they're spread out across the world), but they cant fault people who don't have communities like that yet for thinking individualistically. The only problem is if that individualism prevents them from overcoming their isolation.

It's true that this capitalist-born individualism can be a real problem in building new communities. You're right, the cult of "self-sufficiency" in capitalist cultures is an obstacle for all symbiotic human relationships — people want what they deserve" and "what they earned themselves, " not what is good for others too and thus better for them. "Self-sufficiency" is a fucking myth, anyway — to quote Gandhi: "Western man fills his closet with groceries and calls himself self-sufficient. " It's generally true that whoever calls themselves "self-sufficient " has stamped all over everyone else to be able to be "responsible" for themselves. And since there really is no space left tn the world to go live in the woods (and even if you can do so, its not very cool to abandon your fellow human beings, and your desires that they are happy), we have to face the fact that we are not independent, we are interdependent. The new Harbinger contains a lot of writing about this, as you ll see — the idea that to be truly free, we have to create that freedom with others, in our interactions with them, rather than find- ^{ln}g freedom "from" others. The radical individualist wdnts that simply because he's never had the beautiful experience of getting along with others, andfinding that their happiness and his are inextricably linked.

At the same time, I really don't believe in us "sacrificing ourselves"for the good of any generalization, like "community. " Whether or not what we are is totally socially determined, that doesn't mean I owe anything to society. I experience life as a self-contained entity, myself, and it is that self I must answer to first. People who don't recognize this, even if they are part ofa non-capitalist culture that has existedfor thousands of years, are at risk, I think, and I hope that's not just my ethnocentrism talking. When you make no distinction between your own beliefs and desires and the prescriptions of your society, you leave yourself open to being conned into things like female genital mutilation, which is just not cool, period, if you ask me. Also, groups who have "strong community values" and answer to the group before they answer to themselves as individuals tend not to care about individuals outside their group. My ideal would be that each of us sees herself not as a member of a single group, but rather as an individual who has reason to build community with everything and everyone — who sees herself as a part of the world, not just one community.

to the Editor

I consider myself a part of our community (the punk community), as well as other communities, and I think the most important thing we can do right now is to build those communities. But (and this is the big distinction between anarchist communities and other communities) I think a community is only a good thing if it is good for all the individuals involved in it and outside of it. Therefore, we individuals do have to know what is good for us, to be responsibly involved in community building. This isn't radical individualism — rather, its (what I hope can work as) the most complimentary combination of individualist and community thinking. Each way is a valid way to view the world, but each one by itself is dangerous and narrow-minded.

Or maybe that's just my U.S. imperialist-individualist conditioning speaking. The fact is, its hardfor any of us to get real perspective, since we've spent obr whole lives just being ourselves, conditioning and all. The real question is how each of us can find a way to make things work out, whether you describe that in terms of pursuing your private dreams or integrating yourself into the world as a whole. TH go to my grave insisting that for most of us, they re fundamentally the same thing.

Yours, Brian

Dearest Inside Front comrades!

It's been a while since the last mail to you, my faraway friends. Forgive me if I've been lazy, but I have to wait a long time for your letters too. On the other hand I'm probably not the best person to entertain relationships divided by the greatest ocean of all. Its seems like my brother evolved out of the same lazy genetic pool so he hasn't been able to write down the Intensity legacy of being banned in the USA so I'll give it a shot. I reserve myself for errors...

Intensity fought the law — and lost...

They arrived at the airport pretty tired and Rodrigo had even a vcggic-burrito-induced food poisoning complimentary of the airline. Jonas, Rodrigo and Kristoffer just breezed through customs and passport controls despite their gear and the fact that they look like Latin American guerrilla warriors. Thomas, who looks the most clean cut, got asked what he was going to do there and he replied that he was going to make some music with some friends in the country. He got dragged away while the others waited on the other side. After a couple of hours somebody came looking for them and dragged them back in before they even managed to answer the question if they were affiliated with Thomas.

They did some brief hearings with all of them but concentrated their effort on my brother, Jonas, while he had all the information. They put him in small room and 4 officers started screaming at him and postulated all kinds of accusations. Thomas had been forced to reveal that they were going to tour which they picked up on convinced that they lied about them not going to make any money off it. They did the whole good cop bad cop thing, screamed and threatened with jail and horrendous fines. They also came up with stories that Thomas had confessed and that they knew everything. Thomas said this and that and that they were

going to get this much money at this show which my brother explained that even if it would be true Thomas wouldn't know anything about, because he was sitting on all information.

They found an old tour chart and he even tried to convince my brother that he knew the organizer of the Chicago festival and had talked to him. My brother kept his calm but says that he never been so scared in his whole life. They threatened him jail for a couple of years before storming out the room and leaving him there for half an hour. He had no idea of what his eventual rights were. He was also given a paper at one point where he 'should write his confession". This went on for 4-5* hours and they also called Felix and probably some other of the numbers they found in his pockets. It was out of their mindset that Timmy would accompany them for free and that people would put them up along the way. For some reason they had something against Thomas. Felix called later and said he has a legal right to bring band over as long as they don't make more money than the cost of airline tickets. He have had bands getting caught before which he been able to solve over the phone. When he asked why they wouldn't be let in they answered " because of reasons they wouldn't reveal to him . It was especially the boss that was fucking around. When it dawned on them that they really wouldn't make any money some of they others were prepared to way them by but he persisted. On their way up through an elevator to the interrogation rooms he mumbled something about that "it is my job to protect the American taxpayers from people like you". He clearly had a grudge against them and especially Thomas who "lied on camera about the purpose" of the trip.

The other three were technically free to enter the country but they would notify the local police who would take them into custody while they investigated the economic aspects of the tour, something that could take days. They three of them werent exactly thrilled about the concept of spending days in an American prison, and not being able to do the tour without the drummer Thomas anyway, so they decided to return. After stating their intent to leave for home again the wisecrack to boss replied sarcastically "ohh, how so??" with a smile on his face. Luckily they could change their tickets on the spot and hence only lost about 1000$ each because they we going to fly out from different cities at different from the East Coast. If Thomas wouldnt have made it within 12 hours he would be prosecuted. He can't return now without a special visa. It was all fucked up and they lost a lot of money some of them didn't have as well as a lot of other shit that went down the drain. It all took a pretty heavy toll on at least my brother. He have always wanted to go over there and tour and meet people — his great adventure. On the paper the tour looked really good and they received e-mails from all over the place that volunteered to feed and put them up. He went silent for days after coming home again. I think the Catharsisans can relate to the feeling only that they, Intensity, didn't even get a couple of weeks and never have and never will...

OK, what are we going to do with a world order that denies us pleasure and our youth — BURN IT DOWN'.! Inflamed rhetoric

, Inside Front 9

aside I really miss you all a lot...

> Love — Christian/Volvo/Stella Nera/Big Burger(a new one given to me by the Stockholm people)

*Dearest Volvo — *

That fucking sucks. Tm putting your letter in our new issue so people will see just how fucked up the authorities and the whole borders thing Itself are. I wish better luck to other bands trying to cross national boundaries — be careful, no preparation and cover-up is too much.

Stay out of reach, Brian

This appeared on the CrimethInc. Message board in the context of a larger discussion about facial tattoos, and we kidnapped it fir reprinting here. Hope the author will be forgiving...

**Dear CrimethInc., **

I ve read a lot of bullshit about the subject and have found not a single solidly based reason for not getting your face tattooed. I'll try to address some of the common concerns:

Employment

While it does limit who will hire you, it doesn't make you unemployable. My guess is that the people who wouldn't hire you are also the people you would never work for. Keep in mind, also, that because youth culture is one of the largest commodities on the market, that dermographic [editor s note: pun?] is rapidly changing and what was once completely unacceptable is now the norm.

Social interaction

It is true that it will have a pretty profound effect on rhe way people see you. those who are your friends will have to get used to it, bur once they do everything will be as it always was. As far as those who don r know you... well, it s an individual thing, many people will be frightened, and there will be many different reactions based in that fear, such as shock, disgust, incredulity, etc., etc., there will also be many people (many more than you would ever believe) who will be utterly fascinated by it. Every time you go out in public someone will stop you to ask about it. The two most common questions are, "is that real? and did that hurt? , but you d be amazed at the betty crocket, soccer mom types that actually engage in serious dialogue about it and consequently walk away feeling a little enlightened. People want to know why you did it and it's a perfect opportunity to share some of your ideas and beliefs with the "average" person.

Security Issues

Well, it's true, it will definitely make things different in your illegal endeavors. As far as plain old stealing goes it depends on where you live, where you plan to steal from, and most importantly how good a thief you are. It has a couple different effects on the store employees. One might be that they watch you like a hawk because Judging from your appearance you are a fucking terrorist here to rob them blind, in which case you

can take note of their behavior and point it out to them and liken it to any other form of discrimination. Or they might totally ignore you because they don't want be seen as discriminatory. Of course I don't know what's actually going on in their heads, but that s my theory on the common reactions. Now, if you re planning on doing some ore serious things that involve possi-

[Image not archived]

ble police attention, prison time, cointelpro involvement, etc., then you should first do some studying of covert guerrilla tactics and I think you'll find that the common credo is DON'T GET CAUGHT This usually involves, among other things, completely concealing your identity, and there are many ways to do this.

Aesthetics

Someone saying that facial tattoos look crappy is like someone saying that dreadlocks look crappy, or stretched earlobes look crappy, or whatever looks crappy. It's totally subjective and a matter of opinion, although it's true that there are many poorly done facial tattoos in the world right now. I think it's because most of them are not done professionally, or perhaps not enough thought is put into the design. You better be as sure as possible that the design you want to start with is the one you want (I say start with because after the first one you may want more). Also, you must be sure of the artist who is going to work on you. If you can, meet people the artist has worked on and see the work in person. Check it for scarring and linework and all the other little things that make a tattoo a good tattoo. To be sure of your design, draw it on your face and wear it around the house for awhile. Actually, have somebody else draw it for you, it never seems to work out when drawing on your own face. I find that designs that work with the natural shape of your face and bone structure work best. I have a thing for symmetry on the face, too..

So I don't know if this going to help, but I tried. I'd also like to make it clear that I say these things from experience. I have tattoos on my face, and it changed my life. EVERY DAY I'm reminded of where

I stand. Whoever says everyone will treat you like shit, is full of shit, but it's true that some people will. They are'most commonly white and male. This for the most part reaffirms my beliefs and strengthens my convictions. Every day I'm given a reason to want to change the world.

I live in Seattle and I still steal like a fucking bandit. I'm 28 years old and I know that you don't have to wait until you're 40 to be serious about what you do. I have a son who is the light of my life, his name is Justice and when he's old enough to start wondering why I look so different I'll tell him exactly why. I'll tell him about white skin privilege, capitalism, hierarchy, and all the other things that >shape our society and make it "weird" for a person to have something like this. I never regret getting my face tattooed, regardless of what people say about it, although sometimes, after about the 50^{th} kid in a Korn t-shirt coming up and wanting to tell me how cool I am, I get a little annoyed.

As for those who say "don't make life harder than it has to be"!!?? Come on... millions of jews walked themselves into the ovens behind that same attitude. Billions of people live in fucking despair because of that attitude. The only reason life is harder than it has to be is because people allow it to be, because people don't stand up and say this is who I am, it's my right to be this person and I'll defend that right. I don't want to just exist in this world, I want every last drop of life I can get and I'll be damned if I'm gonna let any laws or rules or especially anyone else's morals or ideas that are based in fear and servitude dictate what I do or how I look. I think I'm done ranting for now.

XRichX

[Image not archived]

If you tough boys want to talk about courage and strength... it takes one hundred times more courage for two girls to kiss in public than it takes for you to fight anybody Fighting, in fact, is a gesture of weakness and cowardice on your part, since (with only a few exceptions) it shows that you are too scared to question the gender role that your society has pushed you into. You should be embarrassed to walk around flexing your muscles, looking violent — showing off to the world what a fool and coward you are. You would do better to find someone who is really tough — a single working mother, for example — and learn from them.

My heroes and heroines these days aren't dead white men from history books (whether the books be traditional or radical) — they are the living people I meet, the girls and boys whose actions and ways of acting contest and destroy traditions and make those history books obsolete. Most of all. I've been inspired by the individuals who are able to live and act with absolute confidence despite the forces of sexism, homophobia, racism, classism, etc. arrayed against them — that courage and resilience is beautiful, and a gift to all of us, so that the rest of us can see just how much is possible even in this fucked up world. Now, to get more specific:

I want to point out that it's not us conscientious boys who are "protecting" women from sexism, when we learn about it and talk about it; it's the feminist women who are protecting us, by making sure that we don't fail to benefit from what they have to offer our lives, by putting their lives on the line to break down the gender hierarchy that fucks up our lives too. It's not us politically correct activists "protecting" gay and lesbian and bi men and women when we speak against homophobia; it's those men and women who are acting on

behalf of all of us, to liberate us all from the cages our culture has built for us. When two men dare to walk down the streets holding hands, they are striking a blow on behalf of every human being who needs to be free to explore life for herself without fear of judgment or ostracism. Women, non-heterosexual men and women, etc. are not "special interest groups" whose rights have to be "protected" by us normal, sexual-law-abiding citizens. They are the courageous front line in the assault against the conditioning and constraining norms which have been unnaturally imposed on us by a hierarchical civilization that has confused sex with violence, power, and role-playing;

their daring'attempts to free themselves will free all of us, if we realize that they are leaders and warriors, not victims.

What we need is *not* equality between "separate but equal" genders, sexual preference roles, sexual identity ghettos, etc., but the freedom for each of us to find her own way of acting and desiring and relating. There should be as many "genders" as there are people — or more, since people change over the course of their lives, too. The belief that there are two genders, boys and girls, and that they are somehow fundamentally different, is as superstitious as the belief in god, or any other myth that can be disproved just by taking a look at the real world: every person is different, and when we try to fit ourselves into generic groups (by all wearing pantyhose, or all claiming to be attracted to blonde anorexics, or etc.), it's never healthy for any of us. Don't tell me I have something fundamentally in common sexually with every other human being who has the same sexual organs — there may be some coincidental similarities, but if you look at the vastly diverse history of human

sexuality, you'll see that those coincidences are the result of cultural pressure and standardization, not biology. Fuck you and your generalizations, it's the unique specifics of individuals that matter to me, not the abstractions by which you hope to divide them up into categories, the easier to control. We wont fit in any category you give us, we're bigger than any $^{ca}g^{e}$ y^{ou} could offer.

So the same goes for giving us more than two gender role options (lipstick lesbian, diesel dyke, S+M dominant, leatherboy, etc.) — it's just like the choice between pop and grunge, between major label identities and "alternative" identities, all bullshit. My self cannot classified, I will NOT be commodified, and I hope that one day everyone will be able to construct and reconstruct their

sexuality without reference to these strangulating labels.

You can see how gender roles constrict each of us, just by standing on the street and watching people. Watch the way men move their bodies — there is an invisible cage they've been taught not to leave: *Must not let wrist bend more than 45 degrees. Must keep shoulders back, chest puffed out, like authoritative frog, so others will know I'm not to be fucked with.* Listen to gangsta rap — most of the men are so brainwashed by the values of male competition and domination that they are literally unable to do anything with the chance to express themselves except repeat the same stupid mantra about how powerful they are. Pathetic. You can imagine how these same cliches and restrictions express themselves in our relationships, too: despite our best attempts, the girls still end up with their lives revolving around the boys' projects, the boys

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still end up not listening or opening themselves up, and both genders find themselves acting out the same unfulfilling farce their parents did, that they swore never to participate in; this pattern is fucked, and we need to find ways to subvert it.

The more radical elements of the feminist movement have done quite a bit towards the liberation of women from their gender programming; as such, they strike me as some of the most successful anarchist efforts of the past half century, whether they

used the A word or not. What we need now is a movement that can do the same thing to help men liberate themselves from their roles.

Both groups are held in their gender cages by intimidation: women are threatened with worthlessness and expulsion from society should they fail to make themselves docile and agreeable to male domination, and men are led to believe that being less tough than the next guy means certain death. My own personal experience as a boy, incidentally, has been the opposite: when I was younger, and felt the socialized need to lift weights and act aggressive all the time, that got me into trouble constantly with other men who were going through the same thing. Tell a bunch of people that they need to be scared of each other, to make themselves into weapons against each other, and you can't expect that they'll be able to get along and act civil together. On the other hand, once I stopped lifting weights and managed to adopt a less threatening attitude, people stopped fucking with me. Other men can tell I'm not playing their dumb game, and they leave me alone. If you are a young man who tends to get into fights, I would encourage you to try this tactic as well; the more of us learn to make others comfortable' in our presence, the les's we're going to have to deal with the mindless tragedy of violence. This is especially an issue at our hardcore shows, at

which people need to get along for our community to have anything of value to offer at all. When I go to a straight edge show and everyone is acting all tough, wearing their big bodies and swaggering walks as symbols of their each-against-all masculine role-playing, it doesn't surprise me nearly as much as it does everyone else when a fight breaks out. Dont waste your energy preparing yourself to be tougher than the next guy so as to take care of the next violent situation — try instead to create environments in which everyone can feel safe, in which people can learn how to let their guard down, so they can take that knowledge with them into the rest of the world and make it a habitable place, too.

To clarify — I'm not saying that every kind of behavior and attitude presently associated with "manliness" is a bad thing in all situations. We should all be able to express ourselves in every possible way, to have every human quality at our disposal for every situation we find ourselves in. But since being "manly" is the default setting for all us boys, let's be very, very distrustful of it. The desired end is that we will be free to move freely between all the possibilities that are divided between different roles and personas today, but to get there the first thing we need is experience outside our own sexual/gender ghettos.

I want to conclude this with a reiteration of what the basic problem with the word "fag" is. I know I'm pretty much preaching to the converted, writing about this here, but hopefully some of you will get the chance to put forth some of these ideas in a more challenging environment, and maybe this text can be useful then. A "faggot" was originally a block of wood for burning, so the word refers specifically to the days when women and men who would not toe the party line on sexual behavior and gender role submission were burned alive as witches. No matter how you mean the

word, the fact is that whenever anyone hears it, they instinctively remember that we live in a society in which deviation from the norm is attacked and punished viciously. Those of us who are real warriors in the anti-gender struggle, who are totally out of the closet and exploring publicly without shame, don't need * any further reminders of how much risk we run, and neither do the rest of us need to be reminded that we should be scared to join in. The real fucking "faggots, " the ones who should be burned at the stake, are the homophobes and thugs who would keep everyone in chains rather than risk a moment of tolerance, let alone questioning. They should be scared as fuck if anyone has to be; they should hide in the closet, if anyone has to hide. I recommend using the word "homophobe' as a slur, where people once used "fag" or "bitch as all-purpose insults.

Homophobia and sexism have the same root, which is the idea that sex is a kind of violence. "Fucking, " in that language of slavery and abuse, is something one person does to another to assert his position of dominance, not a way for equals to express affection or share passion. Women let themselves get "fucked" because they are weaker, according to this bullshit; thus, in homophobic mainstream society, every sex act between men and women has the implications of rape. Homophobes hate gay men because those men show that sometimes men like to be "fucked, " too, which suggests that the stranglehold on superiority that men supposedly hold over women is not actually so invulnerable. Part of forging the path to a supportive, free, egalitarian society is inventing a new kind of sex outside the terrain of such power exchanges. That strikes me as exactly the kind of task that the young, adventurous, lascivious kids who read Inside Front are cut out for. Get busy!

Infinite Relationships

Relationships without bounds or boundaries, love without limits, without ends

This is about so-called "non-monogamous relationships, " about some of the benefits of trying out one of the alternatives to the formulaic dating/marriage/divorce model for love. Your response to this article will probably be similar to the one I had a few years ago when I read a discussion of the same subject by David Sandstrom in the Swedish zine Handbook for Revolutionaries: "good idea, but, uh, not relevant to me, of course..." It turned out I was wrong. Had I remembered a lesson I've learned over and over, I would have realized that often the ideas that make me the most defensive and uncomfortable at first turn out to be the most important for me in the long run. Not to say that I'm offering a program that you must all immediate adjust yourselves to... but we can't remind each other enough to be open to new ideas, in case they do prove to be helpful in our lives.

A couple years ago I had a wonderful experience on tour, in which I finally experienced what it felt like for men's gender roles to be dissolved: over the course of the tour everyone in the band and the people touring with us were all able to open up and become emotionally supportive and loving, and suddenly the experience of being with a lot of other boys was totally fucking different from anything I'd encountered before. In this safe, encouraging environment, all of us really felt fearless, free, ready to try anything, with no more doubt or need for walls to protect us. On the surface, it was just that we weren't afraid to touch and hold each other, and that we stopped complaining and being selfish; but the implications beneath this were immense: I realized that there was no need for intimacy and emotional support to be confined to my romantic relationships — I could create and benefit from these things in every relationship.

This got me thinking about my romantic relationships... if there was no reason my friendships couldn't be more like my love affairs, why couldn't my love affairs be more like my friendships? When I thought about it, my friendships had a lot going for them that my love affairs never did: my friends were never jealous or possessive, my friendships didn't tend to adhere to some strict socialized image of what they "should" be, and while my friendships generally continued on in one form or another through my life, once it turned out that a romantic relationship wasn't storybook perfect it would end and I wouldn't see the lover anymore.

All my love relationships had proceeded something like this: in the beginning I would meet a beautiful new person, we would broaden each others' horizons and have wonderful experiences together, and thus fall in love. At first we would feel more free

together than either of us ever had, and the world would seem full to overflowing with possibility and wild joy. But slowly, not trusting the rest of the world, or the future in which we might not feel such wonderful things, we would build our relationship into a castle, to keep out the cold and dangerous outside world, and protect our passion by turning it into an institution. Sex, which at the beginning had been something that came more naturally and freely than anything else, became jealously guarded as the seal sanctifying our love relationship, as proof that it was different than all our other relationships. [This seems, in retrospect, like a really strange role for sex to play.] Inevitably, I would wake up one day and realize that the free, feral passion that we'd been united by was gone, replaced by habit, routine, fear of change; the castle we'd built had become a tomb, sealing us inside and away from the outside world, which we'd actually needed all along to bring us each new things to offer the other and sustain ourselves. Inside the coffin, we fought more and more, each demanding that the other prove her love by sacrificing more and more — when love is supposed to enable you to live more, not disable you in return for an assurance of basic companionship, a companionship that often replaces your participation in larger communities anyway. Falling in love had been like finding a secret entrance to the garden of Eden, a gift economy in which we shared everything without keeping score or worrying about "fair trade"; but now we were back in the exchange economy, competing to see who could need more, who could control more. After all my attempts to transcend the stereotyped roles of people in romantic relationships, I suddenly found that I was a "boyfriend" again, with a "girlfriend" (which is not a healthy role for anyone to have to play in this sexist society!), with no idea how it had all happened.

I started thinking about how it is that we all keep falling into these patterns, and how we could avoid them. The issue of limitation kept coming up: the idea that some things had to be off limits for the relationship to work. With my friends, nothing is off limits, and nothing is demanded either: we offer each other whatever we can, whenever we have it to give, and we don't demand anything that doesn't come naturally for the other (that's how my friendships go when they're healthy at least, and most of them are at this point). I decided to look into what other models for love relationships there were, and discovered that there is a long tradition of relationships without these limits and expectations: non-monogamous, or "open, " relationships.

I'm not trying to say that monogamous relationships are bad, exactly, but there are a thousand kinds of relationships, and we generally only permit ourselves to try one format, which seems ridiculous. Let's explore a bit. Every time I hear about another wife/husband/boyfriend/girlfriend cheating and sneaking around, every time I hear someone speaking proudly about how (in the name of monogamy) he has managed to resist doing something he really wants to, every time I must listen to someone pathetically lamenting the feeling of being "trapped" in a relationship or unable to pursue her desires out of some kind of fear, every fucking time I have to witness someone leering voyeuristically ("it's ok to look if you don't touch"), it make me so furious about how we've trapped ourselves in this one-option relationship system, accepting

these symptoms of suffocation as inevitable instead of experimenting with the other possibilities. More than anything else, our commitment to supporting monogamy as the only option (other than "casual sex, " I guess, which is boring as fuck and bad in other ways too) keeps us from being honest with each other. We've got to dare to address all these complexities of life and desire openly, even if it is painful.

We punk rockers always act like we're such radical people, but when it comes down to acting, in practice, to try out radically different ways of living that might be more in line with our ideas (or just plain challenging, for once, not safe — nothing is more dangerous than playing it safe!), it doesn't occur to us to question our programmed habits. All too often our revolutionary ideas are just badges, a different ideology for us to vote for, not catalysts for transforming life. This is an issue that affects everyone, where anarchist values can be tried out in the real world, but thus far I've seen very little discussion of this subject in our community; if we're going to question the way the world works, we should take that home to our own personal relationships, and perhaps try out alternatives there first before proposing solutions to the ills of the world. That is — if we really have solutions to the ills of our society, let's put those into practice to solve the ills of our own relations. Healer, heal thyself.

WHAT AN OPEN RELATIONSHIP IS

The most important thing here is to get over the idea that a person's value is measured by whether she alone can be "enough" for another person. The world is infinite, and so are we — no amount of living, no number or depth of interactions with others should be "enough" for any of us, just as no amount of interactions with a person you love will ever be "enough." (To set borders on what another person can do or feel, as a condition for them to be able to receive my love and affection, goes against everything I believe as an anarchist and a human being; I want to trust others to know what they need, and never limit them — and I certainly don't think my life will be any richer from the limitations I place on others). We have to free each other to be and become ourselves. This isn't just about other lovers or sex partners or friends, it's also about other undertakings, needs, even the desire for space and solitude — it's heartbreaking how much of our selves our lovers often ask us to sacrifice to be with them.

I want to be valued for what I am, for what I do naturally, not how well I conform to some pre-set list of needs that someone has. If someone else can fill some of those needs, I wouldn't deny that to anyone, and I don't want to be jealous when others have something different to offer; I just want the chance to offer what I have to give to those I love, and to remember that those things are priceless and not comparable to whatever unique gifts others may have. None of us should ever be saddled with the role of sole provider for someone's needs (romantic or otherwise), anyway; our purpose on this earth is not to serve others, but to find ways to be ourselves in ways that also

benefit others. By saying the rest of the world isn't off limits to your partner, you free yourself of the job of being the whole world to your partner.

The monogamy system means that people hesitate to share themselves with others in certain ways, lest they become romantically involved — for since you can only have one romantic partner at a time, you have to make sure that your one partner is a good investment (and here we are back in the capitalist market even in our love relationships). Women check men out for financial means. Men ponder whether a woman's beauty is socially recognized enough to offer the prestige he hopes to get by having her at his side, and no one is able to experiment with partners who don't meet enough of these criteria to be potential spouses. For that matter — just as in your friendships, there may be people in the world with whom you can spend some wonderfully romantic time once or twice a month, but with whom you don't have enough in common to date steadily and then marry, etc (although you often see such mismatched couples, who would have been happy as more sporadic partners, making each other miserable in fifty-year marriages). Non-monogamous relationships make such things possible without paying any price of mutual unhappiness.

I've decided that I no longer want to have a hierarchy of value between my friendships and my love relationships: they're both crucial, irreplaceable in my life, and fuck anyone who wants me to choose between any of them. Not only that, but I've stopped classifying things as "love" or "friendship" according to arbitrary superficial details — the feelings I share with certain friends are so intimate, so beautiful, that it's ridiculous that I don't call them lovers just because we don't sleep together. It's fucking absurd that sex should be the dividing line between our relationships, between which ones take precedence, between who we play with, live with, sleep with, who we take care of first, who we die with at last.

By the same token, in open relationships, sex isn't weighed down with so many implications and restrictions. Love and desire outside the lines of the monogamy model are demonized and attacked on every front in this society — in the lives of women, at least, and those men who don't want to be monogamous but also despise the superficiality and sexist bullshit of the "player" scene are unlikely to find support in feminist circles, either. Sex should not be contained, and it should not be made symbolic of anything — it should simply be another way for people to be physically affectionate with each other, to give each other pleasure, to be intimate and emotionally expressive, taking equal responsibility for their involvement but without having to answer to some hypercritical mass, social expectation, or moral taboo.

An open relationship is just that: it is a relationship is which people can be open with each other, and with themselves — in which nothing need be hidden or suppressed or off limits, in which the whole world can be ours to explore without fear of transgressing imaginary boundaries. When we demand total openness and honesty from each other in relationships that include limits and taboos, we're setting ourselves up for betrayals and dishonesty: to say "be open!" without being receptive to all of the possible truths is fascist and preposterous. We have to be supportive of each other, in every aspect

of our individual characters, if we want real honesty to be possible. Otherwise, we're like Christians at confession with each other, demanding that we reveal all out of some moral imperative, with the whip of shame ready for any straying impulse. We have to learn to embrace and celebrate anything that feels good for each other. If it's good for our lovers, it's good for us — are we really so selfish that we can't see this?

For one example of how this could work, let's go back to the story of our tour. On the tour, different individuals formed close bonds, and shared private worlds together like lovers do; but they also remembered that for the community to function, they couldn't withdraw from their relationships with everyone else. And whenever two people needed a break from each other or wanted to expand their horizons a bit, they would spend more time with others, because there were always others around them who also had things to offer. Everyone was safe and cared for, and no one was left out, because we weren't paired off in exclusive twos.

Conversely, the scarcity economy of lovers which we have right now makes each person hurry to pick another and chain her to him, before he is left alone forever. The alternative, which this fear of solitude prevents us from seeing, seems more preferable: a world without borders, in which each of us would be part of a broader family of lovers and friends, with no distinction made between the two — and no set format for any relationship, so experimentation would be a constant feature of every one, and no relationship could ever get dull or overwhelming. To get to such a world, we just have to get used to not limiting each other, to not thinking of love as a limited commodity.

JEALOUSY, AND WHAT I'VE LEARNED FROM IT

Yes, I still feel jealous sometimes. I've had experiences before of being insanely jealous — not just of another man, but of other things my partners loved or experienced or were excited about. Being able to come to terms with these things has been very important in the development of my confidence and sense of self. It took me years to feel (not just understand) that if my lover loves other things or other people as well, it doesn't mean I am less valuable. Besides, if (he or) she truly loves me, it's not because I match up to some list of desired qualities that someone else can outmatch me at — she loves me for reasons that are unique to me, that no one else can compete with, so I have nothing to fear. Love isn't a scarcity commodity — it increases, just like joy, the more it is permitted and shared and given away. I don't feel like I have to hoard anyone all to myself now. I know that doesn't work, or help to project love (or me, for that matter).

I consider my jealousy a worthy adversary, one that can teach me a lot about myself if I confront it rather than trying to protect myself from it by controlling others. I've had experiences in relationships before where lovers of mine have limited themselves

in order to protect me from my jealousy, and it has been catastrophic for both of us, you can imagine. It's just as important to me now that I help others to not be "afraid for me" as it is that I learn not to be afraid for myself.

One of the things jealousy has taught me about is my attitude toward other men. It's interesting for me to note that I've never felt threatened by women whom my partners were attracted to or involved with, but other men have always made me see red. In our society, men are conditioned not to trust each other, to hate each other, to try to "protect" women from other men (which often looks more like hoarding and protecting "property"), and this inclination makes sense when you look at how fucked up many men are when it comes to interacting with women. But for me to not trust any men to be something good for my partners (past the point of limited friendship) is outright paranoia and territorial bullshit. If I trust the judgment of my partner, I should trust her to know what and who is good for her, and to not let my each-against-all male conditioning interfere.

SOME OBJECTIONS I'VE HEARD RAISED TO OPEN RELATIONSHIPS:

> "It sounds good in theory, but the way people feel is more important than these abstractions..."

Some people think that we come up with ideas and theories not as solutions to the real problems of our lives, but to show off what good ideas we can come up with. If it's not clear by now that I've been thinking about this as an attempt to solve rather than exacerbate the problems in my love relationships, then I apologize for doing such a poor job writing this article. And hey — if you think open relationships can be tough on your emotions, just try long-term monogamy. They're both hard sometimes.

> "But human nature — "

Fuck you. Enough said. Human nature is what we make it, and you know that too, whether or not you want to own up to it — you cowardly excuse-mongering bastards.

> "I guess that's fine if it's what you want to try, but luckily I only want monogamy for myself! I'm all set!"

That's great for you, if it really is true — for the time being, at least. We're always so thrilled when our desires happen to coincide with social rules; then it's easy for us to feel proud of our desires, to think they're beautiful, since they are universally accepted (indeed, everything around you is reinforcing the idea that what you are lucky enough to feel for the moment is perfection itself)... but you might not always be that "lucky,

" you know. Should you (or someone else) ever feel a need that isn't satisfied by the monogamy system, if you haven't already made the effort to get others to understand and accept the idea that there are many different acceptable kind of relationships and desire, you'll be back at ground zero, finding yourself misunderstood, hated, called slut and whore. Nobody should have to go through that, ever, so whatever you personally need, you have a stake in promoting non-monogamy as a viable option too. Otherwise, we'll all live in fear of waking up one day feeling a desire that is unacceptable — and that fascist power of moralism over our lives is exactly what I thought we were trying to fight in punk rock.

That's why I consider myself non-monogamous right now, even though I've only had sexual relations with one person over the past five months: I do what I do not out of a commitment to monogamy, but rather a commitment to meeting my own needs and those of others, with no fucking regard for social norms — and to supporting others who do the same thing, whether or not they do it in the same way. Non-monogamy isn't about sex, anyway — it's a general approach to relationships with people, as I discussed above.

> "Open relationships are bad for women — it's just another way for men to be selfish and absent when women need them..."

This is the kind of sexist remark I'd rather not have to deal with, but I've heard it before. It reminds me of the old myth that all ["good"] women want "responsible" monogamous relationships, and the ones who don't must be confused [so it's OK for us to doubt them or look down on them, just as misogynist pigs call them sluts]. First of all, women have been the ones who introduced me to most of these ideas. Besides the women I know personally, the very best book I've been able to find on this subject (*The Ethical Slut*, by Dossie Easton and Catherine A. Liszt, on Greenery Press), which I would strongly recommend to anyone interested in this issue, is written by women [if you can't find it, write me and I'll lend you my copy]. Second of all, a lot of the men and women involved in pioneering different models for relationships over the past few decades have not been involved in heterosexual relationships, so in those cases this a totally unfounded criticism. Third — people who say this make it sound like they think men are only emotionally nurturing to women who are paying them off for it with sex... and denying them access to any other sex as a way to be sure the payoff will always work. God, I hope that's not the best we can hope for in heterosexual relationships...

Finally — yes, it's true that men have been conditioned to be selfish and somewhat less than nurturing in their relationships, and just shifting relationship models is not going to cure that. But that's going to be a problem in whatever kinds of relationships they have, not just open ones, and has to be dealt with as a separate issue. A loving, caring boy is not gong to go running off for sex with some stranger when his lover (or one of his lovers) really needs him. There are so many landmines hidden in our

sexuality, since so much of it has been programmed by our enemies; we men need to unlearn the pressures that make us seek out superficial sex as a way to avoid real intimacy and support. That brings me to the third objection:

> "So does this mean you're giving up on your romantic dreams, your hopes for living happily ever, just trading them for a series of sexual episodes with acquaintances?"

No, not at all. I'm not interested in evading personal commitments and long term relationships — rather I want to protect them from being unnecessarily at risk. I want to secure my romantic relationships, so they won't be at risk from trivial things like temporary boredom or attraction to others, by creating relationships that are sustainable through changes in my life and needs. That way I can hope to have my lovers as long as I have my friends, 'til death do us part for real, and no old taboos (or jealousy, insecurity, etc) will interfere. Sure, this will be hard sometimes, just like everything is hard sometimes — but the rewards of making this work will be greater in every way, I think.

What I'm hoping to do here is free us from the unnecessary tragedies of our love affairs, the insecurities and possessiveness that deny us the commitment and pleasure we could have together. In order to be ready to remove those obstacles, we have to be ready to face the real tragedies head on, with great courage: we can't demand that others protect us from our insecurities by limiting themselves, and we have to face the fact that there will be moments when we are alone. The price of not doing this is absurd — today, we suffer both the necessary and unnecessary tragedies in our relationships, because of the courage we lack. Is it too much to ask that we try something new?

[Image not archived]

ranted, as I talked about in the introduction, lots of kids take the spectator role in punk rock and end up feeling as alienated here as they do in mainstream society. But for the rest of us (and hopefully for them too, soon), punk is a

revelation — it is a place where we get to decide what happens, where we find out for ourselves just how much we are capable of, where we can make a world of our own.

Playing music yourself, or watching your comrades play it, is nothing like listening to the radio or going to a stadium concert; it makes it clear just how mighty and beautiful we all are, it shows the rewards of freedom and participation in the flesh. So now, the big question is: if we want this feeling more than once every week or two, what do we do?

Obviously we need to build up a larger, more deeply-rooted community, that can provide-the support system for us to take our entire lives into our hands — including the practical matters of survival, the aspects of our creativity and thirst for adventure that music does not provide for, and our interactions with the rest of society. This article is intended as a possible blueprint of where to start... but for heavens sake, don't think we know everything about this — we barely know anything at all. Surprise us by showing what we left out, if you can!

POOLING 00R RESOURCES

rhere are two ways we can meet our needs as individuals: in ways that help others to meet their needs, or in ways that (directly or indirectly) deny others their needs. This is a basic principle of anarchist organizing in a capitalist world. For example: when you buy your food [at a] grocery store, you have to work to earn the money to pay for it, and since not everyone can afford to buy food there (or have the chance to get a decent job, in the first place), you re using your wealth and labor to support a system that doesn't provide for everyone — and for that matter, in the process of earning the money to pay for the food, you'll probably become selfish ("I had to work hard for tMs! I earned it! its mine! None for you! Your problems are not my problems!"). On the other hand, when you organize a communal garden, or a Food Not Bombs group for that matter, the same process that feeds others feeds you, and food no longer need be seen as a scarce commodity. The more people volunteer at the garden or for the gathering and cooking, the more food there is. You can apply this principle to every aspect of life.

Today we only have a little "free" time to invest in the punk community and the other positive things in our lives, because the rest of our time and energy and resources go into maintaining the system that keeps us

separated and thus weak. Do you pay rent on your own apartment, or share communal space that can be used for more than sleeping, eating, and watching television? Do you work for a corporation to pay for your own health insurance, or do you volunteer at a community health clinic? Do you pay for car insurance, gas, and repairs, or participate in a bike co-op and share a community van for longer drives? Do you put your money into entertainment for yourself, or into obtaining resources for your community to build more entertaining lives for all?

There s a lot of talk in anarchist/activist circles about how to "get the message out." I'm not against demonstrations, but I think its ridiculous to think that demonstrations should be our main outreach to other segments of this society. To show what is worthwhile about sharing, caring, anarchist values, etc., we simply have to demonstrate them. If we can create alternate ways for people to meet their needs together, through which they can take care of the details of survival without remaining divided into atomized units that must sustain themselves or perish, then it will be clear how much better our ways of doing things are. When people see that anarchism (or whatever you like to call it) is about helping people to find food and shelter and environmentally safe transportation and ways to afford the lives they want, they will be a lot more sympathetic than they are when they only see us breaking windows and writing graffiti. If you want to build a community so you'll have a structure to support your own efforts to live free, just find what you have to offer and offer it.

CREATING COMMUNITY SPACES

Here in the U.S.A., all I ever hear about is people complaining about how "this town sucks" (whether it's Louisburg, N.C., or N.Y.C.) and insisting Im about to leave,

I'm moving to..." The town has refused to offer them the life they want on a platter, and so rather than see what they can do with the resources it does provide they just want to move on to some other place which will presumably take care of everything for them. Usually they don't. Sometimes they do, and they find that the new place also sucks, because they're still waiting for it to take care of everything for them. And since they're always about to leave, they never take responsibility for actually putting effort into making things happen where they are. Every city "sucks" in this country because were paralyzed running in place from one place to another (in our heads if not in fact) that no one takes the time to build really strong communities, to make real things happen.

This happens a lot in the case of housing in particular. We need to establish communal spaces in which we can live cheaply and do creative things, but everyone is always too convinced of their own transience to take the trouble to make it happen. Were we all to put the necessary work into setting these places up, we could then move all around the country, and every place we went would be awesome — we would travel through established community centers, stopping and participating for a few months everywhere we went, just as blood moves through the internal organs of a healthy body. I'm exaggerating how bad things are a bit, since this is already the way the punk scene works in a lot of places in the U.S. But as far as community spaces go, I've seen much better things in Europe with the squat scene, and I feel like we could

TAKE BACK NEXT?

really benefit from doing something similar, even if squatting itself is a bit more difficult in this country. Rather than always being about to move away, in quixotic search for the perfect cool place to live, we should concentrate our energies on transforming the places we do live we know better how to do that than anyone else does, and if we don't, we'll just take our inertia and disappointment with us to the next stop in our tour of the alieNation.

Without affordable living spaces, everything else is pretty much impossible — when you have to pay hundreds of dollars in rent every month, that money has to come from somewhere, and living on the street is not practical or sustainable in the long term. In the absence of alternative housing, most people inevitably give up on their dreams of leaving the wage-slave grind, or allow despair and inertia to consume them. As it is, the only bands that can tour as much as they want are the ones demanding ridiculous sums to pay for their leases and the ones who don't care about being homeless in between tours. This is absurd, since it's not too hard to organize cheap communal housing, and we already have a few good examples to work from.

When you rent an apartment, you are paying quite a bit for a space that can't be used for much besides recovering from work or studying for school, the two activities that are generally necessary for paying for the apartment in the first place — and you

re stuck in that vicious circle. Rent (or buy!) a cheap warehouse, on the other hand, and you have a space that can be used for a lot of things: shows (which can help pay the rent), art exhibitions, big parties, housing for visitors or travelers or others in need, a communal library or darkroom or internet connection or anything, anything at all. Best of all, in the process of fixing it up and organizing all these things in it, you 11 learn all about how to do things with space besides just using the microwave and calling the landlord when the plumbing's fucked. When we blur the line between living space and *acting space, * new things become possible that were unimaginable before.

Every town should have at least one community center/living space, where people come together to interact in person, where resources are pooled to complement each other. In the absence of a squatted building or warehouse space, houses can suffice, but the best thing is to have enough space thaj there can be a differentiation between the space that really is open to the community and the space that people dwell in, so privacy is still possible for those who need it. To begin this project, all you need is enough people to round up the starting capital and the labor to make it work. After that, (/you can be careful not to separate yourself from everyone else as the elite that controls the space, others will join in.

MEETING OTHER NEEDS

Once you have a space in which meetings and work can take place, the question is what further resources to make and share. If enough food can be dumpstered, collected for Food Not Bombs, or stolen, you could have a free cafe, providing basic meals so no one in your community will ever have to fear starvation (I mention this especially, since in past years I spent so many hungry days and nights — others who have been in similar situations would probably be happy to contribute their labor to such a project)... that would also double as

a place to gather daily, to discuss new ideas and plan further activities. You could combine everyone's private supplies of books and 'zines (and even records, if you want to get radical) to make a library, so that your group will only need one copy of a given product, not one for each of you. You can get an old VCR and television and have movie showings, or set up a workshop with shared tools for auto repair or sculpture. You could take up a collection and set up a communal screenprinting center; the skys the limit, as long as people are committed to learning how to share things rather than being selfish. You only learn how not to be selfish in the process of sharing, anyway.

In addition to the questions of space and sharing resources, there are other needs that can be met better communally: food and clothing (which I'm sure you know all about already, from Food Not Bombs and similar projects), health care, transportation. There are free clinics set up here and there in this nation already, mostly left over from the 1960's. If you can find one of them, they deserve all the support you can offer them, because they're trying to free us from the blackmail the corporate health "care" system is able to use against us: *your money or your life, * quite literally.

As for transportation... bands are already used to the idea of sharing vans, and that's a good starting place. Sometimes larger vehicles are useful, and if a group of

people can get together and share one, it saves each of them a lot of money. Bicycles are best, of course, and a bike cooperative can help provide and repair them. Bicycles can be collected from college campuses where they have been abandoned after school is over, from the basements of lazy rich people who no longer use them, even from the police (who routinely confiscate them) if you can persuade them that you represent a legitimate charity organization." I've been to places with bicycle libraries, where you can borrow one for your day s travels, and other places where if you put in volunteer hours, you can trade them for a fixed-up bicycle of your own; various groups throughout the last few decades have even set up stands across their cities, with bicycles at each one (painted bright yellow, to be identified as free bikes) that one can take and ride to the next post, to be left there for the next rider.

Sharing knowledge about trainhopping and hitchhiking is also important — and supporting others who are passing through is not only good manners, but helps you to keep abreast of new scams and information as well. It's crucial that each little community be linked with other ones, for mutual aid and education. This applies outside the lines of the punk community, of course — the most stable community projects I've seen have always been the ones that bring together groups from very different circles of society, to cooperate towards goals that benefit each.

A community of people committed to enabling and protecting each other can provide the support and safety net for each of its members to do incredible things. Such groups can start with a small handful who are pledged to give all, who are ready to recognize what disparate qualities and resources each has to offer and share them fairly, and expand to forces of awe-inspiring power. Lets stop treading water and start putting our energy into building these structures.

OTHER PROJECTS AND ADVENTURES

Solving practical problems is only half the program. The other half is to keep life interesting for everybody, and that means continuing to create challenging situations both inside and outside the punk community. The article about Reclaim the Streets in the last issue of Inside Front told of one project undertaken towards this end, and the introduction to this issue tells of another. Rather than go on and on in abstractions like I usually do, I think the best way I can address this is to collect some writing from earlier pamphlets here, with a couple accounts of other projects weve done.

Summer of 1999 Catharsis and Zegota came back from our U.S. tour together hell-bent on making life in North Carolina as exciting as it had been on the road. The first attempt took place at an Atom and his Package show. Considering that Atom was known for his between-song banter, and hoping tb make the show something less predictable and more interactive, we composed a list of secret instructions and distributed it to everyone in the audience before Atoms set: whenever Atom says "song, " shout "Go!" — whenever he says "package, " applaud wildly — whenever he uses profanity, cough, sneeze, spit... We didnt interfere with the mood of what Atom was doing, but contributed greatly to

the hilarity of the situation, giving everyone in attendance a way to ^perform" too, and surprising Atom at the same time. It was a really good night for everybody, I think (although by the end of three songs, Atom was totally confused, sputtering andfreaking out and laughing the instructions had been designed so that the more perplexed he became, the more unusual the mass responses to his words would get, and eventually he was so overwhelmed that he didn't know what to do next)... if you want to see the secret instructions we passed out, I think Atom still has a copy up on his webpage.

After the Atom and his package show, we composed and distributed (he following pamphlet. The original featured a photograph of our good friend Sally breathing fire into the audience during the most recent Catharsis show at Gilman Street.

Touring the globe with a rock and roll band is not be the only way to risk everything with your friends. For a new type of adventure

A group of us at ShotGunShelter in McLeansville, NC stumbled across an amazing way to get something done. Some of us call it a Thinktank, some call it a Concentration; they are rhe same thing. The following is a list of premises that explain what a thinktank is and how you might go about trying one.

In the last two years I have participated in a handful of thinktank projects.

I have also been in contact with other groups experimenting with the concept. Where appropriate, italicized examples and anecdotes from various of these thinktanks have been included to expand on a premise.

Premise: In a thinktank, a specific amount of time, usually two weeks, is allotted for the attainment of a specific impossible goal. Impossible examples are:

-designing and building a mechanism or piece of art

-producing a public event

-producing a publication

"digging to China and freeing Tibet

1 know of one successfill thinktank in St. Petersburg, Florida where only the duration and place were predetermined. The rest was left to situation and spontaneity. This was a risky but brilliant expansion of the thinktank concept.

Premise: Design your thinktank like you would design a machine. In support of your specific goal, assemble a group of people, facilities, materials and tools. Each part should be integral to the project.

For a long while I had a project in mind that required some bicycle mechanic skills; I had a friend in Boston who worked on bikes, so 1 called him up. He came to McLeansville for two weeks and we built it.

20 *Inside Front*

PUNK

INVITATION TO THE ADVENTURE

Punk shows. Punk shows us what we're capable of in tight-knit communities, it shows us how to have more fun, more experiences, more life. If we let it, punk can show us just how much is possible in this world. And punk shows are exactly the place for this to happen.

Do you remember when you went to your first punk show? It probably felt like you'd discovered a whole new world, carefully hidden from the eyes of your parents and teachers, where people danced and screamed and dressed and talked and thought in ways that you'd never imagined before. You kept going back because they kept challenging you, kept introducing you to new things. Pretty soon punk was *your* secret world, where you had adventures beyond anything that could happen in a classroom or an office.

But there comes a time in every kid s life when punk shows start to feel stale. You feel like you know exactly whafs going to happen: some kids will come together and talk about the same stuff, some bands will play while people stand around or dance a bit, maybe a little rhetoric will be thrown about, and then everyone will go home. Why even go anymore, except out of a sense of duty, if you're not going to be challenged and surprised anymore? That's why many people drop out and stop going to shows.

The Atom and His Package Show Was Just A Warning Shot

We can either accept that punk shows have lost their novelty value and are no longer entertaining (like the passive fucking spectators this society has raised us to be), or we can *do* something to make them entertaining and challenging again.

The Atom&H.P. show was fun because the audience got to participate in their *own* way, to be creative and active too, rather than just dutifully following the instructions of the performer or standing in slack-jawed boredom. This made the show better for everyone. What we did together that night wasn't enough to revolutionize the concept of shows itself, perhaps, but it was a little tiny taste of how much less predictable they could be.

THINK

Premise: Two weeks is not a long time; thinktank must be efficient.

Day 11.1 was sewing a six foot tall inflatable Arnold Schwarznegger prop, Drew was in the sub basement trouble shooting beats on the sequencer. Erik was securing projection and hauling equipment, Jason was screening the last ofthe t shirts and posters, Chris, who was on his trailer bike picking up an electric motor, managed to dumpster dive two pizzas and a head of cabbage, which we ate for lunch."

Premise: Thinktank is not just temporary, it is *necessarily* temporary; like a sprint or a tantrum, a thinktank is utterly non-sustainable.

A modern day vision quest, (thinktank) destroys the way you view your limitations and your self., none of these pursuits are for the faint at heart. " -Manifesto for Concentration, 1999

Premise: Thinktank is holistic. Every part of life during thinktank belongs to the project. There are no lunch breaks or business hours. For the given period, Thinktank

is in effect twenty four hours a day. Eating or sleeping are done only in a way that supports the project.

In the final days of a Thinktank arranged by a friend in Boston I had to skip a few nights of sleep to work on the accompanying publication. The next day, I was convinced by my cohorts to sleep in the car on the way to Providence. Because of

— _Lucky Number_*

SHOWS

The His Hero Is Gone Show Might Be Something More

We're not encouraging you to just start heckling bands — that's inexcusable. We're challenging you to contribute as much to these shows as you expect the bands to. For each show, it should be possible for us to add to the atmosphere with surprises of our own. *This is a challenge to you to outdo us, to surprise and challenge us even more than we can entertain and shock you with our tricks.* If we all surprise each other, then shows will be profound again for *everyone, * not just the youngsters, and we'll all have reasons to keep going.

JOIN US IN TAKING BACK THE SHOWS!

A message from the CrimethInc. Revolutionary Dance Party Here are some examples of things other people have done to keep punk shows new and fresh:

-Stalag 13 (Philadelphia) has held punk rock proms, where everyone dresses up and dances (other theme shows include Halloween and Valentine's Day).

-Some place (I don't remember where) put on a show where all the bands had only ten minutes to set up, play, and pack up. Six bands in an hour! It would be awesome to make everyone's favorite bands write songs just for an occasion like that, or according to some other theme...

-Fort Thunder (Providence) used to have demolition derbies, including one show at which the first band set themselves on fire, the second band set the stage on fire, and the final band performed with a tube filling the room with carbon monoxide from a running car outside. The idea of making a punk show a place to explore the boundaries of life and death is as thrilling to me as it is scary. They've also hosted punk rock professional wrestling (complete with a cage, etc.) and a hundred other crazy events.

And here are some things you might want to try yourself:

-Try dancing to bands in ways that you never have before (or that *no one* has before). Make up your own dances. Explore the freedom in moving your body in new ways and shaking off the weight of self-consciousness and routine.

-Incorporate things besides bands into shows. Try putting on puppet shows, showing homemade films and videos, theater, comedy, spoken word, staging unexpected performance art... For that matter, try mixing up the lineups of bands a bit, so things won't be so predictable.

-Set up shows as part of larger events, or with greater themes than just music: have a potlatch (in which everyone brings gifts for the bands and each other, instead of money), a costume party, a feast, absurd competitions...

-Bring your own adventures to other shows: stage scripted events, introduce unexpected elements, refuse fo accept the rule of expectations, strain against the fabric of reality itself. What else is punk rock for?

TANK.

their insistence, the publication remained unassembled until we arrived. Thankfully, Fort Thunder had a good stapler and some willing bodies so we got the job got done.

Premise: Socializing is an impossibility during thinktank. Participants must focus on moving forward at all times. During thinktank idle conversation and dilly dally are out of the question.

*The apartment was saturated with thinktank. Peter, unsuspecting, dropped by around midnight for a visit, only to find Moe and I on a furious binge of screen printing. I don't know exactly what was said or done, but I haven't seen Peter since, and that was back in *96.*

Other people did stuff at the His Hero Is Gone show, since I was in no condition that night to do anything (I'll write about that later on in this issue). It was tastefid and fun, and didn't interfere with the show for anyone, just gave it a more exciting feeling.

The next show I did anything for was the Trial show... Jon and I dared each other to write poetry for it and perform it there, something neither of us had ever done before. I took the dare seriously ofcourse, and wrote Fuckem Goddam Markem, " which later was revised for the Folk lore/Folk war tour. When Jon saw me reciting it in front of everyone, he freaked out, since he hadn't taken the dare seriously at all But on the spot he composed a few lines in his head, complete with a dramatic performance-art conclusion, and delivered them right after me. We were learning to not be afraid of doing anything...

We missed all the activity over the next few months, because Catharsis was in Europe and Jon was there playing with us... but he did something amazing upon his return. Jason had organized a benefit for a park area in the state, and Jon stood up between bands with a chalkboard and a notebook, to deliver a "lecture" on CrimethInc. topics... but as he proceeded, he kept getting interrupted by hecklers he had planted in the audience. The heckling became more and more insulting, and the audience turned more and more against the hecklers as the tension grew higher and higher. Jon attempted to go on with his lecture, until finally he was stopped by a heckler who stepped forward and struck him. Blood (homemade fake blood, but convincing to everyone there, in

the mental state that prevailed) spilled everywhere, and real violence erupted as the audience leapt forward to break them up and drag the hecklers outside. They almost dismembered poor Jeff, who was one of the plants, ignoring his desperate insistences that it was actually just a performance. Meanwhile, Jon stepped back up on stage, and now, with everyone's full attention and an atmosphere so full of tension that no blade could pierce it, delivered a few lines of poetry explaining what he was really trying to do: we're going on the road, were going on the run... and you're the ones I want to come...

For me, this performance was brilliant because, just like Zacks combination of the thesis and antithesis of poetry and work (which I spoke of in the introduction), it synthesized elements that had previously remained trapped in opposition to each other. Usually, a performer has to struggle against the hecklers, while the audience remains aloof, watching the conflict from a distance. By integrating heckling into the performance, Jon transcended the old conflict to create something new and dangerous to everyone.

Meanwhile, another CrimethInc. splinter group had been working on a parallel project. F. Mark Dixon and his cohorts had developed a philosophy of action, which they applied to their various art and performance projects: Think Tank. Using the principles of Think Tank, they had built such unheard-of machines as the Safety Bike (a bicycle that does flips when you hit the brakes) and the Sub-Sub-Contra-Bass-Blaster (described below), and in extremely short periods of time had created, booked, and performed multi-media tours (one explored the connections between bodybuilding and the modern capitalist idea of "progress"). Here is the manifesto they put together, in its latest form:

Premise: Documentation of thinktank is best handled after the fact in the form of propagandic myth making. Any real-time documentation should be handled by non-participants.

For our first thinktank, we overextended. We spent the first week doing everything twice so we could get good pictures. Finally, we realized we were missing out on the real experience so we could have photos to look at. For the second week, we scrapped the burdensome documentation and let our memory serve. It did.

Premise: Thinktank both produces "works or art" and is itself artistic expression rendered as movement through, and alteration of physical and psychological space.

Its hard to locate the borders of this project. Fuller and I have been tied together with an invisible six foot rope for eight days now. He tastes the Food Not Bombs spaghetti and I immediately say "needs salt. " We are desperate to get this show working properly; our intensity leaves stains on carpets and sidewalks. Perched on a

park bencFoutside the third venue we grapple with last minute details. I see my own anxiety expressed on the faces of innocent passers by. Everywhere we go there is a vortex. Everywhere we go it rains.

Premise: Thinktank is a visitor in the world, a simultaneous but separate occurrence. When thinktank is over it is impossible to go back. As for your prethinktank life, leave a forwarding address, you'll never quite get back.

"It was like I got used to a zero gravity situation; when I got put of that building, all of a sudden I weighed a hundred and thirty pounds again. Eor a few days I could hardly move. Plus my eyes ached so bad from the light... [n] *-exerptedfrom a*

letter from Kelly in St. Petersburg. Kelly and three others secured an abandoned building, stocked up some food and water and agreed only that they would stay for ten days. By day three they had decided to blindfold themselves for the remaining period and build a shrine. As I understand, there is a giant deer head sculpture in some unoccupied building in St. Pete.

Premise: It can be quite distracting to be at.home during a Thinktank. Take steps to isolate your group, go somewhere else, bar the door, rip the phone off the wall: "No, we can't come over for dinner!"

Jon finally met got to know Mark and became really excited about this method. While Catharsis was in South America, he combined his efforts with Mark and together they organized a "noise parade" through the business district of Greensboro, complete with elaborate costumes, homemade noisemaking devices, and joyously absurd avant garde pretensions. The pamphlet they put together afterwards stands on its own as a masterpiece of confusionist poetry, so I secretly dumpsteredJons original notes (which were much more straightforward) to be published here for the first time. If you want a copy of the pamphlet, you can write the Zegota address (at the end of the "Fire and Lightning" piece at conclusion of this article); a revised version of the demands submitted in absentia by the parade on behalf of my own CrimethInc. faction also appeared in F.B.I. zine #3.

[Image not archived]

The new medium is movement, ' the new movement is our medium.

It was in the car on our way back from Reclaim the Streets in Raliegh that a noise parade was first suggested. "What can we do to shake things up?" And downtown Greensboro is the perfect canvas — a place designed for routine, for the soulless, lifeless exchange of capital, inhabited by robots, the businessmen and women who've had all their creativity removed by a lifetime of bourgeois comfort and control.

So the idea was to bring as much attention to ourselves as possible: first by means of noise, second by manipulating our appearance. We made our noise devices as elaborate as possible; some were designed to be percussive, others to create droning, constant sounds. We made our costumes big and funny looking: we wore bizarre uniforms and made

After the Noise Parade, there was the Handy Pantry show described earlier in this issue, another Reclaim the Streets (our 5^{th} *in this state, in under a year and a half — not bad for a quiet place like this), and various other efforts. Our most recent undertaking was a two-man tour F. Mark and I did after our participation in the demonstrations in Philadelphia. Fil conclude this article (which I hope has not seemed*

self-glorifying so much as inspiring, imploring, provoking) with the report we co-wrote together afterwards... it wont give you much of an idea of the grandeur of traveling the country with nothing going for you but a burning commitment to making shit happen, but its a start, at least. These are such little things were doing, for now, but from inside they feel so big, so liberating — and they will not be so small for long, if we can keep upping the ante and daring to always wager all.

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color-coordinated protest signs *[editor's note: these were no normal protest signs... one read "You can't push a rope, nope, " another "Viral or bacterial?"].* We

CrimethInc

CrimethInc. agent F. Markatos Dixon and I kicked off the First CrimethInc. Symposium with a narrow escape from the Philadelphia Republican National Convention police state, after being pulled over and searched by a real dimwit of a police officer (Mark finally exasperated him enough that he let us go: "no sir, officer, it's not a weapon, it's a subsonic speaker for doing experiments on fish... yes, fish, well, robotic fish, actually, it's for the naval program with robotic fish at M.I.T., we're late already..."). Somehow, we managed to get our suspicious-looking fed truck onto 1–95 south just in time to be thirty minutes late to the first performance of Folklore/Folkwar, a tour that we'd booked a month in advance without having any idea what we were doing, let alone an organizational meeting or, god forbid, a practice.

Practice or no practice we had the kind of giddy confidence that can only exist when you have a fifty foot inflatable teddy bear in the back of your truck. If we didn't have a recipe, we did have a solid set of ingredients. In the back with the teddy bear was a three string upright bass made from scrap wood and two tin drain pans, a

reduced our level of communication to its barest essentials, until we communicated only through emotion. With the medium of movement through

. Symposium

low pitch horn called the Boviphonic Ohm Cannon made out of a trash can, sheet plastic and PVC pipe, a rearranged household prayer organ and the Sub-Sub-Contra-Bass-Blaster, a 300 pound hand-crafted speaker that produces bass frequencies too deep for the human ear to hear. All of this and more was unceremoniously piled in the back of the truck; up front in the cab each of us had brought the special notebooks were we scrawl only our craziest after-three;AM ideas. Between Philadelphia and Baltimore we managed to brainstorm a six act, forty minute performance piece using all the inventions and a pile of other items including a gas mask, three rolls of duct tape a roll of rosin paper and eight permanent markers.

What was our goal? I can explain this best by starting with a story from a visit I paid to my parents a few years back. My father and I were at an art gallery, and he was standing next to me trying to figure out how to relate to the painting in front of us. As a core member of the bourgeoisie, he'd heard about art and how important it was, but he had no idea what one was supposed to do with it. He gave it a shot in the only way he knew, con-

Lucky Number

physical space, our creative expression existed INSIDE the onlookers. When we walked by and they said "What the hell is that!??" — that's our painting, that confusion our poetry, that curiosity, that disbelief, that is our sculpture.

And we couldn't resist the opportunity to make demands. So we targeted the owners of this town — the Jefferson Pilot Corporation, the only ones with enough resources to make the necessary changes.

Organization (.. ?)

The noise parade was valuable as an experiment in organization. From the outset, we realized that a delicate balance was needed between spontaneity and precise planning. The method we came up with to preserve this duality was to make an elite core responsible for the planning, to keep the project focused and organized, and then to arrange a large periphery of artists uninvolved in the planning, to be brought into the project at the last minute — who would bring with them the fresh enthusiasm that can otherwise be destroyed by a month of weekly meetings.

Ex ecut.km

The elite core began meeting in early April. At our first meeting we established our responsibilities. We decided who would make the signs, who was in charge of costumes, etc. We set a date for the parade, established a timetable for the coming meetings, and gave ourselves a deadline. All our dares and deadlines were pushed and pulled (of

course), but we continued to meet weekly. The Sunday before the Thursday of our parade we had a "stuff meeting" and a "final orientation" the night before. These last two meetings were more like art exhibitions than anything else, as our artists brought in their outlandish costume designs and noise instruments. We began to get excited, began to feel like the idea was actually taking shape and the event was actually going to happen.

The periphery began taking shape less than a week before the parade. Most of the people involved didn't come to a single meeting, they just began to show up on Thursday morning, ready to make noise and get crazy. The organization became chads around noon on Thursday. We threw all our shit in the van and drove to the departure point on Elm Street downtown. We got dressed and ready in the Food Not Bombs park and set off down Elm around 12:20 p.m. We paraded north into downtown, took a left on Friendly Avenue and circled the block, arriving on the doorstep of the J.P. building on Market Street. We presented our 95 demands, which were printed on a Suzuki violin, and made our way back to the F.N.B. park. It was a quick in and out operation, lasting approximately 40 minutes, start to finish.

XnktyMS.

All in ^11, the parade was a great success. I think we definitely got the reactions we wanted, out of ourselves most of all (sweaty palms, pounding

heartbeat, doing something that seems impossible, terror and exhilaration, tumult and exultation) and the shocked denizens of the business district. There are things we could have improved on — better preparation, tighter marching formation, not

forgetting the demands in the van and having to run back for them, and especially integrating the periphery more (bring them in earlier?) so no one would feel like they were just a warm body in someone else's project — Tut overall it was a good way to challenge ourselves and keep escalating the tensions in Greensboro, increase the feeling that everything is about to bust out.

Conclusions

In a condition of adamant doubt you are asked for explanations, when all you want is for someone to explain something, anything.

And you are asked for purposes when you are learning to accept that a purpose is not going to emerge, ever.

And you are asked for a statement of intent when the head seethes with all the fluctuating statements of the past instantly and meticulously taken down and which you use constantly, with increasing derision, in evidence against yourself.

No conclusions. To find out what it feels like, what the possibilities are, do it yourself. Good night.

[Image not archived]

sidering the painting as a commodity, a spectacle:

"I wonder what it would be like, " he ventured, "to own this painting, to see it on my wall every day, and know it was my painting..." He stared, perplexed at the violence of color and form before him..

"That's not what it's about at all, dad, " I tried to help out. "The center of what makes art matter is far from here, from the art gallery. If you bought this, without knowing the artist or being a part of its creation, it would be just another alien form sitting around your living room, gathering dust with the other meaningless tourist souvenirs and trinkets. The most you could hope for then would be that it would pick up some associations from your own life, and to be frank, you'd have to take living a bit more seriously for that to happen. What mattered about this picture was when the artist was painting it, and his friends were over at his little studio in the Paris ghetto, showing him their work and arguing about principles of painting and trading ideas and insights, being creative and alive together. You can't capture that energy by owning this painting or any number of biographies and critical journals."

In just the same way, we punk rockers have a totally different relationship to music than most of the children of Western civilization — even those of us who don't play in bands. We have music being made around us all the time, it is about us, by us, belongs to us. We don't look at it as some alien force that appears from on high, and we aren't impressed by the high priests of the "popular music" that is made to keep music from being popular in the old sense of the world.

To quote a fellow CrimethInc. agent: "Music is now in the hands of the people. What shall we take back next?" Mark and I set out to broaden the territories of our community, to make forays into other fields that will hopefully be further explored and shared by others in the coming years. Anything we hadn't seen a precedent for

at punk shows before was fair game: skits, reading stories and manifestos, acting out street theater (example: I am telling some folk tale of revolution.

[Image not archived]

EPILOGUE:

Where do we go from here?

There are so many ideas I wanted to write about it in this part — creating fret housing and public outreach by setting up long-term "protest" occupations (disguised as sit-ins) on college campuses, arranging Bull Runs in the streets of the U.S. like they have in Spain (only with paper mache- clad kids as bulls...) as a fusion of the Noise Parade and the Reclaim the Streets models with something at once new and primal, doing audio/visu- al tours of bands playing with artistic or informative movies. But man, this new issue is due to be sent out for layout within the hour... I guess Til have to wait until we can put these ideas into action, to see what others they can create in other people. In the meantime, Til close with an account of what this stuff feels like to do, by one of my comrades.

POSTSCRIPT:

one boys experience on the front lines of Greensboro havoc-wreaking

Part One:

the sky is making that color, the birds are making that song, it is dawn, the street is quiet. I look down, listening, past the holes in my shoes, past the cracks of pavement, deep... And the rhythm of the Earth is pounding there. Walking home, I pass the landmarks: there's the Handy Pantry and there's the coffee shop, there's the record store and there's the parking deck... The telephone pole with our fliers, the post office box where I drop my letters... Breathing in, I can feel it, above me and beneath me, to my right and to my left: the world, its parts, myself.

It was the same sort of dawn not quite one year ago that I identify as the moment when things changed. It happened in the middle of a long journey (as it often does). Some of us had spent the night driving north out of Denver, on our way to Salt Lake City: stars faded into daylight, trees began to distinguish themselves as the blackness of night sky crept back from the dawn approaching, just beyond the eastern horizon, which broke, as we watched, and spilt across the sky. We pulled off on the side of the highway to have a piss break and gather our last moments of desert night... In the distance there was a field of giant windmills, spinning silhouettes painted black by the amber glow of sunrise at their backs. I looked closely at them for several minutes; they were so big... moving... seemed to communicate something inexpressible. There was little I could do at the time but cuss and take deep breaths, "Fuck!" I said, head shaking, "What the fuck."

[Image not archived]

Eventually we climbed back into the van and set ourselves back on the road; but something from that moment stuck with me, something like a seed, or an epoch that begins slow and expands in meaning and importance. I looked around — all that I saw had been accomplished by hands and feet. I twiddled my fingers and wiggled my toes.

That was the moment all this began, when an idea was born, when the art came off the wall, when the words sprang from the page, when the music became ALIVE. The Kinko's on Tate street is not quite as dramatic as the desert in Wyoming, but even so..

There is a moment where ideas crystallize around you and you find yourself with a new freedom of movement, with a strange and remarkable ability to act on the physical world, when the emotional gravity releases its hold on your muscle fibers and a spontaneous and creative energy takes over. This is when the billboards have failed, when the cop inside has lost his voice; because no one lie can tell the truth, because if the world is to continue, the past *must* be eclipsed and the future *necessarily* usurped, when the only alternative is death — death of the spirit and death of the mind. Moments like this are the only real reason to keep going. They are reason enough, for now.

industrial sort of foam that Mark dumpstered from an art gallery in Winston; and I began to believe that it was possible to continue on.

I started to think of it as a dance, as one grand coordinated movement through space and time. I thought of my dance partners, who were each alive in different parts of the city: one sewing up the last of the uniforms, one at his desk finishing the demands, and myself, welding in the rain out back of the Durabilt Compound in McLeansville, hoping not to get electrocuted. I looked at the instrument and thought of its design. It was a sort of harness type thing made of ropes and steel shakers. I pictured myself setting it down in front of some parader,

"Here! Use this!" She would stare dumbfounded at the apparatus, "What the fuck is it?" she would say. "It's, um... well... you're supposed to wear it..." I say, "like, um... like this, here..."

Even to this day, I have a hard time articulating *why, * exactly, we decided it would be a good idea to make a noise parade through the streets of downtown Greensboro. Maybe just to prove to ourselves that it was possible? Maybe to shake things up a bit, to do something completely unexpected and unprovoked, hoping that it would speak to the town in a new way... Or maybe I just needed people, needed to know that people still live, that the desolation I feel is an illusion after all... But will the welds hold? And how long will the noise be heard?

Other Days...

is it not something in this cold, dreary world, to be loved?

Roses outside, shattered like glass: mixed metaphors and old issues of HeartattaCk strewn and soaked with black coffee — one cup too many. I have a candle here on my table that's burning down. Also a tape measure and a pair of scissors (next to my heap of emotional baggage). Just to the left of that is a book entitled, "Faces of Freedom, the Challenge of Transformation" which inadvertently got stolen one day from a church down the street during Food Not Bombs. On top of that is a "d.i.y. anti-depression guide" and a box of soonto-be-ruined paintbrushes (because I've nothing to clean them with, nor the will to seek out such a fluid at this sickly-slow pace of

morning sloth). And, of course, to the immediate right of that is the withered bouquet of my expectations, all that remains from the past week of haggard life in Greensboro. Beside that is a book of matches.

Greensboro is a Monster

RunHaveFun, just after "beer o'clock"

Some matter of weeks earlier, my friend Jeremy had called and asked me to set up a

show for his band in Greensboro. "Sure!" I agreed and wrote down all the information on a slip of paper, which I .promptly lost and forgot about completely.

When that slip of paper resurfaced in my kitchen, the show was only a couple of days away. "USA is a Monster" it read mockingly, "June 10th" So I called Jeremy up in

Thirteen

Charlottesville to see, in fact, how desperate they were for a show. It became obvious that I was unable to weasel out of it, so I told him: "Alright goddamnit. I'll think of something." I called Wilson St. and the House of Thieves and left messages, then went out for a walk to clear my head. I felt a wry smile crawl across my face when I came within a block of the Handy Pantry. And I remembered having an idea.

It didn't feel like anything was really going to happen until

[Image not archived]

the band actually showed up... then

the panic rose from within like a £ great tidal wave of nausea and anxiety.

"Um, shit..." I said to them, "Maybe we better have a quick talk..." and the eight of us sat outside and discussed the ramifications concerning equipment, jail, etc. Standing in front of me, USA is a Monster was a motley crew to be sure; but they seemed oddly prepared to devour the task at hand. I watched for their reactions, there was a madness behind their eyes..

Shortly after 2:00 AM, the "music" began (if it can even be called that). I guess, knowing Jeremy, I was expecting something pathological; but I wasn't prepared for such a blatant, even violent disregard for melody and rhythm. It was horrendous, I felt as if the sound were reaching in through my stomach, tickling my spleen. They were in isle four, just in front of the beer cooler.

[Image not archived]

I was astounded when the cops pulled into the parking lot, noticed what was happening, told someone (without even getting out of the

car) to "keep that door shut" or some nonsense, and then just drove away. Inside, we had all commenced phase one of our *emergency response mission-abort plan for saving musical equipment from confiscation', * but then the cop left and we were all just like: "well, I guess you guys can keep playing." Personally, I hadn't even thought about how we should end the show. I figured it would end itself, one way or another. Eventually we just had to tell them to stop.

Other Days...

shatter my life or complete it

I am terrified by the way things happen. The wind feels wonderful on my face. This corner of the world is utterly without commotion, soft orange illumination, a plastic bag rustling... there are *other* places people gather, not this one. I am sitting quiet here, alone, thoughts are soft, calm; but by god my heart screams. I have the feeling of a man who is walking in a pitch-black hallway: unsure of where it leads, unsure if there will be obstacles in the way, unsure if he should duck his head, if he should step lightly, unsure of where he is going, unsure of where he has been, expecting at any moment to fall or to hit something, to sustain some mortal injury, and to die. But hoping, of course, hoping that soon his path will illuminate and all his questions will be answered, all of his uncertainty will be replaced by something else — but what, he cannot imagine. O flower in this barren world, O bright star in this empty sky, say something, say anything...

basic faith involves a certain amount of risk never xxackxx

Nothing Exists, Only the Political

the new medium is movement, the new movement is our medium

I sat with my mother on the curb out front of Gate City Noise and she explained to me why she hadn't come to my wedding. "These things you guys are doing..." she began, "...these noise parades and downtown things..." I watched her fidget with a dirty cigarette butt, "they just make me uncomfortable." After she said that, I pretty much stopped listening. I mean what the fuck! My own mother! Can't even come for her own son's wedding! She thought it was a joke; I told her it would probably be her only chance...

Then, just to rub it in, I told my mother the story of the paper airplanes. Oh! if there was ever such a sign of victory, it is this! I was relaxing and eating spaghetti when Bruce approached me, "Did you see these?" he asked. In his hand was a small paper airplane. This was about halfway through, somewhere between the limbo contest and the mambo line. "No, " I replied, "What is it?" He pointed to an office window across the street, overlooking the festival below. Inside was a fluttering heart and an idle mind, stolen back from the tight grip of routine. Someone up there was making paper airplanes and throwing them down. We unfolded the piece of paper. "Leveling the Playing Field (1 of 2)" it read, "Lawyer was disbarred in _re Pajerowski_, N.J., No. D-224, 12/3/98 for, among other things, (1) using a 'runner' to solicit potential clients and (2) condoning runner's fabrication of client s medical claims..." Ha!

There will always be people who believe in getting caught. You'll run into them the night before your big project and they'll tell you things like: "better bring a toothbrush" and "be prepared to travel" — whatever the fuck that means! Once at a show, there was a guy who tried to convince me that Reclaim The Streets was a lame idea. He told me that, instead, we should just "try smiling" and go into the antique shops downtown to meet the old women who own them. He assured me that this would create the sense of "community" and "creative freedom" that Greensboro lacks. I thought he was a moron; but I didn't tell him to his face.

These people believe in society, they believe in cops, especially the cop *inside.* I believe in tact. I believe that with the right amount of finesse, a creative individual can do a lot of very impressive things without getting in any trouble at all. Always remember that we are dealing with people, even cops are nothing more than people: they have emotions, they have expectations, they can be manipulated. Funny things happen to people who become bewildered by the sight of something really bizarre. I believe it is probably an exact science; although I know nothing about it. I believe that when I get arrested it will be because I haven't been creative enough to overcome the cop-instinct. The cop-instinct is our real enemy.

> There is always an element of despair that must be planned for in anything ~ crazy we try to do. As the project nears its climax, I expect myself to become a complete wreck of stinging nerves and violent anxiety. If I don't find myself a few hours before the event leaning over an empty pot of coffee, head in hands, X chanting: "oh shit, oh fuck, this is it, \ oh god..." then I know the goals are \ not high enough.

u If I die in my mind, then I

> die here soon after. If I convince I myself that. I am alone, then I will convince you to. Bitterness and frustration inhibit movement, prevents motion. Relaxation and broadview are essential for sustain

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able productivity. The way my body moves through space creates and destroys bits and pieces of the surrounding environment. The way my body moves through space is a manifestation of my mental state. "Pressure" is restriction. Pressure is atrophy. The power to create pressure is the power of the human mind.

"Pressure" results from insecurity, which results from the desire to know the outcome. Releasing the desire to know the outcome requires faith. The destruction of pressure involves faith. Faith requires risk.

When I called Mark to ask that he bring his Geodesic dome to Reclaim the Streets, I knew there was a chance it would be confis-

keep under control, "Wait till after the vows!" I shouted in vain. There was sudden movement in all directions, teetering on the verge of complete chaos.

My hand was shaking uncontrollably as I slipped the ring onto her finger. Behind us there were dancers, below us there was Earth, and ahead of us nothing but the sweet sweet now. And then the kiss: THE KISS. It felt as if the word of God had thundered through her veins and in one instant was passed to me by the touch of her tongue to mine. It was cataclysmic. I closed my eyes and listened to the sound of a new world

being born, I heard the buildings crumble within, life became excruciatingly real and undeniable. When I

cated. I believed that the shape of the dome would have an effect on the space such that it would deter the police from responding in a harsh manner. I'd seen what the dome could do, I'd seen how people change when they find it. I believed in the dome, it's such a basic shape. It speaks to people in a language they're not ready for. It communicates something primal, something essential... Anyway, I believed that the presence of the dome would create in the air exact-

opened my eyes, Reclaim The Streets had begun. And with it, the Greensboro renaissance.

A testament of gross self-indulgence supplied
by The CrimethInc. Crash Test Lovers
Correspondence: 1104 Buckingham rd. Greensboro, NG 27408 USA

ly the kind of vibration we needed to keep the dome from being confiscated. One creates the other, the other escapes the one. There is a threshold over which creativity must pass in order to defeat the cop-instinct. To not cross that threshold constitutes a disaster. Half measures availed us nothing. Anything s

worth doing is worth doing right. |

We threw open the door of the van and '

ran out into the street. I went straight for I_jM^_w the bus of art students from Winston and began beating on the door, shouting like a maniac, "Go! Go! Go!" and "Now! Now!

Now!" *Timing is everything. The first five /*

minutes are crucial. Bruce was right behind me; we started throwing traffic cones out of the way. I grabbed the first w

bag of flowers and ripped it open, started kicking them all over the place. Then the banner dropped across the street and I felt the gravity drift from my bones. The space was consumed without hesitation... a thirty foot inflatable plastic tetrahedron rose from the sidewalk, allofasudden there were people everywhere, someone brought out the platform, and I ran shouting: "There's gonna be a wedding! Make way! Make : way!" ,

Our priest was a street poet with blonde hair and glasses, he nodded to signal the W

bridesmaids. The procession rounded the

corner of February One, shouting in one B

unified and frenzied voice such a wedding ; ff march as I have never heard. The festival . became a boiling cauldron, water balloons rained from the sky while Jeremy read his « poem: our call to arms, our signal, past our • B

point of no return. The mob was hard to •

r^pr';"^*

W»» ».evywi< ib . '* ^^ ^ ;ft

Some hours inter, a few of us went back to see what remained. There were sti/l some flower shop scraps and various debris around, and Alex's painting was stili up. There were two police officers left, the same two who had been therefrom the beginning. We watched them standing there, quiet, admiring the painting. Beneath their feet, chalk messages and drawings were scrawled on the sidewalk. "We live'' it said. We live.

Everything we do from here on out involves risk. I vow not to let pass another day that is not an adventure of pounding hearts and racing blood. I vow to make this moment last forever. I vow to follow my heart through the black abyss. 1 vow to swim lakes of fire, 1 vow to crawl through pits of serpents, should they lay in my hearts path. Should my heart decree, I vow to dance, I vow to sing, I vow to crumble in despair, I vow to soar through the sky like an eagle, I vow to crawl through the dirt like a worm. I vow to love. I vow to make myself hard like stone, soft like a cloud. I vow to become like water, or to become like ice. I vow to scream when my heart screams. I vow to cry when my heart cries. And I vow to breathe, to let you breathe. I vow to *never* let go of life.

[Image not archived]

Inside Front Columnists

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Inside Front

Lucky Number

A *Subversive Plot,*

A *Chain of Events.*

by E Ullivit Buck, Minster of sciences

Two years agd I started work on my first vegetable garden. One morning, about a month later, I harvested my first vegetable, a radish. Crouching right there in my plot, I wiped the radish clean and ate it. It was the first bite of food I had ever eaten that was not the product of someone else's efforts. My first twenty two years, seventy three inches and one hundred and seventy five pounds were made possible entirely by the labor of other people.

At the end of this article, I give a few general tips for beginners interested in trying a garden. But instead of dwelling on the little I know from two summers' experience, I will focus on the why of gardening, a subject I have had many quiet hours in my garden to consider.

Its a well circulated vegetarian "party fact" that there are two things that happen to the energy of the sun as it moves up the food chain. The first is entropy. Our planets only source of energy is the sun. Plants use solar energy to stack small molecules up to create large, high energy molecules. We call these big molecules carbohydrates, proteins, fats and vitamins. Herbivores eat plants and are thus two steps away from the source. Carnivores eat mainly herbivores and remain at least three steps from the source.

Each time food is consumed, large molecules are broken apart. When large molecules are broken apart the same energy that was used to stack them up is released. The

consumer's body uses the released energy for body processes and for recombining smaller molecules into the particular large molecules it needs. Every time this process happens some energy is lost to entropy. Entropy is one reason that it makes sense to gather the sun's energy from its first solid resting place: plants.

The other thing that happens when resources move up the food chain is that they bring toxins with them. Toxins, both natural and artificial, follow materials as they move up the food chain. As energy is lost to entropy, the level of toxins stays the same. As a result, the higher you get in the food chain, the higher the ratio of toxins to energy.

At a minimum this information can help us decide what we should eat. But it can also be viewed as a system of logic that Universe uses to keep relationships successful and healthy. The same system of logic can be applied to other things.

For instance, the food chain is an excellent model for the movement of energy along the "trade chain." The trade chain is the series of exchanges through which the things we use flow.

Direct and indirect energy requirements for bicycle travel.
ENERGY REQUIREMENTS — PASSENGER TRAVEL
4.0
3.0
2.0
500
To »O Mice
° ° Lemming
Locust
O
O
Hummingbird *q*
Rat
o
Rabbit
O
Helicopter
O
o
Piegeon^{0}
O Salmon
Dog jet fighte
° Sheep *q* **|_ i**$_{\text{ght p}}$**|**$_{\text{ane}}$
Man • q^{0}©^ Automobiles
?o O-l
U-o Jett
Horses -

MAN ON A BICYCLE
BODY WEIGHT IN TONS
illustration c. 1 & c.2: entropy

Entropy in the trade chain is known as inflation, taxation and inefficiency. Each time a product changes hands, each additional process it undergoes, it becomes more expensive. When the same thing gets more expensive that means a loss has occurred. This rule postdicts that highly processed products will have less value than other products. But sometimes this is not the case. If someone

made an exact replica of a Ford Expedition in their garage they would have to sell it to their next door neighbor for much more than the same item mass produced. Obviously, value and entropy aren't the only things to consider.

There's also toxins.

Toxins accumulate as energy moves up the food chain. Similarly, ethical problems accumulate with every transaction in the trade

[Image not archived]

chain. A bottle of Pepsi, for example, comes to its drinker via a chain of exchanges including research, developing, testing, advertising, bottling, shipping, warehousing and retail. On top of that is the lineage of its ingredients: South American sugar cane, petroleum for the plastic bottle, caffeine additive, caramel color, paper board packaging et cetera. Drinking a crisp refreshing bottle of Pepsi requires the labor of hundreds and the use of a staggering amount of resources. In a sense, this product has many of the problems a vegetarian would attribute to a steak. So even though Pepsi is strictly vegan it can easily be considered less "ethical" or more process-tainted than a locally produced egg and that's before you even begin to investigate the most pernicious deeds of PepsiCo.

Here is another source relationship worth consideration. External metabolism is the way we use energy outside of our bodies. The practice started with fire and to this day humans are the only species who metabolize externally. Furthermore, humans use far more of the sun's energy outside of our bodies (to sustain our world) than inside (to sustain our bodies). Among other things, the advent of external metabolism allowed us to thrive in areas where our internal metabolism is insufficient. The internal and external ways we use energy are inseparably entwined; their combination is what sets us apart from both organisms and machines.

As with our internal metabolism, our external metabolism occurs at varying degrees of separation from the source. When we heat and make electricity directly with the sun, we are instantaneous consumers of source energy. When we burn wood, we are using the sun's energy that was gathered and solidified by trees ten to one hundred years ago. Coal and oil are remnants of the suns energy which are millions of years old. The longer the delay between energies arrival on Earth and its use by a person:

1. the more energy it takes to gather

2. the more equipment it takes to convert to useful form

3. the more money, big business and government is involved

4. the more damage is sustained by the environment

5. the more entropic loss is sustained between its arrival and its use.

So the wisdom that applies to eating low on the food chain also applies to external metabolism. In this case, it is important to stick close to the source with respect to time.

There is no telling how many days worth of stored solar energy we currently use each day but it is becoming increasingly obvious that our gross inefficiency and reckless consumption is both physically and spiritually unsustainable. The Earth receives an allotment of energy from the sun each day. This daily

ration could well be considered a logical upper limit for all of the Earth's energy using processes for one day. Why depend on our dwindling savings account of coal and oil gathered millions of years ago when we could spend your per diem of sunlight?

Considering the source of the things you use is another way to guide your activities. For most things the source system favors consumption of items produced by you or your friends first, your community second, and local or cooperative markets third. All with the overriding principal of avoiding the exchange of money. This principal allows for skimming of waste in the form of dumpster- ing, free food situations and theft from shitty big businesses. When considering energy, source awareness considers the energy's relative freshness.

Of course, the last thing I want to do is to create more rules about how to behave. Rules are unreliable. As you may know, some of the best reading material filters slowly across restricted borders and through unsuspecting mail systems, changing hands dozens of times while maintaining integrity. On the other hand, the growing supermarket trend thrives off of skipping steps in the trade chain. Keep your common sense sharp so you can recognize the exceptions. The most important thing to remember is that staking your voice in the world on your spending patterns is like resting your political activities to your vote... They are always grateful for your polite participation.

Back to Gardening:

Differing climates and tastes make it impossible to give specific gardening advice, but here's some general stuff I've learned.

1. Don't be intimidated. Despite a few beginner's blunders and one disaster that was completely out of my hands, my first two gardens have been surprisingly easy and fruitful. Kept weeded and watered, well- selected plants seem to take good care of themselves.

2. Well-selected plants usually means Heirlooms. Heirlooms means strains that have been hand-selected over generations to.be sturdy, disease resistant and productive

without a lot of intensive maintenance. Certain modern hybrids are selected for size and color of fruit rather than more important characteristics like the resilience of the plant, and therefore require chemical assistance. Obviously, these varieties are to be avoided. Particularly ambitious gardeners can develop their own hybrids the way it has been done for thousands of years. It is easy to find material in the library about how to save seeds from the plants that are the most successful in your particular climate and soil and plant them next year.

3. I have never felt a need for chemical fertilizers or pesticides. The rumor is that chemical additives are an imperative for success. Keep in mind that the agricultural revolution raged for thousands of years without them.

4. Do a little research at the library. Keeping your local climate and geography in mind, plan space and time to grow what you want. Don't be scared off by that five hundred page book that makes gardening seem like voodoo rocket physics, that book is for people feeding entire communities. You can do that next year.

5. It is way cheaper to start with seeds than seedlings; they are not hard to grow, you just have to start earlier and sometimes inside. Get your seeds from a store where they are sold by the ounce. They are much cheaper that way, plus the kind of store with bulk seeds is generally a place with knowledgeable employees. They will think it's cute that you are trying your first garden and will most likely be helpful.

6. * Spread out your harvest. Plant in several waves to insure that you are not hit with too much produce all at once.

7. It can be helpful to get your soil tested for proper Ph and balance of nutrients. Where I live, this can be done free of charge by the State bureau of agriculture.

8. Proper mulching can save a ton of water and weeding. If you don't have a mulching material, use newspaper. After your plants get a couple of inches high cover the soil around them with several layers of newspaper leaving holes for the plants.

9. Almost anything that can be planted in the ground can be planted in a five gallon bucket. This is perfect for porches and rooftops. Buckets can be collected behind stores and restaurants. Drill holes in the bottom and add a layer of gravel before filling with soil.

The Violence/Non-Violence Question: How (and Why) To *Transcend It.*

(reprinted: Crimethlna Special Bullet-in fir
Maximum Rock'n'RolL volume 2, number 1)

There are about 1500 of us gathered there in front of the hated Millennium Clock in downtown Sao Paulo. The college kids, members of some Communist Party which has organized this, are there in great numbers, with their little membership stickers on their shirts; but plenty of people from other walks of life are there too: older, poorer workers, bohemian types, middle-aged anarchists and syndicalists, even about one hundred and fifty anarcho-punks. The last group is beautiful for me to see, growing up as I did in a country

where most kids in mohawks and leather jackets spend their lives sitting in front of shopping malls: yeah, they have mohawks, and leather jackets (decorated with more political slogans in Portuguese than Exploited skulls, however), but they also all wear bandannas across their faces, like old-fashioned outlaws, and carry backpacks filled with projectiles, gasoline, and paint. They're clearly not here just to chant slogans.

Everything is pretty peaceful at first. There's a radical hip hop group performing from the top of a painted up double decker bus, people playing drums and dancing, a few people trying to burn Brazilian flags (which are all made out of asbestos, it seems). Some of the kids, carrying signs, walk out onto the broad street (eight lanes — this is the second biggest city in the world) to stop traffic; they're pretty orderly, not really ready to get too crazy, and when the police line moves forward to sweep them back onto the sidewalk, they don't resist too much. But the police, having gained a little momentum, push a little further into the crowd than they are welcome, and a scuffle breaks out. They seize one young man, with the domineering pomposity that characterizes anything pigs do, and everyone rushes forward, pulling him away from them and shoving them back. The pigs brandish their clubs; a little space opens up between them and us, charged with a palpable electricity. Into this space, with a sneer of abandon that I recognize well, leaps a young punk kid, who hurls a rock at the face of the Clock which towers fifty feet above us all.

The floodgates burst. From all directions rocks and paintbombs and even molotov cocktails are being hurled at the Clock; the pigs pause, stunned for a second, then charge at us. One courageous soul dashes past them to throw fuel on a fire which has started at the foot of the Clock. People are screaming and shouting all around — none of us have felt this kind of adrenaline in a long time. Tear gas is suddenly in the air. The glass on the face of the digital readout of the Clock shatters, and the glowing numbers go out. The police raise their guns and fire shots over our heads, real bullets. A rock comes flying through the air and hits one of them dead in the face. He crumples like a rag doll.

But I'm getting ahead of myself. [George

Tabb, eat yer heart out']

First, for those who have never been to Brazil, let me explain what this was about — then I'll talk about the implications. At the time of this writing, Brazil has just celebrated its "500 year anniversary" — that is, it's been 500 years since the Portuguese

first landed there, killed all the men, raped all the women (the majority of the modern day inhabitants are descended from this, I'm told), and looted the land bare, before bringing in African slaves to work plantations so that MORE wealth could be squeezed out of the country and into the pockets of Western nations (and a very select few rich accomplice locals). It's histories like this that explain why nations like Brazil are so poor today, and why the Western nations that raped them are so rich (it has nothing to do with who was/is more "civilized" — the opposite, in fact).

Of course, the people who hold power in these nations today stand to gain more if foreign corporations come in and continue to exploit the locals (read as: "enable Brazil to join the global economy, " etc.), so they are doing their best to make the Brazilians associate themselves, their history, and their interests with the European colonial powers rather than with the ancestors those powers slaughtered. When we were in Brazil, the most visible signs of this propaganda campaign were the Millennium Clocks: in the center of every Brazilian city, one of these fifty foot tall monoliths (decorated with a picture of the world, no less) counted down the minutes to the 500 year anniversary. All of them (like EVERY public monument celebrating the invasion of the colonists) had to be guarded 24 hours a day by gun-toting members of the military police, for obvious reasons. My friends in Belo Horizante had thrown a lone molotov at the Clock in their city before, but to no avail, so you can imagine how good it felt for us to see the face of one of these seemingly untouchable symbols of capitalist domination smashed and covered with paint in Brazil's largest city.

Sure it felt nice, you're thinking — but did it do any good? How about the actions of the Black Bloc in Seattle, or Washington, D.C. for that matter? Now that things are really start

ing to heat up in the U.S., too, shouldn't we be addressing which approaches really "work" (my word choice there is deliberate, as you'll see below), and which kinds of activism are "counterproductive"?

These are exactly the questions I want to discuss, but first let's get back to the events in Sao Paulo. There's a sudden moment of stillness, as everyone realizes the gravity of the situation. The Communist students (you knew they would reappear, didn't you?) take this opportunity to throw themselves, with a display of courage that is admirable for unreconstructed middle class kids, between the police and the rest of the demonstrators, and are shouting, pleading with the pigs. The next gunshots were going to be fired into the crowd, but they aren't. Grudgingly, hatefully respectful of each other's strength, the two sides face off across a line of truce formed by college Communists fearftilly clutching one another's hands. There are some more scuffles, and more rocks are thrown at the Clock, but things don't escalate further. The wounded policeman is borne away, and maybe a half hour later the demonstrators take over the highway, with no resistance this time, to march back from the damaged Clock.

Through the second half of the demonstration we hear a fair bit of complaining from the Communist kids about those fucking anarchists, who don't know how to behave, and have screwed up yet another peaceful demonstration. Strangely enough, though,

no one hears any grumbling about the college kids from the vandals and rock throwers. You'd think they would want to brag about how much more courageous and radical they are than everyone else, but no, they're quiet and respectful when jt comes to their more peace- ftil comrades — despite the fires visibly burning in their eyes at the sight of cops assaulting their friends. Could it be that they understand how they benefit from the presence of the more "moderate" activists, and vice versa?

[Image not archived]

For if it had just been anarcho-punks at this protest, you can be sure that they would have been shot at, beaten, and/or arrested, and no one would have intervened. And on the other hand, if it had just been well-behaved college kids, the whole thing would have happened without anyone paying it any notice at all —

the powers that be wouldn't feel like they needed to pay any more attention than the bored bystanders, and the kids would have chanted a bit and gone home feeling unfulfilled. One of the most convincing analyses I've read of the struggle for black power (liberals can read this as "equality" if you must) in the 1960's claimed that the holders of power and privilege were forced to bargain with pacifists like Martin Luther King, Jr. because they knew that otherwise they would have to reckon with people like Malcolm X and the Black Panthers — people who were not willing to be nice and polite and non-violent. I think that's a good example of how non-violent activism and direct-action activism can complement each other well, and this demonstration in Sao Paulo was another good example. The college kids were there to present the position coherently and to communicate with the pigs when the need arose, while the anarcho-punks and others were there to make the issues REAL and pressing for everyone there, ready or fucking not.

I'm sure many of you are worrying right now about the "bad image" that vandalism, etc. gives us and our ideas. For the moment, I'm not going to try to defend terrorism, or to explain (again!) the difference between initiating violent relations and simply pushing back when you're pushed on — so I'll just concentrate on the question of the "image problem." I always argue about this with my college activist friends... they think that whenever we do things that are publicly visible, we have to make sure not to seem "too radical" or else we will scare everyone away. I think there is a difference between being radical and alienating others. Being accessible (i.e. making it clear that what you're doing is something that others can and will feel comfortable doing with you) is extremely important, but it does NOT necessarily mean we have to tone down our radical messages or actions — perhaps the contrary.

The problem with trying to be accessible to everyone at once is that different things make different people feel included or excluded. The same nice clothes that may make my college friends look good to their bourgeois parents when their protest airs on TV can alienate the fuck out of the poor people down the street from the protest (and which of those two groups do you think has the more revolutionary potential?). By the same token, putting a brick through the window of a building that belongs to the capitalists these same people know are responsible for the mess of their community

(to quote the old Profane Existence article, the masses are NOT asses) might speak very plainly and accessibly to them. If we're trying to appeal to others, we must have flexibility in our approach, and recognize when the time is right for wearing suits and speaking nicely, when it is right for

smashing windows and setting fire to public monuments, and when it is right for both at once.

At the bottom of my friends' fears about seeming too radical — this is my guess, at least — there is a profound insecurity that is a bigger problem than any poor press could ever be. For decades now radicals in the U.S. have tried to downplay their beliefs, as if these were something to be ashamed of. This insecurity helps others to see these ideas as crazy, while the real nutcases on the far right get to talk about all sorts of nonsense with the certainty that the concepts they are throwing around (God, country, etc.) will be accepted as absolute values by almost everyone. Thus these motherfuckers can act so smug and confident about their bullshit that everyone is afraid to question it at all, lest they seem "extreme." I think it's time for all of us to be visible in our radicalism, confident and selfassured (without being snobbish or confrontational, of course), so that others will understand that our ideas are nothing to be ashamed of, and will not be ashamed of or try to hide whatever sympathetic feelings they have, either. If nothing else, being cheerfully, openly radical sure opens up access to a lot of ground between you and the so-called mainstream, ground that becomes safe for others to inhabit without appearing TOO crazy: "well, I'm not as far out as those CrimethInc. girls, but I do think there are some serious problems with modern representative democracy..." And it might well be that people haven't come to the radical left before because the solutions we were offering just didn't seem radical ENOUGH, given how disenchanted everyone is — ever thought of that? So as for whether smashing shit sends a message that is too radical — well, perhaps the more radical the better.

[Image not archived]

Also, it's worth mentioning that not every political action has to be done for the sake of how it LOOKS. There's something valuable about doing what you do for its own sake, not in order to sell your ideas (the way we're used to selling everything in this society). Without moments of authentic and emotionally honest action, like the assaults on the Clock in Sao Paulo or on corporate storefronts in Seattle, we can totally forget what we're trying to do in the first place as activists (which is work towards a world safe for free, authentic action,

right?) and become totally lost in our role as salesmen, the branch managers of the revolution. In this sense, like it or not, the anarchopunks and the Black Bloc are acting for all of us, simply giving voice to a different aspect of our desires than other activists.

Above and beyond how our activities are seen by spectators, the real crux of the issue is this: any resistance movement, call it "Left" or what you will, is only going to work if everyone who is interested in resistance can find a place for themselves in it. We can achieve this NOT by establishing one dogma about methods and ideology, but

only by finding ways to integrate the different methods, needs, and values of different people into approaches that work for everyone involved. It's not very antiauthoritarian, or even humanitarian for that matter, to prescribe the "one true path" to revolution and demand that everyone else follows it regardless of their differences from us. If we can't find a way the Black Bloc and the middle class student activists can work together, we'll be stuck back at square one, where we have been for the last thirty years: the same old endless infighting, the pointless squabbles and blood feuds that make us look ridiculous and alienate everyone else — because people want SOLUTIONS, not new teams to join.

That's why politics has been off-putting for most people for so long: because the majority of the people who HAVE involved themselves in it have done so not because they genuinely wanted to find better ways to live and get along, but out of an insecure need (created by the capitalist impoverishment of our lives and selves) to establish an identity for themselves. An identity is always established in contrast to those of others, of course — so, although he probably didn't recognize this, your old-fashioned political activist actually had a stake in others NOT joining him in his cause. That way he got to be the smart one, the noble hero fighting for everyone's freedom, while they, the dumb unwashed, waited for his help — or despised him and his glorious ideas, "not understanding them." The truth was, everyone else could sense that he was acting more at the behest of his own insecurities than out of a real desire to build bridges to others or live authentically for himself, and therefore assumed he didn't have anything of value to offer to their real lives.

In building the new, powerful resistance

that recent events have demonstrated IS possible, we need to leave the "activist identity" — and ALL identities — behind us. Yes, it's important to talk together about what will work and what wont, and to think carefully before we act or declare support for others' actions; but we have to be more ready to listen to each other, and to accept each others' differences (no, I'm not saying we should welcome Nazis, for you fucking morons out there). But the whole "violent activist" (or vandal or whatever you want to call it) versus "nonviolent activist" thing isn't going to help any of us get anywhere, it's just another of the false choices we're used to in this so-called democracy (Pepsi/Coke, Clinton/Bush, competing football teams, etc.). Instead, let's think about what we can gain from each others' different methods, and how to unify them into something mutually beneficial — for it is such interlocking, mutually beneficial relationships and methods that are themselves the model for sustainable lives in a revolutionary world.

As one of my fellow CrimethInc. workers once said: "Anyone who isn't on both sides of the issue is obviously against me from some direction." Scene unity, yo.

CrimethInc. Black Writers' Bloc, 2695 Rangewood Drive, Atlanta, GA 30345 U.S.A.

Political Participation:

Protest and the State

by Eric Boehme

[Image not archived]

Street demonstrations and property destruction have ? had at storied past in American history. Striking directly at the powerful British Tea Industry, indirectly at Parliament and the King, the Boston Tea Party was a form of political participation that addressed the same issues as anti-globalization protest. Protesting aims to put pressure on government either directly through violence, or indirectly through public opinion and institution-building. Protesting predominantly is issue specific. In other words, protesting builds pressure for incremental change, to enact public policies. The supposed uniqueness of anti-globalization protest revolves around the very ambiguity of what is being criticized. What policies or programs would protesters generally agree upon if given the chance to have an impact? The spectrum

might range from a stronger state and government to a radically decentralized participatory democracy.

Today the means of delivery for raising the voice of the people in protest is the mass media. Media coverage of the Seattle protests made Clinton respond and claim a moderate position on strengthening the state against corporations. In this case, exposure by the media benefited protesters supporting incremental change in the state. Generally the media frames protesting against the state as either a violent confrontation or a street party. Violent confrontations receive less legitimacy as protest in the eyes of the average American. Furthermore, public opinion often supports the use of state violence to "protect property." Framing the protest as a street party, the media delegitimizes the protesters voice, framing the participants as inarticulate, hedonistic, and marginalized.

Protesting seeks to create a crisis of legitimacy between citizens and the state. Outside the usual forms of political participation such as voting, campaign volunteering or contributing, protesting seeks to influence an institution by questioning either its workings or its very premise. Protesting aims to bring some voice to the people, some input for the direction of political and economic institutions. Whether that voice wants institutional reform or institutional transformation, protesting speaks the dissatisfaction of the way one's life is organized. Public opinion is sought and the state may face a crisis of legitimacy to which it responds with either incremental change, radical change, or reaction and repression.

Accepting incremental change means accepting the fact that the state has a legitimate monopoly on violence. Violence is in effect regulated by the state. Without a strong state, the competition of the market heaps subtle levels of violence upon us in terms of environmental devastation, increased "risks" of living in advanced industrial society and class distinctions. Actual violence occurs without a strong state as the struggle for resources pits races, classes, and genders against each other. State building also means institution-building, developing specific programs to alleviate and channel the effects of violence. Yet states protect and do violence to their own populations. Either through the

subterranean violence of law or the blatant creation of public distinctions through specific policies like segregation, states regulate violence.

Protest often seeks to criticize, limit, or overthrow the state's ability to regulate violence. Accepting incremental change means realizing that states enact particular policies that build and support particular institutions. Institutions are useful for regulating violence. Unions support the state. They support building the state to enact better regulation on working environments, enforce wage laws, and protect workers from the competition and violence of the market. Many environmental groups support the state. They would empower the Executive Branch to enforce strict environmental Standards and pursue litigation against polluters, reducing the potential for violence through environmental destruction. Some anti-corporate groups support the state's ability to regulate commerce, tinker with the economy, and develop the institutions of civil society to protect against violence. Nader even came to prominence through groups trying to direct the state to regulate a kind of violence done by consumer products.

While this means the state can exercise violence upon its own people, it also means that protest can pressure the state to punish the excesses of corporations and curb the worst effects of consumer culture. For those who support the state, the sword cuts both ways. Accepting a realistic possibility of incremental change, one legitimizes the political institutions of this country. Public opinion often supports protesters with agendas of incremental change, as in the anti-war and Civil Rights movements show. Legitimizing and empowering the state to enact change, protest can make a difference. When public opinion supports protesting, elected officials notice and begin to enact legislation. Accountability results. The voice of the people is heard.

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Editor's response: Don't seek incremental change in the State — erase the State!

Eric, I'm sorry we didn't get to discuss this together first, rather than my thoughts on your article going straight into Inside Front, but this is the final night before it all goes off, so it seems there is no alternative. I hope you won't fault me for saying my piece here.

I think the most valuable thing about the anti-globalization protests of the past year is NOT the "pressure they put on the State" to do things for us. I believe that the State having power over our lives is itself a fundamental problem, one which is essential to the misery of modern man, and I don't want to have to run to one

bully (the State) to protect me from another (the corporations). The State may limit some environmental destruction, just a little bit, but as long as the hierarchal distribution of power (human society as competition rather than cooperation) on which the State is founded exists, the ones who are merciless enough to claw their way above us in the hierarchy game (the corporations, who do this by cheating us out of the same resources they use to maintain their psychological and practical stranglehold on power) will have the basic ability to keep destroying shit andfucking us over: because they can buy that right in the courts and senates, and we cant.

The "voice of the people" is NEVER "heard" by the State — the existence of the State is simply the condition of the voice of the people being suppressed. Sometimes

we may make them give us a little ground, so they wont be in danger oflosing control — that's all that happens in the cases of "incremental change"you speak of The Boston Tea Party was the harbinger of a frill-scale revolution, you'll recall, not a small change in British policy. We desperately need to stop accepting the "divine right of kings" and governments and corporations to hold the power, and get it back where it belongs, in our hands.

Of course, to be able to do this, we'll need a revolution in the way we get along and care for each other. You suggest at one point that State control prevents us from fighting among ourselves as we compete for resources; I see State control as the ultimate expression of the hierarchy created BY us fighting among ourselves for resources. When we can learn to share rather than fight, States that hold power over us will be unnecessary.

Therefore: acting directly and autonomously to prevent the corporations from going about their destructive business isn't interesting to me because it might enact "incremental change" (i.e. REFORMISM — leaving the State in place to dictate our lives for us, but asking for a longer leash and a cleaner cubicle) — it's interesting because it is a chance for people to learn about using their own power to do things together, rather than defering to some State or authority. It is through experiences like these that people can get the experience they need to figure out how to utilize their own abilities to get out from under the control of the much-talked-about Powers That Be.

And so I also want to say: fiuck the power of the media, too. I'm not opposed to the efforts of those who want to use the media to work towards specific ends in the short run, but in the long run our freedom and survival as a species (seriously!) depend entirely on whether or not we can shrug off 'hierarchical distribution of power, information, and the power to communicate information — that means rendering the existing "mainstream media" obsolete by creating alternatives and helping people see the benefits of simply ignoring the networks out of existence (which may include burning down some billboards).

Your article does do an excellent job of indicating some of the serious drawbacks of protest politics. Protests, unlike actions (example: the Seattle protest became an action, when it succeeded in achieving the objective of temporarily disarming the WTO...a wider-ranging series of actions like this would constitute a war of free women and men against their oppressors, not snivelling begging to the Higher Powers), assume the existence of a Master, of whom requests are being made. What I think we really need to do now is use whatever resources we can get our hands on to Do It Ourselves, negating the power of government by simply not recognizing it (and fighting it whenever we have to, but only when we can gain from that fight) — and for this to work, the most important question of all is: how do we find ways to encourage others to join us in doing this?

Why I *Love Dumpster Diving*

by anyone, anywhere

, Nothing compares to the feeling of elation, of burdens being lifted and constraints escaped, that I feel when I slide that lid back and hop inside a dumpster stocked with possibility, when the mountains of trash produced by this filthy society cease to be mere refuse and become materials. *Dumpster diving is the ultimate expression of tact and savvy, it is pure evasion. Everything that sucks about capitalism is immediately inverted when the late night dumpster diver finds her score. Poverty becomes abundance. Loss becomes gain. Despair becomes hope.*

Tactics:

[Image not archived]

The first thing is to find out who in your town is wasteful. I have found that newly opened businesses in yuppie parts of town are often unaware of the wonderful things they throw away. They make good targets; but you have to be careful not to piss them off. A disenchanted yuppie is twice as likely to pad lock a dumpster as a shop owner from a more working class background. Many yuppie shopping centers will be ripe for the "double d" but have security guards that patrol the area. It can help to disguise yourself with an apron or a name tag. When questioned, look extremely annoyed (in true yuppie fashion) and say: "I'm taking out the garbage, you moron, " or something to that effect.

If you live in a college town, it should be obvious. College kids throw out more useful garbage than perhaps any other class of people on Earth, especially at the end of a semester. Near the end of spring, the campus here in Greensboro is swarming with scavengers of all kinds. A fellowship exists among us, but there are no rules, no traditions in this game of findtokeep; some secrets are shared, others we keep to the grave.

Successful dumpster diving is not only a question of *where, * but also* when. *It involves precision timing, especially when it comes to frozen goods and other perishable items. There was storm here not too long ago that cut out the power for a few days. Many businesses were throwing out their frozen goods because their freezers were failing. This constituted an opportune moment, prime for the savvy dumpster diver to collect many otherwise unavailable items..Moe and I, for instance, were able to dumpster 10 frozen pizzas, 5 apple pies, 12 packages of Morning Star corn dogs, 6 boxes of Boca burgers, and 16 quarts of almond bark Tofutti, not to mention nearly 13 back issues of* Seventeen *magazine (so that we could work on Moe's love life). It took us a total of 3 and half hours and roughly 6 trips to and from the dumpster on foot. We hoarded it all and fed ourselves from the cache for roughly two weeks.*

Psychological Effects:

Among other things, dumpster diving is a powerful anti-depressant. In the middle of one desperate night, I left the house in disgust to go for a walk and try to clear my head. I was listening to Black Sabbath and grumbling bitterly to myself when I ran into my friend Nirmala on Tate Street. On a whim I mentioned, "Hey! wanna go dumpster diving?" She had never been, but she was ready to go. We left the world of despair behind and walked to Friendly Shopping Center, where I took her on my usual

rounds. In the end, we walked away with: 1 bag of potato chips, 1 garden salad, as much bread as we could carry, 3 bags of cookies, and oh my god the flowers! We got flowers! We took them back to the apartment and made them into a bouquet on the back porch; it was so romantic, I felt like french-kissing Nirm just being caught up in the moment!! But I didn't...

While we were behind the florist sifting

through the scraps, a Wackenhut Security officer pulled up in a white ATV with green police lights. "I'm gonna have to ask you to leave, " he said dryly. Completely swept up by the idea of beautiful dumpstered roses and tulips, I sauntered up to the Enemy and, saying nothing, offered him a white carnation. He refused: "I'm allergic to flowers." His eyes never met mine and his hands never let go of the steering wheel. We gathered our flowers and left the scene; it was obvious to us all what was going on.

On the other hand, dumpster diving can be risky for the recovering bourgeois. Once I was climbing out of the dumpster behind a bread shop, drooling and giggling (of course), and just as I was leaping out, two of the bread shop attendants came out the back door. They looked at me, I looked at them, then we both looked at the huge bag of bread I was toting like Santa Claus. "I... uhh..." started to explain but the two went back inside before I managed to get out my doctoral thesis on free food. They looked a little appalled, I felt a little weird. It wouldn't have bothered me much except that I recognized one of them to be the little sister of a kid I was in drug treatment with a number of years earlier. I shrugged it off and set about my way. Before I could make a clean break, however, the two emerged once again, this time with a loaf of fresh potato bread to give me. "Um, thanks, " I said. I don't think she recognized me.

Sustainability:

I try not to be noticed, but war is war. In my experience, it always serves the dumpster diver to go unseen. I usually make my rounds after store hours and try to clean up the dumpster a bit, leave it in better condition than I found it. However, if the store owner becomes openly hostile, I say fight back. If they padlock the dumpster, squeeze a tube of super glue into the key hole and leave a lengthy manifesto with death threat.

Superstition:

[Image not archived]

First and foremost: never be afraid to get inside the dumpster. The dumpster gods do not like window shoppers. Second: if a dumpster appears fruitless, do not assume it will always be so. The dumpster gods smile upon those who show persistence. I had to go to the CVS dumpster once a week for months

before I finally found it filled to the top with fresh ice cream bars. Third: if you find something useful, *take it.* The dumpster gods deserve respect, keep them appeased and all will go well. Last week I found an umbrella, on a day as hot and dry as every other one this summer; today, it's been pouring rain torren- tially since we woke up, and I've got to go to the bus station.

Warnings:

Some of us have had a problem with this, that's why I bring it up: you've got to watch out for scabies. It was common among us for some time to acquire our sleeping arrangements from a mattress store down the street that would throw away the old mattresses their customers brought in when they got their new mattresses. We have also been tempted by the many foam cushions people leave out with their trash on Thursday nights. Sometimes these seemingly dreamy cushy cushies are infested with little bugs that get in your skin and try to eat you. This is a condition to avoid — be careful.

Another thing to watch out for is rat poison. Most common in larger cities, shop owners often pour Clorox or other lethal substances onto their edible goodies out back to deter the presence of our fellow dumpster divers, rats. Sometimes you can smell it and sometimes there will be discoloration on the packaging. Be sure to inspect your score and stay away from the sketchy ones.

"Dumpster juice." It's a bad thing. Sometimes you just don't need to go any deeper.

Scavenging:

Trash picking is a fine art, it takes experience and intelligence to cultivate your skill. Something changes in the mind of a scavenger as she becomes expert, something strange and hard to define. Where others see garbage, she sees opportunity. Where others see junk, she sees valuable materials. There is a moment in the life of every serious dumpster diver when she realizes that her hands and feet have super power and are capable of incredible things, *if* they are in the right place at the right time, with the right idea. It is a mastery of the resources at hand that gives the scavenger her power. To the extent that she can see the unseen, to the extent that she can match her

wild imagination with the sea of trash before her, is the extent to which the dumpster diver can realize the true possibilities hidden from the rest of society, hidden in the trash.

Some items obtained:

- *one 15 x 6' sheet of industrial museum foam twenty pounds of steel shavings*
- *over one hundred VHS jewel boxes (for video project Hl)*
- *one pair of white mule work gloves • one custom guitar amplifier*
- *mountains of bread*
- *rivers of coffee*
- *miles upon miles of romantic Christmas lights • one container of shark cartilage supplements (among other hippie/yuppie health products)*

•*"The Enchanted Caribou' (children's book, found in Toronto)*

- *did 1 mention* bagels? *•fiowers, oh the flowers • one greasy massage table*
- *one "frozen"pizza (slightly moldy eaten afier three days baking on the dashboard of the Catharsis van)*
- *twenty-five banana flavored power bars*
- *silk-screening ink*
- *various home furnishings*
- *one Dutch bass player*
- *more Ben and Jerry's ice cream than is healthy for any human*

If you're not careftil... epilogue (backlash):

In the summer of 2000, I found myself caught up in a great purging, an elimination of the physical objects surrounding my body and choking up my home. It started as a simple room-cleaning, one Saturday afternoon around 1:00 PM. By 2:00, things had changed: I was throwing out cassette tapes and dirty clothes. By 2:45 I was throwing away stacks of things I meant to mail to people (effectively sending them through the *other* postal system...). Soon I realized this was more than a mere physical cleansing of my dwelling space; it had become something primal, something *that had to be done.* At 3:00 I started in on the home furnishings, and then the pots and pans. By 9:00 AM the next morning, my house was completely empty. I threw out all of my belongings as well as all my brother's (who was away for the weekend). I threw out the shelves from the refrigerator, and then dragged it onto to the street as well. The experience was simultaneously terrifying and liberating.

A few minutes later, I looked out the window and saw my friend Jason digging through our trash, my old sneakers in one hand and the thrill of discovery on his face.

Rimbaud, Verlaine, Mathilde,
and the Hatless Priest.

by Liz, Visible Woman

Dear Brian, <

I can't write a column for Inside Front after all. I wanted to a lot and I really did try, but I'm finding that it is just beyond me. I think it would take about four years of deep psychological analysis and another four years of silent meditation and maybe four years after that of solitary travel to get to the bottom of what I really feel about freedom and responsibility — or maybe that's not it exactly: independence and interdependence. No, that's not it either — and I guess that's the first problem. The thing I wanted to write about doesn't fit into a neat dichotomy of action and reaction or yin and yang. In fact, the more I examine my problem the more it refuses to stand still for definition at all. F. Scott Fitzgerald wrote "The test of the first-rate

intelligence is the ability to hold two opposed ideas in the mind at the same time, and still retain the ability to function." At least on this project I have ceased to function.

I'll try to explain what I wanted to do so you can see the difficulty. It began with the piece in *Days of War Nights of Love* about Arthur Rimbaud. Do you remember it? "Rimbaud wreaked havoc throughout Paris, knocking the hats off priests in the street, verbally and physically assaulting the popular poets Verlaine introduced him to, and destroying Verlaine's marriage." As the book tells it, Rimbaud's life is an invigorating account of independence and adventure, a kind of inspired selfishness, a life lived entirely in the wild borderlands of human possibility. But as I read it I began to wonder: what about Madame Verlaine? How would the story sound if she were telling it? She was, you know, almost the same age as Rimbaud — 16 when Verlaine met her and began courting her (courting her, I should point out, with the same relentless obsession that he later pursued Rimbaud). She wrote poetry herself; not good poetry, it's true, but her own. It was poetry that attracted her to Verlaine, ten years older than she was and already balding and unromantically working in a city office. Her first words when he was introduced to her were "I like poetry very much, Monsieur." You can imagine how short a step it was for a 16-year-old girl from loving poetry to loving a poet, especially one who would slip little poems, lovely sensual little poems, into her hand as he was leaving her parents' house. Who knows what magnificent future she imagined they would share.

My idea was to write in Mathilde's voice — I wanted to write a little dialogue for her and a priest, one of the priests who had had his hat knocked off in the street. My imaginary Mathilde tried to describe the intoxication of

those early days with Verlaine. "I saw windows opening in all the stuffy drawing rooms of France, " she said. "I saw highways unrolling at our feet, bathed in golden light. It seemed that we would spend a lifetime dancing naked together across the rooftops of Paris. Can you remember" — she asks the priest this — "what it feels like to be young, to yearn for freedom, to be filled with that aching desire to have everything matter? To long so deeply to translate everything familiar and ordinary in life into a new language?"

Of course in real life Mathilde's marriage was hard from the very beginning. Verlaine, already a little frightened by his own excesses and most particularly by his addiction to absinthe, had married an idea, not a woman — he wanted an angel, a redeemer, a mother, a muse — and he didn't have the capacity to liberate Mathilde from his own romantic imagination. They were married after a year of exquisite, urgent, unfulfilled desire (this was 1870 remember) but almost immediately he rejected the flesh and blood reality of his young wife. She apparently disappointed him in bed and he returned to his absinthe drinking, beating Mathilde at night and begging forgiveness in the morning in floods of weepy, sentimental remorse. Poor Mathilde!

Then came Rimbaud. Mathilde actually met him first, if only by a few minutes. Rimbaud, you may remember, had been sending his poems to Parisian poets — although at 16 he had explicitly rejected all poetry that had gone before, he still longed

for recognition. Verlaine sent him train fare to Paris and went to meet him at the station, with no idea that the poet he was looking for was a boy in homemade clothes and rough hand-knit stockings. They must have walked past each other on the platform; in any case, Verlaine waited for the next train and Rimbaud made his own way to Mathilde's parents' house where she and Verlaine were living. So it was Mathilde who was the first to welcome Rimbaud to Paris.

What did she think of him? He was by all accounts an attractive boy, tall and blue-eyed, with tender skin and big hands and big feet, although in the photographs I've seen he looks sulky and severe. All the biographers suggest that Mathilde and her mother were taken aback by his crude manners, but my

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Mathilde — the one I wanted to invent for you — was more complicated than that. She was hugely pregnant at the time, emotionally shredded and patched back together by Verlaine's capriciously alternating kindness and cruelty, lonely, frightened, and still very young. Perhaps Verlaine showed her Rimbaud's poems; perhaps she simply took them out of his coat pocket while he lay snoring on the bed, but however it was I think she had seen them. To be certain, one half of her was repelled by Rimbaud's rudeness, selfishness, and lice, but the other half, my invented half, was half in love with him. Not long before he left his village home for Paris Rimbaud had written a letter to a friend that was to become the famous manifesto for a new poetry, in which he called — you've heard this quoted many times, I'm sure — for "a long, immense and reasoned deranging of all the senses." But there is another passage in the letter, quoted less often: "When the endless servitude of woman will be overthrown, " Rimbaud wrote "when she will live for herself and by herself man, — hitherto abominable, — having given her her release, she will be a poet, she also! Woman will discover some of the unknown! Will her worlds of ideas differ from ours? — She will discover strange, unfathomable, repellent, delicious things; we shall take them, we shall comprehend them."

Rimbaud joined the household. Of course the arrangement didn't last. Mathilde's father, who had been traveling, returned; the next month the baby was born and Rimbaud moved out. He derided Verlaine for his bourgeois devotion to his wife and new son, and soon Verlaine was out every night again with Rimbaud, falling in love with him himself. I see one last meeting between Rimbaud and Mathilde: a strange one. I imagine Rimbaud returning to the house to get something he had left behind and encountering Mathilde in the hall. She has just come from the nursery; her dress

is still unbuttoned and her hair is loose. Rimbaud blocks her way, and when he reaches for her she does not resist. He opens her dress and leans over, takes one of her breasts in his mouth, and he bites her — hard, so hard that he draws blood, the red drops mingling with the white milk. She cries out and runs away, pulling her robe around her. They never meet again.

That scene is my invention (although

Rimbaud's casual cruelty is not — remember that Rimbaud once drew his knife across Verlaines palm simply because Verlaine had offered him his hand). Not long after that imagined scene, however, Verlaine and Mathilde had their own well-documented final meeting. Verlaine and Rimbaud had left Paris together; Mathilde followed them to Brussels and met Verlaine in a hotel room — perhaps in search of "strange, unfathomable, repellent, delicious things" she presented herself to him naked on the bed and they spent the afternoon in lovemaking. Verlaine had always believed that his time with Rimbaud was an interlude, that he would return to the security of Mathilde's comfortable household when he was ready. Now he -decided it was time: he and Mathilde boarded the train together, still scented with each other's sweat, but as they pulled away from the station Verlaine fell silent, looking out the window. When the train stopped at the Belgian border he got off and ran away, sending a cruel and insulting farewell by the stationmaster.

That was the last time Verlaine and Mathilde met face to face, although for ye^rs Verlaine kept begging for a reconciliation. He went on to become one of France's most revered and distinguished poets; Mathilde remarried, a building contractor this time, and passed out of history. As for Rimbaud, the book outlined the rest of the story: "Rimbaud, disgusted with Verlaine, who claimed he couldn't live without him, decided to leave. In desperation, Verlaine shot Rimbaud, wounding him in the wrist. The police came and Verlaine was jailed for two years, on charges not of assault but sodomy; meanwhile Rimbaud escaped to his mother's farm, where he completed the body of poems that was to change poetry and writing itself forever. Then, at the age of eighteen, Rimbaud put down his pen and announced that he was done with being a poet."

Have I explained my dilemma at all? It's partly this: secretly each of us believes that we are the central player in the drama of our own life* and that everyone else is just part of the supporting cast. In this drama, however, Mathilde was not allowed to choose her own part: without consulting her, Verlaine and Rimbaud cast her in the allegorical role of "middle-class respectability" and then proceeded to systematically kick her to bits. In

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my imagined dialogue she tells the priest "Their freedom put me in chains."

The priest was such a small part of my dialogue that I never bothered to even invent a name for him, but he did have one important thing to say: he tells Mathilde about

an afternoon when he was walking down the street and Rimbaud ran by and knocked his hat into the mud. "It was awful, " the priest says. "The hat was ruined and I had to proceed to my next appointment bare-headed with every person in the street staring at me. But" — this is the important part — "do you know, when I look back at that spring that is the only afternoon I remember? All the rest is lost in routine and duty, but when I think of that one extraordinary afternoon I can feel the sunshine and the wind, see the startled expression of the passers-by, hear the carriages passing. It was, perhaps, the only hour that season when I was truly alive."

So would Mathilde have been happier if she had never married Verlaine? Would Verlaine have been happier if he had never met Rimbaud? He certainly wouldn't have been as good a poet — in the months that he and Rimbaud shared a series of cheap rooms in Brussels and London his poetry leapt off the page and became the poetry that is reprinted in anthologies. What about George, Verlaine's baby son, abandoned by his father? He grew up — this is documented in the biographies — an unhappy, selfish, alcoholic man, his father all over again but without the poetry. Could Verlaine have saved him?

The three central players — Verlaine, Rimbaud, Mathilde — have taken over my imagination. There is Rimbaud, the dark angel, dedicated to impulse and desire. There is Mathilde, forced to be a plaster saint, representing convention and respectability. And there is Verlaine trotting between them, never quite able to choose. He's the least appealing of the three, but the truth is he is the most like the rest of us — dabbling in freedom, dabbling in convention, trying to find some way to hold onto both. I know that you yourself lean more towards Rimbaud than Verlaine. What, therefore, would you advise a 16-year-old who wanted to follow Rimbaud's example? Steal her parents' ATM card and take a Greyhound to California? Break the lock on the music store door and take all the instruments? Drink anything, smoke anything, embrace

anyone among the broken glass and weeds down by the railroad tracks so long as it deranges the senses? Burn it up, burn it out, kick it down, use up your poetry as fast as you can?

Instead of a dialogue I'm left with scraps of paper covered with questions written at random moments — stopped in the car at a red light, standing with my grocery cart in front of the frozen food case. I'll assemble a few for you: Must following your own desires always hurt other people? If it must, do you still have a responsibility to other people? Is freedom isolation? Does being a genius give you special rights? Can you be a genius without assuming special rights? Can you assume the rights without being a genius? Do you owe something to the world for the choices you make? And what is happiness? Is there value in orderliness and responsibility? Is the only way to reverse a mistake to walk away from it? Mustn't we always remember that other people are also fluid and growing, with their own sets of desires that sometimes contradict our own? What if part of the pleasure of freedom is taking more than our share? How do we know what, and who, to sacrifice? And, finally, is poetry — art — worth it?

So, Brian, that's all — I'm really sorry, but I just can't do it. I hope you can find something else to fill the space.

Love, Liz (406 North Mendenhall Street, Greensboro, NC 27401)

The Possibility of Perfection

by Erie Boehme

I've been holding these standards for years now, like some secret personal ad written on my heart. You: Dionysian, passionate, intelligent and soft, decisive and political, cut from this cloth, veggie and vogue, attractive and secure, outspoken and funny but never demure. Me: Apollinian, insecure, seduced by the form, cautious but curious, the calm and the storm, compete and sometimes play fight, stay up bleary all night, body and mind, committed... But I never could get past committed. In everything I do, commitment. To myself, and to you. But how can I negotiate it? Commitment means having standards, having perfect blueprints to fight for, to pursue. Does having standards of perfection, for myself and the people I love, inevitably doom all of my relationships to substandard copies? How can I imagine the possibility of perfection between us, that I would one day find some-one. One, who would match my secret personal ad?

Body

Can you, without any hypocrisy, criticize the beauty myth and the objectification of potential sexual partners but still think physi-

cality and attraction are important to a relationship? You live in your body, a body with desires created through your social environment. You're attracted to certain people, certain looks or body types, you're not attracted to others. You harmonize well. Fitted deep into arm crooks and bent elbows, back of knee-scents, and protruding shoulder blades. Desirous body, you battle the mind. You consume all in your path. A brief glance...but you know body, you know the first test has been passed. Leave me alone mind, you know this is how we were raised, images of beauty, images of perfection. Masterfill pornographic perfection.

You desirous multiplicity, many sources create your pleasures. Yet which sources should I trust? Which origins are untainted? You've tried to change your origins, deny the social construction, the daily existence in the society of the beauty myth. Why do you so desire to be with the beautiful? The secret personal ad includes attractive. It must. Should you be ashamed? Seduced by the form, the cheapest manner of ignoring the mind. Yet pleasurable nonetheless. Tearing against your friendships, you, body always looking elsewhere. You, masterful body, flit and echo, experiencing without cessation, digesting and forgetting, cutting a swath miles wide. Always already moving to where the grass might be greener. Obectification dictates fluidity. Bodies desire objects. Is that how you are? Is that the secret you must accept?

You body, volatile and violent. Pain becomes you. You inflict it on others too, objects. Just, only, merely, barely, slightly bodies for conducting pleasure. You body, consume others. But digesting hurts because you body, are all alone. To stop consuming body, you must be hurt. Perfect secret personal ad, to find you, you must hurt me. To

stop for a moment to say beauty doesn't matter. But can it ever not matter? Ironic that you use beauty to soothe that hurt, body. For it is beauty creating violence to body, the never-ending motor of your desire.

Mind

Can you live the life of the mind, shaming your body because of the fucked up ways desire has been socially constructed? Can you imagine the possibility of perfection? You body consume, but you mind, possesses. Knowledge... of information, of secure relationships, of possibilities, of perfection. Bodies never know perfection, bodies know degeneration and death. You mind, imagine perfection, creating perpetuities of possibilities. Minds think desire can be fulfilled. Bodies know better. You mind, controlling and binding, anxious to keep, to hold onto, to remember, to store away.

You mind, try to possess the beautiful, to

hold it/them down, to capture the perfect stillness of frozen time, through the perfection of your mediated gaze. The mind's eye. You hold the beautiful, picture perfect and still, never moving iconic on a pedestal. You want to remember, not forget. You create the illusions. Mind, you think you lack beauty because your knowledge tells of the violence and the terrible instability of body. You try to possess, to stabilize, to hold and reassure because of that • horrible knowledge. You mind, wish you could forget.

Trust

Paradoxes rife with contradictions, trusting body you do feel closeness. You might one day be able to trust. You lay and sigh, you know trust is a feeling not a thought. You body, trained not to trust, trained to fight or flight, your wish is the stillness of complete trust. The stillness of never moving, trusting, because you body, want to be cradled and at ease. Yet body, you must pursue ecstasy, you must move outside yourself as body. Orgasmic individuality, you body destroy trust.

Mind, you too might one day be able to trust. You add up the history, you grip and remember those times that body was cradled. You know reality is never perfect, you know form never matches content. But you mind, wonder if perfection is possible. Mind, you're trained to stop and consider, you press onward. You destroy trust. You tightly grip the secret personal ad, your glance strays, looking for perfection slipping out the corner of your eye. And the picture-perfect lock clicks closed the heart.

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Pornography and the

REPRESENTATIONS OF THE EROTIC: A RESPONSE TO LIBERTINAGEM

by Ferdinando P. Villa

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Pornography is tinder constant attack, not only by the censors of the Christian right but by the liberals as well, turning this art (yes, art) into something clandestine, shamefid, guileful, steal

ing all its libertarian aspects. The conservatives' argument is that pornography is dirty, an insult to good behavior; we assume we don't even need to counter this argument. The liberals' argument is that pornography is automatically sexist, degrading, and exploitative; this argument shows a great lack of knowledge, and, even if a little more hidden, this same disgusting morality seen on the Christian right. Yes, they're right in one ' point, mainstream pornography sucks, it is sexist, it is degrading; as such, we have no interest whatsoever in its use. In this same way, it is also true that mainstream music almost always sucks — hut basing ourselves solely on this argument we wouldn't assume that all music sucks, ignoring all its subversive potential and all DIY musical experimentation that doesn't find in profit, fame and propaganda its main objectives. Following the same logic, there is DIY porn based on the subversion of values, on the experimentation ofthe erotic, on the coherence of pleasure, as an art, made by women and men alike who found strength in breaking social taboos and exploring their desires without guilt. Between 1500 and 1800, the first erotic writers and painters were part of the so-called heretics, freethinkers, and libertines, who constituted the dark side of the Renaissance, the Scientific Revolution, the Enlightenment, the French Revolution, and used pornography to subvert political authorities and social relations. Centuries later, the modern libertines who see strength and self realization in sexuality are not so far from that. Sexuality and eroticism is one of the most perfect art forms, one of the only ones where we can give ourselves to the moment completely, one of the most beautifidforms of contact between two human beings, therefore destined to be some of the most beautifid artistic expression. To the moral watchdogs: attack the true reactionaries, explore your desires without guilt or limitations; it's a lot more fun and liberating.

This proposal of a radical use for pornography was presented by the Brazilian band/col- lective LlBERTINAGEM in their debut release. While the LlBERTINAGEM members surely had good intentions when they came forth with the piece above, and, more importantly, talked about eroticism (do I hear gigging [in] ^ back?) inside a sexist and heterosexual environment which is, underneath the rebellion catch phrases, very conservative and still unable to break away from the old

Christian/Judaic morals, still unable to liberate its sexuality, there are a few problems in their proposal and in the concept of pornography itself that need to be further addressed and discussed.

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The writing above seems to deal with pornography in a historical perspective, when they talk about the "heretics, freethinkers, and libertines, who constituted the dark side of the Renaissance, the Scientific Revolution, the Enlightenment, the French Revolution, " and, credit given where due, pornography (more specifically the murdered, burned and tortured who dared to experiment new and radical ways to enjoy life) deserves its place for bringing up the fact that people have fucked, like to fuck, and will always be fucking, regardless of who, where, or when. But back then things worked in quite a different way, the world was dominated by religious mysticism and a unitary

pre-determinism not a bit interested in the co-optation of desire. The kings and priests of the old world hadn't found out that people could be profitable. If plagues, famines, and horrendous wars wiped out their kingdoms, people could just be expendable — the right to consume hadn't reached everyone yet. That was before mercantilism and market laws spoke louder than God's voice, "it was before advertisement was born to convince every citizen of the need to consume a specific product for every feeling allowed to be felt (and for those not allowed as well: at every point in history there was always a black macket). This was before Penthouse, before the discovery of the feminine body as a marketing strategy for an audience of masculinized, dumbed-down men who spend way too much time drinking beer and watching football. It was before the societies of diffuse spectacles were born, before representation came to be more important than essence, before everything was reduced to appearances. The old priests and kings were more interested in the word of heaven, the unitary mode of existence centered around pre-determinism, than to divide up that share and sell a slice of the market to every good citizen. If it is so, could the same circumstances of before be applied today, when images of unhealthy bulimic women are being used to sell every imaginable product on earth, when sex shops make a fortune selling products specially designed to improve your life and sexual per

formance, " a world of Barbie dolls, phone sex, online pornography, anorexia, Monica Lewinsky, Jerry Springer? To base pornography's worth today in its merit centuries ago is like saying Jesus Christ was a revolutionary (he was a political prisoner after all, wasn't he?). It's undoubtedly important to have a historical perspective and to know the other history, the one they didn't teach us in school, about the men and women who found out that life was much more enjoyable if you just stop tormenting yourself with morals dictated by somebody else and start to have pleasure, about how we can learn a whole lot by looking at the way these people expressed this kind of terribly repressed sexuality — not to mention it can be just plain beautiful to look at. Bodies can be wonderful. But it's even more important to know how to bring this to the present — nothing is static, and to treat it as so makes it all the more dangerous. It can be very dangerous to talk about pornography in a time when sex became just another product, one more sector in the quantitative organization of our carefully constructed lives. It can be very dangerous to talk about erotic representations in a time when images have come to represent every sensation that was previously experienced by the individual himself.

By reading the LIBERTINAGEM writing, one can clearly point out that it was written exclusively through the eyes of an author, of a creator of the erotic art on trial (them being a band, it's not hard to see why), and not through the eyes of the individual experiencing it — this point of view was kept entirely out of the picture. The author of a piece of erotic art can have numerous reasons to create an image, a representation of his or her sexuality. Maybe she would like a visual sensation of a sexual fantasy that has been tormenting her for years. Maybe she sometimes likes to express her own sexuality in other ways besides sex — maybe this can work more

or less like an orgasm or sexual relation. It doesn't really matter why; human beings have always created images to express important happenings in their lives or in their imagination, and the sexual area of our minds is undoubtedly very fertile and worth being dug out. But in the process of creating an image and making it public, its author automatically creates a relationship to anyone experiencing this image, and .over what foundation are these relation-

ships formed?

What are our relations to images and erotic representations? Why do they excite us? How do we use them? These questions were left aside of the original writing, and although too complex to be answered by this pretentious sex addict, I intend to dwell a little deeper on these and other questions that might come up when dealing with pornography and the representations of the erotic.

Erotic images are mainly used to stimulate our imagination (some people have a rather — um, bizarre use for them, but that's another story). Having visual contact with these images, we can create whole fantasies and scenarios where we are the absolute masters of everything that happens. In fact, this is the image's greatest advantage, in a society that's based on non-communication (or mis-communication), images cannot talk back to us. Images consent to everything we demand and desire. Images do not disagree, impose barriers, or get headaches. In short, it's a perfect world, where we and our images can fuck in peace in the craziest of ways, and among these four walls there is absolutely nothing to stop us.

But there lies the bigger problem. The image becomes an entity in itself, disconnected from reality, a fetishized and unreal object. If, for example, you masturbate using an image of Pamela Anderson's incredibly fake tits, or even your girlfriend's (the subjects used here are masculine because men in general tend to use more images to fulfill their sexual fantasies; the reason it happens would generate enough discussion for a whole new writing, maybe next issue), you're NOT having a real, complex relationship with Pamela Anderson or with your girlfriend. You might be looking at them, thinking about them, but your relationship consists in a merely objectified relation to separate and unreal entities.

In the real world, would Pamela Anderson even pay attention to your existence, would your girlfriend agree to what you're thinking? Maybe not (in the first case, most definitely not), but these imaginary entities would. And when we reach the point where we're spending more time worshipping a TV model practically nonexistent in real life, when we spend more time using images as escape valves for our most intimate, secret and unfulfilled fantasies than we do trying to learn how to communicate with our partners, being in touch with real bodies and complex individuals, exploring every unknown territory of our lovers' bodies, trying to bring up and work out the mutual fulfillment of our desires and fantasies, something is deeply wrong here. It can be quite scary to see what pornography can do to people. A friend of mine who used to work in a video store tells me about a single lonely middle-aged man who every week returns six porno movies and rents six more, infallibly.

Try to imagine this man's life — you don't have to be a genius to guess that, if he is occupied with a porno video 6 nights a week, there's not much room left for real human interaction and sexual contact. The time and resources spent on pornography also don't give much room for activities that are intellectually stimulating and bodily exciting. And while this man can be sure that his sexual representations and blonde hooters will always be on the shelves of the video store every time he gets a hard on, chances are that his problems, fears, and sexual anxieties will only increase and trap him in this artificial hell as he sinks himself deeper and deeper in a sexual unidimensional world of black and white social interaction.

But, as LIBERTINAGEM suggests, this is how all mainstream pornography operates — and we have to fight its evil ways with some kind of revolutionary and D.I.Y. pornography. They are right on one point, this is how mainstream pornography, being part of a bigger whole of division, appearance, hierarchy and market rules, operates. The mainstream sex industry is just like any other corporation on the planet, it exists exclusively to make profit, no matter at which costs. And maybe there is a certain value in magazines such as Fat Girl that, as the name suggests, brings very daring erotic photos of naked fat lesbian women, bodies the beauty standards say should not be photographed naked, should not be acknowledged as sexual, let alone published — and that are anyway in this great publication, going against every unhealthy image of blue eyed, bulimic blondes. But doesn't it create another problem? Doesn't it just expand \ «ur choices of having an alienated relationship |to skinny women or fat women? Isn't this another aspect of the liberal thought that to be free means to have as many choices as possible? Isn't this why they fight to have Ralph Nader running for president, the "rights" of gays and women in the hierarchical institution of the armed forces — or D.I.Y. pornography?

Maybe this belief that is reinforced by LIBERTINAGEM, of some kind of conspiracy against pornography is making them stand up and defend this poor, lonely image cowardly attacked by all sides by liberals and conservatives alike, when maybe we should just leave pornography aside as part of the spectacle and look for some more fulfilling forms of eroticism. It's very easy to be caught up in this proporn stance because at first it might seem like some kind of pro-sex, pro-freedom fight, and who wouldn't want to support these causes? But maybe this pseudo-libertarian fight would just create an illusion of freedom — a temporary relief that we are a little more free as long as we have the "right" to produce atomized porno. But is this the freedom we want?

However, we have to consider: is pornography inherently harmful? LIBERTINAGEM manages to prove that the argument used by

liberal feminists that pornography is automatically sexist doesn't work anymore for us. A quick flip through the pages of a magazine like the mentioned Fat Girl would prove it to be anything but sexist and degrading. Bur LIBERTINAGEM's argument doesn't prove that pornography isn't inherently harmful because it always creates an objectified and unreal relationship. Liberating can turn into alienating just as easily. A

D.I.Y image is still an image, it still belongs to spectacular categories and objectified relations. So if images are inherently problematic, and if it is consensus that they will always exist in rhe specter of artistic expression, does this mean that certain spheres of life (such as sexuality) shouldn't mix themselves with images? Is it possible to- use images in any healthy way? If the image is used solely as a stimuli to the imagination, a stimuli to a desire lost inside of us to be then realized with real lovers, can we break the image's spectacular status?

In my opinion, images are inherently harmful *while images.* Which means that, while the object created continues to be a mere representation, an entity separated from reality, an escape valve for our forbidden desires, images contribute directly for non-communication and non-rcalization of life. The actual problem does not reside in the image per se, but in the society that created the need for such, images, and why they are needed. The spectacular relation of the image does not operate independently — it reflects the society which it belongs to. Therefore, if the system has created this artificial necessity of sexual representations and false relationships, the images we create and experience normally and without interference will correspond to this function. The whole problem is when a creation of our own escapes our control and becomes an independent entity, thus taking control of us and the way we experience the world. It's the old principle that the human being alienates itself when it becomes the attribute of an abstraction that it created itself, but no longer recognizes as such, becoming instead an entity in itself and turning the human being into its object — God, the State, or images.

[Image not archived]

When images start to construct our desires for us, to be the subject of our relations for us, when the definition of sexuality is determined by someone else for us?> it's time to take our lives back. And the only way we can achieve it

is to work our way towards a society that collaborates for the mutual fulfillment of our desires, not for their destruction; for the realization of life, nor its suppression; for some kind of cooperation that would still allow us to be individuals so we won't have to rely on images and representations to guide us to the sensations this world can offer us. Images should exist solely to be deconstructed, dismantled, transformed, used according to rhe reality of each individual (if desired). The only acceptable image has to be shareable, imaginable, expandable, accessible, free. Only when we abolish this system of market rules and hierarchical power will an image (or anything else, for that matter) cease to be a product, a commodity, and become free to become an active participant in the fusion of art, sexuality, and life into one. I think by now it has become obvious that this system does little for our happiness, that any image created will correspond to its alienating function, so what are we waiting for? Me and LIBERTINAGEM are not in opposite sides — I still believe sexual art has place in life, that when we find life we will also find control to give enough wings to our deepest desires and their realizations. I don't want my erotic stories to be someone's fetish, someone's escape valve, because they could never do what I write about in real life.

They are way too important to be commodified so easily. I want them to be weapons, words inflamed with passion and desire ready to explode. But first, we have to create conditions for our sexuality to flow freely, beyond any constraints, free of alienation, co-opration, or exchange value. To think what could happen if we could live our sexuality however way we wanted, whenever and wherever we wanted, it gives me more than enough reason to risk everything in the name of the extreme sensuality of being truly free. Therefore, lovers, paint, roll over paint with your naked bodies, make love over the Mona Lisa, write, let the pen be guided by your most intense orgasms. There is no image in the world, no representation, no matter how real or how virtual it is, that beats the smell of a lover's body, bodies rubbing, hands slipping through curves and cavities, lips touching, tongues sliding, sounds of pleasure being exchanged. If we can work our way through some kind- of life that attracts us, perhaps we can also work our way towards some kind of anti-image,

[Image not archived]

that reduces images to their base form — useless, dispensable. Like witnesses to a terrorist action, they are only useful while they can spread the myth. Afterwards, their existence is pointless.

It is said that Henry Miller wrote with his penis. Did you know that when he died nothing was found between his legs but a fountain pen?

*contact: through Libertinagem address (see reviews section) , *

Capoeira, The Deadly Dance

by Robin Banks

My first exposure to capoeira (pronounced ka-po-AIR-uh) was in the martial arts video game Tekken. There was £ character in the game called Eddy Gordo whose style seemed a bit like breakdancing, a bit like kung fu, and a bit like acrobatic tumbling. When I finally found out that Eddy Gordo's fighting style was called "capoeira, " I knew that I had to find out more about it. Here's what I learned.

The History

Capoeira was developed hundreds of years ago by renegade African slaves in Brazil, who were influenced by ancient African martial arts such as sanga. They had been captured and enslaved by Portuguese imperialists, who then sold them to Portuguese settlers in Brazil. Some of the slaves escaped into the mountains which surrounded the Portuguese plantations, and it was there that they honed the craft of capoeira. The escapees would then sneak back to the plantations and teach capoeira to the other slaves.

This is the main reason why so much of capoeira seems like elaborate dancing and ritual — any martial art practiced by slaves was a threat to the slaveowners, and so the slaves concealed their skills within graceful dances, music, and chants. Eventually the slavemasters caught on, and any slave found practicing capoeira could be put to death. However, the slaves continued to practice in secret and passed their skills to their children.

In 1888, the Brazilian government abolished slavery; four years later, it criminalized capoeira. Due to economic hardship and racial discrimination against the former slaves, jobs were scarce, and as a result many capoeira gangs sprang up. These gangs, known as mal-

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do the capoeiristas pull their punches or kicks when fighting cops? Do they spend time doing flashy tumbles and cartwheels, or does capoeira become more focused and brutal when your life is at stake?

I'd like to read more about the lives of early slave capoeiristas as well as the early mestres such as Mestre Besouro, who was notorious for fighting cops and escaping capture and death. If anybody finds some decent books on capoeira, please write and let me know (robinbanks@disinfo.net).

The Scene

Why is this article in Inside Front? What does capoeira have to do with hardcore punk? Think of the parallels — a group of people form a circle with, musicians at one end. Dancing fighters (or fighting dancers) leap into the center of the circle, coming quite close to physical contact but always just barely missing. When the dancers do inadvertently strike other dancers or bystanders, they are considered clumsy buffoons, and the best ..dancers are those who display great skill and form without actually injuring anyone. Sounds like a hardcore show, doesn't it?

The very idea of a deadly martial art concealed within an aesthetic medium like dancing is fascinating. It's a great metaphor, too... what deadly ideas are contained within the aesthetic ghetto of hardcore punk, and how can we apply those ideas to our daily lives? Capoeiristas may learn their skills in capoeira classes with ritualized music and singing, but in the streets they retain their deadly kicks, acrobatic grace, and self-confidence bestowed by capoeira. What lessons do we take from our own rituals of song and dance? Is hardcore punk just another aesthetic commodity and subcultural ritual like country music and line dancing, or is there something greater contained within, something we can apply to our daily lives in valuable ways?

Fela anikulapo Kuti:
This is How It's Done
by Robin Banks Monsanto-manufactured
duplicate, Robin Banks
From Africa to America to the
Kalakuta Republic

> Fela Ransome-Kuti was born in Nigeria in 1938, son of a Protestant minister and a teacher. His upbringing was typical of the Nigerian middle class —

> as "good Christians" and good citizens, they strove to fit into the power structure imposed by white imperialists. When he was twenty, his parents sent him to London to study medicine, but Fela instead studied at the Trinity School of Music for five years. He formed a few bands which played a style of music known as "high-life, " a sort of

light, danceable African pop. Fela blended high-life with jazz to form his own unique sound.

Nigeria was liberated from British colonialism in 1960. Three years later, Fela returned to Nigeria and formed a new band, Koola Lobitos, with several other Nigerians who had studied music in England. At this point Fela was not at all politically conscious; he was slowly becoming a successful musician who wrote popular love songs, and his idea of fulfillment was to be a wealthy pop idol.

In 1969 Fela decided to take Koola Lobitos to the United States for an extended tour, where he changed the name of his band to Fela Ransome-Kuti and Nigeria 70. While in Los Angeles he met a Black Panther, Sandra Isodore, who opened Fela's mind to the politics of Malcolm X, the Panthers, and other black radicals. They stayed up late, engaged in a passionate argument about radicalism and Pan-Africanism (the idea that all black people are Africans, as opposed to Nigerians, Gh'anians, Egyptians, Jamaicans, or African- Americans; an idea espoused by many reggae artists including Bob Marley and many hip hop artists including Dead Prez).

By morning, a seed had been planted in Fela. Sandra loaned him several books which he read and re-read avidly as his United States tour concluded. When Fela returned to Nigeria he was a completely different person. The band changed its name again, from Nigeria 70 to Africa 70, reflecting Fela's new Pan-Africanist beliefs. Fela also changed the name of his nightclub to The Shrine, where in addition to performing his new conscious music he would also give lectures on radical politics and Pan-Africanism.

Fela had dubbed his estate the "Kalakuta Republic" as a sort of joke, but by the early 1970s it became very serious. He declared the Kalakuta Republic's independence from Nigeria and many of his fans (who lived in the same neighborhood!) followed suit and joined the Republic.. The upper crust of Nigerian society (consisting of white businessmen and their Nigerian allies) began to consider Fela Kup a threat. *

Against the State

Fela changed his name to Fela Anikulapo, which means "he who carries death in his pouch." From this point on, nearly all of Fela's songs were politically charged. Some were sarcastic or humorous jabs at government or police and some were direct attacks on specific officials or policies. He developed a new style of music which became known as Afrobeat, a combination of traditional chants, trumpets, piano, and drums, all blended smoothly in free-form jazzy jams. One of Fela's songs would take up both sides of a long-playing record; the first side was an instrumental build-up, and the second side

featured his vocals. Fela also considered the recording of a song to be its obituary, and after a recording session he would rarely if ever play that song in concert. Because of this, Fela's new style never found much success in the United States, where audiences wanted recognizable three-minute pop hits, not thirtyminute improvised jam sessions.

In Nigeria, however, Fela's music was an enormous success. He was more popular than ever, but instead of accumulating his wealth and cultivating an image as a playboy-musician, he used his money to develop the Kalakuta Republic (for example, he built a hospital on his land and opened it up to the people!) and hire more musicians. The name Africa 70 now meant the number of musicians, singers and other performers on stage during Fela's concerts.

Fela was repeatedly beaten, arrested and interrogated by government officials. The attacks increased as Fela and his ideas became more popular. As Osofisan says in his brief biography of Fela, "In Nigeria, power has always been, since Independence at least, in the hands of a certain elite, made up of men who got their wealth through being the local agents of white companies. Fela's message, that we should stop serving the whites, that we should develop our own black resources instead, was a direct threat to this ruling class. His message, that we should turn away from the colonial religions, because they had been and were still the instruments of enslaving our minds, turned the numerous Christians and Muslims against him."

The End of the Kalakuta Republic

[Image not archived]

A crucial event occurred in 1977: a thousand government soldiers attacked the Kalakuta Republic and burned it (along with the hospital, the Shrine, and many other facilities). During the attack, all of Fela's musicians, supporters and allies in the Republic were severely beaten and many were arrested. Fela's mother, by now a radical Pan-Africanist feminist in her own right, was thrown out of a window by soldiers and ended up dying from her injuries. Fela and his supporters later put his mother's coffin in a bus, drove the bus into a military compound (crashing through the gates, avoiding machine-gun fire from the guards), and laid the coffin at the front door of the Nigerian general responsible for the

attack.

Fela and his people moved to Accra in Ghana to escape Nigerian repression and to plan a world tour in response to the government attack. On the first date of the tour, which was one year after the destruction of the Kalakuta Republic, Fela performed in a packed stadium in Accra. The first song he played was "Zombie, " his satire of Nigerian soldiers, and fighting broke out between his fans and police in the stadium. The fighting turned into a massive riot. Fela and his band were arrested and sent back to Nigeria after being permanently banned from Ghana.

Upon arrival in Nigeria, Fela and his group began squatting in the offices of his record label, Decca, for two months. Then Fela moved to Ikeja and formed his own political party, Movement Of the People, which was almost immediately banned by the government. Fela tried for years to build Movement Of the People and get elected but

was continually thwarted by the government through legal means and through violent police repression. A succession of military coups crushed any hope for democratic elections, and so Fela gave up on his campaigns for office.

In 1984 Fela , was imprisoned on false charges and served twenty months. He was released when the judge revealed that he had jailed Fela solely because of political pressure from the top down. When Fela got out he formed a new band, Egypt 80, and began touring the world. His politics were as radical, passionate and powerful as ever, and his repeated world tours helped spread the popularity of Afrobeat and Pan-Africanism. He ruthlessly criticized colonialism, imperialism, and United States/ European policy towards Africa. One of his biggest hits at this time was "Beasts Of No Nation, " a song about Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan (which wasn't actually released on LP until 1989).

Fela continued agitating against Nigerian government regimes and foreign colonialist powers until his untimely death from AIDS- related causes in 1997. His funeral drew over one million mourners, many of whom believed that Fela was actually murdered. Fela's son, Femi Kuti, is also a musician and activist. Femi founded an organization called Movement Against Second Slavery (MASS) which is not a political party but rather a

direct action group which works against corrupt government and corporate interests.

I was introduced to Fela Kuti's music and legend by the band Bread and Circuits, who include samples of Felas music on their Ebullition CD and explained a bit about him in their liner notes. The first Fela Kuti CD I got was "Coffin for Head of State" which is about the government attack on the Kalakuta Republic and the murder of his mother. The other song on the CD is "Unknown Soldier, " which refers to the government report on the destruction of the Kalakuta Republic. The report attributed the illegal attack to "unknown soldiers." Felas response is to sing of revenge: "Unknown police/they kill nine students/we get unknown civilians/they kill two soldiers."

Fela's family is re-releasing his LPs as CDs. Most of the CDs have only two songs on them, each song being around fifteen to forty minutes each. I recommend "Coffin for Head of State/Unknown Soldier, " "Let's Start" and "Black Man's Cry."

Sidebar / Footnote:

What can we learn from Fela Kuti? He was wildly popular and revolutionary at the same time — is this possible in our country, in our culture? Personally I'm not sure, though I lean sharply towards saying "no, " simply because our consumerist/capitalist culture has an amazing capacity for absorbing, defanging and repackaging everything imaginable, including hostile attacks on the culture itself. An American Fela Kuti (can you think of any candidates for this title?) would have to be on a major label, tour constantly, release songs instantly to cope with the here-today-gone tomorrow nature of American politics, struggle daily to resist commodification, avoid bullshit legal harassment (trumped-up drug or tax charges, for example), and also build a real political movement, not just sing about discontent and revolution.

[Image not archived]

I think it's also important to realize that Fela did not spring from his mother's womb as a mature musical genius and political radical, but to recognize that he (like all of us) went through several phases of growth. It wasn't a spontaneous bolt of lightning that caused Fela to become a radical; it was a single late-night conversation with a new friend who encouraged him to read a few books. All radicals

should learn something from this — talking with friends or acquaintances can completely change their perspectives, not just on politics but on their daily lives. Do you write off nonradicals? Then you're making a huge mistake. Talk to people — friends, family, strangers — share your ideas and analyses with them. Don't be an elitist asshole either by not listening at all or by talking only in haughty, inaccessible, academic language — dont use radical code words like bourgeoisie, class war, syndicalism, imperialism, etc. — in fact, don't use any "ism" words at all! Please, fly out into the world and set a dozen hearts on fire. Maybe you will befriend and inspire the next Fela Kuti. You never know until you try.

Death: Fun for Everyone
or Just a Pain in the Ass?

by G reg Ben nick

I want you to imagine the character "Pig Pen" from the Peanuts comic strip by the late cartoonist Charles Schultz. Foreign readers unfamiliar with the strip would do well to imagine a dirty young boy surrounded wherever he went by a three-foot diameter cloud of dust. Do you have the visual in mind? Excellent. Now, for our purposes tonight, replace the dust that surrounded Pigpen in the comic strip with the odor coming from my body in real life, in this moment, as I type these words. As I always aim to provide the reader with the most exacting sensual experience possible, please allow me to describe the odor for you: it is a blend of cigarette and marijuana smoke, human sweat, a touch of beer, and some other unidentifiable tidbits thrown in as well. "But Greg, " you might ask, "Why, if you are of the committed drugfree variety, would you be smelling of the long-forsaken weed or beer?" The answer, dear reader, is because I attended tonight the event of the decade thus far...the single greatest night of Dionysian bliss one could ever hope to find in this new millenium...the one thing which could pull me out of my recent state of existential dread (to be explained later) and into the direct heart of life itself. Yes, you guessed it: tonight I went to see Iron Maiden play at the Tacoma Dome.

I find it difficult to describe in words just how much I love Iron Maiden. 1 here is no other band in the world which embodies the creativity, innovation, ridiculous premises, and sheer metalness contained in these six (yes, count them, six!) British lunatics (The current tour features all three guitarists from their last few years together onstage with bassist Steve Harris, frontman Bruce "Tattooed Millionaire" Dickinson, and drummer/ psycho Nicko McBrain for a total of six Maidens for your simultaneous viewing and listening pleasure). They had it all, from fire and explosions to feet up on the monitors for guitar solos, to lights and moving sets...whew! "But Greg, ' you ask, "What was the show itself like? Would you tell us, in the CrimethInc tradition, of what the experience

FELT like, what PASSIONS were aroused in you as you stood within that. Temple of Metal?" Well, it was like being thrown back to 1985: a sea of long haired white guys in various KISS, Motley Crue, and Metallica shirts talking loudly about how they were ready to rock, dude. On the "way in, I mentioned to my friends that the difference in the crowd now as opposed to '85 is that many of them probably held stock options for dot com companies and were simply posing for the evening as metalheads. Rather quickly however, as we drifted through a sea of humanity beyond description — filled with interlocking devil horned handshakes and cigarette lighters ready to punctuate the ballad filled darkness of the arena — it became obvious that at least some of the people there were the real deal: the true metal maniacs of yesteryear, the Bill's and Ted's of a bygone day. I wondered where these people had been for the last decade or so. I realized that though I'd seen them from time to time around Seattle, I'd just not had the chance to observe them in their natural habitat or in as concentrated a space as I was able to observe that night. The most frightening thing I saw by far was a metalhead of about 35 or 40 years of age standing WITH HIS SEVEN YEAR OLD SON, both wearing matching Queensryche t-shirts and jeans. "My god, I thought, "They breed." This was a terrifying thought, and it was one that had not occurred to me in 1985: that metalheads actually produce offspring. It is for the best that this was a new thought. Had it crossed my impressionable teenage mind during the 1980's, it would undoubtedly have sent me into a state of panic comparable only to Nostradamus or the National Enquirer in terms of an apocalyptic vision of what the world might in fact become.

As for the band themselves? Six fortysomethings wearing jeans and white high top shoes with three of the six in Iron Maiden t-shirts, bless their little hearts.

Bruce Dickinson was amazing on vocals, sounding even better than the records...HE should be giving lessons to all of us hoarse hardcore singers. Rumor has it that Bruce is a world class fencer in his spare time. Can* anyone confirm this? I was ready for the show. About three years ago, ar a Trial show at Gilman in Berkeley, a guy came up to me with a gift. It was a set of cassette tapes he had made for me featuring every song, outtake, and B-side Iron Maiden had ever recorded. That guy, wherever he is right now, is proof to me that Nietzsche was wrong: Good and evil *do* exist: GQOD=that guy, and EVIL=anything which harms worries or concerns him until rhe end of his days. He should be knighted, bronzed, canonized, or all three.

I left rhe show feeling very alive...in fact tingling with life...or was that the effects of residual pot smoke? (Perhaps I should quantify/clarify my self-proclaimed straight edge title with something more specific and accurate: "straight edge except when receiving second hand bong hits from meralheads"). Arriving home to my beloved Cynthia, I could not begin to express my joy. After all, how would someone who went through a finite metal "phase" (metal is forever, my love) listening to Kix and Extreme EVER understand what it was like ro kickbox in the center of a pit of metaloids during "The Trooper ? Forget it. I can only hope that she and I continue to connect on other levels, since metal, in all of its splendor and glory, seems to be out of the picture for her.

"But Greg, " I hear you ask, "What is this column really about? Surely you can't expect to retain our ex-worker collective attention for even one more paragraph if all you keep typing about is middle aged metalheads, one of which you yourself are quickly becoming?" Ah true, my friends, and so I refer you to rhe title of this column. I had spent quire sometime trying ro decide what ro write about, given rhe intensity of the last column and the implications of rhe previous ones. The problem is that I live in a state of writers block. I do nor find "writer's block" ro be an occasional occurrence which inhibits my process of purring words on paper. Rather, I live in that state, constantly unable to write, and rhe rare "writer's unblock" is what actually frees me ro pour ideas onto rhe pages of zines worldwide. With that, I offer you rhe following:

"The idea of death, rhe fear of it, haunts rhe human animal like nothing else, it is a mainspring of human activity — activity designed largely ro avoid the fatality of death, to overcome it by denying in some way that it is the final destiny for man." -Ernest Becker.

I have been obsessed with death recently.

In a way, perhaps "obsessed" is not the right word as I have not been only able ro think thoughts of death and dying. Rather, it would be more accurate to say that many of my actions are influenced by the foreboding feeling that my eventual death is a reality, and inescapable ar that. I suddenly *feel* rime, rather than just experiencing it at a distance. I was walking recently with a college professor friend of mine who just turned 50. I told him that I often worry that I am not living fully enough, that I am afraid to die, and that I need ro come to terms with death in a more comprehensive way somehow in order ro feel alive again. He stopped walking, turned to me and yelled with a smile, "What is wrong with you, man? You are having a fucking midlife crisis ar age 29! You are 20 years too early!" Good advice, and I guess that is what friends are for, but it didn't heal me completely by any means.

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The quote above is by Ernest Becker. Becker wrote a book called *The Denial of Death*, which I would ask you ro remember 'f y°u remember nothing else from this column. Find the book and read it from cover ro cover and let me know what you think. Keep in mind that Becker was a student of Freud early on, and his descriptions of Freud's ideas in Chapter 3 should be pushed aside a bit in favor of focusing on rhe book's central theme. Freud was a sexist jerk; Becker a genius who went far past Freud in terms of overall vision. Becker explained that rhe world is terrifying, with rhe cause of rhe terror being death itself and our fear of it. He said that the basic motivation for our behavior is our biological need to control our fear of death, which he saw as rhe primary anxiety facing us in our lives. This is an anxiety that Becker argued we attempt ro keep unconscious because it is so overwhelming. He suggested that we attempt ro overcome death by constantly involving ourselves in a social hero system which makes us believe that we will actually transcend death by participating in something of lasting worth. Becker called this rhe *causa sui* (cause of rhe self). Ultimately, in his second book, Becker described rhe social implications of this "immortality striving" and its

effects on society. He argued that our attempts to destroy terror and ugliness through involving ourselves with projects

seen as the highest good ultimately had rhe paradoxical effect of bringing more ugliness and terror into the world. We would trample and destroy all of those around us in our attempts ro transcend this existence.

The implications of Becker are overwhelming. If we are motivated constantly by rhe fear of death, and if we deal with that by involving ourselves with projects that we hope will insure our immortality, then what is that to say about such seemingly basic tasks as writing this column? Couldn't it be argued that rhe reason I have pursued this task so consistently, worrying when I could- nt decide what ro write, was because psychologically my entire existence depended on the outcome of rhe challenge? And I am not joking. What if the psychological implications of nor completing this column on rime were that I would be cast aside and nor remembered by future generations of people on this earth because I had failed ro provide rhe world with something lasting? Becker suggests that art is a result of that immortality striving. He would suggest that a root cause of creation by rhe human animal is ro craft life into a tangible form which will outlast the body, which of course, is finite.

Becker suggested that we are in continual competition with one another as well through our immortality projects. He suggested that what we fear is being left behind while another attains the transcendent, and as a result, we do whatever we can to insure that we are the one who survives, who wins, controls, and dominates. Again rhe implications here are astounding. What does this say about all those who flip people off while driving (he/she who gets there faster or more efficiently wins rhe race), or succeed in business (he/she who makes rhe most money wins rhe race), or for that matter — and in order to stay focused here — those who kickbox during "The Trooper" ar Iron Maiden concerts (he/she who clears the most space on the floor and frightens the metalheads wins rhe race)?

Ultimately, the effect of thinking this way can be restrictive. Reading Becker put me into rhe aforementioned stare of existential dread, where I worried about death and thought about it clearly for rhe first time. Or rather, for rhe first rime in my conscious mind. I found myself concerned with what

I perceive as a societal lack of acceptance of death, an ignorance of it so to speak, and an unwillingness to contemplate or face it on any widespread scale other than for its shock value in the media. There is a distancing which happens in media representations of death. The images we see play on our fear of death and our wonder about it, but do not directly address the issue. We all suffer as a result. The restrictive element enters when we consider the implications of Becker's thought: if I am motivated by a fear of death, and if my actions are inspired by a psychology far deeper than I can readily perceive, then what is the reason behind even getting up in the morning? Why would I engage in activities throughout the day no that I know that everything is a defense mechanism against my fear of death? Ah *mes amis, * before you let yourself get roped into this mode of thought and end up laying face down on your sofas across the world*

crying in paranoia and pessimism, let me offer a few thoughts. Understanding and appreciating Becker and fully integrating what he has to say is entirely a matter of putting him into perspective. This is where the greatest challenge lies. Now that we are aware of death and our fear of it and what that fear implies, the question becomes: how will we deal with this information? My process has not become one of identifying EVERY example of death-anxiety-driven- action in my life and negating it: that would literally be impossible, as EVERY action is *driven by death anxiety. (Wait! Don't run to the sofa yet...there is still hope!) Instead, the answer is to be found in balancing out my fear with a sense of wonder at the process of life itself. The process involves making myself aware of every moment of life and of fully experiencing it, and more importantly of crafting my life and the moments within it into art itself, and then offering that art to the world at large for them to experience, enjoy, discard, or embrace. The act of creation and of experience is what we have in this world, and learning to fully understand that* in the context of our imminent death *is what I now feel to be the task at hand for me, and hopefully for the people around me.*

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Wow, sounds like a party! Hey everyone, come on over to Greg's house! Let's contemplate death, pain, and suffering! Yay!

Hooray! Yippee! (...there are the sounds of noisemakers and party favors in the background...children singing in chorus... rainbows in the sky...a cake in the shape of a decaying corpse...etc...). Sorry, must be the residuals from the show tonight.

Anyway...this actually brings me to the next section of my little treatise on demise. What do we do with the information Becker has offered us? Your faithful editor and I were recently discussing life, love, and van break-downs, and in the midst of that I said to him "Do you know what I would be doing with my life right now if I could do anything at all? I don't even think that I would be juggling. I would be spending my every waking hour preparing for my own death." Joy, bliss, death! Really though, I think that something is missing from my life, and that is a greater comprehension of death and a preparation for it. Socrates, from my understanding, advised people to practice dying. Becker agreed. As I am not an anthropologist, I know little about what other cultures have done or are doing in terms of role playing their deaths. (Any insight would be appreciated folks!) I think that establishing a means of communicating about death would be a first step to a new broad based social psychology. Admitting that we are afraid, and examining our projects as extensions of our fear would be a good first step. Sharing information openly about custom and death ceremony would be a good second step. I might go so far as to suggest role playing, or even reinstating ritual into our lives, the symbolism of which would bring us psychologically more in line with death itself.

Recently, Bill Moyers did a four-nightlong special on death and dying on PBS. From what Cynthia said, the shows were very intense, and well needed. I taped them but was only able to watch the first few minutes of one night's broadcast. I saw something striking in those few minutes. Before the show began, a man came onscreen and told

viewers that if they were troubled by what they were about to watch, that there was a number offered which people could call to discuss their feelings. While this foresight (and the series itself) is to be applauded, I was struck with how limiting the offer really was and how it clearly

represented a troubling aspect of our culture. The offer was not a suggestion to create local support groups, or an idea to share thoughts with friends, neighbors and family. It was an offer to solve the problem, so to speak, through a phone call. What are the implications of this? It was yet another example of people hiding behind technology, social construct, or character in order to solve problems that they have been taught not to admit to those around them. Becker might suggest that this tendency stems from a desire to not appear weaker than anyone and thus continue to maintain an appearance as a formidable opponent for immortality conflict. I wondered about the people who would call in, and actually should have called myself. I wondered if they would be linked directly to a person who would become their confidante for a number of follow-up calls as well, and maybe offer to meet in person to really establish some connections and valuable human interaction on the matter. Doubt it. But this is what we need.

-We need to meet eye to eye and face to face and admit that we are scared. We need to start thinking about the personal construct of'character' and what it represents, and the group construct of'society' and what it represents in terms of death. I would suggest that both are distancing tools. We need to explore or examine death and its implications on our lives. At least I think that I need to. Anyone else interested?

Out soon: a new issue of a great zine called No Longer Blind from Australia, which will include columns and articles by a number of good people about intensive personal politics. The writings will be much like what I have been writing about in the last few Inside Front columns (email nxlxb@yahoo.com for more information on contributing or getting your hands on a copy). Also upcoming: I am always on the lookout for people to help raise money through benefit shows or any other means for the Western Shoshone Defense Project. Contact me for more information at xjugglerx@yahoo.com and check out `http://www.alphacdc.com/wsdp/`.

> Well, it is now time to shower ten pounds of Iron Maiden residue from my body and go to bed. Write me anytime about anything from any of my Inside Front columns, and thanks for reading. This column was written under the influence of the new In Flames album *" Clayman"* which is more metal than your grandma's soup kettle. Check it out (The *album* that is. Leave your grandma and her kettle alone.)
>
> Talk with you again sometime soon my friends.

All Brute and No Force *is continued on page 137*
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In our society (punk included) music is often mediated several degrees from its 'immediate' creation. For example, at a rock show, there is a degree of mediation that is physical, the sound vibrations are transmitted through amplifiers. But there are other, even greater mediations, like the roles we're supposed to play at a show. On stage (usually literally above everyone else) there are the 'musicians', the creative specialists. The musicians are supposed to fulfill this role ~ they are supposed to be well dressed, witty, talented, and are even expected to have answers to all our questions. Down below is the 'audience', who in affect are supposed to worship these specialists. This audience is generally passive, though a few swaying motions are permitted back and forth in the dark. This hierarchy between 'musician' (creative specialist) and 'fan' (passive consumer of said creativity) acts as a form of mediation. So, you and three of your friends sitting around playing acoustic guitars together on the sofa is a less mediated musical activity than you watching a rock band with six hundred strangers in some club. I'm assuming here that the less mediated the creative process (the less alienation), the better.

IF: I saw you play two weeks ago at the Cradle here in Chapel Hill at the Daemon/Mr. Lady Records Showcase and it clarified for me quite a bit what I like so much about seeing The. Butchies play. During your set, when Amy Ray (of the Indigo Girls, who was on tour promoting her record label, Daemon) came up to play with you. a contrast became clear to me: What Amy was doing was Rocking, with a capital "R." She has been around rock n' roll for a long time, and it's obvious she's an expert. However, to me it seemed that a few minutes before, the Butchies had been attempting something different — Yes, you had been rocking, but with a crucial difference — Namely that a distinct humor was involved. It was with that humor that to me it seemed that you were playing around with that role of the Rock Star (the kicks, the Rock Faces, etc.) and thus exposing it for what it is — A role. I believe that, this sort of play has the potential to subvert that role (by exposing it and it's alienated nature, and then by refusing to take it seriously) and consequently subvert the hierarchy of Rock Star/Audience. I think the Butchies achieve this, at least during certain moments in the show. I believe that this subversion allows myself and others to connect to you — you know, as three human beings being passionate and creative, instead of just seeing another rock band.

I'm interested to know, insofar as you agree with me, what tactics in addition to humor have allowed the Butchies to have that "im-mediate" emotional connection — Which ones have worked? Which haven't? What do you consider the largest object in the way of this emotional connection? Why is this connection important to you? What are some personal examples of when this "emotional music connection" has been most immediate, either as musicians or audience? •

M: Well, humor always works for me. You gotta be able to laugh at yourself. Try not to take yourself so seriously. I feel that's what the Butchies do. We remember that we are performing for people who wanna see us... so why not put on a good interactive fun show? I don't think I can act like nobody is out there watching me. I gotta be like "Hi, how are ya?" "How's the family?" Be friends. I guess it doesn't work if no-one wants to be involved. They don't want to participate. A voyeur. I really try not to let it get to me. I don't want to force anyone to do anything. If that's how they are feeling or if that's

how they want to interact, that's fine. Be yourself. No pressure. One of my favorite shows we did was at Santa Cruz. Before we played there was an open mic. So people who came to see the show could "perform" as well. We saw some great performances. I felt really connected to the audience. Like it was some warped family reunion. I definitely want to do that again. Maybe a Butchies tour with no opening act just open mic... hmmm...

A: I don't know about "tactics". That sounds a little fake. We are ourselves on stage, which is funny, honest, open. I think it's important to pay attention to the crowd. We are watching and get inspired by our fans. When the crowd is not willing to be open with us, that's probably our largest obstacle. We don't get up there to entertain ourselves...playing wouldn't be as much fun if it wasn't for the fans, so when we connect, everyone is happy. My favorite show was probably in Bismarck, ND because the kids were so excited and open that we got really energized. They never get those kinds of spaces where they can be themselves, so it's really important for us to play there.

IF: It's been clear to me at every Butchies show I've been to that you have created a successful Queer Positive atmosphere. I often feel totally alienated at punk and hardcore shows, not necessarily because they're not queer positive (unfortunately very few are), but they often don't offer *any* kind of positive space. Usually I feel that social rules are even more strict than elsewhere, you can't dance, or you can only dance a certain way, you can only talk about certain political topics or not talk at all, and on and on. If your not crossing your arms with an emotional-less expression on your face you are some kind of freak! Or so it seems. That's why I've found the Queer Positive spaces at your shows so appealing — that space allows you that breathing room to be yourself, at least to a significant degree more than when you're walking down the street. Additionally, I don't think in any way is a Queer Positive space alienating to straight people. It obviously, at least at your shows, includes almost everybody. We all feel queer, even if isn't necessarily is about our sexuality, and I'll assume that's why most of us came to punk rock — to have that space where we can be comfortable being queer, freakish — to support others who feel alienated from the "mainstream." But we also come together to create a new world, where we

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And even if we are creating our "micro-capitalist economy (which we are to a greater extent than in years past), where all the money is in queer hands, or punk hands, or

whatever, aren't we still just selling one another *products?* I want music (and ideas, and all art) to be more .than just a commodity, and though we can transcend this sometimes at shows and through sheer imagination with our record players, I'd like to think that there's another way. *Pure music — emotion heart.* I've seen this a few time in action, but only a few. Do the Butchies see a way out from here?

M: You totally hit the nail on the head... this is a very complex issue. I think of the queer kid in Anytown, USA who doesn't have access to queer music. They have no support group at all. Until one day he/she picks up a copy of SPIN. Sees some review of a queer act and thinks to him/herself... wow, that's me. I'm queer! Then he/she picks up the CD of such band. Finally a support group! The doors have opened. How can I say that that is so awful? Is it?

A: Sure it's weird to see companies marketing things to us, and making us another demographic. However, at least they are acknowledging our presence. The capitalist system is a good indicator of the wider community. In order to get our message out, it's necessary to be accessible, and if doing that is buying into the scheme, then I guess we do. The most important thing to remember is that ultimately we have control over our community, and we can suppress being commodified. In order to transcend the microcapitalist economy through out record players, aren't we buying into it? It's difficult at best for people to receive information unless it is disseminated. Product costs money, be it from the consumer or from advertising dollars. I see no way out of this.

IF: In your liner notes to the more recent Butchies album Cara Hyde writes, "...Every time we write a [queer] love song, every time we take control of our own lives and our own potential — every time we kiss — it is a revolution!" Beyond being a word used to sell us cars, what does the word revolution mean to you in your day-to-day lives?

M: Holding hands with my girlfriend at the grocery store. Not being afraid to be myself. Trying to challenge myself and others to not be racist, ciassist, xenophobic, homophobic. That s revolution.

A: In my life, revolution means rotation, as in "the car tire went one revolution". Seriously though, by being ourselves and being open, we are revolutionary.

To get in touch with the Butchies contact them at the record label (which one of the Butchies co-owns) Mr. Lady Records, PO Box 3189, Durham, NC 27715–3189 or send an electronic message to: mrlady@mindspring.com (www.mrladyrecords.com).

In this interview the Butchies were:
Alison, who strums the Bass guitar and sings.

Melissa, who pounds drums and is responsible for between song banter.
Bruce, who asks leading questions and dances in the back.

Kaia, who plays Guitar and croons — Kaia didn't get to respond, but we forgive her.

[Image not archived]

It's been a year since the events during the Seattle meeting of the World Trade Organization suddenly made demonstration activism seem like an effective way to make things happen. There have been a lot of other attempts to shut down meetings in the months since then, most of them not as successful. The honeymoon is over. In recent months we have learned that just showing up and blocking intersections is not going to recreate what happened in Seattle. The police are ready for us now, they know our strategies, they have our planning meetings bugged, they have a media blackout arranged so no one will even hear about our attempts. It's time to decide whether we want to abandon the demonstration approach for another thirty years, or find new ways to (re)vitalize future demonstrations. When you're creating through the. medium of revolution, you have to always keep ahead of inertia (especially when that inertia is represented by the F.B.I.!). What follows won't be a comprehensive guide (that's impossible!) or even a thorough introduction (which would be indispensable!), but I hope it can remind others to think these issues through themselves.

Before we get into this, let's go over why participating in these big demonstrations can be worthwhile in the first place. A lot of the people who deliberately choose not to go to demonstrations argue that the events in question do not represent their particular "issues" — or favored methods. For example, my friend in Germany stayed home from the Prague demonstration because he thought the protesters wouldn't do a good job of communicating with the local civilians. This boycott of a demonstration rests on the assumption that a demonstration is one mass event with a single mission or platform. Instead of staying home, my friend should have gone to Prague and worked to create the pieces that he saw as

missing. After all, demonstrations are going to happen whether we go or not. Boycotting may be valuable in the case of hopelessly petrified institutions like K-Mart or the vote. Demonstrations, on the other hand, are not institutions, they are a forum. As such they have the power to be fresh with each materialization. The anarchists who made Seattle so important didn't stay home because the Revolutionary Communist Party was involved. Instead they came and, D.I.Y., threw their own party, with a lowercase "p!"

When people are going to be in the streets trying to make things happen, the rest of us have two options: we can leave them to struggle on their own, imagining that our absence will speak for our qualms, or we can seize the opportunity to shape the event. We should view demonstrations as a chance to create the situations we want, not just to vote with our presence or absence for some particular method of organizing. Unless we can find something more effective to do somewhere else, there's no reason we shouldn't be there.

A demonstration is different from almost any other project we could use that time to work on. A public demonstration means thousands of people see our work with their own eyes. In a mediated world we cannot forget the power of direct visibility. The interactions spawned by this contact are far more valuable and meaningful than the scraps of "coverage" the corporate media may or may not toss us.

Participation is also an excellent way of raising issues (from globalization to animal rights) in the eyes of people we are close to. This is important because often these people will not be involved otherwise. Family and friends who hear about pur activities become aware of important issues as an extension of their concern for us. At the same time we can use the forum to reinvigorate ourselves: it's easy to come to accept the most horrific

tragedies as normal things, until you try contesting them.

Of course it's also an opportunity to fuck shit up for those fucking it up for us. When we *demonstrate* that the monster has weak spots other people will be inspired to do the same. On the other hand, when others try to demonstrate this and have a hard time, because people like us are withholding our fresh ideas and participation, it reinforces the illusion that the monster is invulnerable — when all it would take to dispel this might be another couple participants with a secret plan.

There are other reasons to participate in these mass demonstrations, that activists don't usually talk about as much. The demonstration is an opportunity to collaborate with people from outside the circles we usually travel in. If we're going to make this cooperative anarchist thing work, we'll all need lots of practice with this. (Remember: there is nothing that pleases the motherfuckers more then infighting among the people. It is perhaps their greatest weapon against us.) Furthermore, demonstrations can become conferences where we develop plans, have fun, see friends from far away, meet new people, fall in love. Far from the blockades and handcuffs, we sleep on the floors of strangers (who are soon to be friends), and over the meals we share, we exchange stories and ideas. The smallest of these details is as important as our most radical long term goals.

Now, back to the subject. The people who came up with the strategies that worked in Seattle had been developing them for many years. Just like the band whose ground breaking music is repeated until it is a cliche, our masterpieces often become monoliths that loom from the past, trapping us in ritualistic attempts to resurrect them. Preoccupation with precedent can prevent us from finding the new innovations we desperately need.

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Now that chaining ourselves together across intersections is not so fresh and vital, a responsibility lies in our hands. Those of us who have been coming to these events unprepared, hoping to be directed by the ones "in the know, " must bring our own plans to the next event. We, who have *not* been central to the organizing over the last few years, may actually have the most to offer. Our minds have not yet been filled with years of plans, failures, expectations and assumptions that are difficult for

the experienced to shake off. What *we* need to shake off is our passivity. Each of us must prepare as if the success or failure of the whole demonstration depended on our contribution.

This decentralized approach will be the most effective for a number of reasons. It's impossible to infiltrate — if the F.B.I. had to discover the secret plans of every single person headed to a demonstration, they wouldn't have a chance. The affinity group model has been a good start towards this end, but it could be taken a lot farther, particularly if the individuals who have been hanging back in these groups waiting to be directed brought their own plans instead. ["But it would just be *anarchy?* shriek the old-fashioned communist organizers, to which we respond, "Exactly!"] Of course we should not act in total disregard for what others are doing. The most effective approach will be one in which everyone answers to themselves while planning original approaches that complement those of their friends. I'll give some examples of this below. The old guard are going to stick to their predictable stuff, anyway, and it's going to keep on not working. Instead of just arguing about their methods we would do best to introduce something new and fertile.

It was the introduction of fresh elements that made Seattle so effective in the first place: the anarchists destroying property, the radical cheerleaders, the infernal noise brigade. Countless unique individual projects which *Thirteen* -

no one expected created a situation that no one could control or predict.

OK, on to specific examples. The number one cliche we have to avoid: going to fucking jail. Movement after movement has started in this country, gotten going, and then collapsed when mass legal trouble scared off half of the participants and embroiled all the resources (money, time, patience, you name it) of the rest in court cases. The lawyers and judges are surely the segment of this society with the very least potential to be radicalized! Why waste all our energy on them? Let's keep it in the streets, where it belongs. For countless reasons, getting arrested is just a bad idea — especially in this atmosphere of media blackouts, getting-caught is martyrish at best. Abbie Hoffman (who went through this whole thing three decades back) once commented: the trick is to find things to do that *aren't illegal yet.* Or just not to get caught.

My favorite example of fully legal mayhem remains the time Abbie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin shut the New York Stock Exchange down just by walking out onto the visitors balcony and dropping money down to the stockbrokers. The crazed capitalists, well practiced in the ways of short sighted gains, abandoned their posts to collect falling dollars — precipitating a stock market crash for the day! Had Hoffman and Rubin tried to barricade the market by chaining themselves across the doors at 5 a.m., they, probably wouldn't have succeeded, they certainly wouldn't have had as much fun, and even if it had worked I wouldn't be writing about it over thirty years later.

Now let's use the Philadelphia Republican National Convention protest (which I attended as the kind of unprepared automaton criticized above) as an example for some things that could have been done differently.

> Had I known how much more my creativity was needed than my mere presence, I would have tried one of the following ideas,

which Brian and I came up with after it was too late. One of the main things we were all trying to do was block traffic, and delay the beginning of the Convention. There we were, trying to block traffic with our bodies, when we all know what blocks traffic best: more traffic! If everyone who came to the demonstrations by car had simply driven them very slowly into the area where the hotels were, stopping to ask for directions at every block (perhaps with clever art on our cars, like floats in a parade), traffic would have been effectively halted. I he beauty of this plan is that if they chose to arrest people, they'd have to tow their cars out of the jam, which would just make matters worse!

Hell, we could have done that and still have had plenty of people left over to do other things. Here's another idea, which could easily be applied in any traffic-blocking demonstration. Usually the people in blocked cars are regarded as unfortunate victims (if not apolitical car-driving assholes!), and nothing more. Why not take the opportunity of these traffic jams to communicate with them? A radio transmitter that can reach car radios within a block or so can be built for around $10, and it's legal. Take one of these to the next demonstration in a car (so it wont be confiscated), and hitch it up to a tape loop explaining what we're doing and why. When you get stuck in the traffic jam, friends will be ready at the curb with signs reading "FOR INFORMATION ON TRAFFIC DELAYS, TUNE TO 98.9 FM." We could make the next demonstration into a pirate radio convention, with twelve different stations participating (each with its own message). This way, formerly useless, mad or bored motorists become the guests of honor! At least when the newspapers the next morning say "the protesters' message was unclear, " the drivers will know that's just bullshit.

More on traffic: Let's say you don't have two hundred people with cars to gum up traffic; if

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you had ten people who were ready to get a little crazier, you could achieve the same effect. Have a few benefit shows, and raise money to buy each person a clunker car that's on its last legs. We could have found hundreds of them in Philadelphia... long old American cars just begging to "break down." Purchase them under fake names (or whatever y^{ou} gotta do), then at the assigned minute, ten old cars breathe their last breath in the middle of ten crowded intersections, paralyzing traffic for hours. Maybe the drivers have escape routes planned; or, if they're gutsy, they'll just stick around insisting that they don't know what's going on (in that case, they could use their own cars, with no fake names). Even if ten people get charged with "conspiracy to block traffic" it is still preferable to four hundred people getting charged with assault for being beaten by police because they created a human blockade. If you're an expert and you really want to increase the tension, you could rig a device to set your old junker

on fire (cars sometimes burst into flames you know!), and — talk about demonstration ambiance!

Or let's say we couldn't get our hands on any cars at all. Let motorists deliver them! Did you know that if you clog up the exhaust pipe of a car, it shuts down? Potatoes are ideal, just pound one in, way in, so its good and lost. In a matter of seconds you've got your blockade provided by some unfortunate motorist or truck driver. And happily for those of you with qualms about "property destruction, " the offending tuber can eventually be extracted with no lasting damage... slashing the tires, on the other hand... works too! If we'd managed to enact a few of these plans, the delegates would have had to take the fucking subway to get out of the downtown area, and that would be the last thing they'd want to do with hundreds of demonstrators (with plans of their own!) on the streets.

While all this was going on, it would really

just take one person who had planned far enough in advance (and gotten a nice enough haircut) to have infiltrated the Convention itself to go to the basement and cut the power on the whole event. Or, since all the police in the region were at the Convention center or waiting downtown for the demonstration, it would have been a perfect time for a group of people to appear in a totally different part of the city, free to wreak the havoc that everyone would be talking about for years.

One interesting new tactic surrounding the Philadelphia Republican National Convention occurred almost spontaneously. At the time, Brian and I were on the road with a performance project of folk lore, science, music, home made instruments and a large inflatable teddy bear. As it turned out, our somewhat inconvenient itinerary began in Philly and ended up buzzing around it like a moth. Our periodic returns to Philly combined with close contacts with highly involved individuals there put us in the position of becoming folk media. We ended up incorporating news of the demonstrations into our performance. Every where we went people were desperate for real news of the events. We provided the information we could within the performance and in several instances ended our show by beginning a discussion about the demonstration. The discussion gradually lead to important local needs and issues. By the end of the discussion, we had provided national news to a local audience and learned of local news — all from first hand sources. In addition we were able to send out e-mail updates. We have evidence and reports of many of these being forwarded around the world. Distrust of the media is not uncommon but it is quite uncommon to be in the position of being a first hand authority on an important issue that the press is actively blackballing. With a little more planning, the role we ended up playing for the Philly Demonstrations could be covered

in a much more thorough way.

These are just a few examples of dumb ideas my friends and I have tossed around. There are a thousand other starting places. Next May Day, instead of doing that march carrying signs down the street, break up and have each person start a conversation

with someone — that's much more real, much less of a spectacle. Bring yo-yo's to give out for everyone to play with at the next protest — it'll make us feel less dumb standing around there. Invent games, be tricksters, do things no one can understand (that's what our leaders do). Come up with crazy alliances between totally different groups that could come together for one moment to make things happen that *nobody* could have imagined. My wildest dream is that one day we can coordinate one of these mass demonstrations to coincide with a citywide police force strike. They have reasons to be discontent too, you know, not the least of which being that their masters are always forcing them to be assholes to us. If we took to the streets one day and the rank and file of the police force stayed home in protest, that could be the first day of something bigger than any of us have ever seen...

Regardless of our methods, our collective activities hold unlimited promise for transformation. It is during the brief moments of clarity, when a demonstration stops being self conscious, that we begin to wonder why they ever end. You know, fat cat murderer C.E.O, motherfuckers proudly flaunt their ideology of power on the streets *every day, * and in front of the very people they exploit! These demonstrations are a chance for us to be "out" about what we believe, too: rather than hiding in our punk and political ghettos, as if being conscious and concerned was something to be ashamed of, we adventure, we get a taste for what real* action *feels like, we test the possibilities. And the possibilities are big; all this revolutionary talk seems pretty dumb until you live through a moment when it comes true.*

[Image not archived]

The first time I really experienced what it was like to change a little piece of the world, my life was altered forever.

Postscript:

"But What About Local Activism?"

A lot of people point out the drawbacks of these mass demonstrations and then say we should just be concentrating our efforts in the places we live. Well, of course we should — and a lot of us are, otherwise the broad base of individuals who join in these demonstrations would not exist in the first place. At any rate, there is certainly no need to choose one over the other.

It is crucial, above all else, that we do not stop doing outreach to others. Its that outreach that made what we're doing possible. I'm sure the Powers That Be would like nothing more than to see the small number of radicalized people remain small. Cut the spearhead off a spear, and it's just a stick — we need to remain active in the places (like the much-maligned punk community, and even the college activist scene) where we first learned about activism and anarchy, so others will too. These need to be augmented, not replaced, and certainly not fought against. We need to find local environments and communities where interaction and action can take place. But concentrating on local activism doesn't mean that we can't also work together for big events that unite us from across the world. This system of cross-pollination is critical

if our activism to remain fresh; in fact, it is at these gatherings that people exchange the new ideas and inspiration which travel back home and keep the fires burning.

I'd like to conclude with a couple more ideas of what we can do at home to "get the message out." I wrote in the features section about trying to provide for the needs of the community in anarchist ways (without necessarily using that word!). With our energy

applied that way, our communities wont have to meet so many needs through the usual (Christian, etc.) channels. Through our example, people will learn about the alternatives to old process of doing things. _A good case study is the B.R.Y.C.C. house in Louisville, Kentucky, a vast building my friends opened (with a $150, 000 grant from the city!) to be a "youth center." They have a 'zine and book library, a radio station (which is, in effect, a record library as well), an art gallery, punk shows, poetry readings and Food Not Bombs. All of this is organized by young people acting autonomously and getting involved in radical shit in the process. The city government has no idea what its funding there, and my friends are filling a space in the community that would otherwise just be occupied by assholes.

Something else the readers of this magazine can do to make the alternatives to the capitalist nightmare visible (when the big demonstrations aren't going on) is autonomous media. There is more to this than just 'zines — wheatpasting and graffiti writing are good examples. If we make our own media to reach people outside our communities, than we don't have to beg the media barons to do the job for us. Instead of photocopying 'zines, put the ideas that usually remain within our circles on posters and wheatpaste them all over the streets of your town. People will see them for the next three months, and even after the text is unreadable they'll see the remains of the flier and it will make them remember what was there before. If I had a wheatpasting recipe committed to memory, I'd print it here, but I'm 'sure you can find one easily enough. This kind of adventure is a fun and empowering experience for people who do it. It means deciding for yourself what your town should look like and spending your time and effort to make it so. This is radically different from the methods of slave masters like Nike who simply

spend loads of money dumping their an-aes- thetics on our towns. Remember, we have more ingenuity than they have cash. Aside from being an invigorating experience for the "artist, " the results of autonomous media and street decoration will encourage others who see it. Maybe they thought they were alone in their discontent until your efforts started showing up. Maybe you think you are alone in your discontent... until someone begins to reciprocate.

Another option, beyond wheatpasting and hand spray-painting billhoards and walls, is stenciling. Here's an idea: If you want to safely stencil an image all over the sidewalks of the world, cut the bottom out of an old back pack and attach your stencil in its place, You'll look like you're just rummaging around in your back pack when you're actually spraypainting through the bottom of your auto-media portable decoration machine. Then, there's stickering. If you live in the U.S., it's easy to make free stickers that are

hard to remove. Go to the post office, where free stacks of priority mail stickers will be available. Make a stencil and spray paint a design on the stickers (you could even have a big design that was formed by a number of stickers together). You can put the stickers up (on the front of newspaper machines, at bus stops, on stop signs: "Stop being bored/eating animals/etc.") so fast that it's practically impossible to get caught.

Anyway, all these examples are just to encourage you to be thinking about this stuff yourself. You've probably heard most of these ideas before, and surely you can come up with better ones on your own. The thing is to focus on doing stuff yourself, coming up with your own approaches — that's the best way to have fun, and save the world, all at once. See you on the streets *(not* in the jails, if we can all help it!)... your friendly neighborhood folk scientist, Dr. Frederick M.D.

**AFT£R PHIUY, **

I'm sure all of us feel excited, empowered and full of revolutionary electricity over the recent events in Seattle DC and Philly. If for no other reason, the FBI and local police are' really acting like the movement is a true threat to the establishment, and shit — may be they're right! But as we can all see from one event to the other, the police tactics are changing and we need to change along with them if we hope to keep effective. So, I think we must analyze what has happened.

In Seattle, none of the authorities were ready for what happened, not only did thousands of truly peaceful protestors (read: fencewalkers) show up, but there was a new addition to the scene, "the violent anarchists" who, although their number was small, managed to lay waste to much of downtown Seattle, and turn the event upside down getting national and international media coverage and sparking debate at every office water cooler, where just minutes before they were talking about prime time TV sitcoms.

But in Philly and DC things have changed. It is obvious to anyone that Seattle was a wake up call to the FBI who instantly began the ol' COINTELPRO (counterintelligence program) and started monitoring and infiltrating the groups that are involved with the protests — after all those boring years after the radical sixties they had none of their own citizens to persecute and now, wow, we get to break all kinds or laws, and lie, and get away with it again! All in the name of defending the status quo! Woo hoo! It must be a great time to be piece of shit FBI motherfucker.

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And we made it easy for them to watch us and fool us: we made no secret about when and where we planned on showing up, we even set up websites for them, we went to the same buildings day after to day to organize, and since our large groups were composed of members of other groups and individuals it was easy for them to infiltrate.

And the results are clear enough: Seattle, 0 arrests for the violent" anarchists, and no arrests prior to actually participating in the action(s).

DC and Philly: there were many preemptive arrests, clearly the sign of police and FBI infiltration and surveillance. Also, because there was time to prepare, there were

many plain clothes police on the streets, dressed very much like protesters, and as you were about to light that Mercedes on fire, the fellow revolutionary standing behind you who you thought had your back is really radioing the police four blocks away. Disaster.

And, now that we are seen as a enormous threat, the justice department has begun using every tactic at its disposal to keep us locked away in cages with the occasional beating, or in extreme fear of such a fate. False arrests, outright lies, denial of the very laws and privileges that they claim to support, such as no access to lawyers and ridiculous bail amounts.

Take this situation from Philly: In what turned out to be only an hour before the major protest actions in Philly were to begin, the police and FBI raided (with a full SWAT team as

IM CAS£ YOU HAVEN'T H£ARd ON TH£ STRUTS, TH£ FBI ANNOUNCES IT ZA.ST W££K IN MUZZY-' *there is a fucking* WAR *on.*

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part of the action) the Puppet House which had been used as a meeting place for helping organize the protest. They had a warrant, issued in the time-honored FBI/Nazi tradition of an anonymous tip that C4 (a U.S. military plastic high-explosive) was on the premises. This of course was a lie, and in fact due to the intelligence of those working at the house, there were no weapons or drugs at all! The 70-odd people who were in the building were arrested (and most are still in jail a week later) on various bullshit misdemeanor charges and the police and FBI confiscated basically everything they had there. Now, keep In mind these people were in the building lawfully, not , breaking any laws. The police have stated that they had things like chicken wire, plastic pipes, chains, etc. that they claimed were to be used in protests, and thus were labeled as *IOCs* (Instruments of Crime), and possession of such is, of course, against the law. It is clear that they had inside information about the group and what was to go on that day (most likely provided by infiltrators) and timed the raid just before the people in the house were have started a major protest. Hence we have what is basically a preemptive gestapo police raid on people who have broken no laws.

In case you haven't heard on the streets, the FBI announced it last week in Philly- THERE IS A FUCKING WAR ON.

coverage to the protests in the future. And that is what has happened, if you blinked, you would have missed all the coverage of this last week of police brutality and FBI raids.

[Image not archived]

So, how should we handle these new twists and turns? First, we must ask what the advantage is in protesting these large events because the disadvantages are many. It is assumed that these events are chosen because they are covered widely by the national mainstream media, and as such protests are sure to get attention. Outside of this I can

see no reason to choose these events for direct action. In Seattle, this tactic worked wonderfully, we caught the whole nation off guard, and it showed — there were front page stories and it got tons of coverage on television. But in the Philly protests it has been a different story. Clearly, the networks had some serious meetings (with, I would guess, a fair amount of input from corporate sponsors, not to mention the corporations who own the networks and newspapers) and it seems obvious that a decision was made not to give

So, the primary objective of the protests failed — this is not to say the protests were a failure at all; all those who participated feel empowered, and with a new, healthy resolve to take action. But now, 400 of us are in jail, eventually having to give money to the system for our freedom, with our names, fingerprints, and photos in the FBI's files, on the relatively short list of people to watch out for — which is not a good thing. And some of the unfortunate might be m jail a lot longer, charged with felonies and bails as high as $450, 000.

I ask you this, is it easier to smash the windows of ten luxury cars and set them afire when there are no police around, or when there are thousands of them roaming around in groups of 12 concentrated in a small downtown area' Is it easier to assault an abusive police officer when its 5 on 5, or when its 5 on 500? We should not be willing to sacrifice our bodies and our freedom in ill-advised, poorly planned direct action that goes unnoticed by everyone who

If the FBI expects you to show up, then you better figure out how to not get caught, or better yet — burn down their office while they are looking for you protesting in another state.

The time has come to start acting like the serious threat to the status quo that we are being made out to [be, when] my time comes, I want to earn every dollar of my $1, 000, 000

bail!

No more sheep intentionally carrying protest signs to the slaughter shouting now meaningless slogans. Work at night, with your friends, in small groups and set the world ablaze with passion and beauty!

-No Surrender Cell

[Image not archived]

I his is nOW just our second attempt to do a scene report section that transcends the tedium of bands/labels/distributors/etc. — again, not to say that kind of knowledge is useless, but others are offering it, so we consider it our role to offer something else. Please don't interpret this as news reporting, or even historical snapshots — these reports are first and last the testaments of individuals trying to recapture their own inexpressible moments of life, holding out the shreds of memory that remain to you as possible blueprints from which you might continue to weave your own tapestry of life. This is a map to lost hours in the lives of strangers; but we hope it might help you to find your way to wild new hours and days of your own. Just remember that you can't do the same thing twice: neither the W.T.O. protest in Seattle nor the first kiss

of your childhood are coming back, so don't hold fast to old methods if you want to make new things happen. You can't get in on the joy and glory of what others have done by imitating or following examples — but the present is always greater than the past, and if you create revolutions for yourself in the moments to come, whether with caresses, bricks and plate glass, or boldly putting your words and body between the violent and the beautiful, those instants will outshine whatever displaced "historical importance" the events chronicled here are supposed to have.

There's a focus on the demonstration activism of the past twelve months here, since there are a lot of things that are brand new about it. If people are ready to keep being creative with it, to learn from all the events of the past few demonstrations, and explore how to be even more ready that the authorities for the next ones, this could be a way for us to gain momentum and power in our efforts to take our lives back. If we don't learn from our mistakes, we'll dissipate our energies following futile formulas and crashing into the brick walls of defeat. Don't read these accounts as a celebration of what has happened, but as a question you must answer: what next?

And another thing — looking over these reports, Gloria pointed out that they're pretty much all about visits, "vacations" in other people's lives. Even our demonstrations have largely been political tourism, in which we descend upon a foreign city and try to act on the forces of evil who are also visiting it, with no reference to the people who live there and the daily routines of their lives — which are what we really have to address, eventually, if we're making truly radical change, not just trying to get the governments or corporations or whatever to "change things for us." What would be really beautiful would be if the next time I pick up a punk magazine and flip to the "scene reports" section, I see fiftyh reports from people talking about all the crazy transforming shit that they have going on in ther hometowns and neighborhoods. It's the same for all of us punk rockers as it is for my bourgeois parents: go on "vacation" to "get away from it all, " and you'll run all around the world trying to get far enough away, carrying that insidious "it all" with you every where you go. Start with some maniacal idealism and new ideas in your home, and you can find yourself in a totally different world in two weeks, or two seconds.

Seeyou in 006 Of thOS6 WOfldS, next time.your loving editor, Brian

***partone:* DEMONSTRATIONS**

The World Trade

Organization meeting in

Seattle; Washington

This is a story about some things that I did and saw and felt during the protests against the World Trade Organization in Seattle in November and December of 1999. I have

done my best not to romanticize or exaggerate any of this, and I didn't make anything up. I have tried to make this as accessible as possi

ble, and to avoid using activist jargon as much

sive bullies and watch them blink, to fall in

love with tens of thousands of people at once, to not know what would happen next, to become dangerous. And that is a tragedy which haunts me as I write every one of these words. Because if somehow I could share with

you what I _felt_ for ten days in Seattle you would never settle for anything less ever again. You would kick in your TV, run outside buck naked, tear up the freeway with your bare hands, flip all the tanks upside down, and dance with panda bears through the streets. The barbarians would emerge from exile to knock down Heaven's door and the dead would rise up from their coffins and cubicles. And once you got a taste of the sublime joy of reclaiming control of your life and your world, of regaining your lost kinship to a human community of which you are an integral component, of realizing your wildest dreams and desires, you would do whatever it takes to make it happen again.

*Monday Nov. 22 — Thursday Nov. 25.: I left

that they stand for, look vulnerable to me. Up at Denny the bustle and activity of Thursday night has multiplied exponentially. I help out with the kitchen and the dishwashing, finally get some food, and spend most of the day getting my bearings. Around dusk Critical Mass issues out of 420. I ride with some woman on the back of her bike since I don't have one. Later I just run. We ride around and around the upscale shopping districts downtown, taking over whatever streets we want, whenever we want, without any authorization or permission, singing, dancing, howling, and conversing with anyone who will listen. Someone begins chanting "We're gonna win! We're gonna win!" and for the first time in my life I believe it. Much to my surprise and delight, I chance upon Mr. X in the midst of Critical Mass. I have only seen him once since I spent much of the summer of'98 in a van with him. He is in Seattle with Ms. X and X-Dog. Our reunion is cut short, however, when a psychopath in a fancy car tries to run us over. Mr. X screams like a banshee, jumps onto the hood, slips a piece of cardboard under the wipers and over the entire windshield, pounds three big ass dents in the hood with his fist, and disappears into the night. Later we invade the Washington Trade and Convention Center, where the WTO summit is supposed to be held, and ride in circles through the foyer for quite some time before a security guard punches someone in the face and the police finally manage to chase us away.

*Saturday Nov, 27*: I spend all morning and early afternoon at Denny. The 420 Space is serving as a welcome mat, training grounds, mess hall, and nerve center, and it is turning into a complete madhouse. Countless meetings and workshops, endless training and skill sharing, and ceaseless cooking, cleaning, eating and welding all rage perpetually and simultaneously under Denny's roof. More and more people pour in throughout the day, and it is beginning to get difficult to move around inside. I leave late Saturday afternoon for the Hitco space to make lockboxes. Hitco is every bit as wild as Denny. While others hammer away at mammoth puppets and matching sea turtle suits we set up an assembly line and build hundreds of lockboxes out of PVC pipe, chicken wire, framing nails, tar, sand, yarn, and duct tape. We turn them out late into the night. I ride to 420, walk to Filbert, and sleep covered with tar.

_ *Sunday Nov. 28_ :* Sunday morning Denny is an utterly unfathomable zoo. I learn that Saturday night banners were dropped all over downtown, one from the top of a crane over I-

[Image not archived]

5. At noon a parade complete with giant puppets, street theater, radical cheerleading, and an anarchic marching band rolls out of Seattle Central Community College'(SCCC). The street party is a roaring success, reclaiming downtown for hours and railing fiercely at all manifestations of corporate dominance. Unfortunately I miss it. I go back to Hitco around five to finish the lockboxes, unaware that the festival is still bumping. I get back to 420 around eight and run across Ms. C. We are eating dinner when we catch wind that a mass public squat is about to be opened on Virginia St. The word is free shelter downtown for anyone who needs it during the protests, and for Seattle's homeless after. About forty of us steal through the night to recover a fragment of the world that has been stolen from us.

913 Virginia St. The door opens, and two masked heads emerge from the darkness. "GET IN!" I run through the door, up the stairs, through a wooden hatch, onto the second floor. The door closes behind me. The building is enormous. This floor could harbor a horde of barbarians. The power is running. Androgynous ninja elves scamper about everywhere around me, hammering away furiously on a thousand different project. I board up windows at a breakneck pace with a tireless Danish carpenter. Plywood, 2x4's, chicken wire, black plastic, anything. Next room. The cops are coming. They're about to fire tear gas through all these windows. No they're not. More rooms. Yes they are. Cover all this up so they can't tell how many of us are in here. No they're nor. "WHO THE FUCK LET IN PHOTOGRAPHERS? I'VE GOT FELONY WARRANTS IN WASHINGTON STATE!" The cops are coming. Two rooms left. No they're not. "KEEP THOSE FUCKING PHOTOGRAPHERS IN THAT FRONT ROOM! SOMEBODY GOT TALK TO I HEM! Yes they are. We're done. No they're not... 1'here are two doors one in front and one in back. The former can be opened from the inside by dismantling the contraption that braces it. The latter, where Mr. N has constructed a virtually impregnable barricade out of toilets, concrete, rebar, plywood, and an iron fire door, could only be opened by a tank. The doors are adjacent to two stairwells, one in front and one in back, which lead to either end of a long winding hallway that connects about ten rooms. The rooms are vast and spacious, with 25' ceilings, gigantic windows, and giant stages and lofts of various shapes and sizes. One has been furnished with an ample supply of food, water, and medical supplies. Someone runs out of another, arms raised in triumph, a crescent wrench in one fist and a plunger in the other. "THE TOILET _WORKS_!" In yet another Ms. I and Ms. S arm a security team with short wave radios. Every window on this floor is boarded up

earlier we gave a full fledged press conference before banishing the blow-dried talking heads of the corporate media altogether — and nothing inside can be distinguished

from below. The third floor is essentially identical to the second, except that none of the windows are boarded up and there is a ladder to the roof in the back stairwell. There is no way to approach the building that is not visible from the roof, where someone stands guard with a short-wave radio, waiting for the inevitable. Here come the cops, this time for real... We assemble in The Spiral Room and send Mr. G outside to negotiate, agreeing that he will not •accept, refuse, offer, or request any proposal before we have all consensed to do so. The cops say we need to let in a fire inspector. They need to know if we are posing a fire hazard to ourselves. After much discussion we consense that this is complete bullshit. They don't know the layout of the building, they or how many of us are inside, or how sturdy our barricades are or for that matter if we all have machine guns or not. They want to inspect the building to determine how difficult it will be to raid. When we refuse they cut the water, then the power. By this time a bizarre circus has gathered below. Reporters, Feds, and undercover agents film us, and our friends from 420 and the Independent Media Center film them. We hang banners and signs from the roof and windows. Mine says "RESISTANCE IS FERTILE". Outside, Mr. G wrangles with the cops. Inside we are embroiled in an absolutely endless meeting regarding their ever-changing promises and threats. As it gets later and later we are left with less friends and more enemies, who make less promises and more threats. The situation becomes increasingly tense, but they never move in on us. Around four they finally leave, swearing that they will return at eight with the landlord to chase us out. I sleep with one eye open, and wake up four different times to false alarms. The cops are coming. No they're not. Yes they are. No they're not.

*Monday _Nov, 29_* : Throughout the morning a crowd from 420 and everywhere else gathers outside, beating drums and singing. The cops return at eight with the landlord, block the doors, and refuse to let anyone in or out. Around noon we manage to get a lawyer inside. He tries to cut us a deal. We will occupy the building until Friday, then hand it over to Share/Wheel, a homeless advocacy group, who will convert it into a free shelter. The landlord claims he will get sued if someone gets hurt in his building. We write up a waiver clearing him of any liability for anything that happens inside. He refuses to sign it. This all takes hours. The negotiations break down completely by late afternoon. The landlord wants us disposed of. The cops slaver in antic-

ipatioh. Around 5:30 they Swear that in thirty minutes they will Eick down the doors, beat

ass, break heads, and arrest everyone inside. They will let anyone who is willing to leave out now. This is our "last chance." Nearly everyone opts out at this point, understandably having no desire to spend the 30th in jail. They promise to tear ass up to Denny and return with as much backup as they can scrape together. I know that whether this is our "last chance" or not there are nowhere near enough cops outside to actually raid the building, and I cannot fathom why. Later I learn that crowds have amassed all over downtown. Some have surrounded The Gap, some the Westin Hotel so that the WTO delegates cant get in to sleep, and some have attacked a McDonalds,

breaking some windows. About 15 of us remain inside. There a lot of people out front, but not enough. The situation looks bleak. At 6 the riot cops show up. We decide that there is no longer any way to defend the building, and that there is no point in making martyrs of ourselves. Except for Mr. B, who says he will hide in the rafters and hold out alone if he has to. We dismantle the barricade at the front door and run outside. We are greeted with a wondrous sight. The cavalry has arrived from 420. Somehow hordes of people have slid in between the cops and the door, and more stream in from all around. Everyone goes berserk. We pound and bang on everything we can get our hands on, howling and dancing and taking up most of the block. Mr. B is up on the roof, roaring at the top of his lungs with his arms raised to the sky as if all the indomitable power of the avenging squatter demon is running through the marrow of his bones. The cops are at a loss. Every time they try to give us an order or command we just dance, but when they try to charge their van across the block to disperse us we surround it and slow it down to a crawl, then beat and kick and rock it while the couple inside squirms. It is all they can do to limp their wounded warhorse through to the other side before all the little elves flip the damn thing over. The cops leave. Pandemonium reigns. Up on rhe roof Mr. B roars in triumph, and the walls tremble in the top of the tombs. I suspect that the cops are not prepared to start a riot on Virginia St. when so much of their force is downtown protecting the world's most ruinous and abusive corporations and the delegates who represent them. A fragment of the world has been recovered, and it is safe for now. About forty people run inside, and I run back up to Denny. A few hours later, right before I leave 420 for the night, I run into Ms. X and X-Dog. She tells me that Mr. X is in jail. She is trying desperately to bail him out before the state discovers exactly who he is and what he has done. I promise to keep in contact with her and to do all I can to help. Before I fall asleep back at the squat, beneath

a window, with the glittering batiks looming over me, I remember the time Mr. X told me that there were only two things that he would never do. He would never hurt anyone, and he would never take anyone's food. His captors do both, and some day they will suffer the consequences. They have locked Mr. X in a cage, and tomorrow it's time for payback.

_ *Tuesday Nov, 30*_ . I wake up before dawn and walk to SCCC, where the festivities begin. Before long I am surrounded by thousands of friends, and at seven we set out for the Washington Trade and Convention Center, where the summit is supposed to be held. As we near it we fan out, taking over the surrounding streets and blockading entrances to the building. Everything you can imagine turns into a barricade. Bodies, puppets, lockboxes, a fifty foot tripod, barrels full of concrete, dumpsters, cars. We begin to form a human chain around the convention center. In an amusing display of either arrogance or stupidity the delegates all wear matching beige suits and big ID tags that say DELEGATE . Whenever they try to approach the building we stop them and chase them off. Without the protection of their armed servants they are as powerless as a brain without a body, and their expressions are priceless as they run away. Before long the chain is complete, and the only ways in are through parking

garages, hotels, and underground tunnels. We cut these off one by one. I dart around by myself, patching up holes where blockades need help and trailing delegates to their secret entrances. I dog one for blocks, grinning malevolently at him as he searches in vain for a way into the

clouds, ejaculating toxic gas as fast as they can stroke their triggers. They open up on us with rubber bullets and concussion grenades, and we stampede batk down Seneca and around the corner. The stampede becomes a fairly orderly retreat as we book down 4th Avenue, hurling everything we can get our hands on out into the street to protect ourselves from their cars and horses. Trash cans, newspaper _ stands, concrete tree planters, dumpsters, construction barricades, anything that will stop them or slow them down. The gas is inescapable but we grab the cans and throw them back. The rubber bullets are legitimately scary but we chuck sticks, stones, and bottles, and hope for the best. I find myself on top of a newspaper stand in the middle of 4th Avenue, unleashing a psychotic stream of invective at the interchangeable bullies who

are approaching through the smoke. ~~FUCK~~ YOU, COWARDS!, I'M INVINCIBLE!" This is happening all over town. They can move us but they can not disperse us. At 4th and Union the worm is beginning to turn. The cops, facing thousands and thousands of us now, are a little less gung ho than they were at 5th and Seneca. They form a line across 4th and we come to another standoff. Only this time no one is going to sit down for them. I find myself on top of another newspaper stand in the middle of 4th Avenue, roaring at the top of my lungs. "I can't TELL you how THRILLED I am to BE here right now. I LOVE every ONE of you, like a SISTER and a BROTHER. There is NOWHERE, in the WORLD, _EVER_, that I would RATHER BE then WHERE I AM right now. There is _NOTHING_ I would RATHER BE DOING than WHAT I AM DOING right now. I would RATHER be OUT HERE than spend . another FUCKING SECOND in my CAR, or at my JOB, or WATCHING TV. I DON'T think these cops can say that. I DON'T think those delegates can say that. I would rather FAT MORE TEAR GAS than any more of their FUCKING fast food. I would rather _DRINK_ MORE — ~~PEPPER~~ _SPRAY_ than any more of their FUCKING soft drinks. I would rather DEAL WITH

[Image not archived]

chains, and crowbars; and attacked T he Gap, McDonald's, Niketown, Bank of America, Starbucks, Levi's, Fidelity Investment, Old Navy, Key Bank, Washington Mutual, Nordstrom's, US Bankcorp, Planet ' Hollywood, and other manifestation of corporate dominance, smashing windows and redecorating facades. I am ecstatic. Those glittering towers are not invincible after all. The

would take is for one dumb ass aggro cop to decide to get his rocks off and open fire and all the rest would follow suit. It would be a massacre. Kent State. Bonfires smolder behind my eyes, and the smoke rises out of my mouth.

I choose one — at random, for they all look exactly the same. Every inch of his body is hidden under black cyborg armor. He is armed to the teeth. His face is hidden under a gas mask, face shield, and full helmet. "O Neil" is embroidered on his bulletproof vest.

I plant myself squarely in front of his face and I stare dead into his eyes. He won't look at me. He blinks constantly, looks down, left, up, right; anywhere but at me. It infuriates me almost beyond words that this coward has the impudence to attack me when I am unarmed but lacks the courage to even look me in the eyes. "Can you look me in the eyes? CAN YOU LOOK ME IN THE EYES? _LOOK ME IN THE EYES, O'NEIL._ Nothing. I know why he won't look at me. When he was halter-broken he joined his trainers in a companionship stimulated not by love, but bv hatred — hatred for the "enemy" who has always been designated as a barbarian, savage, communist, jap, criminal, gook, subhuman, drug dealer, terrorist, scum; less than human and therefore legitimate prey. I try to make it impossible for him to label me as a faceless protester, the enemy. I pull off my ski mask and continue to stare into his eyes. I tell him that I am from the south, about fixing houses and laying floors and loading tractor trailer trucks, about nearly getting killed in a car wreck in October, about carrying my dog around crying to all the bushes that she loved to root around in the day she died of cancer. I

why I am here. I am enjoying myself. I am reveling in this. I am rejoicing. I have been waiting for this to happen since I was a little kid. There is nowhere, in the world, _ever_, that I would rather be than where I am right now. There is nothing I would rather be doing than what I am doing right now. It has never been so magnificent to feel the sublime power of life running through the marrow of my bones. I know that you don't want to be here. I know that you dont know why you are here. I know that you are not enjoying yourself. I know that you don't want to be doing this. And no one is holding a gun to your head and forcing you to. Wherever you want to be, go there, now. Whatever you want to be doing, do it, now. Go home and get out my way. Go make love with your girlfriend or boyfriend, go snuggle with your kids or dog, go watch TV if that's what you want, but stay out of my way because this is a lot more important to me than it is to you." I have not moved my feet or my eyeballs at all. I have been trying to blink as little as possible. O'Neil's eyes are quivering and squirming to avoid me beneath rhe mask. "O'NEIL! CAN _YOU_ LOOK _ME_ IN _THE EYES_? CAN YOU DO THAT FOR ME, O'NEIL? CAN YOU LOOK _ME_ IN THE EYES. Basically this whole 'Battle of Seattle boils down to the relationship between you and me. And really, there are only two kinds of relationships that we can have anymore. If you can either join us or

walk away then you will be my brother, and I will embrace you. If you cannot then you will be my enemy, and I will fight you. The relationship that we are not going to have is the one where you are dominant and I am subservient. That is no longer an option. That will never be an option again. Which kind of relationship do you want to have with me, O'Neil? Look around you. Look at all of these people singing and dancing and making music. Don't you see how beautiful this is? Don't you see how much more healthy and strong and fulfilling and desirable and fun relationships that rest on mutual respect and

consent and understanding and solidarity and love are than ones that rest bn force and fear and coercion and violence and hatred? Don't you see that the life and the world that we are beginning to create out here is superior to the one that you have been trained to accept... Dont you see that we are going to win? Don't you want to be a part of this? I know you do because you still can't look me in eyes. If you want to remain my enemy then so be it. But if you want to be my brother all you have to do is join us, or walk away." At this exact moment the Infernal Noise Brigade appears. For the first time since this surreal monologue began I look behind me. A small man wearing a gas mask and fatigues is prancing about in front, dancing lustily with two oversized black and green flags. Behind him two women wearing gas masks and fatigues march side by side, each bearing an oversized black and green mock wooden rifle. Two columns of about fifteen march behind the women with the guns. They are all wearing gas masks and fatigues, and they are all playing drums and horns and all sorts of other noisemakers. They are making the most glorious uproar that I have ever heard. The Infernal Noise Brigade marches all the way to the front where we are standing. When they reach the line the columns transform into a whirling circle. We form more circles around them, holding hands and leaping through the air, dancing around and around in concentric rings like a tribe of elves. We dance with absolute aban-

don, in possibly the most unrestrained explosion of sheer fury and joy that I have ever seen. On one side of the line across 4th Avenue there is a pulsating festival of resistance and life. On the other side there is a blank wail of obedience and death. The comparison is.impossible to miss. It hits you over the head with a hammer. When the dance is over I return to my post up in O'Neil's face. I stare into his eyes and invoke all the love and rage I can muster to fashion an auger to bore through his mask and into his brain. And Cow Eyes cries crocodile tears. His eyes are brimming, with red veins throbbing. His cheeks are moist. He won't look at me. "O'Neil, I don't care if you cry or not. I don't care what you're thinking right now. I only care about what you do. Before long you will get orders to attack us, or one of you will get impatient and provoke another confrontation. What are you going to do? When that happens I am going to be standing right here. If you choose to remain our enemy then you are going to have to hit me first. You are going to have to hurt me first. I dare you to look me in the eyes when you do it. You may be able to hurt me and not look at me. You may be able to look at me and not hurt me. But you won't be able to look me in the eyes while you hurt me, because you are afraid you will lose your nerve. You are afraid of me, and you should

[Image not archived]

be. O'Neil, you all have been terrorizing us all day. If this goes on ail night we will have to start fighting back. And you and I will be standing right here in the middle of it. I have no illusions about what that means. Neither should you. We may get killed. But I would rather deal with that than accept this one second longer. I would rather die than give in to you. I don't think you can say that, can you, O'Neil? Would you rather die then be my brother? Who are you dying for? Where are they? Whoever gives you

orders is standing _behind_ you, man. Whoever gives them orders is relaxing down at the station, and whoever gives _them_ orders is safe in some high rise somewhere, laughing at your foolish ass'. Why isn't your boss, and their boss, out here with you, O'Neil, risking their lives and crying in the middle of 4th Avenue? Why should they? You do it all for them! What are you thinking? I just don't get it. They don't care about you, hell, I care about you then they do. You're getting used, hustled, played, man, and you will be discarded the minute you become expend-

able. Please look me in the eyes. I'm serious, O'Neil, come dance with me..." Someone whispers in my ear that another cop is crying down the line to my right. For a fleeting moment I can feel it coming, the fiery dragon breath of the day that will come when the servants turn their backs on their masters and dance...and then it's gone. Because O'Neil is not dancing. He is completely beaten. His lifeless eyes don't even bother to quiver or squirm. And he won't look at me. I could whisper in his nightmares for a thousand years, I could burn my face onto the backs of his eyelids, I could stare at him every morning from the bathroom mirror, but he would never look me in the eyes. He is too well trained, too completely broken, too weak to feel compassion for the enemy. His eyes are dead. There is nothing left. The magic words that could pierce his armor and resurrect him elude me, if they exist at all. "O'Neil, I know that you have been broken and trained. So have I. I know that you are just following orders and just doing your job. I have done the same. But we are ultimately responsible for our actions, and their consequences. There is a life and a world and a community waiting for you on this side of the line that can make you wild and whole again, if you want them. But if you prefer to lay it all to waste, if you prefer death and despair to love and life, if all of these words bounce off of your armor and you still choose to hurt me then FUCK you, because the Nuremberg defense doesn't fly." I have nothing left to say. I sing the last verse of my beaten heroes' song, softly, over and over and over again, staring into O'Neil's eyes and waiting for the inevitable, "...in our hands is placed a power greater than their hoarded gold, greater than the might of armies magnified a thousand fold, we can bring to birth a

I.M.E *Meeting*
in Washington, D.C.
courtesy of Ameliarate

"Never doubt that it small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever does."

It's been exactly seven days since I left D.C. and I lay here on my bed wondering how the hell I'm going to write down my experience on paper when I still tremble in cold sweats at the thought of what's happened in the past two weeks of my life. As my hands leak with perspiration of the past, my brain rattles in wonderment of what lies ahead. My stomach growls and twists as a manifestation of relentless hope burns in the deepest part of my soul. Where has this taken me?

I've heard from most of my comrades and have replied with short, heartfelt emails describing how much each of them mean to

me. The more I reminisce I realize that there is a tugging at my heart longing to be closer. I want to touch them again. *I want to feel you again.* I want to gaze into their courageous souls and grab hold of what we shared and fly as far away with them as my wings will take me. These strangers have become counterparts in a movement that is not only revolutionary in a global sense, but in a personal and spiritual sense also. I could never forget them or this experience as anything less than life altering and eye opening. Raising our fists, singing verse upon verse, or getting naked and going limp were experiences that will be crammed against my heart for eternity.

For those of you who weren't there, I want to portray what I experienced that week as

A16-5am

I first stepped onto the kidnapped ground of D.C. to a morning wetness that reminded me of other marches I had been to. The air was humid and the streets were damp from the early morning rain. Without an official affinity group name, my friends and I made our way past Farragut North Station to an intersection that held a clump of demonstrators.

As we approached, I could see a group of about 30 forming a circle inside the intersection. There were a few people with string running around the four light poles in an effort to keep police cars from passing through. Soon after, two police cars struggled their way through the intersection while the cluster of demonstrators remained, singing and chanting.

Since we didn't have a schedule to go by, we decided to continue walking. By late morning we had managed to stay together, ending up at a blockade on some street that looked like all the rest. We locked down for about 3 hours in front of a police line. As the gray morning soon turned into a sunny afternoon, we remained locked down; fed, sunblocked, and massaged by our fellow compeers. As delegates attempted to solo it through our line, we gently refused them entry and told them to try another block (even though every block within a quarter-mile radius was blocked with protesters). By 3 o'clock we heard that the meetings had begun and most of the delegates had made their way into the World Bank. We gathered our noisemakers and puppets and headed for The Ellipse.

My group and I made our way around police barricades and riot cops, soon to find a street overflowing with demonstrators. We joined in and followed the crowd (or more accurately put, critical mass) to the Washington Monument. [I remember by that time of day the skies had cleared and spirits were alive and roaring throughout D.C. Dancing in and out of the crowd, I caught an eye here and there, receiving smiles and shouts of support by the blurs of people lining the streets.] As the warm breeze sifted over us, my lover and I would periodically lock eyes and walk arm in arm as if we were in a dream: We could see it, we could feel it, but was it the real thing?

Once we arrived at the park, my friends and I collapsed beneath a tree and dozed on and off for the rest of the afternoon. Everywhere I turned there was a smile to smile back at or a drum to dance to or a voice to echo. I realized that within those tens of

60 *Inside Front*

A17-9am

The next morning my friend (whom I met the night before; I'll call him "G") and I headed towards the Ellipse for another series of protests. As we crossed the intersection of 16th and H St., I glanced at the light, notic- *ng ft's green glow, and then to the opposite, which was red. I looked to my right and saw a black suburban sitting at the light, partially acknowledging that it was probably a police vehicle. As we continued jay-walking across the intersection, the suburban gunned towards us, ignoring their red light, and aimed straight for my bandanna-covered face and all-black attire. I slapped the side of the vehicle in retort, not thinking about the possible consequences. The vehicle halted to a stop and an enormous man in a bulletproof vest jumped out and shouted "hey!" as I dodged to the sidewalk (G ran the opposite direction). Once on the sidewalk, I realized it was pointless to run any further. I stopped, turned around, and held my arms above my head as the Herculean caught up to me, grabbed my arms and slammed cuffs on my wrists. I let my arms go limp but remained standing and allowed him to push my head into my knees and my legs into a position that gymnasts are only supposed to do. A group of agents were already surrounding me; one ripping my hat and mask off my head and others yelling at pedestrians to get off the sidewalk (I found that quite amusing and ironic when they were told to go *into* the street). A cop walked up to the scene, recognizing me from the day before and sputtered "it isn't so easy to look at me now is it?" I remained silent, ignoring the childlike comments and threats of "we got you now, " and "are you an anarchist?" After being searched two or three times, I was pushed over to a suburban and slammed against it until they shoved me inside for a few minutes. I was then put into a paddy wagon with G. During the drive, G

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pulled up and a herd of tops jumped out. At that point, he said he stopped and put his hands up, but as soon as he shouted "I quit" the cops were senselessly beating him into the

ground with their batons. There were a few cameras around, one being our friends who we had lost earlier, but were pushed away by the agents. I wonder what would've happened if those cameras *hadn't* been there...

We arrived at an office building and were taken to the 5r^ floor (which was private and unmarked as far as I could tell). We were searched a few times and then finger printed. I had identification on me so I complied with their questions. After one phone call we were taken downstairs and put into a car and taken to the Central Cellblock (the "dangerous" jail of D.C.). We were finger printed again and offered donuts or a bologna sandwich. I took the donuts out of desperation for some nourishment and was taken to my cell upstairs.

As I entered cell #43 I noticed that the rest of the cells were empty. The gate slammed shut and chills shot up my back and into my neck. The thought of Mumia penetrated into my chest. My heart raced. I peered around and examined the cracks

and corners of my five by six foot cell: The shoe marks on the mint green wall formed rainbows of memories that I would never know; the stained bars sent images of bruised wrists and chapped hands through my head. Hesitating, I gripped the naked bunk and hoisted myself on top. I looked through the bars and thought to myself, Where am I? What is this place?" As I sucked in the coldness around me, my heart cracked with thoughts of the thousands of displaced souls who i;ad been there before me...and would soon return. Was this the belly of the beast?

I fell in and out of dreams for the rest of the evening until I was awakened by rhe sound of female voices and cell gates slamming shut.. They were here; thirty Jane Does we re being brought in. I touched as many hands as I could as they walked to their cells with their juice and donuts. My door opened and a young woman walked in, dressed in a yellow hospital jumpsuit. We introduced ourselves and exchanged stories. Once everyone was in their cells, we opened the meeting that would last all night and into the morning.

The goal of our night in jail was to attract media attention by remaining in solidarity for as long as possible. We chanted for hours on end, demanding our lawyer and a phone call. After awhile, the men's voices from downstairs echoed ours. The entire jail was pumping with hope and desire; we were alive. As voices harmonized and fists and feet thundered against the walls, something changed inside of me. Fear dissipated and trust took its place. We became one.

Around 7am we were transported to the *Lucky Number*

[Image not archived]

courthouse for ^raignmenty 1 was put into a cell with twd rion-protesters for the remainder of the day. By early evening, the majority of the thirty women who were arraigned chose to remain in solidarity and sent to the D.C. Jail in shackles. The few that had "no papers" or posted bail ("no papers" meant their papers were "lost" and they were free to go) were released and I was left alone in my cell, a little shaky at the thought of spending another night in jail. I had been offered a sandwich and cookies (after asking for food three or four times throughout the day) by late afternoon and took the cookies. I don't know what time it was when I was finally taken to court but once I was there, I wasn't given a phone call or a court-appointed lawyer. A lawyer from Midnight Special (a group of volunteers that answered questions regarding the legality of situations) was waiting for G and me but could only answer questions, not represent us. We were pushed into the courtroom, my name almost immediately called and before I knew it, I heard "no papers" and the judge told me I was free to go. My charge "tampering with an automobile" was serious enough that (hypothetically, according to the U.S. Marshals) I could have faced up to five years in prison for. You might imagine how dumbstruck I was when I heard "no papers" and ordered to leave the courtroom. I nearly collapsed, as did G when he was told the same. We made our way outside for the press conference and told our story. Welcomed by hugs, blankets and Food Not Bombs, I was relieved, but my mind was still in jail, thinking of the hundreds of others who were still shackled and caged.

A18-12pm

After a good night's sleep, G and I headed to the Secret Service to collect our belongings. My arresting agent told us that he had gone to the courthouse and put in a good word, but the nice cop ensemble didn't appeal to us since they had told us earlier that they arrested us simply because of our appearance. At that point, any officer's opinion was taken with a grain of salt. G and I said our heartfelt goodbyes and headed for the D.C. Jail.

We arrived at sunset to find a group of about 40 dispersed throughout the parking lot of the jail and adjacent hospital; some playing tag, some singing, some cooking in the homemade kitchen, and the remainder mingling with police. We tried to get an update on the prisoners but were only told what everyone else scarcely knew: there were 150 left and no one could talk with them or see them. As the sun waned and a chill grew over the small camp, people gathered for a meeting to discuss the current situation and what to do in the coming hours.

The meeting was short and ended up splitting due to blocks and conflicting proposals.

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Attributing to the fact that so many had been without sleep (and one or two men were on hunger strike in solidarity with the prisoners still inside), tempers were short and ideas were taken half-heartedly. The scattered meetings continued throughout the night while food was served and warm liquids brewed. The numbers slowly drifted into the twenties as some headed for their distant homes and the

rest either attempted to sleep under a tarp or stay warm through conversation and cuddling. I decided I had too many unanswered questions to sleep since I knew the women and men inside were awake and plotting their demands for the following morning. Later in the night we were told that prisoners were going to be transferred to the courthouse as early as 4am; their public defender had made a deal with the judge to move them, post bond, issue a trial date, and push them out in an attempt to break solidarity. As far as we knew, the prisoners were not aware of any of this and were being taken to court against their will. We were at a loss of what to do since there were so few of us. After many proposals and heated concerns, we decided that we would make signs to tell the. prisoners where they were going and why.

Around 4am a group of 15 headed to the rear entrance of the jail with signs saying "FIRE YOUR PUBLIC DEFENDER" and "DON'T SIGN ANYTHING." As vans crept out and sped past us every few minutes we attempted to shout in unison "FIRE YOUR PUBLIC DEFENDER (amongst other things)" but somehow nothing was in sync. Wrapped in blankets and sleeping bags, we struggled to stay awake for the next 3 hours as vans periodically sped by with barred and tinted windows making it almost impossible to see prisoners inside. By late morning, the Midnight Specials had news that no one in our group had been transported to the courthouse. I drifted to sleep on a curb for about an hour and soon awoke to more vans and shouting, but no new information.

As the tireless day went on, the Midnight Specials were allowed to speak more with prisoners, now aware of the potential of being moved to the courthouse. The women decided to strip and go limp if they were to be taken out of their cells; the men were on hunger strike. As we marched around the jail chanting to our brothers and sisters, we heard the prisoners' voices begin to echo ours. We stopped and listened. Hope had sprung loose inside the jail; I was speechless.

In the late afternoon there was an attempt to transfer some of our prisoners to the courthouse. A small group ran to the back of the jail and attempted to slow the van to inform the prisoners of what was going on. Two people were pepper sprayed by a U.S. Marshal and one was pushed into a car, followed by a violent push to the ground (which later put

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Her in a neck brace and sling). The group followed the van for about a block with only two officials fighting them off. After the chaos, they were told to leave the neighborhood unless they wanted to be arrested. One local was forced to leave even though he lived a few blocks from the scene. Still recovering from the shock of the marshal and his uncalled for violence, we calmed down, reassembled, and

talked about what to expect next.

It was Thursday evening and things were back to a calm but questionable pace. The current information was that the prisoners would be released the next evening with the hopes of only a five-dollar jay walking infraction with the option of remaining a John or Jane Doe. There was still a good-sized group outside the jail, many talking with police and others still singing and dancing. The night rolled by and the next morning we awoke to gray skies and wet tarps.

By Friday afternoon, the prisoners were

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illustration s.3: S26 in Prague

guaranteed release by midnight. We began to cook more food, warm drinks and gather lawyers for people's stories of their treatment in jail. There were five guards in riot gear blocking the very narrow entrance to the inside of the release area. We lined the sidewalk singing and waving to the inmates we could see in the windows as we anxiously awaited our comrades' arrival.

As time began to drag, I heard cheers and hoots and locked my eyes on the guards. I saw three women proudly walk out, hands

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held, smiling from ear to ear, approach the roaring crowd. The energy I saw in those women's eyes reminded me of why I had slept outside the jail all week. As the hours passed, women and men filed out, either running or

> nearly o llapsing into the crowd, as their friends and strangers greeted them with hugs and kisses of affirmatiOTK^Once reunited with my sisters who I had spent Th knight in jail with, the crowd died off and people headed home. There was still a man and woman who hadn't been released so I waited with ten oth

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ers until they were let out.

The remaining ten of us decided to walk around the jail one last time in solidarity and thanks for the inmates' support; we had been there that week not only for our friends, but for them also, who were just as meaningful to the fight for freedom and justice. Following our march, a black van pulled up to the camp and a guard jumped out. He extended his hand and began to tell us how much he appreciated what we were doing. The small group of us gathered round in awe, blown away at rhe sight and sound of this man's quavering voice. His "mixed emotions" about our cause and his job as a security guard left me speechless. With tear-filled eyes, we thanked him for his empathy and watched him drive away. Dumbfounded, I staggered and collapsed. In my daze of disillusionment, I found the world now flooded with justice. Our revolution had begun; strangers had become allies and there were no more sides to be won. We were now

spiritual companions that could move the world in places, in people, in ways, that we've never thought possible. The world was ours forever.

MAYDAY 2K IN THE NYC

by Nick Baxter

PLANTING FLOWERS IN THE ONCE-FERTILE SOIL OF THE GARBAGE-HEAP CALLED NEW YORK CITY... Planting a forgotten beauty in the now-desolate thoughts of the cynical, apathetic masses...

...We came to New York City via train from the posh wasteland that is Connecticut this past Mayday, or May 1, 2000, not quite knowing what we were getting ourselves into. Jessica and I had read the email forwards in the days preceding the action, and had visited the Reclaim the Streets NYC website eagerly planning our adventure into the city that never sleeps. However, unable to glean much information from the all too-in secure electronic medium, we packed some food and water and headed out into the bright spring day.

We arrived at the chaos of Grand Central Station in the groggy disorientation that follows any long train ride, took the subway to

Y lower Manhattan, and headed above ground to get our bearings. Almost immediately $^{u}P^{on}$ greeting the piercing sunlight once more we became aware of the stench of bacon. No, not "the other white meat" — I'm talking about human pigs: police. There were pigs everywhere. Every street corner swarmed with dozens of pigs; every sidewalk was lined practically shoulder-to-shoulder with pigs; every street was clogged to a standstill with pig transport-devices, if not blocked off completely with barricades.

And this says nothing of the wide variety of uninvited barnyard guests present that day: pigs in riot gear, hogs on horseback, swine on bikes, porkers on motorcycles, pigs in normal uniform and plainclothes, pigs in cars (marked and unmarked), piggies in vans and trucks (marked and unmarked), and oinkers in helicopters...And all because a bunch of real humans wanted to make their voices heard and try to change this place for the better. Of course, not all these cops were there for our particular action — there had been some protests and civil disobedience earlier, targeting City Hall and the NY Stock Exchange — but the fact that there were so many in the first place proved the point that we were not welcome in this labyrinth of capitalist greed. But I'll give the pigs some credit — they later succeeded in doing their job of making our day more exciting and rewarding.

It's difficult to explain the type of tense apprehension I felt that day, walking through the gauntlet of uniforms, guns, batons, and shields, all ready to strike me if I said one wrong word or made one sudden movement while passing the time before the 4:30 meeting. My companion and I clutched each other's nervous hands tighter as we tried to stroll as nonchalantly as possible down Wall St. and Broadway — intensely aware of the hostile stares and almost-tangible suspicions of the officers surrounding us. As time crept slowly by, we ended up back where we started, at Battery Park. Settled down on a park bench, we listened to the lively rhythm of a street performer's bongo drums and kept a lookout for any fellow guerrilla gardeners.

After getting discouraged and contemplating the fruitless train ride back home, we noticed a crowd beginning to converge nearby. A young man saw us walking over and whispered to us that it was in fact the guerrilla gardening meeting, and to stay inconspicuous, as the pigs were already beginning to surround, surely itching to slap plastic ties around our wrists and cart us out of there. More waiting and nervous small-talk ensued until finally the wheels were set in motion: we were to split into small groups and make a roundabout trip to the nearest subway terminal, trying to shake any cops or suspicious followers from our tracks. As most of the crucial information about the mission was kept

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between rhe handful of main organizers (and . for good reason), my ladyfriend and I basically tagged along with a few other activists who seemed to know what was happening, fearful that we would lose the group and get lost. Fortunately for us, we never lost sight of the others amidst the general chaos of the NYC subway transit system, and even found some adventure along the way. This was because at several points the pigs were able to catch up with us, sending our group running through rhe echoing bare tunnels of the subway, looking desperately for the nearest spot at which we could transfer and elude the boys in blue. After several incidences of this, a few tense conversations over walkie-talkie with other groups, and more waiting, we arrived above ground once again in Brooklyn, hearts beating and veins pounding.

We raced to the designated sire: an abandoned, derelict plot of land shackled by a tall, menacing iron fence, overrun with prickly weeds, dead brush, and littered with

trash and debris. Nestled between rhe nondescript piles of brick and concrete that pass for city architecture and partially under a looming bridge that seemed as if it would cave in on top of us with each passing vehicle's rumble, we found — that day's promised land. Despite the immediate ugliness of our surroundings (which included, obviously, scores of police officers in a ridiculous football team formation with riot gear), our eyes were greeted with a beautiful sight that I will never forget: a huge banner tied some fifty to sixty feet up on one of the bridge supports screaming triumphantly, "FREE THE LAND!" With soaring hearts and victorious smiles, we walked with our heads held high past the rows of pigs and into our new urban playground. We were delighted to find out that most of our fellow guerrilla gardeners had already set up shop in this once-morbid meadow and were having a grand time serving free vegan food, pulling up weeds and dead brush, collecting trash into plastic bags, handing out seeds, flowers, and gardening tools, setting up banners, decorations, and maypoles, laughing, playing music on homemade drums, singing, conversing, relaxing... *living!*

Fearful of being rounded up and kicked out (if not worse) by the cops before actually getting anything done, we quickly went to work, shedding our bags and inhibitions. I found a small group of people tying long strips of fabric together to use with a tall maypole being erected, while Jessica helped pull weeds and clear the area of sticks and dead brush. I soon found out that the ropes we had been making were to be held by each of the participants of a traditional maypole dance, and before I knew what was happening I was running frantically around the pole, ducking and dodging the runners coming in the opposite direction. Stealing glances out to my

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companion I was comforted by her warm smile and the look in her eyes that I knew meant, "WE DID IT!" This haphazard, joyful game eventually came to a panting, giggling end as all the ropes were wound completely around the pole and the participants converged in an exhausted pile near the center. Soon after these festivities we resumed the task of cleaning the liberated space and organizing all the trash bags into one pile to be thrown away later. Gradually word spread that the dozens of police officers standing at the entrance of the area like useless statues had been persuaded by the legal observers (lawyers; most likely doing this pro bono) into letting all of us go at 9 PM without questioning or arrest. They were also persuaded into getting the city's sanitation department to come the following day to remove the bags full of trash and refuse we had collected. This

further raised our spirits, and just before 9 o'clock the 100 or so gardeners and activists all gathered in a huge circle holding hands, while a final impromptu statement of thanks, congratulation, and celebration was given. This closing was a moving tribute to our persistence, perseverance, and positive action, and an intense wave of joy swept through me as our last moments together that evening unfolded with the powerful chants of "WHOSE LAND? **OUR** LAND!" and, "AIN'T NO POWER LIKE THE POWER OF THE PEOPLE, 'CUZ THE POWER OF THE PEOPLE DON'T STOP!"

For those few hours on May 1, 2000 we tasted perhaps the closest thing to true freedom that our system of shackles and cages could allow. Our hearts and minds were comforted, at least temporarily, with the feelings of victory and success, and it is in the precious memories of these triumphant events that our hopes, dreams, and will to keep fighting for change are sheltered and fed. We must harness the positive energy that these small victories create, and use it to build stronger communities, form lasting bonds, and execute further actions and plans. We *can* make a difference, and this story is proof of that.

BUT THAT'S NOT ALL...we need to figure out where to go from here, what lessons were learned that day, and what else should be done next time. In thinking about what happened this past Mayday, I have gained some new understandings into direct action and civil disobedience.

My first lesson: planning, organizing, and preliminary work are insanely crucial! I realized that what happened took place only after much careful and meticulous planning and organizing. Much of this I could not even recount to you, as I was largely an outsider until the action took place; I only found out about it via email a relatively short time beforehand, and never did any extensive information gathering or participating until

the last minute due to my own busy schedule. There was inevitably much research conducted into the city's unused land, whose jurisdiction it falls under, how to get to it, how and where to elude cops, what legal repercussions to expect from such an action, where and when to meet, what techniques would be most effective, how and where to obtain legal observers, etc... With all of this-preliminary work going into one short event, it is imperative that as many dedicated people help out in this process as possible. This goes along with my realization of the lack of readily available information, but I know that this is because we live in a police state and every mode of communication open to the general public is monitored and invaded, especially when activism or direct action is involved. We can't rely on means such as the internet or phones, or sometimes even mail if we dont want to

risk getting our actions infiltrated by undercover agents or ended outright before they can even be carried out or made effective. This means we must be dedicated and involved in real-life 3D space and time; bring whatever you can to the table as early as possible, and stay informed every step of the way (D.I.Y. ethic in ftill effect here).

My second lesson: despite the fact that latecomers and rookies will undoubtedly be at a slight handicap, it is crucial to leave the action as open to everyone as possible at every step, for maximum participation and involvement. Perhaps the only thing I didn't like about the Mayday action was the lack of participation of the general public, "outsiders", and passersby.

Although I realize that its an extremely difficult task to convince any Joe or Jane Shmoe you see around you that it may be beneficial and enjoyable for them to participate in your action, it is something we have to keep working on. We need to find more effective ways of communicating and reaching out to those who would otherwise

be ignorant, in order to achieve change on a larger scale. I've realized we need to be creative, sincere, and un-conde- scending in our outreach attempts, while being careful not to divulge enough information to end the mission if it falls into the wrong hands. Strength in numbers (i.e. soli' darity or unity) combined with an inviting atmosphere to the public are absolutely

, imperative for a successful mission.

My third lesson that I kind of already knew: cops really aren't completely bad, despite the fact that I love to make fun of

them (especially in this article). Pigs are a huge problem and a constant threat to any action, guaranteed, but the key to diffusing at least some of their "power" is in dealing with them properly. I've learned that if you never deliberately provoke direct confrontation or blatantly break laws for the hell of it, it will be much easier to accomplish your mission — this much is obvious. On a subtler note, having the right body language is always helpful, such as a pleasant; calm facial expression accompanied by confident eye-contact, and hands not shoved deep into bulging pockets, where a bomb or weapon could be lurking (for all they know). Of course, the ones who know the law, and thus cops the best (besides criminals)

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are lawyers (a.k«a. criminals, in most cases). Jokes aside, there are always good, left-leaning lawyers around whom you should try to contact and persuade to be legal observers for your action, to make sure that the kids with the big toys play nice. As you read above, I learned that they really can help mediate the situation and diffuse conflicts.

My fourth lesson that I definitely already knew: New York City and its subways are like a maze of confusion for a suburban-raised youth like myself. Bring maps and don't be afraid to ask people questions when you're lost. This goes along with always being prepared.

My fifth lesson: direct action gets the goods.

If you would like to ask questions, give comments, or correspond for any reason then please get in touch with me at the address below, and we can take it from there. If you have any projects or actions you've done or are planning similar to this article's, I would love to network with you. Hopefully someday there will be networks of people who could 1 eventually carry out actions like this every day in cities and communities across the nation or world _(Fight Club_, anyone?)...We're getting close, so let's keep working.

Peace. — Nick

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Republican National
Convention, Philadelphia
provided by Chapel Hill local, H. H.

> What were we really expecting of the protests at the Republican National Convention in Philadelphia? We were nearly thirty people, all who felt compelled by their knowledge of the current sorry state of the world to make some type of stand — to at least be there in Philly. Were we expecting to win, to shut down the convention, and send George W. Bush packing home with all his bags of money-bribes to his daddy? It would be nice, but probably not. Were we expecting to adventure? Most of us were I think, after all, this type of thing doesn't happen every day. Were we expecting romance? Well, you never really know. Were we expecting the eyes of America see us on the television screen and suddenly wake up to reality? Probably. We all know they need to. While most of us come from vastly different backgrounds, since in our little group we had people ranging from an student from Oxford to a down and out anarchopunk, we all did have one expectation: To help in whatever way we could with the Revolution. Whether we were effective in that is a question only history will decide, but I'll

real harm to the system, something seemed "$>$J $\backslash$ like it was about to break. Personally, I hoped it was Americas so-called Democracy.

Then Monday was the second day of the Big March, this the Kensington Welfare Rights March, a march of homeless families right up to the convention center that was not given a permit. A permit for a protest — the whole idea's a philosophical crock a shit, but to be realistic some people won't show for a non-permitted event. While I did see these brave homeless activists, they were joined and outnumbered by hordes of home-having activists. The possibility of confrontation in this march was very real, and everywhere we say cops on bikes, cops in vans ominously going up and down side streets, and cops on every corner — waiting for us. Honestly, it seemed like a death-trap reminiscent of the PIC march in DC, in which the authorities would take advantage of an un-permitted march to arrest as many people as they could to defuse whatever direct action was going to take place in the following days. Events sure seemed to be playing into the cops hands — the march went on and on and on right up to the convention center with cops totally surrounding it, with buses and paddywagons just ready to take people away in. I saw lots of little heroics though, like activists tearing the media (who unlike the cops swamped the march to standstill) off the march, protecting the homeless children, and scouting ahead to provide reconnaissance information. The end was anti-climatic, since nothing really happened, but we all went home nervous about the direct action planned for Tuesday. For after the march, we all had a distinct feeling we were being played with by the cops, like a grubby mouse being played with by a strange blue cat.

Overall, the group in charge of the planning for the direct action, PDAG (Philadelphia Direct Action Group) did a decent job, but due to lack of organization, lack of security-consciousness, and general lack of planning managed to set the stage for the disaster Tuesday. It's far too easy to be an armchair critic, so take my words with a grain of salt. Still, while we had thousands of puppets, the general plan was to shut the entire city down by blocking off major roads and . generally causing a ruckus — in other words, actually using our right of free speech. It followed the same general gameplan as Seattle and DC, which was to try to physically stop delegates from getting to the convention, it was clear this was neither Seattle nor DC. There were simply not as many activists as they were at those events — definitely not enough to cover the whole city as PDAG planned. Also, as usual, most the activists were simply confused, and PDAG, which could have provided guidance and tactical information, seemed to have only slightly more of a

[Image not archived]

clue what to do ("Hey^ George Bush is staying in this hotel. Umm.., it would be cool if some folks would go over there and do something). Also, all decisions were made by consensus. I think consensus works great for small groups of people, but for a group of a thousand, it is idiotic to use consensus, and P-DAG tried to run everything via consensus. While it sounds noble, it actuality, what happens is that people just get bored of hearing a few people take control of the conversation, and through boredom agree to whatever anyone says it desperate hope just to end the consensus process. Also, the whole idea of one person blocking or stepping aside for the democratic process, while it from a theoretical standpoint sounds noble, is ripe for abuse. But somehow it was all pulled together at the very last minute, and people agreed at least on a time and a location to end up on the streets. Not being complete idiots, the police knew all of this because they were without doubt at the meetings. The

security was almost non-existent, they simply asked you when you came in if you were associated with the law, and they entrusted with heavy responsibility many people who just showed up a few days beforehand. Later they admitted they had been fully infiltrated by the cops, and that the people they thought were spies were actually just ordinary folks getting involved, and the ordinary folks who were even in the tactics ending up being spies. As regards other direct action groups, the Black Block brilliantly posted their meeting time over the internet and in doing so got infiltrated, and many of the older and more experienced direct action activists just got desperate. I admit, while I consider myself fully an anarchist, being an anarchist does not exclude one from being organized, prepared, or knowledgeable, especially when going into a situation rife with possibilities.

Ground Zero: We were going to reclaim the streets and shatter the myth of American Democracy, revealing it for the corporate-run lie it is. Or that was the plan.

What actually happened was quite different — we were outnumbered and outmaneuvered by the cops from the beginning. The whole thing took on the air, not of a

brave seizing the streets for the people, but of a ridiculously braze kamikaze attack on Big Brother. From what I saw, there were at least five cops for every one protester, and the protesters, while some tried to disguise themselves, were for the most part painfully obvious by their age, funky hair, and Conflict t-shirts. Most of them also wandered about fairly large groups, looking for something to do. For quite a while, it appeared like the whole Philly protest was one mass hallucination, that the protesters weren't actually going to *do* anything. Finally, something in my section happened: The Anarchist vs. Communist soccer game started in the middle of the street, and right in

front of it a group of brave and suicidal souls "hard-locked" (using chains and PVC piping to lock themselves in a line across the street), so completely blocking the street. Street closed — Protesters: 1, Capitalist Rat-Bastards and Their Tools the Police: 0. Suddenly the mood jumped from anxiety to jubilee, people moved a dumpster into the middle of the street, people jumped onto the dumpster to drum, and dance, and the for one brief, almost unreal moment — we had won. The infamous Goats with a Vote, whose exact purpose seems beyond the comprehension of mere mortals, began doing their goat-costumed dance of joy right next to me. Then the police came, not in the gas-masks and full body-armor of Seattle and DC, but in their normal light blue gear, almost comically biking around us. They blocked off all the streets

around us, encircling us and cutting off means of escape, and closed off the intersection. The media were everywhere, and we finally had to almost physically drag some of them away so we could position ourselves to "puppy-pile" (jump on people physically to prevent them from being beaten senseless by the men in blue) They began marching straight at us, hands itching at their billy-clubs. We put our little masks up, and soft-locked (human blockaded) ourselves around the hard-locked protesters. We heard them marching up to us, and we gripped ourselves tightly and whispered words of encouragement as we realized our fate was sealed. Finally, the police came, and they didn't even bother to beat us with billy clubs or pepper-spray us, which somewhat surprised us as we had seen police in similar situations go completely insane. But

here, unlike in DC and Seattle, they had complete control of the situation, so they put on a good orderly spectacle for the media. The cops simply picked us up, we went limp, and then dragged us away against our will, a process that took several hours. Not exactly a running riot, or even a dramatic inspiration I must admit, but a small if fine example of human beings looking out for each other. Protesters: 1, Capitalist Rat-Bastards and Their Tools the Police: 1.

Once everyone was dragged, some upside down or by their hair, into the bus, we began our journey into the twilight zone of the so- called justice system. While being heckled by the police, our plastic cuffs were on so tight many people lost all feelings in their hands, and many still suffer perhaps permanent nerve damage. The weather outside was burning,

and the police did nothing to alleviate the situation by turning the heat on in the buses. A few people fainted due to excessive heat. However, as I was to see again and again, in our darkest moments the people came together in solidarity and brought real

meaning to the word mutual aid. We rocked the bus when people started crying — literally crying — due to the pain of wearing hand-cuffs. The police would finally listen to us a bit and take people's hand-cuffs off after we caused enough commotion. We were then taken to the Roundhouse, a detention center, to be processed. Once in the Roundhouse, the atmosphere became elated, when we saw bus after bus of protesters come in off the streets. Even though they bore usually bad news, for the police had completely swept the streets, arresting anyone and everyone they put their

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hands on, we still wanted more company and<^ limp. This pissed the fuck out of the guards, to keep morale up. Some people snuck.their '

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hand-cuffs off and began smoking, we openly joked at the police and sang songs of Joe Hill and our younger days deep into the night. For that moment, despite the fact we couldn't even tell each other our real names, we were one family of fellow humans.

Then we realized we were one big family together, despite the strange circumstances. The police, after separating the males and females, separated some people they thought were leaders from the main groups and took them into solitary confinement and having them questioned by the FBI. Others of us were processed, and almost everyone refused to give up their name or any ID, an act called jail solidarity which usually has the effect of clogging up the police and legal system to such a degree that they comply to our demands, such as being let out on minimal charges and being tried as a group. This frustrated the police and the correction officers to no end, and they continually yelled at us for not co-operating, which only made our resolve stronger. Once processed, which included the bizarre act of having your shoelaces taken away so you don't hang yourself or other in jail, we were put 6–9 people in a filthy 6 by 8 cell, packed as tightly as sardines. We could not even all lay down at once and sleep — there simply was not enough room. Even though the cell blocks couldn't see each other, we could still organize, chat, scream, and keep ourselves from going insane. We refused to eat the "nutrition-approved" meals of two slices of stale bread with cheese and some chemical Wawa (who ironically were one of the main sponsors of the Convention — wonder what kickback). We threw the bread and cheese out of the cells, made a cross out of cheese and started worshipping it — "All hail Cheesus Slice, Lord of Lords!" Everyone begged the guards to let us see our lawyers, and when they refused we tortured them with bad humor. "What did we do — CD? C-Deez nuts!" was one of our rallying cries besides singing "Solidarity Forever, " various 80s songs, "Banned at the Roxy, " and "State Violence, State Control." Discharge would have been proud. When our friends led a vigil outside the jail, we began yelling and hanging on the walls so loud we broke the jail's light bulbs and guards started breaking down — mentally. We could hear the

women upstairs yelling and organizing too — it was very uplifting. We would yell "Hey Women! Stay Strong" and they would yell "We love you guys!", and vice versa. A more romantic moment I have never seen. It was like a mix between a disco and hell, with handcuffs if you misbehaved.

The guards took us one by one to get finger-printed and arraigned. Lots of people resisted, taking off their clothes and going

who preceded to start beating the shit out of people. I saw a guy dragged down the hall by his genitals, with a female guard mocking his small dick and then giving him a few swift blows when he said anything. She scratched her badge number off so we couldn't get her. Lots of guards just started terrorizing people, like holding them upside down to get fingerprints and nearly breaking their fingers when clenched their hands. They called one black protester who refused to co-operate "a moth- erfucking Mumia". Actually, one chant that really drove the cops almost too tears in anger was "Brick by Brick, Wall by Wall, we're gonna free Mumia Abu-Jamal". They squirmed when they heard that. Finally we all got sent to a monkey-court one by one where a judge laughed at us with his attorney (who just sat there playing with his pencil!) and preceded to charge us with trumped up nonsense. We were then sent to a maximum security jail for "quarantine" for a week- after all, the authorities can't have us standing around spreading our radical ideas about freedom, equality, justice and anarchy. Might cause a revolution if they're not careful. We continued to hunger strike, and every other non-protester prisoner I met was behind us, giving us cries of solidarity and raised fists. We even tried to hunger strike with all the rest of the prisoners across the nation against the prisonindustrial complex, and call it "Hungering for Justice". But we could never call out — the phones were always mysteriously not working — so I don't know if anyone ever figured it out. I really don't think the brutality was out of the ordinary for the police — all prisoners get treated like shit, and to them a bunch of "hippie" (as they called us) protesters were no exception.

The whole prison system needs to be dismantled — ask anyone whose ever been there.

It doesn't reform. Prisons destroy human dignity, turning both guards and prisoners into monsters.

What is far from ordinary and incredibly fucked up is the bail money — they charged people with a few misdemeanors about $15, 000 bailon average and people accused of felonies (like throwing a bike at a cop!) up to $450, 000 dollars, and people they thought were leaders up to a million dollars. To get out you have to pay one-tenth of that bail, and the rest gets sued out of you if you^on't show up in court (also known as "government tracks you down and steals all your earthly possessions, then throws you back in jail"). The police kept taunting us about being a bunch of rich white college students, but from personal experience most of us weren't. While my cell-mates in Roundhouse did include a white, rich college-kids (who were arrested for making puppets!), they also included a concerned middle-school teacher, several home

less, punks, a working-class pizza delivery boy,

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and older Quaker. I know a guy who lost his. home due to the fine, several people who lost jobs, and one person whose dad had to mortgage the house to get him out of jail. This is ridiculous — and they're honest about why they're doing it: They're trying to cripple the movement by ruining its members lives by whatever means necessary. Let's face it folks: This is no game — this is serious, and there are serious consequences to our political power. But we got the capitalist fucks running scared — and we're really just a bunch of unorganized kids.

But we did get our act organized to get people out of jail. I myself, when finally released from jail, and many others spent night after night without any sleep trying to figure out who was in jail, how to get money to bail them out, and how to get everyone home. Some people camped outside the jails until their loved ones were free. It was truly an amazing time to be alive — when I got too frustrated in dealing with the lawyers, the media, and the prison a hippie Quaker women would sit me down and calm me. I have to admit, if I were a religious, I'd definitely be a Quaker. One by one we got our people out, and finally, we too could go home.

Home to what? Let's face it — we were bunch of unorganized kids with immense ideals and passion, and now we were straddled with fines and stuck in the legal in/ justice system. In retrospect, Philadelphia was a massacre. Everyone got arrested, the delegates got to their convention, and many protesters had their lives ruined. The cops were well-prepared and we weren't. The Republicans snorted their coke and drank their wine like we weren't even there. The CIA has now moved their main focus of operations from international terrorism to internal protest — now the whole weight of the government will be trying to shut us down. Still — we are a threat. To the punks out there, I am finally proud to be a part of punk culture — punks formed one of the largest groups out there and many of them were on the front lines, doing things others wouldn't dare. To the anarchists, the spirit of anarchy has definitely influenced the entire movement, and anarchists could lead the movement from being one a fractured reformist movement to a true revolutionary movement for freedom. However, we are simply not organized enough, or serious enough in both our ideals and our actions, as we should be. The government has clearly learned from Seattle and DC, why didn't we? They had clearly infiltrated all of P-DAG, and knew our every move. They treated us as terrorists, not protesters.

Sending a bunch of kids to the streets of some city they don't know to meander around, protest things, and block delegates works only if there is a fuck of a lot of people

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t they're up , neither side

really saw it coming. We need to stop being mere protesters, stop looking like terrorists, and become an organized and coherent force for revolution grounded in the people. We need to reach out into our local communities more and plan with

them. It's incredibly easy for cops to arrest a bunch of political pilgrims who travel into town for a weekend, but they can't arrest a whole community. Imagine if rhe entire city of Philadelphia had been there in the streets — then the city would have truly been shut down. Enough jails simply do not exist for everyone to be thrown into. Revolution requires going home and talking to local grass-roots organizers, local businesses, high schools — everyone — about your experiences, your political views, and what we as people can do to help ourselves, if* not overthrow capitalism, at least turn the ride on the new wave of corporate fascism that is destroying everything and everybody. Revolution requires organizing, taking part in local community actions, local issues, and forming real local communities. Eventually the government and the corporations will hunt us down and try to destroy us, and we need our communities at our backs. The era of the weekend protester must end now — we must instead become revolutionary in our every moment. Until this happens, there will never be a revolution. As a consequence, we all have a more than probable chance of destroying ourselves and taking the whole planet with us.

Let us look at the supposedly most revolutionary faction in the current movement, the Black Block. First, the black block is necessary. The government strikes back and they physically hurt people. It is only a matter of time before they start shooting people, especially if we get more organized and become a real danger to the corporate Reich. An extralegal force of revolutionaries committed to fighting, physically if need be, against the government in whatever form necessary is needed. However, right now, due to heavy media coverage, it may very well become a bunch of kids in Conflict shirts throwing rocks at the

police. That is simply stupid, and only the most removed from reality of us can really sir back and say "Hey, the people will see the destruction as art". Fuck that. They need to see the destruction not as art, but as concrete and needed tactics meant to defend people. To do this, the Block must be tactical and strike large corporations like the Seattle protesters did with Starbucks, with very explicit reasoning. We should then, quite honestly, spread our thoughts and our ideas through whatever channels. Break a window, and then spraypaint the reason why right next to it. And don't just go out and there to break windows, but break them to cause a distraction when the cops starting beating the fuck out of peo-

pie. The anarchists could be the leaders of the movement. Of all the factions, we are the most passionate, with one of the best critiques of the entire system of relations under capitalism. We just have to prove we are responsible. Other groups don't have to know our plans — that would be compromising security — but they should be able to trust us and be proud of our presence there. The movement in the 60s was destroyed by Maoists, lifestyle rebellion hippies, and art-as-revolution anarchists. Anarchism could succeed. If we can demonstrate that we are fucking serious and fucking intelligent, then anarchism can progress beyond being a lifestyle into a real fucking movement, and then into a real fucking world.

As for being revolutionary in our every moment, I'm not saying in anyway that we should all withdraw from all aspects of our lives except for politics. We should instead strive to be full human beings and realize that

there is nothing really revolutionary about being revolutionary. Revolution is not some far off socialist utopia. Revolution could be our decisions right now. People seizing control of their own lives, making their own decisions, fighting for their rights — that is the most natural thing a person could do when faced with the situations we are living under. A television-brainwashed corporate temp slave with no dignity or freedom — that is the most unnatural state. Look at your hands. Were they not built to grasp, to hold, to manipulate? Likewise our minds and bodies were meant to move, to think, to plan, to act, and to serve not only our own benefit but to

t of everyone and our environment.

I guess in that regard love of one's fellow humans is one of the most revolutionary values of all. If we are to be revolutionary in our every moment, then others will see our lives, feel the deprivation and destruction of capitalism and join us. When enough people join us, either bit by bit or in one giant collapse we will destroy capitalism and erect an alternative based on human and ecological values. Wc need more than a few revolutionaries, more than a Black Block. We need the people to become aware of their own actions and their own power.

The future belongs to the people, not the big corporations and big government. I he future belongs to us. We must simply seize it and never let it go.

Love and Revolution,

Hairball

Melbourne, Australia,
September 11, 2000
by Dan/NoLongerBlind

An account of life before, , leading up to, and after the Sil World Economic Forum protests in Melbourne, Australia.

Background Information / Introduction

No doubt you would have heard of the N30 protests in Seattle, or the Al6 protests in Washington. I have written this under the assumption that you may not have heard much about what happened down here in Melbourne, Australia, from a perpective that

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isn't that of the tn4» media. Sll (September "11: isn't anyone gettm^sick of this whole let- ter/number combination yet?!) was a protest/blockade/mass action against the World Economic Forum which was meeting at the Crown Casino in Melbourne. The WEF comprises of the richest fuckers in the world, who get together to discuss the "merits of globalisation", and (covertly, of course!) how to extend their control over the world and our lives. Seeing as the downfall of capitalism was high on my list of priorities of "Things To Do" this lifetime, I was really excited to be there.

Now, first things are first. I wanted to write this article from a purely clinical standpoint to avoid some of the very painful and depressing things which my time in Melbourne represented to me. However, in light of how tedious and boring it would be for you to read, I've decided to open my heart here. Melbourne was definately one of the most awesome experiences of my life, but for many reasons it was one of the most excrutiatingly painful experiences of my life (which, all things considered, could correlate with the former?). A short time before Sll my girl- friend/lover/best friend/soulmate decided to end our two year relationship (we have lived together for 1 ? years now) and to pursue a new relationship with my best friend and, coincidentally, OTHER housemate. So, while I would like to claim that I am the revolutionary who is totally fine with this situation, living with your ex-girlfriend and her new boyfriend (also your best friend) was taking a toll on my sanity. When we were going to SI 1, we were all going together and I knew it was going to be hard for me. So a lot of what I write will be influenced by this situation, that I was in a terrible emotional state whilst down there and therefore cannot report on a "textual basis", that I would like to. Understand? OK, let's go.

Here is a short excerpt from an article I wrote about life before Sll for my own 'zine:

"This September, I went on a trip down to Melbourne for a mass action against the World Economic Forum. The trip lasted just under a week, and though that may seem short to some, I can say with confidence that this was one of the longest weeks of my life. Full of adventure, fun and mayhem; of dancing in the streets, fighting with police and and some incredible hardcore bands. Here is the story of that week.

"... I was tired, hungry and in a city I did- nt know so I was feeling just a 'little' overstressed...

"...that night I couldn't sleep I was so angry at everything. I sat there feeling the blood pumping through my head, thinking cold, bitter thoughts with an empty stomach and a broken heart.

"...after a boring meeting and some food

if front the gracious 'Food Not Bombs' we all cruised over to check out the Casino, which was where the WEF was being held. Well, fuck, you would have to be there to believe how huge this place was. It's hard' to understand how and why someone would need to build such a place for people to come and throw their money away at. But, they did, and as an example of how much profit this place pulls: the three days that we shut it down (September 11–13) it was estimated they had lost $10 million. Fuck, that's more money than anyone needs to feed their entire family over 10 lifetimes, isn't it?

"Come the morning of S-l 1, we were all as ready as we could be. We awoke at 4.30am, got our stuff ready and caught a 5.30am tram into the city, a short walk away from the casino. We arrived, a motley crew of anarchists and socialists and -ists, clad in ski-masks, bandannas and multi-coloured overalls, some smiling, some scared: we were ready...

"...and over the next few days of intense violence on the part of the police, running, dancing, screaming, laughing, talking, arguing, love and hate I realised that nothing could have prepared us for it!"

The reason I wanted to use these excerpts is because they articulate some of my feelings in Melbourne. It was such a hostile situation to be in, the meetings and convergence spaces we went to were full of untrusting people trying to be as covert as possible in fear of the police, as it was understood that there were police spies 'everywhere.' This unhealthy dose of paranoia was beginning to get to me after a while, and I'm still feeling that untrusting insecurity which was drilled into us in Melbourne. One thing I remember was this anarchist bookshop we went to, and my friend Dave passed them a copy of the 'zine' by 'Revolutionary Action', an organisation devoted to the downfall of capitalism and the construction of some form of socialism. While I am definitely not a socialist, they are awesome to work with. What got me was the dick at the bookshop whose first reaction was "oh, there isn't any Marxist crap in there, is there?". I was just sick and tired of the faction fighting political bullshit, and it was only the second day! A quick note: it's unhealthy to be dogmatic about anything. Sure, anarch-'ism' is a great thing, but if you treat it like it's the be-all-and- all then you become like a religous zealot, like these guys obviously were. It was fucking gross, I wanted to puke.

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Organization / Strategies

Basically, there was a very concrete aim to what we were trying to do in Melbourne, and that was to blockade the entrances to the casino to prevent delegates from entering and thus, hopefully, fucking up the meeting and showing our disapproval for capitalism, globalisation and all it's destructive extensions. To

blockade the entrances, groups of people would stand at the entrances *locked-on to eachother (arm in arm) and chant to any delegate who came to enter to "fuck off", but usually in a more 'media friendly' way. There were some chants which I will never forget, mostly because of how disgusting they were! For example:

"We will, we will stop you!" Sung to the tune of "We Will Rock You" by Queen (ah, the amount of times we've talked about Queen over the past few weeks!)...

"Shut it down, shut it, shut it down!" Said really fast in some sort of head jerky techno dance music pattern.

"Join our line, join our line!" Sung by people whenever you'd walk past. The problem with this is, usually you'd be going somewhere important and people would hurl abuse as you passed them for another area.

There were two groups of organisational strategies apparent at sll. First, the 'official' "Si 1 Alliance", who were organizing in a traditional 'socialist' way from my understanding. No, I can't articulate this, this was just a description given by someone for it. It doesn't help, does it? OK.

They organized on the basis of a group of people marshalled by people identifiable as 'marshalls'. These 'marshalls' were supposed to know all about the area we were to cover, about first aid and legal advice, about what to do in certain situations, and they

had a level of 'authority' invested onto them for this information. More information on these people later!

The other way of organizing was in Affinity Groups'. If you are unfamiliar with this, it's pretty easy to understand — it was basically a group of people you have 'affinity' with, familiarity with, friendship with. For an example of an affinity group, our group consisted of about 7 people who all knew each other relatively well. We would stick together and keep an eye out for one another. We would always organize meeting places if we would be separated and we kept to it. If one of us went missing, we would find the person before moving on.

Each affinity group decided what they were going to do. Our group in particular was a mobile group. We walked from blockade to blockade, filling it up if it needed numbers, and when it had enough numbers we would move on. This way, we did a lot of walking and running from place to place over the time we were there. It did mean that we missed a lot of the 'action' which usually happened in certain blockades at certain times, but it also meant that we were able to keep the numbers up where they were needed. In hindsight, it would have been a good idea to not have run around so much!'

Other affinity groups did different things. There were street performers, a huge truck

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which played that 'dance, music; that the kids listen to these days (!h mobile groups, vandals, a self-proclaimed 'Black Bloc' who romanticised the whole thing to the point of ridiculousness and people who just stayed on a certain blockade for the whole day.

Day One

As I said earlier, we arrived very early to the casino and it was still dark when we got there. We had arranged to meet a group of people known as 'Red & Black' as it was safer to be around a huge group of people at this time of morning. As soon as we got there, it started pissing down with rain and my feet got wet there and then. Fuck! For the record, I spent the entire day with wet feet and when I took my shoes off that night, it looked like I'd been having a bath for my entire life.

We took shelter and started to do blockade tactic training. The group that we arrived in, which was basically the 20 or so people who came from Wollongong (my home town, fool!) split in half, half of us deciding to stay with Red & Black and the rest of us scouting the outsides of the casino.

At this stage of morning, there were a lot of huge jock motherfuckers around. For example, I was wearing a ski-mask (for reasons I will articulate later) and this' HUGE guy walks up to me looking FURIOUS and says "the last time I saw that it wasn't a pretty sight". I hightailed it fast, this guy was three times bigger than me!

We walked around, surveying each blockade. At this stage of the day, the police looked very confused as they didn't know what to expect. We walked around for a little while, and then I freaked out worrying about Jyoti's (my ex-girlfriend) safety and decided to walk back to Red & Black and meet them there. My friend's Luke and Keith came with me. As we were walking back, this group of jocks were eyeballing us.

One says to Keith: "what a life!", and Keith says "It's better than yours!" and he got angry and started following us. He didn't do anything.

We found Jyoti and our friend's Dave and Lee and formed our affinity group there and then, deciding to be a mobile group and we started moving.

Today the police didn't know what to expect, and although they knew it was a non-violent protest they were still pretty scared. There were so many people they couldn't really do anything, and we kept out 2/3 of the delegates which was so awesome. They werent very violent today, but my friend Luke got kicked in the chest by a horse and he coughed up a hunk of blood (gross!) and Jyoti almost suffocated when police got violent on a blockade that we were on.

Anyhow, I won't detail everything that happened because it would take way too long. I organised for me and Keith to stay at my

friend Mark's place and we did, because the house where everyone else from Wollongong was Staying was packed with people. We hung out, listening to records and watched an Unbroken video, then we crashed.

Day Two

Today we had much less numbers. I knew this because, when me and Keith arrived at the casino we were told "go to this blockade now!" and we ran down to it. It was down a couple of streets, and so we turned a corner to face about 50 riot cops with sticks and horses and masks and shields and they looked fucking psycho! Behind them, in a small intersection, there were easily 200 police standing around armed and angry. We forced them all back into the casino, and then me and Keith were told what had actually happened 15 minutes before we arrived.

Basically, there was a blockade on one of the gates the buses (which the delegates wanted to enter in, fucking smartasses!) were going to enter, and it was there for about ? an hour. Suddenly, a huge line of police horses arrived, and police on motorbikes and riot cops with huge sticks came out of nowhere and started beating people up to form a path for the bus, and they zoomed through at about 70km an hour!

Today, there were much less people and the cops knew we were 'non-violent' — even 'pacifist' — and they took advantage of this. People were beat up really bad today. It was fucked! My friend Luke got punched in the head and guts by a cop at one of the blockades he was at.

Anyhow, today I realised how fucked the marshalls were. Basically, they were making decisions on the part of a blockade without consulting the blockade, they were telling people what to do (including stupid shit like "turn your backs to the police", whereupon the police would hit the back of your head or "sit down in front of the horses", whereupon the horses would stomp on you) and were basically of no purpose whatsoever. I received more assistance from people in the street who I asked than these marshalls, identifiable by their blue scarfs.

Also, I realised how fucked it was wearing a ski mask. I wanted to wear it just in case I became involved with anything compromising, and also because the police were taking photos of protesters and I didn't know whether I had a file with ASIO

(Australian Security Intelligence Organisation) which this photo could become a part of. Anyhow, every time I turned around there was some fucking photographer from some mass media trying to get my photo because it looked so 'violent and 'dangerous'. The majority of photos taken would have had me flipping them off, but it was just disgusting how many there were! So, I decided that I'd rather not have that photo

in the newspaper and I wore a bandanna over my face instead (a good choice, now I could breathe!).

That night, shortly after I left (I was putting in a twelve hour day here!) the police went really violent and fucked people up. My friend got a broken nose, another has a huge gash taken out of their head and a cracked skull, I know of people with broken arms, punctured lungs and cracked ribs. It was total police brutality!

Day Three

Because of my emotional state, I couldn't stay in Melbourne any longer and today decided to try and get home. I managed to hustle a ride in a mini bus going back to Wollongong, and I got back late on this night, and finally got to lay on my bed and cry, for the first time in a week.

*

[Image not archived]

illustration s.7: S26 in Prague

Conclusion

Obviously, I can't conclude this. It's so soon to what has happened, I have so many thoughts going through my head that I need to sort out — as do many of the other people who were in Melbourne. I have a friend suffering from Post Traumatic Stress, who has panic attacks whenever she sees a police car. In fact, I know of people who suffered from PTS just from watching the violence on television, and my mum was so worried about me that she has to take a week's stress leave!

In the next issue of 'no longer blind' (#9) there will be an open forum discussing what

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over the: streets and helicopters overhead the whole time I'd been there. I had been thinking

about this demonstration for 3 months now and hoping that it would be next in the string of legacy protests that were N30 Seattle and A16 Washington DC.

Tuesday morning we headed off to the meeting point at Nam?sti Miru square. There we met up with six friends of ours from Germany so we now totalled 10. There were to be three organized marches (blue, yellow, and pink) to the congress center which were all declared illegal by Czech officials. Around 11:30 we left Nam?sti Miru with the blue march, sticking more or less with the black block. We all locked arms and the march kept stopping and starting, people were breaking off to spray graffiti, some asshole fascist/nazi types harassed us...I was nearly exploding with adrenalin and nervous

energy. Not far from Vysrehad near the intersection of Krokova and Lumirova we encountered a police blockade. I was pretty far back and all I could see was the huge globe some demonstrators had made being sprayed with water cannons and bobbing up and down. Once I made my way to the front I could see that people had already started hurling rocks and bottles at the police who responded with more water. They would occasionally swoop down a hill where members of the press were trying to photograph and videotape the events but always retreated. At one point it looked like the police were making a full retreat and I, absolutely dizzy from excitement, charged forward with the crowd only to be pushed back by tear gas and concussion grenades. I saw several people hurt, bleeding mostly from their heads which showed where the police were aiming their weapons.

Since this was the first time I was ever in the thick of a violent demonstration I scurried around near the front with rocks in my hands, unable to get the courage to actually do something with them. After being hit by a tear gas canister and some rocks thrown by the police I got angry enough to launch some of the rocks. I spent quite some time trying to get close enough to throw more but kept being turned back by the tear gas and concussion grenades. When 6 tanks were rolled down it was evident that we wouldn't be able to get past them. Some people however continued vigilantly and I saw several molotov cocktails flying through the air. Yannick saw 4 police officers catch on fire and people scrambled to grab their shields and batons. Four of our German friends grabbed a ton of rocks and marched toward the police in a line punching the air with their fists and shouting, "No justice, no peace! Fuck the police!" and I got chills down my spine.

The battle continued for about two hours until the police managed to force us all back down the street we came from. A cement train

pulled up behind us, ln^^ome?kihd of feeble attempt to block Us in between it and the

police but there were several ways to get past it. By then it was 3 pm when the IMF meeting was supposed to be over so I felt defeated. The police had successfully kept us from reaching the meeting center and it seemed like complete failure.

For the next hour or so I wandered around trying to figure out if anything more could be done. Every time the police started to attack the crowd I would lose track of everybody I was with but managed to more or less stick with Derek and Yannick. We heard some people were moving up to the congress center to surround it so we marched up some steps on a steep hill and somehow arrived with no police interference although the complex seemed to be heavily guarded everywhere else. There were some cops there and people in suits, presumably IMF delegates, standing on the roof. The riot police formed lines a few times but would break up shortly afterwards. Nothing much seemed to be happening so I took a nap in the grass.

About fifteen minutes later someone tapped my shoulder. "I think it's better you are awake now." I looked up and saw riot police making a bigger formation than before. I scrambled up to where Derek and Yannick were and a few minutes later the pigs

attacked us and started beating the shit out of people. I ran down a path until I reached a police blockade and had no choice but to slide (more like fall) down the side of the very steep hill. Things seemed to calm a bit so Yannick and I climbed back up and saw loads of fuckers in suits standing on the roof, at least ten times as many as before. Seeing these assholes on the roof who are destroying the planet and people's lives drew anger and hatred out of me like nothing before and I had to scream "Fuck you!" at them a few times, wishing I could pelt them with rocks instead. There were now a lot of police behind the blockade on the path and they charged us again from about 20 meters from where I was standing, sending me back down the hill on my ass. This time the police kept pushing forward so I was forced to run down yet another steep hill. Derek tried to grab me as we were running and he sent us both tumbling down to the bottom. When the police stopped attacking us and shooting tear gas/concussion grenades we climbed up only to see a big police bus pull up. We scrambled back down to the bottom just in time to miss the second wave of gas and concussion grenades. Walking on a path at the bottom of the hill I saw some police grab a protester on the street above and aggressively try to force him to get down. A group of us clambered up the hill, taking photos and shouting at them, "Everyone can fucking see what you're doing! Fucking assholes!"

After walking for a bit it was obvious we

[Image not archived]

could do nothing!more;- especially with the peace police faction of the protesters shouting at everybody throwing rocks so we decided to head to the Opera where the delegates were supposed to have some sort of dinner and entertainment. On the way we met up with a huge crowd of Italians and all of us boarded a tram to the center which was pretty amusing. When we arrived at the Opera we turned a corner and looked down at Vaclavske Nam?sti (Wenceslas square), the huge shopping/tourist area in front of the Opera, absolutely overflowing with people. It was seriously a jubilant sight. The McDonald's was already completely destroyed as well as some bank windows. From this point on it was complete mayhem. Riot police were constantly forming lines and attacking everybody they encountered, even tourists and locals trying to leave some of the businesses. I had several close calls and did my best to stick around the area without being beaten or arrested. I had completely lost everybody during one police rush when I ran down a side street so I was alone for about 15 minutes which was nerve-racking. It was pretty dark by this time and the scene at the square was like something out of a movie that looks totally unreal and exaggerated onscreen. People running and screaming, clouds of tear gas, police in riot gear randomly attacking and arresting people — I couldn't believe what was happening in front of me. We all managed to regroup and after seeing what seemed like a mile of police cars and buses we decided it was best to leave the area. Once we were in the flat we were sleeping, I asked what happened to two of the German guys, Mario and Philip. Nobody knew. I found out a few weeks later that they had been arrested and kept in jail for 2–3 days, Philip with a broken hand.

> At 11 the next morning we headed off to Nam?sti Miru where everyone was supposed to meet. There were groups of police on nearly every corner on the way there and we were, of course, stopped and searched. I was a bit nervous since I had my passport in a plastic bag taped to my leg which looks pretty sketchy and my bag was filled with supplies for the demonstration. Yannick was taken away but the rest of us were let go. I wasn't about to walk through the dozens of other police so Greg, Derek, and I opted to head back while Marian, Sascha, and Jorn continued on. They were immediately stopped and searched by the next group of cops and arrested. The three of us that remained went to the INPEG infocenter and found out that there would be no demonstrations or actions that day but there might be some peaceful protest organized for the next day. We also heard that people who had been arrested were being beaten, sexually harassed, and tortured by the police. An Israeli guy that Yannick knew told us about a march to the prisons that was sur-

who was made to stand against a wall with his arms and legs in the "spread and search" position for 4 hours. We ate some bread and tofu together and headed off to the old town center where we heard there was a meeting at 9. We arrived to see what was basically a street party. I bumped into my friend Nick who explained that the meetings had been stopped that afternoon, a day earlier than planned. The IMF and World Bank said they worked really fast and finished everything they needed to do in two days but we all knew that was bullshit. Contrary to what INPEG denounced as "fruitless expressions of powerlessness and political immaturity, " it was obvious that the violence sent a very clear, effective message. The street party was a celebration — we fuck

ing her that she jumped out of a window and cracked her skull. Others were pepper-sprayed and beaten and, of course, denied access to medical and legal help. When I heard about all of this I was enraged and wished I had done more to fight the fucking assholes that are getting away with this bullshit. Ralph said that what happened to him only made him more angry and more motivated to continue to fight. These organizations must be stopped and Prague showed me that we can stop them. I made a pact with myself that any time the WTO, IMF, or World Bank are meeting, no matter where it is in the world, I will be there.

Traveling Through Bosnia

I slept about two hours and woke up feeling sick. Things had settled during the night but I was feeling rough as shit, physically and mentally. The past few days had been hard: never more than a few hours of sleep, always up early, long drives and problems at every border. Not enough food, not enough rest, we ran on forty-five minutes of adrenaline just to play the music, then spent the rest of the day trying to recover our strength. The fifteen of us crammed into these little apartments and dorm rooms at night, into the van all day; I hadn't been able to find any personal space. The

apartment in Klagenfurt was small but cozy. There was a woman who gave us bread to eat in the morning; I still don't know exactly who she was. Anyway, we hit the road to Banja-Luka early.

I crawled into the back of the van, sleep descended and I spent most of the long drive in a hazy state of light comatose. We went through something like three borders and each time you cross a border it's a fucking hassle because we always have to lie to the customs officials and hope the border police don't search the van. But they always search the van. And no matter how thoroughly you prepare, it's always a high-pressure moment when you drive up to some soldier-of-fortune motherfucker with a badge and a gun and pretty much the ability to shoot you dead. Then you hand over your passports with a bullshit story about being "tourists" and hope for the best. You've got to be on your toes, talk fast and look confident about your story. And never, *never* ask to use the bathroom.

Anyway, by sunset we were driving through the mountains of Southern Croatia. It was an eerie experience to drive through these old villages and see the standard of living and think about what it's like to live in such a place. These families were really living at subsistence level, right off the land. Every house had chickens and piles of wood, ragged old barns and rusted tools, woodstoves out in the yard. Your sitting in the back of the van, weary from the constant travel, looking out the window, watching these old houses roll by. And every so often you catch a passing glimpse of a pale white corpse hanging from a sort of teepee made with branches lashed together at the top with rope. "Wait, was that..." you think. Then another one goes by, you realize it's a slaughtered pig, some of them have been cut down the middle, exposing the rib cage. Intellectually, you *assume* these animals are killed for food; but you don't really know, not for sure. You notice there are also skinned chicken bodies hanging from the branches of

trees. Feral-looking dogs are prowling around and every once in a while you see and old man with a hat standing motionless by the .side of the road, expressionless, he doesn't look at you, he leans on a cane, he's a farmer in southern Croatia and he has no idea what punk rock is, he has no idea what Catharsis is trying to do. Then you see he has a Pepsi in his hand and you realize what you're up against.

The closer we got to the Bosnian border, the darker it became and the worse the road got. In the twilight it seemed the place was haunted by memory; the landscape was utterly vacant, but there was evidence of terrible things. We passed burned-out houses and apartment buildings, scarred and torn with bullet holes. There were ghost villages full of empty, abandoned houses, cars burned to their skeletons overturned by the side of the road, huge holes in sides of buildings caused by artillery fire.

After hours and more hours of driving, we were flagged down by pair of soldiers standing by the side of the road. They took our passports and compared them to a list on the hood of their patrol car. "They must be looking for somebody, " said Matt. At this point, you're thinking to yourself: we don't even speak the same language. We

don't know our rights or their privileges. They have guns. We are in the middle of fucking nowhere. They told us to keep going.

When we finally got to the Bosnian border, the sky was black as coal and none of us had any idea what was going to happen. There was a small bridge. And soldiers. We stopped and handed over our passports, which they held for about thirty minutes while they checked us out and made strange paperwork. We told paraplegic jokes to ease our anxiety. Then they let us on in. Actually the Bosnian border was more rational and practical than most of the other borders. The Bosnians were worried that we didn't have insurance for our van (rightly so — because we didn't!) whereas most of the other just wanted to bust us for small amounts of drugs so that they could fine us and keep it for themselves.

Once through the border, it wasn't far to Banja-Luka. I fell back asleep in the van and as I drooled on my guitar amp and flirted with semi-consciousness, I heard the others voices. "We need to get out of here, " one said. "Just go, Alexei, just go." A voice told me to look out the window and when I raised my head I saw outside the van a small village of tents, constructed of wood and plastic, camp fires and people cooking over fifty-gallon barrels, kids and dogs running around. There was no electricity, it was dark, like really dark. Every place gets dark, I guess; but few places get as

dark as that bus station in Banja-Luka. We had no vital information about the show except for the promoters name and phone number, so we drove to the bus station to call him. He told us to stay put, he would meet us in an hour.

Standing around the van, a little edgy, perhaps a little nervous, I absorbed the sights and sounds of Banja-Luka. There were various sketchy characters around, standing, waiting on their busses, smoking cigarettes, looking suspicious. There were others who lived there. Bojan, the promoter, later told us that the tent village is inhabited by Yugoslavian refugees who were driven from their homes during the war. "The government helps them some, " he said, "but not much."

At this point, I thought to myself: *right now I feel like absolutely anything can happen next.* And it was true, none of us knew the promoter or anything about the Bosnian scene, we're waiting for him at the bus station next to a camp of Yugoslav gypsies *[editors note: gypsies are a distinct ethnic group, not just refugees... these weren't gypsies].* I thought: "Is this guy going to show up with a Chain of Strength windbreaker and a pair of New Balances and take us to play for a basement full of middleclass Bosnian hardcore kids? Is an army going to come through and start wrecking shit? Are we going to get robbed standing here? Are those gunshots?" Some of the kids playing around were setting off fire crackers every minute and a half or so. Each time I heard the sound, my blood curdled and my eyes flinched open. It was so dark; there were many people standing around nearby, but you couldn't see anyone's face. We waited.

Bojan came after an hour and directed us to the show space, which turned out to be a pretty typical kind of rock stage with a tall stage and loud PA system. Bojan told us it was the first hardcore show they'd had since the war, which is pretty fucking cool;

but I don't know whether or not to believe him. Another woman 1 spoke with told me they have about seven shows a year. I don't know what Bojan meant by "hardcore show."

After the van was loaded, I was sitting outside on the edge of a concrete patio next to a restaurant or night club that was closed. I watched a shadow looming up behind me and when I turned I found an old Bosnian man, the proprietor of the restaurant. I started to get up, expecting him to yell at me and kick me off his property like they do in America. But this guy didn't want me sitting on the cold stone, he showed me to a bench constructed outside one of the restaurant windows. "We don't even have the same alphabet, " I said and gestured a thank you. He nodded, and walked off.

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-^I^LAW^^' / > After the show-we went bad? to someone's apartment (a friend of Bojan s whose name I never got). I was dead tired and went to bed immediately. In the morning it was pouring rain. I ran out to the van, where Ernie, Josh, Christian, and Alexei were sleeping. It was early, I remember that. There was like five or six days there where we were going to bed at four or five AM and getting up at nine AM to move on to the next town. A week of four hour nights can take it's toll, especially when you're not eating much.

It wasn't a long drive to the town in Croatia where we were scheduled to play; but we knew it would take a while to find the place because we had no vital information about the club itself and no real idea where exactly it was; plus we had to make it out of Bosnia first. We were right to be concerned, when we got to where we thought the border would be located, we found only a very long, very still line of cars. Christian went ahead on foot to check out the situation; but he returned unsure of what to make of it. "There's some kind of

activity at the front of the line, " he said. Turns out that Croatia and Bosnia are separated by a river and the bridge had somehow been destroyed. So all of us would-be commuters had to wait for the army to set up a pontoon bridge before we could cross, which explained the line.

We made it across okay, but our Hungarian friends didn't; they were rejected, because their paperwork was out of order, and forced to drive all the way around Bosnia to another border crossing. We waited for them all night, sure they were in prison, and had to miss the show. We never carry paperwork with us, anywhere, just give blank looks and seem certain that we can't be stopped. I guess that's the moral of the story.

Catharsis South American
*Guerrilla Tour, Fall** 2000

*(thats spring north of the equator, remember) provided by your lovable editor

[Image not archived]

front of a 'policeman^..), and everyone who talked to us made a big fucking deal about how we were "leaving civilization" and all this other really ignorant bullshit.

Really, any place seems wild and exotic when you first arrive, because you project your own fear of the unknown onto it. When we first got off the plane, into hot summer weather (we had left shivering winter in New York), everything did seem crazy at first: "Wow, did you see that tree? We don't have trees like that in the U.S!" "Look at that shantytown — fuck." "Oh my god, that's really Portuguese!!" But after we'd been there for a while, it was no more exotic than any other place (in fact, coming back to the U.S.A. was a real shock — everyone seemed so unhappy here, all the fucking amenities seemed so unnecessary, and though the drinking water in South America never gave me trouble, contrary to popular myth, the tapwater in the U.S. wrecked my life for a few days when I got back!), and that's when we stopped being just adventure-happy First World punk kids on

[Image not archived]

tour and started really learning. I think it was really important for a band like ours, with our political pretensions and so on, to actually go to the "Third World" (whether Brazil, Argentina, Chile, or especially Uruguay actually count as Third World is controversial, I guess — but the way I see it, you can see pieces of the Third World everywhere, in Detroit ghettos just as in small town Peru: the Third World is basically the parts of the world that have been designated by capitalist power as waste dumps and sources of cheap/slave labor), to have real experiences and faces to connect it with, so all our talk about imperial-

I. I stayed up later than everyone else on the flight south, totally carried away by the thrill of setting out for a new world. On the advice of PfM (my old comrade who I hadn't seen since the Catharsis tour in 1997, who joined us for this again, rekindling an old and troubled friendship), I watched a somewhat clumsy but poignant romance movie that was showing on the in-flight program, and cried a little. When it was over, everyone else was asleep. I opened the window and looked $_{t}$<verbatim>	</verbatim>$_{own}$ — at that moment we were crossing the northern coast of Brazil, for real, and it blew my mind. After so many times in the past few years thinking I couldn't go any farther with my life, seeing the little lights of that anony-

> mous coastal town winking beneath our plane was a sweeter absolution than I could possibly deserve. Then, at that instant, — the sun broke through the clouds on the horizon — and I looked up to see the sky turn blood red.

II.

<quote> Did you know in South America bands share amplifiers, drums, and cabinets? We always share cabinets and drums when we tour Europe (unlike a lot of touring U.S. bands, who insist on renting "their own" equipment, then take the expense out on the "fans" in show guarantees), but we'd never shared this much stuff before. It's awesome,

[Image not archived]

because it emphasizes a basic common sense point that is so hard to remember when you live in a wasteful, consumerist, selfish place like the U.S.: one car is enough for a neighborhood. One amp is enough for a punk scene. If people can just learn how to be cool with each other, they don't have to each provide individually for their own needs. Now, if we could only apply lessons like this, which make it more possible for people of varying means to participate in making art, to life in general...

III. PfM and I spent a lot of our time in Sao Paulo at what we called the "straight edge house, " our own poor translation of the local name for an apartment shared by lots of really cool people involved in the hardcore scene there. I have some wonderfully idyllic memories of sitting on the second floor overlook watching him play stickball (Taco, in the local dialect — it has different rules in every neighborhood) with the kids in the neighborhood (who came to refer to him as Soldado, a reference to his resemblance to the guerrilla warriors of the gangs in Brazilian ghettos) drinking Guarana (a delicious Brazilian fruit drink/soda, one of the only local beverages in the world that still can outsell Coca Cola despite the latter's marketing powers).

Something that amazed me over and over in South America was the generosity and hospitality of everyone we met; it far exceeded anything I've experienced in Europe or the United States. There are a lot of different factors that could explain this — the continent is not yet overwhelmed with money-hungry U.S. hardcore bands, people who have less always understand need more, cultural differences, etc. — but the bottom line is that we were spoiled rotten by everyone, and might not have survived physically or emotionally otherwise (since being placed in a totally different environment is a bit of a system shock). I'm afraid that we North Americans with our feeling of entitlement didn't make it clear how much we appreciated every meal, every place to sleep, every show set up for us... but we did, we really did.

IV. Before we played any shows, we got to see a guerrilla show on top of a concrete parking deck-type structure in downtown Sao Paulo. Some of the poorer punk and hip hop kids organized a show there, with almost all the instruments plugged into one little struggling P.A., so they could play their music and get together without having to afford a hall. It was definitely cool to see the different musical genres combined there, and also important to me to see how different being a punk rock street kid is in Brazil from in the U.S. Someone hot-wired the electricity

to power the amplifier from the streetlights (very impressive!), and though the pigs showed up

kid: one pig stood in his face, threatening him, while the other stood a few paces back with a gun aimed at his head) they didn't shut
it down.

V. Our first show was at a Krsna house in Sao Paulo, oddly enough. The hardcore kids can use the house for free, which makes it possible for them to organize shows that can actually provide funding — the shows we played were a big help to us in financing our tour (we lost $1200 altogether, and it would have been a whole lot worse without the Sao Paulo shows — hell, we wouldn't have been able to go to South America at all without them), and they paid for the printing of the Portuguese version of Harbinger (Arauto) with funds from shows at that place, too. Someone was selling books (including de Sade!) and radical magazines in the courtyard, alongside the usual records and 'zines, which I thought was awesome (a lot more awesome than the local television station, which showed up to do one of their typical "News of the Weird" pieces on Brazilian hardcore).

The Sao Paulo hardcore scene is probably the biggest in Latin America (we're talking hundreds of people here, consistent shows, lots going on), and it's notable for its variety as well as its size and age. It has come to maturity with the people involved in it, growing from the primal disorganized violence of early punk scenes about a decade ago to something much more positive today. You can find all sorts of punk/hardcore bands, 'zines, etc. in it. I'd start listing bands and 'zines and kids, but I wouldn't even know where to start, and I don't want to leave any out if I do make that list. Pay attention when talk of Brazilian hardcore comes up, write kids and 'zines and bands from there if you can; I'm sure over the next couple years South American hardcore will begin to be taken more seriously north of the equator, just as European hardcore is finally coming to be taken seriously in the U.S.A.

VI. We stayed at a farm occupied by the M.S.T. on our way north from Sao Paulo. The M.S.T. (landless farmworkers' movement) is an organization that squats — not buildings, but rather large stretches of farmland! This one was about 30 kilometers across. I'd heard that the M.S.T. has some communist party involvement at the top, but the people I saw on this farm (basically poor families who had nothing, who work in the movement in return for the chance to take a home and sustaining land of their own) were purely anarchist/syn- dicaJist in their day to day lives (if you have to put an "ism" on it) — and it was so fucking inspiring to see that happening, to see land that had been selfishly owned and unused now captured and turned into a little corner of egalitarian paradise (hard work not option

al, of course, but vastly prefctablet to a lift of comfort built on the bruised backs of others — let alone remaining one of those backs...). I don't feel qualified to write in depth about the M.S.T. or our stay there here, I feel like it would be easier for a native Brazilian to capture the subtleties of what's going on there, and hopefully before the week is over and this has to go to print Tarcisio will send me his article *[editors note, the next day: his piece follows this one]* — but I do feel like I need to mention a few beautiful moments:

a. Our hosts spend the day showing us around the area: they take us by the houses that have been erected, by the farms where coffee is grown (they encourage us to try our hands at planting, and we learn just how impractical our suburban upbringing has left us... later, passing by another field, one of us points at a sad, stunted little coffee plant, and jokes: "that's from when Crudos came here"), and as we go we collect various fruits and other foods that happen to be growing on the land. It was a fucking revelation that night when I realized that was what we were making for dinner. And oh my god, the stars clear in the sky overhead after everyone else was asleep, with no air or light pollution to interfere...

b. The town calls a meeting to talk with us and find out what we are doing there. We all sit in a circle, asking and answering questions with the brilliant translating assistance of Tarcisio... at one point, I ask how decisions are made on the farm. The first time I ask, everyone ignores my question. The second time, one of the farmers looks around at everyone like it's a most ridiculous question he ever heard, and responds, simply, *'collectively'.* Of course.

c. The next day we hike about 25 kilometers to the other camp, on the other side of the farm. The first has been there for a few years, and has been legalized; but this one was new, freshly erected houses with tarps for walls in some cases, and always the threat of assault by the pigs or thugs of the rich (there have been slaughters in M.S.T. occupied zones before, brutal murders on a par with the original genocide of the fucking conquistadors). The people there were as generous as anyone I have ever met, sharing the best of their food with us even if they had nothing else. I spoke (thanks again to the wonderful patience and efforts of Tarcisio) with one older man, who told me about his struggles in the mining unions in his youth, and insisted with a calm, inspiring conviction that law or no law, this was where he was going to make his home and live for the rest of his life.

I was also told about an urban movement analogous to the M.S.T, which squats build-

: c . ^ *9* ^ ^ *Iff*[1] .. *i* ings and neighborhoods, and has won similar advances for the poor and dispossessed, also against the resistance of the violence of the rich and merciless. For those of you reading this in the U.S. and Europe — the M.S.T. is the sort of

group that your governments put pressure on "Third World" governments to eradicate, so their countries will become better investing grounds (and we saw as many fucking multinational corporations there as in any Western European nation — the difference being, of course, that *none* of the capital earned by these corporations is going to remain anywhere in Brazil...). Your government counts on you not knowing about their existence. The pressure you could put on them not to interfere or arm the Brazilian government to destroy these groups could preserve the lives and livelihoods of thousands of people, as well as strengthening an arm of the international anti-capitalist resistance far removed from your own efforts. Learn about this stuff if you can.

VII. After the inspiring days at the M.S.T. camp, we crashed right into the brick wall of how stupid and senseless hardcore can be. We were playing in Belo Horizante, at a show organized by my friends Ian (the comeliest man in the world — seriously) and Felipe of Libertinagem, with Point of No. Return (in which Tarcisio, who had come with us to the M.S.T. farm, Fred, who booked our whole tour, and Marcos, who released our split CD with Newspeak, all play, along with other good friends of ours); over 400 kids were there, and it looked like it was going to be a great show for everyone. But while P.O.N.R. were playing, and Tarcisio was trying to speak about our experiences with the M.S.T, some drunken punks began heckling him, and suddenly the whole show disintegrated into a bloody riot as the two gangs (punks and straight edge kids) fought each other with martial arts, spiked belts, throwing chairs... it went on for over half an hour, until the pigs came and the whole space was cleared out. I know it's easy for me to say this, since I'm far enough away from the whole thing to have a disinterested perspective, but what happened was really fucked up and *everyone* should figure out what their part of the blame was. Yes, the "other guy" always does dumb shit that makes it impossible for things to turn out any other way, and of course as a recovering macho male myself I understand when someone loses his head, but the question is not who to hold responsible, but how to make sure this shit doesn't happen next time. Being violent when violence is around you, coming from a life of violence, is understandable, if tragic — the only part that really disappointed me was listening to my friends, whom I respect so much, comparing their exploits in the fight afterwards.

There are class implications to the

punk/hardcore kid distinction in South America, just as there are in the rest of the world, and they are expressed in some places (like that night) with more tension and force,

because the class tensions are themselves more

explicit and tense (that's my theory, at least). In situations like that you can see how people get lost in the roles set up for them by their chosen identities: hardcore kids are supposed to look tough, so the punks feel intimidated; punks are supposed to be drunkards, so they get defensive about straight edge kids; and everyone gets so caught up in the conflict of their identities that it's no longer individuals with different perspectives meeting, it's just

[Image not archived]

roles meeting to fight each other without the humans playing them even being present (except in body). Again, it's easy for me to preach, since I'm not involved (I might as well tell rival street gangs in Los Angeles to forget their blood feuds, when their brothers and friends have been killed by their enemies) — but the question is how to act in such a way that you never get involved, so our efforts to build something in this scene don't end in blood, waste, defeat. Fuck, that was a depressing night.

VIII. After the Belo Horizante debacle, we proceeded to the coast, where we played in Vitoria and then Aracruz, and met more awesome people. We were also fortunate to encounter in the flesh a truly legendary character: Schmike. Schmike is known in these parts of the Brazilian hardcore scene as a man who has walked on foot to every punk or hardcore show in the past decade or more. He was at our Vitoria show, and then there the

next day at Aracruz, after an all-night walk —

kids pointed him out to me, sitting by himself. He has the faraway look in his eye of a man possessed by a destiny greater than himself, driven by things he cannot articulate to

anyone else.

IX. PfM and I returned ahead of time to B.H., to hastily organize a show to replace the one that had ended in disaster (we were only playing on the weekends, when people were free to attend shows — we spent the weeks meeting people, or traveling, which we did by bus)... well, that's a lie, Ian and Felipe organized the show, we just tagged along and chatted. We spent some wonderful time with them — Ian

really is the most attractive man in the world, it's ridiculous... everyone in his city knows him, too. Everywhere we went, they call him over, greet him enthusiastically, celebrate him. I share this with you for no good reason except that I'm not quite over it myself. He simply radiates a feeling of calm and acceptance.

We caught up with the anarcho-punks at an art gallery opening, after attending the meeting of a local activist group. There was free food inside (it was an exhibition about the 500 years of European oppression in Brazil, yet of course the refreshments and access were reserved for an elite), and we were all trapped outside, until the guards saw Ian among us, and welcomed us all in. The punks had come to sneak in too (we ate the free food, they drank the free liquor), and we made peace between us. They apologized for their friends who had acted out of line, and said they had no quarrel with us, which was quite cool. One of them asked me if I spoke Esperanto (the

X.

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In parts of Brazil there is a war on between the State-organized public transportation and independent cells of vigilante public transportation. A van will suddenly pull

up, invariably a minute or two before the city us arrives, and a man leaps out screaming and gesturing for you to hurry into the vehicle before the bus, or police arrive. (Ever seen the movie *Brazil, * which incidentally has nothing to do with the nation Brazil? The vigilante repairman in that movie is a good reference point for this phenomenon.) Each van is manned by two people: one who drives, the other whose job it is to lean out the window, screaming at . traffic and waving his fists. The State has posted huge billboards threatening those who ride the guerrilla public transportation with death and dismemberment, just to make the whole thing more ridiculous. Marcos informed me that the "alternative transportation" is all controlled by the mafia, which sucks, because for a second I thought we'd experienced some real d.i.y. "dual power theory" in action. Ah well — the same principle could be applied here, without the mafia.

XI.

<quote> We played in Rio de Janeiro, which is probably the scariest, ugliest place I've been, outside of New Jersey. I attribute this to the fact that it's a tourist city used and abused by rich assholes from all over the world: of course the city is left to deal with all the garbage and bad karma of their bullshit attempts to lose themselves on vacation. Matt had pinkeye so bad he couldn't see, and we all thought he was going to die — it hurt just to look at him, with his eyes crusted shut and swollen up. I was the only one who would even come close to him, since the others were so scared of being infected too. We were up all night waiting in the bus station for a bus out of town, so we could get back to Sao Paulo for our second show there... finally, at six a.m., a bus came. It was one of the more expensive busses, a higher class one, but we opted to pay the extra couple dollars each just to get going and finally get some sleep. When the bus started we found out that the extra cost was simply because they had movies on the bus — and no headphones, the soundtrack blaring out of the speakers at us. The screen was right over my head, and at 6:15 am Mortal Kombat 2 came on at full volume, poorly dubbed into Portuguese. Oof. I pulled the cheap fabric of the pillow I'd stolen from the airplane over my head, managed to finally fall into a troubled sleep (sitting erect, on the bus seat, as we were for up to 72 hours a week during the tour), and woke up in Sao Paulo with my eyes sealed shut: pinkeye.

: XII. The pinkeye proved useful, however. We were interviewed on a Sao Paulo rock radio station, by a DJ. who quickly turned out to be our enemy. He was out to imitate the successful rocker DJ.s of the first world, regardless of the fact that they and their whole civilization don't give a fuck about him — and was angry that we were trying to make his show address serious topics by bringing up the M.S.T., music industry imperialism, etc. The cool hardcore kids who had gotten us on the show were a little shocked to find out he was so adamantly opposed to what we were doing, and at first thought we should leave; but we kept wrestling with him between songs, until all the issues that were supposed to be kept silent were on the airwaves. At one point, as he was bidding us a pointed farewell, firmly shaking my (infected) hand goodbye, I informed him (live on the air) that he had just contracted pinkeye from me, and his so-cool professional pose cracked for a second in front of all his listeners. Ha ha!

XIII. Id also managed to develop an abscess in my thumb. Everyone in our group made fun of me, since I'm always exaggerating things, but this time it was true, I had a fucking abscess and no one believed me. It was in my right thumb too, the one that holds the microphone, the one that people grab and squeeze when they're singing along. We were playing a show south of Sao Paulo, in Guaraja, near Santos — on the drive there and back we had passed through one of the scariest industrial infernos I have ever seen; the town is occupied by a chemical company, which has polluted it so badly that a whole generation of babies were born without brains in their skulls... it took a decade for the corporation to admit responsibility, and even now they're not doing anything for the families affected.

We were at the merchandise table, and I'd bought a pack of razor blades, determined to solve the abscess problem once and for all. PfM held my hand down, while Ernie (I had chosen him because, as you may know, Ernie has had extensive experience with abscesses of his own) sliced my thumb open with the razor blade, as the kids who had come up to buy records or grab a copy of Arauto watched in horror. But Ernie missed the abscess, so now I had a fucking abscess AND a gratuitous incision halfway through my thumb, too! Later that week, Estela (the drummer of Sao Paulo's all-female hardcore band Infect, and a wonderful person) had her mother look at it (her mother is a doctor who also gave me the medicine that cured my pinkeye), but she was afraid to try anything to fix it. Finally, at the end of that week, before we headed south for the next leg of our tour, when I was staying at Marcos' house, my thumb had become so fucked up from the abscess that I couldn't feel anything in it at all (the skin under the

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liberated, 1 took the remaining razor blade and made another incision, cutting until I finally got to the abscess. More pus came out than I'd thought could possibly fit in my thumb, but after that it healed and I was OK. It's a pretty good feeling to perform successful surgery on yourself — makes you feel capable of looking after your own health after all.

The other event I really remember from that show was watching Abuso Sonoro play. Although there was a lot of good competition, they were probably my favorite live band we saw all tour. It was straight ahead political punk, the kind I already know and love, but played with such fucking passionate seriousness that it swept us all away. Their singer, Elaine, has the most powerful presence when she sings, and creates just through her own self-confidence the kind of safe environment in which everyone is able to feel secure and supported and self-confident. If you've ever had the experience of being at a real punk show, where the feeling of community and belonging and power is so thick in the air that you feel you could live on it alone, you know what I'm talking about. There was an anarcha- punk woman at the show wearing a fishnet shirt and nothing else, not to show off her body but simply because she was comfortable like that — just the fact that she could do that and not fear the bullshit and stares and judgments of those around her was a beautiful thing. The walls were hung with

banners urging us to make good on the promises of punk rock rhetoric by living them out, and when Abuso sang about solidarity with our Zapatista comrades, we could all taste the reality of what we were doing and it felt fucking good. Their guitarist was wearing a bandanna over his face, and I didn't truly understand why until I saw him at the rally against the "500 Years" clock the next week, wearing it again, participating in the riots I wrote about in the "violence/nonviolence"article in the columns section.

XIV. A few days later, we played a show in a water park in Joinville, farther south in Brazil. It was an old, slightly rickety water park, and after the bands played the owners were cool enough to keep the water on for us — imagine upwards of fifty hardcore and punk kids running around a water park at midnight after a punk show, screaming and leaping down hundred-foot slides... for me, it felt like we'd slipped through the fetters of everything that was supposed to be off-limits to us, and we had arrived at a paradise beyond the edge of the world. Here we were in fucking small-town Brazil, with a hundred new friends, in a fucking water park, a place I never thought I'd ever be (for financial, social, legal reasons), let alone feel so happy and free in. I count that night as one of the high points of my life in this past year.

XV. We arrived ?m Uruguay at four in the morning, after a 22 hour ride from Curitiba in Brazil. Fred and I were met by yet another generous host, who took us to his mother's tenth-floor apartment, with a broad window facing a gorgeous sunrise over the river that separated us from Argentina (it was so wide, you cold see no land on the horizon). Again, we were pauper kings, more free than anyone in any office in the United States behind us (thanks as usual to the support of the international punk community, to which I am forever pledged to give everything, now!).

The day after the show in Uruguay, some other friends there took me around the city of Montevideo, explaining to me the political history and current events there. They told me about the school occupations (organized by horizontal, spontaneously created student committees) that have happened since 1996, pointed out one such group meeting on the steps of a building (including a well-known communist party member, who stood to one side, except when he was delivering angry speeches at the others), and explained to me why the whole punk/anarchist scene in Montevideo is 22 years old or younger: there is a whole missing generation of radicals that were killed or forced to flee during the coup d'etat.

One of the places they took me was the CO.TRA.VI: the squatted neighborhood ("shanty town, " some Westerners would call it) outside of town. Over 360 families moved in when the land was first squatted three years ago, and now many more have joined. All the houses are built by hand by their occupants, from found materials; the electricity is all stolen from neighboring power lines, by talented (and dangerous) local handiwork. This squat differs from the M.S.T. squat in one significant way: the group that squatted this land was organized during the planning and squatting, but afterwards left all the inhabitants up to their own devices, rather than continuing to meet and make group decisions. Consequently the township has same problems within that go on in the outside world, with the notable absence of police pressure. The police

are scared to enter, and a young punk called Gustavo (the Montevideo punks have all moved into the CO.TRA.VI to find common cause with the other poor men and women there, to see what they can all learn from each other... they seem to have done quite a good job integrating themselves) told me of a night when he and his friends forced some pigs to flee who were trying to break into his house (in a purported search for a "criminal"). Police are not well paid in South America, and Gustavo also told me of one policeman who lives in the squatted town — once the squatters set a big fire in the middle of the nearby freeway, to place pressure on the city not to evict them, and his neighbors had

to warn him to hide, because he might be recognized: his squad had been called out to watch over the protest! Gustavo's parents were full-on Tupumarus, part of the terrorist resistance to the dictatorship government of Uruguay a generation ago — they were captured and tortured by the government before escaping and fleeing to Holland, where he was born. Gustavo loaned me some photographs of the punks building their house in the CO.TRA.VI, which will hopefully be reproduced with this article. It certainly was inspiring to see people living autonomously in every sense of the word, to walk into a hand-built house with punk playing on the hijacked stereo, and see people from the other side of the world, who are also a part of my community, putting these values into practice in a totally different situation, and to a much greater extent than I am used to seeing in the U.S.

XVI. We took a boat over the vast river (it was a beautiful ride, the sun glinting off the water — in the middle the river is so vast you can't see land on either side, and you only know you are on a river by the branches that occasionally float past), arriving in Buenos Aires. We were terrified going through customs (we don't look like tourists, of course, and we have musical instruments, lots of CDs and radical literature, no papers of any kind besides our passports...), and the pigs were checking everything very thoroughly — but fortunately, just before it was our turn, they took a cigarette break, and we just walked through unchecked! Thank heaven for this kind of luck, which we had every time — without it, disaster.

The most memorable moment for me in Buenos Aires was when one of our friends took us to an anarchist center, the F.L.A., which had been there for decades. It has a vast library, an infoshop, a large meeting center, all sorts of awesome resources. Argentina has a rich anarchist history — a lot of refugees from the anarchist movement in Italy and France fled there in the earlier part of this century, and in fact there is an Italian neighborhood in Buenos Aires that declared and maintained independence for a year in the 1920 s. People explained to us that after the success of the so- called Communist Revolution in Russia, lots of anarchists became communists, because that seemed to be what was working. I guess it's a good thing, in the long run, that the Soviet experiment was attempted and failed, so now we can know what to avoid in our next attempts to overthrow capitalism and replace it with something genuinely free and healthy for all of us (hope I don't sound like too much of an ideologue here).

Anyway, the guy who showed us around the EL.A. was this awesome old man who, it turned out, had once been a race car driver (something Ernie fanta-

sizes about from time to time — at first Ernie thought we'd put the words in his mouth!)... he recounted how one day he had realized that it wasn't the competition he enjoyed, but the speed itself, and from that epiphany it was just a few steps to getting involved with autonomist action.

Something else that's worth noting about Buenos Aires — shows there take place so late it's unbelievable for people of other nations. Both the shows there we played didn't start until after two in the morning, and we didn't play until five a.m., in both cases — and at the second show, we weren't even the last band!! We sat out on the curb at eight a.m. that morning, waiting for the show to close down so we could leave, watching people head to work.

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illustration s. 11: View from Alamut

XVII. Our best show in Argentina was in La Plata, a matinee. After we'd finished playing, we had to run as fast as we could to catch the last night train back to Buenos Aires, and we just barely made it. That ride back is another of my most treasured memories of the last few years — it was a cool, perfect night, the doors of the train were open so I could sit on the steps watching the dark countryside speed past, our friends were moshing in the train car behind us and singing Argentinean samba as they beat out the rhythm on the walls, and I felt so fucking good about what we were doing and where we were going.

XVIII. We were terrified heading over the vertical horizons of the Andes mountains (which

• were beautiful, ' oh yes, the most stark and severe, dry splendor), because Chile is the most recent of the four countries we visited to come out of a dictatorship, and the pigs there (who are a part of the army — "military police, " they're called — it's the same in Brazil) were trained under the last generation of murderers. [This seems like a good place to point out, in case any of you don't know already, that these dictatorships, especially the one in Chile, were all established and maintained with the explicit support, training, and funding of the C.I.A., even when it was clear that thousands of people were being executed without trials. This is not secret information, it's easy to research, and if you don't know about this shit, you should read up.] The border crossing was elaborate (a few different stops, thorough searches, guns and military bunkers, etc.), but we didn't have much stuff left with us anymore, and we got through OK.

Santiago, the capital of Chile, is an industrial city in a desert valley in the mountains: that means the smog from the factories can't escape and is trapped over the city, keeping the sky a lead grey and making it impossible

to see more than a few hundred feet through the air. It's hard to breathe, even if you're not used to it... you'd think obvious shit like this would make even the industrial capitalists more environmentally aware, but I guess they can afford fancy air re-conditioning. Despite all this, Santiago struck us as having a sort of romantic atmosphere, and again we got along with everyone there very well.

If I can beg your indulgence to tell one more Catharsis war story... the last show of the tour (besides a free show we played in a ghetto outside Sao Paulo on our return, after a 72 hour bus ride from Santiago), we were playing on a stage a number of feet high, and I somehow got carried away enough during the last song to do a somersault off of it — and landed in between the people in the audience, flat on my back. I was out cold for a minute, and when I came to I saw everyone staring down at me in terror; Ernie came over to the edge of the stage as he continued playing the improvisation — he saw that I wasn't dead, and kept playing. And (you won't believe this, but it's true) somehow it happened that at the exact second we hit the last note of that final song, the electricity in the whole building cut out.

Conclusions

There's a lot I haven't done with this scene report that I really should have: I should have written about all the awesome bands we played with and got to know (all of whom deserve the exposure, for helping us so much), the specific activism happening and issues being addressed — about the political and economic history of Latin America, and the context from which punk rock has emerged there — about the specific life lessons I learned

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from all rhe wonderful people I spent time with, and the fragments of culture and language I picked up. In every case, I've just been too afraid of leaving things out, misrepresent-

ing things, spelling names wrong, revealing my typical North American ignorance. Had I worked on this soon after my return from that continent, I could have at least had the poetry of recent experience at my disposal to capture those wonderful, pure moments I mention so clumsily in this piece... but alas, I'm writing this the day before the deadline to get this issue laid out and printed, and I'm afraid I can't do better than this. Besides, to really do those two months justice, it would take a whole book. The one thing I can say for my article is that it captures the edges of my personal experiences there, which you can't find out about anywhere else. There are others much

more qualified than I am to teach about the way imperialism works, the function of class and race in nations like Brazil, the latest incredible bands in Santiago. Please, seek them out, if anything in this scene report has interested you. I'll be addressing some of those issues myself in my future writing, too — and, as always, the best way to follow up on this article would be to just corner me next time I'm passing through your town, and ask me to tell you how to get a visa to enter Brazil, or exactly what I mean when I talk about "hardcore imperialism, " or where the best old school hardcore band in Buenos Aires gets cheap vegan pizza.

Brazil and the M.S.T.

Edited and provided generously by Tarcisio

1. The MST — Landless Workers Movement General info to contextualize the reader...

As you may know well, Brazil is one of the richest countries in the world. It is a huge territory, with plenty of natural resources, full of rivers and fertile lands. The problem is that all the wealth is concentrated in the hands of a real small — but powerful — elite: 1% of the people in this country controls more than 50% of the wealth it produces; 32 million Brazilians suffer hunger and 65 millions are under fed. The results... you may know it as well. Brazil is one of the most miserable nations in the world, equal to many African countries in which natural resources are extremely scarce.

If you take your world map you will see that Brazil is almost as big as Europe. Most of the population is concentrated in the big urban areas, which are mainly distributed along the coast, while the countryside remains a huge amount of land with very few inhabitants. These lands are mostly very fertile but, as we have already said, a small elite controls them. This fact recalls to the period of colonization: after reaching the Brazilian coast, the

among their relatives and friends — people from the Portuguese elite.

From the 16^{th} century to our present days, something has changed, but the basic structure remains the same: a small minority controls the land, most of which is kept for the only purpose of economic speculation. Less than 3% of the population owns two-thirds of Brazil's arable land. Thus we have huge areas of unproductive lands, while millions of people in the countryside and in the big cities live a life of misery, with no perspectives to find any kind of work at all. While 60% of Brazil's farmland lies idle, 25 million peasants struggle to survive by working in temporary agricultural jobs.

This situation has forced poor people to get organized and start struggling to take back what has been stolen from them. The Landless Workers Movement (Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem-terra — MST) is an attempt to do it. It is a social struggle, which is trying to achieve agrarian reform for poor peasants all over Brazil's territory. Hundreds of thousands of landless peasants have taken onto themselves the task of carrying out a long- overdue land reform in a country mired by an overly skewed land

distribution pattern. The Movement started many years ago and has grown greatly ever since, at such a level that they became nowadays a terrible thorn in the side of Brazilian federal government.

The MST is transforming the lives of thousands of families from north to south, from east to west. It's an autonomous mass move-

ment, without any political or religious link. The main goals of the movement are the land, the agricultural reform, social justice and the schooling of rural workers. Their actions go from occupying unproductive lands to setting up public demonstrations in big cities, from mobilizing extensive marches in the countryside to carrying out raids of big supermarkets. As their power increases more and more, it has became impossible for the Federal Government, which is responsible for the agrarian reform, to simply ignore them as they usually do to the demands of poor people. MST became a real threat and the government knows it.

And of course, the more the struggle for human emancipation grows, the more violent State repression becomes, and we see that the so-called democratic nations are not democratic at all. The MST has been bombed from all sides: 1) by the media, through deliberate lying, cheating and manipulation of public opinion (note: recently, our biggest weekly magazine, Veja — a Brazilian version of Times — has published a special report about the MST; the cover of the magazine, with a dark/red background and the picture of a

MST member hr the first plan looking like a crazy fuck, showed the following line: "The tactic of riot: how the MST wants to transform chaos into a socialist revolution". Do we need to tell anything more about how tendentious was this report?); 2) by the government, through the ostensible police and army repression; and 3) by the landlords, through the building of paramilitary groups, seeking to assault, threaten and kill peasants who are occupying their lands. In the past 10 years, more than 1000 people have been killed as a result of land conflicts in Brazil.

2. The Visit

by Isadora and Tarcisio

When Catharsis was on tour on Brazil they decided to see personally one of the MST occupations, and since we had never seen any of these as well we decided to get off our fucking asses and go there with them — a decision which we will never regret. We left Sao Paulo on Tuesday at night, we took a bus to a small town and, from there, we had to drive about 40 minutes in a cab — which looked like an old van — to the MST farm "Primeiro do Sul" (note: This encampment is called "Primeiro do Sul" — "South's first one" — because it was the first land MST legally gained in the south of the state of Minas Gerais, which is bigger than many European countries).

The MST has two kinds of occupations: the settlements, that is, the places in which the fight for the land was successful, and the MST members were given the legal right to remain on the land; and the encampments, that is, occupations in which people are

still fighting against the landlords in the Judiciary, waiting for the final decision of the judge. The first place we visited was a settlement.

A family that was known by one of our friends, Isabela, welcomed us. They were a couple — Tani Rose and Magela — and one kid — Ipe — and received us in the kindest way. After leaving our bags in the rooms, we all sat around the kitchen, and while the food — rice, beans, and some vegetable — was cooking we had a nice conversation. Magela is one of the state secretaries of MST. We talked to him about Brazilian reality and about important facts on MST history. Tani Rose kept coming into our conversation, talking about some aspects of Magela's personality: "He doesn't like religion at all. He is pretty much an anarchist, " she would tell us. *[editor's note from Brian: When the topic of religion first came up in our discussion, I was really carefid with it, because I had no idea how this guy saw religion or what role it played in his life. So it ended up that HE told ME I was being too soft on religion, which was pretty funny and ironic!]*

It was our first candle-light dinner in years. But, wait a minute... not in a romantic sense. They use candles because they do not have electricity. Their home is humble, there is no

electric devices as TV set, refrigerator or whatever. They have only a small oven to cook their meals and a small radio that works with a battery. And that is all. On the other hand, they have something that people from big cities as we are, with all our apparatus — from TV sets, CD players and computers to washing machines, guitar amplifiers, etc. — could never dream to possess: they have freedom and dignity.

(note: perhaps it would be naive to say they are free. But one must consider that they have conquered much more freedom than we do because they were able to take control of the means of production — in their particular case, the land. And they certainly have dignity because this freedom is a result of a great col

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lective effort and militancy).

In the next day we hung around the farm. In the morning, after taking some tea and fruits, we went to visit some plantations and other houses. The main agricultural activity there is coffee because it is one of the most valuable products in the market. They plant coffee in order to sell it and make some money to buy the equipment they can't produce by themselves: tractors, agrarian machines, gas. We went firstly to a coffee plantation, in which we could see — and help a little bit — how to plant the seedlings in the soil. After that, we came to visit some other houses, passing through small roads and many other plantations. All those pieces of land had been equally divided among the members of

that occupation, by the time when they conquered the land legally, according to the needs of each family. So everyone has their own piece of land to grow their crop, which is par- tiallv sold and partially consumed by them.

During our walk, we chose what wc would have for lunch: edible vegetables were everywhere and the sensation that we didn't have to buy — or steal — to eat was

incredible. Food was just around, all we had to do was choose a vegetable and pick it up from the land. We felt that we could really be in control of our life in that place. We felt that the survival of the landless workers on "Primeiro do Sul" depends only on themselves and on their own work. Maybe that is why the Brazilian elite is so afraid of the MST.

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At night, after having dinner, we had a meeting with the whole community of the farm. They were all very curious about us. First of all, because not so many people go to distant farms like that — unless members from other MST occupations in the region; secondly, because they knew that there were some foreign people among us. But we, also, were very much excited to have the opportunity to know those people personally, to talk to them, to share information. And so we went.

For that night, we reserved a special place in our memory. Around 8pm we all went to a big hall in front of an abandoned house, in which we sat and talk to more than 30 peasants for about two hours. There were all kinds of people, from the elderly, who could barely

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*S j J **

ˆ talk, to kids, playing around frenziedfylt was ‘ x one of the most exciting experiences we ever had. We were mediating the conversation. Sometimes, it was the peasants asking their doubts and curiosities about the USA; sometimes the guys from Catharsis wanting to know about the life in the occupation.

> We've learned that, on the settlement, all the decisions are taken collectively, and that each person is responsible for an aspect of the administration of the farm. The production and the profit from the coffee sale are divided between all equally. They have some special rules there, and one of them is to respect nature (there are two ecological reservations on the settlement area). One of the landless workers told the guys from Catharsis that the competition against multinational companies was very unfair and harmful to them. Another one asked if they had class struggle in USA, or any movements that are similar to the MST. They all wanted to know about the American distribution of land and about American social movements.
>
> How moving it was for us to see poor peasants, which had barely access to education, so aware about our present political situation! In Brazilian big cities, most part of the poor population is completely indoctrinated; they have given up to pessimism or, even more frequently, to religion determinism. The MST, on the other hand, has created a structure in which poor peasants have been given not simply a common education, but a critical one. We left the meeting deeply affected for what we have seen and heard there. The experience was inspiring for ourselves, and we are sure, for all our friends as well.

> In the next day — our last one there — we woke up very early in the morning and walked from the settlement to a MST encampment near there (well, not so near...). We walked for about 2:30 hours to get to the encampment! But it wasn't tiring or boring; it wasn't boring at all! Nice conversations and the beautiful vision of plantations had filled our minds, and at 12pm we were able to see the red flag of MST trembling: we had reached the encampment.
>
> The fact that it was not a settlement means that the situation over there was much tenser. In the settlement, since the land already belongs to the MST militants, we could find many houses being built, while old constructions were being reformed, and we could find each family growing their own piece of land. In the encampment it is not like that. Instead of houses they have provisory tents, built with canvas and bamboo; small pieces of land are cultivated but most of what is consumed still comes from the city; and the hope for a positive response from the Judiciary is high.
>
> Zacarias, one of the leaders of that occupation, told us that the legal recognition of that encampment was dangerous to the elite of

the wings of some extinct, absurd fishing-bird. I'm sure Ernie means no offence to all you retards out there.}. At last, he wasn't able to do it 100% — his best jump was like 80% — and it made him a bit frustrated. The sun was setting and we had to move on, back to Sao Paulo... back to hell.

Anyway... any kind of bad feeling could never overwhelm our great excitement for being able to know a revolution taking place before our very eyes.

3. A Personal Comment by Tarcfsio

What shape may revolution take? This question has been in my mind for quite a while. Some years ago, I had already tried to provide a reasonable answer for myself but nowadays, looking back and rethinking the issue, as well as observing recent historical events that are taking place all around the world, I believe my opinion slightly changed.

One of the most important things I have learned in the past few years is the importance of seeing social phenomena historically. This means to understand that historical circumstances of time and space cannot be excluded from the process of interpretation of events. It seems to be pretty obvious but, personally, I have always found myself prone to fall in the very same mistake, again and again: trying to provide absolute solutions for problems that are circumstantial.

That is why I believe that I was pretty naive by spending my time thinking of what shape a world revolution might take. Because we don't know. We can't know. It depends on several different inter-related aspects: where and when is it taking place and what are the social, economic, political and geographical conditions involved. Besides,

revolution is not something that we can specify: "now it just started; now it is all over." Revolution is not an event; it is a process.

But what all this has to do with the subject of this report? Well, in this text me and Isadora tried to come up with some information about one of the most important social movements in Brazil nowadays, the MST. But I believe it is important for everyone reading this to keep in mind that this struggle is very specific to Brazilian reality. The whole idea behind the MST may sound absurd to any American or European person, if they think about it in terms of their own reality: highly mechanized rural areas, few amount productive fields, relative social equality, effective preventing politics from property speculation and so on.

The best lesson we could take from MST, in my opinion, is not that agrarian reform should be tried everywhere. Rather, we learn the importance of striving to understand deeply the historical circumstances of the

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places we live: ihf sb that we ate able to come up with real effective, solid, threatening counterattack to capitalism advance. If the MST is getting any success nowadays it is because — besides, of course, the tireless militancy of its members — they were able to interpret Brazilian reality as no one else could.

For more information, or to discuss this subject farther, contact Tarcisio at the Point of No Return address.

Working in Chicago's
Gay Nightclubs

committed to monogamously and spiritually. And I even though it was interesting for me, I didn't really like the club scene. Hopefully, this won't color.the way I tell what I saw and participated in during that year.

The Clubs, The Crowds,

The Clothes, and The Chests

I worked at a couple of clubs in Chicago s "Boys' Town" for over a year, starting in 1996. I worked mostly at Fusion, formerly called the Vortex. At the time, it was one of the largest gay/mixed dance clubs in Chicago, with two different dance floors and four separate bars on an upper and a lower level. Manhole was

dnnkb and try to develop a repeat clientele who knew me and would come to my bars

rather than the other guyz who worked there. When I bar-backed, I worked for the bartenders, filling up their coolers with beer and ice, stocking glasses and supplies, and making sure the liquor guns were full in the back. Business was usually pretty crazy there — very high volume, very stress inducing. We would try to attract business by having performances and theme parties. At Fusion, Ru Paul played the opening, Debbie Harry performed, and we had some of the International Male Leather Events. We wore theme-specific costumes (the over-riding theme being less cloth-

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Culture and Hedonism

By Eric Boehme

I see him approach, making a beeline from the dancefloor just as I come behind the bar. I'm used to this now but I still cringe inside. I know I'm gonna have to kiss him. I know his lips will linger just a little too long and, if he can get his arm behind the bar, hes probably gonna grab my ass. But I m gonna let him do it because last time he was here, he left me $20 after buying just one drink. I went home with over $300 that night, all tax free, all cash. And even though I've been working in all kinds of jobs since I was fifteen, this was the most money Id ever seen in the quickest amount of time. I bought my first computer that summer, I saved money to go back to school and I took a three week trip to Paris to visit my then-partner. Sometimes it really sucked. Like being at the bar until 6 AM. Other times it was cool, talking to some friends who would come in, hanging around and not doing too much. Every night though, it was interesting.

This is not a Commodity nor a Spectacle: These are Peoples Lives.

First lemme start with a disclaimer. I wondered if I wanted to write about working in Chicago's gay night clubs because I thought that some of the things I saw, if I wrote about them, would come across as a kind of judgment on the behavior and lifestyle of folks I worked with and I saw at the clubs. This is not meant as a judgment on the way people want to live their lives. Neither is this an attempt by me to commodify gay club lifestyle by writing about it or make a spectacle, an "under-cover expose" of the deviant lifestyle of gay club guys. The facts are that I needed money for graduate school and at that time, for all intents and purposes, I lived as a gay club guy. My housemates were gay, many of my friends were either gay, straight or ambisexual kidz who liked hanging out in gay places. Finally, I worked so much that I was constantly around gay club culture. However at the time, my partner was a woman I was

a smaller, two room leather bar run by the same guys who ran Fusion. Our clientele at both places was pretty varied but there were basically four crowds that came through: the leather crowd (predominant at Manhole), the shirtless-and-jeans, water-drinking, circuitclub boys, the "freakshow" club crowd (drag queens, trannies, costume wearing hetero club kidz), and regular gay guys and girls. At Fusion, a fifth group was regularly seen: straight women who came to dance in a place where they wouldnt be constantly bothered by men trying to pick them up. I did a variety of jobs but mostly I bartended and did what in the industry is called bar-backing. When I bartended, I woul^ mix and get

ing is more), leather for the leather events (vinyl for me), loin-cloths for the monthly "Animal Parties, " boxers with hearts on them for Valentine's Day. Even the three or four straight bartenders never wore a shirt behind the bar. Everybody worked on their bodies (some obsessively) because this is how we made our tips. It made me realize that sometimes men have just as many body issues as straight women do. Guys come to your bar rather than others' because they like the way you look or because you have developed a continuing relationship with them where they give you tips in return

for drinks, kisses, ass, nipple, waist or bicep grabs, a quick conversation, flirting, and sometimes complimentary

tive. bartenders re-decorator. Some guys Wouldn't care what I did as long as they had b^r, ice, and glasses, some guys wanted every- thing, around them set up and placed in a very ^ Particular way. It was like I was fluffing them A^o^at they could go and display themselves ^'Z^^heir customers, so that they looked good to attract tipping guys.

Drugs and Sex: Vanilla and Leather

Everyone was just wasted on drugs. Either frenetically trying to control everything apound them, or doing as much as possible to , iiun around and have a good time rather than , doing their job. I , saw all kinds of sniffing and ^porting [an]d puffing from people who went jo*the club as well as most people who worked " at. the club, who used some kind of drug for entertainment or to keep them awake and up for so late into the morning. The most popu Jar.'drugs I saw were coke and Crystal meth, ecstasy and K — everything up to keep you dancing. Even the owners were all wired. Many a time I d try to talk to someone running the joint and they would be sweating and talking faster than a firing AK-47, trying to encompass far too many thoughts, suggestions, £nd mostly orders into a jumbled trainwreck of sentences.

Sex and drugs were everywhere. Indirectly, I guess we as bar-tenders were doing a kind of sex work by wearing hardly any clothes and exchanging some level of physical interaction for tips. But I'd walk around on the dancefloor, in the bathrooms, or in the dark corners and-couches upstairs and run into all kinds of people, both gay and straight getting it on. I've seen guys getting jerked off, giving head, arid hetero couples having intercourse right on the dancefloors. I was introduced to

J leather sexuality, to codewords and practices, top and bottom roles and bondage techniques. During the International Male Leather competition, there was a shaving and boot-blacking booth next to my bar where men would get their crotch and assholes shaved or their boots shined by a big man with a handlebar mustache wearing nothing but a leather biker hat and a leather apron. One time a guy asked him to urinate on his boots. A swing was set up in another bar for incapacitation and whippings, while tops tattooed their submissive slaves at a table next to the downstairs bar. I overheard a conservation in the line for the bathroom that basically consisted of one guy asking another to urinate in his hat, which he then put on his head.

Jackie told me I should wear my armband on the left. I think I would consider myself a top and he said that tops wouldn't try to pick me up if I was representing myself as a top. It was interesting to meet men in leather culture who considered themselves either tops or bottoms. As with the gender roles of men and women, the dominant and submissive relationship was a kind of guideline for action rather than a rigid set of roles. Traditionally you think top and bottom and you think the top is the one who is dominant and in control. Yet youd meet a top who would initially come off really tough and macho yet later youd find out that the bottom, the guy who was being submissive and obedient, was actually running the show.

Head-Games, Drama, Hierarchies and Categories.

It was refreshing for me though because I think gay men, unlike some straight men and women, are totally honest about their desire. Everyone was totally up-front and honest about what they wanted from you, and if you didn't want to give it to them, that's cool, there is always someone else. I think there are far more head-games when it comes to sexuality between men and women. Not to say that gay men aren't interested in head-games and drama, but just that when it came to fucking, things were pretty cut and dried.

It wasn't just pure, raw sexuality though, it was also an insight into the way men interact with each other. I think many men, both gay and straight, need to be able to use categorizations and hierarchies to determine where they stand in the social order. There was certainly a hierarchy between those worked at the clubs based on the amount of time that someone had worked there, or based on who happened to be the personal favorite of the owner at the time. It is not just straight male culture that needs this kind of wolfpack, pecking order mentality — these men I worked with also needed it. They also needed to be able to categorize, to determine once and for all what someone's sexuality or sexual habits were.

I mostly kept to myself and I think they really couldnt figure out where I stood sexually, so I was constantly the subject of gossip and speculation. It was like any ambiguity was problematic and rather than let you represent yourself in a certain way they had to have confirmation of which category you fit into. I remember on a number of occasions telling men that asking the question of whether I was gay or not was so passe. It just seemed to me that most of the guys and girls I know just naturally consider themselves, bi or ambisexual and defining yourself in such black and white terms is anachronistic. I guess it also could have been a generational thing because back in the day there was so much more at stake by declaring your homosexuality in the face of a dangerous and prejudiced society.

The off-duty Chicago police-officers who did security for the club didn't quite know what to make of everything, particularly anyone who came across as quite masculine. I felt like it was weird for the security to see straight or straight-acting guys among those of us who worked there they just didn't know how to talk around us. After shift they would sit around with us as we cleaned up and waited for the owner to count out our cash drawers. The best conversations during these periods were always between the police officers and the most effeminate bartenders. The thing was, they agreed on everything. The security guys and the more catty among us would crack wise about certain things that occurred during the shift. Sometimes I heard the same homophobia from both: genuine in one case, self-hating in the other.

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ground everything^ rfj^ open, we could do anything, anyth mg we wanted, anything we desired. Playing next to each other in very close quarters, we had a constant level of physical yet non-sexual contact. Hugging each other, horse-playing, wrestling, slapping each others asses, it was all in good fan and deeply refreshing to find out that you could

touch and be physical with another man without it being sexual or getting violent. Yet as far as I knew, none of the guys slept with each other. It was just like being a kid before you knew that touching another guy was socially frowned upon, before physical contact was channeled into either sports or sexuality. It was the way boys play with each other before heterosexual society begins to try to mold them into either masculine males or queenie fags (not that everyone now is or should be one or the other).

Live Your Desire? Hedonism and Fulfillment In many ways, gay-club culture could be seen as the complete expression of the "hve- your-desire" mentality so advertised and exhorted in the pages of this magazine .

Even the off-duty police treated the club

pleasure-seeking is not a temporary abandonment to individual desires, but a well-reasoned, long-term commitment to the pursuit and exploration of desires of all kinds and scopes, especially the large-scale, long-term ones.

Alamut

Excerpted from the international bestseller, *Volvo Speaks*

Prologue

After a 56 hour bus trip that took me through most of Turkey, countless mountain passes and military checkpoints, I reached Iran. After an overdose on Persian pop music and a day of severe diarrhea I was overwhelmed with relief when I got of the bus. I wouldn't do my memories justice by trying to incorporate my impression of Iran into one essay and therefore 1 choose one tale...

Alamut — The Eagle s nest

We descended into the clouds that filled the valleys in the Alborz mountain range and traveled back in time, or so it seemed. Behind me laid the busy street life of Tehran, housing the remains of an American Embassy, the world's largest bazaar and millions of people and cars.

The countryside was waking up as we made our way on winding roads. The villages, which scattered the mountains, showed no signs of modernity and its female inhabitants colorful clothes were in stark contrast to the black chador, worn by the majority elsewhere. At the time I was unaware of the significance of the place I was about to visit, I was along for the ride and the scenery made it worthwhile. As always, unmediated adventure is the most rewarding, and this particular one took me to Alamut, the ancient fortress of the medieval

Assassins.

The fortress of Alamut was the center of the empire and the symbol of the movement, controlled by Hassan i Sabbah and the later heads of the Assassins. The Assassins were a

Persian Isma'ili sect and their empire was largely a hidden political one within the borders of others and was maintained by the means of information and political

assassination. Alamut is said to been seized in 1090 by the Assassins and stood unassailable until 1256 when it was destroyed by Hulagu Khan and his Mongol raiders. Why became apparent when we parked the jeep at the foot of the mountain in the outskirts of a little village and started to make our way up the mountain. Alamut is only accessible only by a single, almost vertical pathway, which at the time of my visit was slippery with small stones. We reached the top and our eyes were rewarded by the swindling view, while a group of young local boys who tailed us filled our ear with incomprehensible phrases and laughter. There

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illustration s. 13: Marko picking vegetables in Zagreb collection of tales he picked up from storytellers along his journey. According to Marco Polo an initiate was drugged and taken to garden close to Alamut where he was given a taste of paradise on earth. It's a matter of dispute whether the initiate was treated with hash along with the other sensuous delights as wine, food and sexual pleasures. The initiate was led believe that he would return to this paradise after death. With this prospect ahead of them the Assassins performed their deed willingly. From Alamut the Hassan i Sabbah, also called the Old Man on rhe mountain, sent out missionaries to infiltrate his enemies ranks, where they would often rise to positions of prominence and trust, often posing as religious teachers or dervishes. From this posi-

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r Tufomenin thenar 1092stoodan^^m^ parts if a medieval castle — the Eagles Nat — perched high upon the crags of the Persian mountains: the personal representative of the [Persian] Emperor and the veiled figure who claimed to be the incarnation of God on Earth. Hassan, son of Sabbah, Sheikh of the Mountains and leader of the Assassins, spoke.. -You see that devotee standing guard on yonder turret-top? Watch!'

> *He made a signal. Instantly the white-robed figure threw up his hands in salutation, and cast himself two thousand feet into the foaming torrent which surrounded the fortress.*
>
> *-1 have seventy thousand men — and women — throughout Asia, each one of them ready to do my bidding. Can your master, Malik Shah, say the same? And he asks me to surrender to bis sovereignty! This is your answer. Go!*

The paradox can be seen in some of Hakim Bey's writing on the Assassins where he states

[t]rue, in this myth some aspirants disciples may be ordered to fling themselves off the ramparts into the black — but also true that some of them will learn to fly like sorcerers".

The Assassins most known lasting legacy is actually the English word in itself, which definitely entered the literary vocabulary when it was used by Dante. In The Divine Comedy: Hell, Book XIX, Dante describes himself "like a friar who is confessing

the wicked assassin". From an etymological viewpoint the popular notion is that the word is derived from the Arabic word hashashin, consumer of Hashish. It is unlikely that the austere Hassan i Sabbah indulged personally in drug taking and there is no mention of the drug hash in connection with the Assassins in any historical written records except for Marco Polo's. Other scholars derive the word from the Arabic word assasseen , which signifies "guardians" and consider this the true origin of the word — guardians of the secret.

Epilogue

Its a tentative to reason whether the Assassins legacy has had any influence on contemporary militant fractions in the Middle East. I do think that the myths can serve an emancipating purpose among the many people, who has to conceal their armed desires in an alienating world, to endure until the time is ripe to strike. A guiding star in the battle may well be the oft quoted maxim attributed to Hassan i Sabbah which reads...

Nothing is true — everything is permitted

Additional recommended reading: Arkon Daraul: A History of Secret Societies, *Edward Burman:* The Assassins — Holy Killers of Islam.

Plagiarized and supplied by Volvo — CrimethInc. Travel Agency

Kimball, Nebraska /
Interstate 84, U.S.A.

by Matt (SK8amongus) *[editors note: to its. credit, this scene report arrived handwritten with lovely pen drawings in the margins, and^a 'few stalks of genuine Wyoming wheat in the envelope, which was of course postmarked December 29.]*

11 p.m. December 27^, 1999

Car pulled over. No others in sight. No light but that of the wide open, clear sky. Lying in the dead grass, we stretch and marvel at the warmth. One hour until we sleep. Gorgeous!

December 28^, 1999

Oh my god, it s so beautiful out! The guy in the Harley shirt and leather vest proclaims that this 60 degree weather is, indeed, unusual for this time of year, then continues with his tales of weddings attended by himself and Al Gore, Boston accents, C.B. radios. What the fuck am I doing in Wyoming? Two weeks ago, if you d told me I'd be staring at these vast plains spotted with remnants of snow and deer and cowboy culture and "Taco Johns, " Kum & Gos, " our polluting tailpipe, sagging bumper, cramped Corsica, and us insidewell, how would you know that? How the heck was I to know I'd finally find the nerve to make a long-standing dream of mine a reality? And not a moment too soon — nobody seems to know whats gonna happen three and a half days from now.

The guy at the trading post said that Sunday was their busiest day by far. A lot of young fellers coming in, stocking up on firearms and ammo. His electrician buddy claims there'll be a fourteen-day minimum lack of power. What are three (more or less) middle class white boys doing so far away from the security of friends, families, homes,

jobs... I should be stocking soymilk or cashing out 47-year-old ladies with $50, 000 bank accounts and a taste for free range, "organic" turkey, so I can pay for a decaying, over-priced third floor apartment back on the coast of New England. Not that I mind that as much as I might say if, say, I was there doing that. I feel really lucky. If not for some stupid Hollywood movie (or two), I might not have decided to risk the economic eclipse I'll have to face once I get back — if I get back. What if this IS it? My last chance to finally witness the sun setting on a rocky Oregon beach that so many people have captured with camera lenses and paint brushes, yet I've (longed to but) never managed to see first-hand (not having the opportunity to spend the time or money on such a journey).

Normally, rationality would instruct me not to escape the security of my daily/ weeldy routine. Things are tight enough as it is — but * — Lucky Number*

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eventually, I detitled;it warnearmandatory to at least try to make this Journey a reality. I think that if the world is engulfed with nuclear disaster the morning of January first, there will be a bit more harmony within my personal constitution, huge hiking pack strapped on and fir trees cradling the moon. The only regret I might have, if busses dont exist anymore and I can't be carried back to the east, is I may never see Noella again. This almost had stopped me, but we all gotta do what we gotta do. I guess I wish I had brought my skateboard, too (Cheyenne had some rad fucking transitions going on). 700 miles to Eugene. 79 hours to live. 3 friends. 2 many days before this I've spent dreaming, not living. 1 last chance to live the dreams. ($0).

Carrboro North Carolina*

by Gloria Cubana

> A zoo without a fence and the Paris of the Piedmont. The two towns share a main street and the burden of housing 25, 000 students, but Carrboro and Chapel Hill enjoy very different personalities. Take the homeless populations for example. Chapel Hill is the upscale, self-conscious town (only recently persuaded that with a huge university and a rapidly growing supply of permanent residents, it could no longer call itself a village) — in spite of this, or because of it, a lot of panhandlers ply their trade on the main couple of blocks in the center of town; the crazy ones tend to roam down-to-earth Carrboro, since they won't get any money out of anyone anyway, preferring Webster's Laundromat and the sidewalk outside of the cooperative grocery.
>
> That grocery, Weaver Street Market, is the pulsing center of a tiny town, which means that you will not be able to get out of it in under half an hour after going regularly for a period of time. In fact, even if you have never been in it before, and in fact have lived thousands of miles away all your life, there have been documented cases of people entering WSM for

the first time and finding long lost friends. Lucky you if *your* friend plies you with Carrboro bars the most filling vegan pas-

Mex, but you can stuff yourself for less than $3. After dinner you should venture onto Chapel Hill's Franklin St.: if you don't(stray too far from the safe glow of Carrboro, you'll find the Silk Road Tea House, where a Sufi group frequently gathers to sit on the cushions and enhance the atmosphere of the place. Another option is the Open Eye Cafe, a comfortable Carrboro coffee shop with divine vegan ginger carrot cake.

For nighttime entertainment, Carrboro provides the Cat's Cradle, a once-great club that now hosts a bunch of bands I've never heard of. (I haven't yet been able to decide if this means they are out of the loop, or if I am.) If you've got to work early, and can't go sway with all the hipsters at the Cradle into the wee hours, just get up an hour or two early and head over to the fire station, which is beside Town Hall and the Farmer's Market. I used to live right across the street from it, and besides the insomniac bird chorus (purportedly the result of a Zoology department experiment at UNC-Chapel Hill whose purpose was to see if

Officer Bob will tell you bad jdkes of his own invention ("Thanks, folks, that's an Officer Bob original.") and stop to chat outside the coop.]

' The Saturday morning Carrboro Farmer's Market, by the way, is almost as upscale and boutique-y as Chapel Hill. Still, Kathy will keep you talking and sell you beautiful garlic, and right next to her you can get all kinds of crazy varieties of potatoes, and sometimes there are even free tastings. I stuffed myself on watermelon recently, feigning studied concentration as I carefully compared the 10 or 15 different varieties they were offering as snacks — I mean, samples. The eco-gourmct atmosphere can be off-putting (no dusty, sunburned old men backing up a dirty pickup truck with a bed full of ears of corn here), but there are a few old-fashioned farmers there selling produce (and all kinds of preserves). Plus, those little yellow tomatoes are so delicious, they're worth any price.

For such a small place, you wouldn't think they'd need two hardware stores three blocks

from each other, but they do, and if you lament the salt-of-the-earth types missing from the farmer's market, you can always go listen to the hardware guys converse with the regulars: "I know you aren't trying to flimflam me this early in the morning, now, " we heard one 8 a.m.

Cheap clothes can be found at the PTA on Jones Ferry Rd., but I don't often find anything that I want to wear. For a somewhat more expensive but more reliable selection of old clothes, you should head to Time After Time, only a bit farther down the street from Carrboro than the Silk Road Tea House.

Haircuts can be had at the Beehive on Weaver St., but I think you have to be far cooler than I to enter. That's why I cut my own hair, and my bathroom and broom and dustpan are available for other daring souls with

similar plans. When I'm getting really fancy, I call my sister (no remarkable haircutting skills, except that she can see the back of my head better than I can), who can be found way over in Chapel Hill. She might do yours, too, I'll ask her.

After Hours at Weaver Street Market (summer Thursday evenings) is usually a really terrible band playing, attracting a large crowd of hippies and yuppies (and that weird breed that is sort of a mishmash of the two) who gather and bring their kids and drink wine and dance and basically make life hell for the hapless store employees that get stuck with the Thursday shift.

During the summertime, there are numerous apartment complexes around town whose pools are rip'e for sneaking into. I'm not going to tell you which one is my favorite, though because I don't want to see you there. There's also a hot tub at a luxury complex, and if you re willing to climb a fence in your bathing suit, there's no reason you should hold back...

An idyllic way to Get Away From It All (if you are first enough to dodge reckless mountain bikers during peak hours) is to wander the trails in the woods of Estes Drive. One of them leads to Wilson Park, where it is pleasant to lie in the grass and read novels and listen to the thock, thock, thock of tennis balls bouncing back and forth in the courts. Or you can take a ride into the countryside. Just past Calvander, a small community (i.e., an intersection), the scenery turns to fields and dairy farms.

Nice Price is perhaps the best used bookstore around. And Carrboro does have a public library — but why bother, when there are the 8 floors of Davis Library on the university's campus to explore?

Zagreb, Croatia

by Kim Bae

I was fortunate enough to spend about 11 days in Zagreb in August 2000. There I found a bounty of great food and happily immersed myself in a frenzy of eating debauchery. Before revealing the details of my gluttony, lets get . some practical information out of the way.

I. Practical Information (for tourists, punkers, and vegetarians)

A. Croatia is actually called Hrvatska in the Croatian/Serbian/Bosnian language.

B. At the time that I went the exchange rate was about US$1 = 7 Croatian Kuna (KN).

C. The tourist office on the east side of the main square in Zagreb, Trg Bana Jela?i?a, is

> one of the best I've ever seen. Be sure to grab a copy of the pamphlet "Zagreb Info A-Z" which has all the information you need to know as a visitor to Zagreb. Also

available is a map of the center (which can also be found in the pamphlet) and a map of the tram and bus system — all for free! Keep in mind that the names you see on maps are not the names you see written on the street signs. It's a bit confusing but at least the roots of the names are the same. All street names in this report are those that are written on maps.

D.

<quote> Most of the time you need not worry about purchasing a ticket for the trams but

> I was controlled about 3 times so I bought a ticket and simply didn't stamp it. They can be bought at little kiosks that sell tobacco and magazines or at post offices for KN 5.50 or from the driver for KN 6.00.

.. If you find yourself in a pinch and need to

> get some vegetarian/vegan shampoos, soaps, etc. there is a shop called Lush near Trg Bana Jela?i?a on Petrinjska. Everything is handmade, vegetarian, and cruelty free. You can ask for a newspaper they produce which lists ingredients so you can be sure of what

‘ is vegan. Very expensive.

E The best place to go to check email is the Mama internet cafe. It is located on Preradovi?eva on the west side of the street in between Berislavi?eva and Hebrangova. Its a bit difficult to see it but just look out for the red and white sign and a small passageway you must walk through to reach it. Internet access is really cheap and the people there are involved in some political activities with the Attack! autonomous center (see below).

G. Attack! is an anarchist community center in the basement of some alternative club (cant remember the name — starts with an Tn"?). They have an info shop, library, internet cafe, and cook a cheap (10 KN) vegan meal every Tuesday and Thursday. Its located at Kralja Drzislava 12 south of the center of town in a former factory building. Telephone: ++385-1-461-12-671. Website: members.nbci.com/zap_zg/ newsl eng.htm. Email: attack_zg@zamir-zg.ztn.apc.org.

H. As far as I know there aren't any record stores where you can get punk and hardcore stuff. Attack! has a few records for sale.

broccoletti to dried-^

> It runs from early in the morning to about T;. 6 pm. Another pretty good one is at Dolac, north of Trg Bana Jela?i?a but it's only open until 2 pm. I visited the one at Britanski Trg as well but it was pretty small in comparison to the aforementioned.

C. Health food shops: Health food is super fucking expensive. A carton of soy milk is about US$3. Be prepared to spend big. The best health food shop I went to was Biovega which is located at Ilica 72/1 near Meduli?eva. There is also one called Rosa which is on the south side of Hebrangova in between Gajeva and Strossmayerov Trg but it's a bit smaller. Inside the meat market just south of the open-air Dolac market is a small health food stand which is bizarre. It's truly difficult to brave the smells of raw, bloody meat in order to buy a some Alpro Soja Drink Schokolade (which you absolutely must try). It's impossible to explain exactly where it is but it's somewhere in the middle of the building. Supposedly there is a new health food store that just opened right at Trg Bana Jela?i?a but I didn't have a chance to go there. If you just need soy milk, try going into a DM (Drogerie Markt) — it's a drugstore but they have a sort of health food section. They can be found everywhere.

D. Restaurants: Zagreb has two(!) macrobiotic restaurants. One is called Makro Nova and it's in the same building as Biovega. If you have a huge appetite you can have an entree for about 60 KN but I got the small plate which was more than enough (and cheaper). Desserts are 20 KN and are pretty good. Bijeli Vai is this not-quite legal restaurant situated in an apartment at Trenkova 7. You have to push a buzzer to be let in and I was too stupid to write down which buzzer it is but it's on the first floor and the word written on the buzzer is also written on a little sign for the restaurant on the wall. The meal I had there was really incredible and the atmosphere is great. A huge meal including tea and dessert will cost you about 70 KN (?). The Attack! community center has an infokitchen twice a week (see above).

E. Foods you must try when in Zagreb: Konzum has these vegetarian sausages that you can slice up to put on sandwiches. I can't remember the exact name (I think it has "veg" in it somewhere) but there are 3 different colors of packaging. The white is original flavor, the green is olive, and the beige-ish one is with tofu. Ajdvar is this interesting spread made with red peppers and onions that comes in a jar. It's bright orange and looks gross but tastes great. I discovered some wonderful ?ipak (rosehip) jam in a small shop near Sanja's house and decided to try it, not knowing what the hell it was. Also look out for the best chocolate

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in the world , called Bajadera which is a creamy hazelnut chocolate. Fontana Ledene Kocke in a blue box is a strange minty kind of chocolate. Kras ?okoladne Napolitanke in

a red and brown box are really amazing chocolate wafers. Dorina ?okolada Za

Kuhanje in a brown and white wrapper is really good, not-so-bitter cooking chocolate. There is a cherry liquor chocolate in a red box that I didn't try that is always found next to Bajadera and Fontana in shops. All of this, except for the sausages, can be found just about anywhere. The plain white bread loaf found in bakeries and all food shops in Croatia (and all the other former Yugoslavian countries) is really amazing. I don't know what they do to it but its kind of crusty on the outside and really,

really soft inside. It's really different from any kind of bread I've had before. There are 3 Slovenian drinks that are commonly found in Croatia that are incredible. Their answer to Coke is Cockta which you seriously have to try to believe. I don't even like soda but this stuff is great. Eis Tea (the one with the blue label, not the pink one) is a peach flavored ice tea that is, again, something I would normally hate but is somehow really good. Fructal is the brand name for a line of the best juices I've ever had. It's not as easy to find as Cockta or Eis Tea but is still available. I think the strawberry and blueberry ones are the best but they're all good.

III. Stuffing my face for 11 days straight

I'm positive I gained some weight on this trip and I wouldn't be surprised if it was all from Zagreb. My first full day in Croatia, a big group of us went to this small village where the parents of my friend Marko live. We picked some vegetables in their garden and made a huge meal with stuffed tomatoes, dozens of kebabs, marinated soya steaks sandwiches, tomato and kohlrabi salad, great bread, and baked chocolate bananas. I told everyone that night about my idea to do this scene report and from then on the stage was set. My friends Sanja, Ne?u, Marko, Bojan and I sat outside on Sanja's patio one nice evening and had a stirfry dinner by candlelight. They had told me that Chinese food was somewhat of a rarity in Croatia (considering the extremely high cost of soy sauce there I can understand why) so they really enjoyed my ordinary stirfry. This evening I tried cornflakes with chocolate soy milk for the first time which tastes a lot better than it sounds.

The next night Sanja made this traditional Croatian dish with beans, onions, and soy milk which was really great. About ten of us sat around in her living room, bonding through food. The grand opening of Attack! after the summer closing was the next day and I cooked a Korean meal. It was a grand

affair with flyers announcing the meil and a beautiful poster that Ne?u drew. A few days later Sanja had her birthday party there and I cooked a Thai meal with some salad. Just about every day we ate bread with ajdvar, miso, garlic, tomatoes, margarine, mush-

room pate, etc.

I really love to discover new foods as I'm travelling and cooking/eating with new friends. For me, food isn't just about suste-

[Image not archived]

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^ : *c^-ww ' :*

Last USTchkung ShH

Eugene, Oregon, USA Summer 1999

A *Hillside*

Prague, Czech Republic Summer 1999.

by Finnegan Bell

Usually a "scene" is conceived of as a certain amount of people in a loose community, involved with various projects, usually bands. However, more often I've found that the

most critical scenes that I have been a part of have lasted seconds, or perhaps a few hours or a day, like the ones described below. I feel much more compelled to share these "fleeting" scenes with you because with all disregard for time and place these moments have shaped my life more than any list of local bands. It is also quite clearly subjective to the reader whether or not any of the below information is of any "practical" use. At heart, I want to begin to sketch a picture of a world that I have caught a glimpse of in my travels throughout this life. These transforming moments have become more and more of a web that I can travel upon — I'm doing everything to link them; not only with each other, but with other's moments as well. A federation of beautiful moments! There is a world beyond the perceived banality of our society — a world full daring people, breathtaking beauty and ingrained with (dare I violate the cynicism?!) — magic...

As the bi-plane pilot, lover of key lime pie and sublime novelist, Richard Bach noted: "There was no need for fiction. In fact, the truth wasn't plausible enough for it!"

Thus:

☒

An old dance hall on a street of forgotten buildings — a long summer's day descending into twilight. Earlier that day Arwen came to me at the coffee shop; "Hey, " she said slyly "There's something you can't miss tonight."

"What's that?"

Some folks are coming down from Seattle, a band... erm... of sorts — Tchkung."

"A Tchkung? What do they do?" "You'll see..."

Later I found myself following Arwen into a foyer of the old hall. I could see that it was already packed: hippies, punks, burnouts, dropouts, freaks, and what looked to be a whole regiment of wood elf terrorists. Some were sitting masked behind an Earth First table. I looked to Arwen.

"They came down from the Treesits for the night, " she replied to my unspoken question. The Oregon and Northern California Treesits were some of the most pleasing and effective activism that I had ever experienced. In response to the relentless cutting down of old growth trees in National Forests for-profit a brave handful of individuals took to the trees and refused to come down. They have actual-

ly, with the simple tool of ropes and their bpd* ^ *'

ies, prevented the trees from falling. In the last decade not only have the number of treesits steadily increased, but a number of treesits have become year round communities — some [as] going so far as to declare their autonomy! Though media coverage rarely extends beyond Pacific Northwest, the support community is immense -Everything from food to funds to climbing training. Around town they were fondly referred to as the "Ewok Villages." The dark smoky room smelled sweetly of the Earth.

Arwen turned to me and smiled mysteriously.

***

Joelle and I had been in Prague I don't know how long. She had rigged up some crazy scam where we had traveled from the North of the Continent for ridiculously cheap. But we had had to spend days traveling on shady regional trains and arrived in Prague in the middle of the night to find we had the city to ourselves. The air was damp in that eastern city. It was probably noisy like all cities, but later we could only recall a steady thumping silence.

Joelle and I had been traveling for months in disguise as Swedish tourists. We had even made up a secret language; our own "Swedish" that we would speak in front of taxi drivers and late night kiosk loafers.

"Where are you from?" they'd ask.

Sweden, " We'd answer with serious faces.

But Praha was different — it was a secret city — at least the one we stumbled on in those days. We soon realized that we didn't need our disguises.

We walked through the midnight until we found a corner to sleep in. Later, we woke in the mists.

***

Arwen and I carefully made our way through the crowd of people excited with anticipation. Arwen explained that the last time Tchkung had played in Eugene a street riot had ensued at the end of the set! A tribal drum session was played seductively over the PA evoking a ghost ensemble. I was handed a small tract by a fleeting figure — I could only make out a certain amount of the apocalyptic ramblings in the half-light. The small stage was crowded with debris that I assumed were to become instruments. I noticed a guitar hidden in the clutter. A massive percussion section dominated the back of the area. And power tools... I turned my friend. "An oil drum?" I mouthed.

The lights went out. ***

We had been wandering since early morn- i^{n}g« The mist us had kept us well hidden and happily lost. Each corner we turned seemed to hold some new surprise.

Sauntering over cobblestones we found a

[Image not archived]

^stopped. I caughVa glimpse of a shotgun on stage and pieces of a hysterical speech about defending the lives of the last remaining wild North American wolves — And I understood — a refusal to accept the destruction of the little beauty left — drawing the line. Savage and beautiful.

Then everything crystallizes into the Real: A gas-masked uniformed figure in riot gear broke from the crowd and brutally tackled the fire breather in center of the room. Total confusion. Everyone stumbled back over each other only to suddenly find we had been roped in — The room panicked.

Flashing lights, bull horns, flailing bodies, screams. The music did not stop.

> The mist and rain increased until Joelle and I found that we were alone on the windy streets. We had just come from a lush, concealed and deserted garden we had just explored. We made our way up a twisting street,

ascending a long hill slowly. To one side of us was a row of old medieval homes, to the other a decaying stone castle wall, long abandoned.

We both became anxious to discover what lay on the other side of the wall. After and indeterminate amount of walking, weary from the climb, we finally spotted a gate ahead in the stone. Reaching it, we eagerly slipped through and old iron door to the other side. We emerged into a strange light, sight. There was a wood before us already well into its autumn colors — despite the persistence of summer on the calendar. Ahead to the right a statue of some forgotten saint stood remembered only with old dry flowers strewn about its base. Beyond that the forest disappeared down a hill.

Joelle looked to me and I followed her amble away from the door into the strange fall. Soon we came to a large grassy slope. The mist had intensified quite noticeably. The wood was cloaked in grey. We both stopped suddenly. Ahead appearing from further down the hill, entering into the glen was a figure in white. We stood still and waited for the stranger, a young woman, to approach. Her pitch black hair was tied back and moist -All our clothes were clinging to our forms from the moisture. She was carrying a small canvas bag. As she drew nearer she eyed us thoughtfully. Finally, standing in front of us she asked something in Czech. We shrugged in the Swedish manner to indicate politely that we didn't understand. She then reached into her bag and held her hand towards us asking again in perfect broken English, You want a pear?

Joelle and I stood both shocked for a moment, totally entranced by what seemed to be some magical question. There was something so queer and beautiful about the encounter that we were both savoring. With tender care we each took a pear, all the while

and intricate chains she surveyed the room. As the procession, which was followed up by two additional drummers, made its way around the room, the blue woman was handed a small torch. She then produced an American dollar bill and set it to flames. Then another. Fistful after fistful of dollars were sent fluttering to the crowd around her. Every Single last dollar was retrieved and held to the fire. Money is a symbol of debt — every symbol was returned to ashes. After marching through the crowd, they slowly exited. The room was quiet — we were all left with ourselves.

Arwen found me and we hurried from the

the tattered paperback that I had been carrying around for months. Remembering the old trick Richard taught me, I opened the book to a random page. "For magic to even begin to work, you have to believe, it said. It was no longer a choice, not that night. We could only acquiesce. Joelle carefully brushed her behind her ear with her hand. Dishes clattered joyfully from the kitchen. The forgotten city exhaled.

EMPHASIS

is function
SOLRESOL
UNIVERSAL MUSICAL LANGUAGE
KEY
is primary
The Final Inside Front Reviews
redomido = to slander REdomtdo = dander reDOmido = slanderer
Do = Physical & Moral Aspects of Humanity Re = Family, Household. Dress Mi = Human Actions
MEANING
*i_s reversible_*
Mi sol = Good
Sol mi = Evil
ORDER
is static
Subject — Verb — Object
Noun — Adjective
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As you can see, this last reviews section begins with some reviews from outside the hardcore scene. I'd wanted this issue to conclude with reviews of some of the movies, books, plays, and older records (punk and not) that were responsible for inspiring us to do what we have with Inside Front in the first place, alongside the more standard reviews of current records and 'zines, but time and space were, as usual, too pressing.

I'd hoped to write a review comparing Art Speigelman's *Maus* (about his father's experiences in the Nazi death camps) comic to the more recent *Palestine* comic (which deals with the current situation of Israeli oppression and inhumanity in occupied Palestine). I wanted to write about Godspeed, You Black Emperor! and their side project A Silver Mount Zion, about how their ensemble approach subverts the usual hierarchy of roles within a band, and how my friend Paul says their music is the only thing he's ever heard that sounds like it's coming from a world on the other side of the "rev-

olution" we talk about. Speaking of that, 1 wanted to write about the heartbreaking Bertolucci movie *Before the Revolution, * about the fragile idealism of a young Italian communist in love with his aunt.

Hell, I even wanted to write that ten page exploration of *Natural Born Killers* I've been threatening to write ever since that movie changed my life, and Paul was supposed to write about *Fight Club.* And I wanted to add to those a raving review of the Children of Bodom "Hatebreeder" record, my other favorite record along with the Godspeed e.p. — Children of Bodom are the most amazing metal band I've ever heard, five Finnish (of course!) guys doing the work of a whole symphony orchestra. I was also going to review the new Dover CD "Late at Night, " which is by far the

best rock record I've heard this year, and I wanted to talk about how the first song addresses the subject of non- monogamous relationships ("I've been with someone else — I've been with someone we

both need"). I was going to write about the first Integrity record, about what was so important about it when it came out, since so many people listening to hardcore today weren't then and don't understand now what all the fuss was (since that band turned into a joke in poor taste). I wanted to write about Diamanda Galas, about the anarchist jazz communes of the 1960 s, about my favorite books by Italo Calvino and my favorite paintings by Ernst Fuchs...

I was going to write about one of the best punk shows I've ever been to in my life, when I saw Alexei's old punk band Polyester Cowboys play almost a decade ago, while we were still in high school. The singer of the band was a little older, and worked construction with a black man in his late thirties who was a blues musician, who had promised to come to the show. He arrived at the club (the Fallout Shelter, a notorious basement punk club where my friends saw Agnostic Front and other bands in the '80s) with his saxophone, and was so musi-

cally acute and outgoing and confident (in what was a totally alien environment, to him) that he was able to pick up all the chord progressions of their songs and play along. He got up on stage and joined them and they played together, and everyone felt so close and excited — clearly, anything could happen! I remember that night as one of the first times I realized the real power of punk rock...

And I was going to write about seeing the Cirque du Soleil, the French Canadian circus I went to see with my parents that made me think about how the circus has been a place where creative and radical and exciting things could always take place in the most conservative and repressive of societies, and gave me ideas about what new things could be done with the circus model. Before the performance started, a man in a hilarious costume who later turned out to be the ringleader was stalking around the aisles of the amphitheater, , sneaking up behind people and reaching over their

shoulders to steal handfuls of popcorn. A rich older woman caught him doing this, and clutched her popcorn to her chest in outrage. To everyone's amazement, he snatched it from her hands, threw the popcorn in her face, tossed the box in the air, and strode away while everyone in the place (a bunch of totally bourgeois families!) laughed and cheered. Right on!! I'm sure she got another popcorn and a free sweatshirt ("we can only hope, " quipped Bruce when I told him this story), but all the same it was amazing to see this sold as entertainment. A young man I've corresponded with told me the second half of the story: we he saw the Cirque, the same guy was going around stealing popcorn, and a little girl noticed him trying to get a handful of hers. She held her popcorn out to him, and he was so surprised that he took his hat off and

gave it to her. Her eyes got really big, and she was very happy — as was I, to hear about it.

And, damn it all, I was going to write a review of my friend Greg Bennick's juggling performance in front of the post office when he came to visit Chapel Hill last summer,

and review my friend Sera's 'zines and tell the story of how we met when she was living in the library I hang out in and sleeping in her car. All that will have to wait, I guess — look for those reviews in future issues of F.B.I. zine, or maybe Slave magazine, or else we'll have to do a fucking Inside Front epilogue. The only piece I did get finished was this, the final submission for the "Negate box" (the Inside Front feature created in honor of our favorite nonsense-lyrics band, as reviewed two issues ago).

Dead Prez
"Let's Get Free"
by Nick Baxter

This is a rap (or hip-hop) album, has nothing really to do with hardcore/punk, and consists of the rappers M1 and Stic. However, I felt it deserved a review in this zine because of the profound effect this album has had on me since I first heard it while in Washington D.C. "protesting" the IMF and World Bank. I have long been a fan of hiphop (or rap) music, but stopped listening to it when I started to become more educated and informed, and dare I say, political. This is because of the overwhelmingly nihilistic, sexually degrading, mindlessly violent, and basically counterproductive views and lifestyles embraced by many rappers, which I found myself increasingly aligned against...And then I heard Dead Prez, a politically and socially conscious, revolutionary, positive-minded, "from-the-streets" hip-hop duo, and was blown away. Finally, I could really sympathize with the lifestyle being represented, the intense emotions being portrayed, and the intelligent, uplifting messages being advocated in a rap album. I really don't know where to start, as I have so much to say about this, so I'll sum up by stating that Dead Prez have got their shit together and cover all the bases on this album. Their main goal seems to be to uplift, unify, and energize the African-American (or in their minds, just plain "African, " as they see "American" as an unjust term for the race) population into forming revolutionary armies and declaring war on the status quo to obtain true freedom and equality. This is a *huge* task considering present conditions, and they seem aware of this, with every song an urgent call to arms, both literally and ideologically. They go from rejecting the Eurocentric, institutionally racist school system, to overthrowing the prison system (even more horrifyingly unjust), to confronting harmful social attitudes and perceptions towards blacks, poor people, and women, to rejecting lies of the advertising and media industries, to fighting the pigs tooth and nail, to dispelling the capitalist myth of material comfort and status (perpetuated by most rap artists nowadays), to veganism and sustainable living. It is so uplifting and inspiring to see people trying to organize the

"When I'm bent up I think a lot about da reasons I'm here/ I think about da things I fear in the cornin' years ahead of me/ I'm ready for whatever they bring though/ I'll go against a tank wit a shank fo' my dreams and that's my fuckin' word!" *-n, reprinted from F.B.I. #3 ivtvtvdoud.com, and/or 79 Fifih Ave., New York, NY 10003*

**Evening, * by Susan Minot*

by Gloria Cubana

So this is what it is to cast off the heavy cloak of pain, to scrub the smoke and shadows of fear from your skin, and reenter your past. To enter your self at last. Not to see it objectively but to see it *truly* for the first time.

They could say anything now.

There it all is, luminous and complete. There your *selfris, * suddenly, even at those times you felt youd lost it, those moments and months where you numbed yourself to the thought of its absence, and you see that you have never been anything else.

I am here I have always been here your true self I was never gone and though you thought it came from him it was really yourself your whole self entire

You know what evening means. You have felt the sun's warmth fading. You have felt loss, you have watched the most beautiful thing slide away, you have known what it is to kill beauty when it has only begun to blossom. *Hope belongs in the same box as despair.*

You watched yourself die. You watch yourself die. This time it's different.

I have to go..

You did not try to escape it then. It even seemed inevitable. A perfect dream to carry back into the real world. You have known loss to be natural, even easy. And you know that, scientifically, more is coming.

...eventually one lost everything.

But there is no longer any fear. Even that hurt that you have carried with you for most of your life, that loss that shaped your future until the future became the present and now is ending — even that one, you see now, is joy. You are resigned to nothing but you accept everything, you open up your arms wide to it, overwhelmed, incredulous, that there could be so much beauty in your own life, which you lived with adequate happiness, to be sure, but without realizing the rapture that was hidden within it all the time.

Her life had not been long enough for her to know the whole of herself it had not been long enough or wide.

This is what it is to feel it all, even the pain, without hurting, without being damaged. This is strength. This is slow and gentle and silent. Laced with pain, even with sorrow, but without regret. The pain: an ache, ghosting through the chiaroscuro memories of your life, but not a stab. How can one find such joy in death,

such satisfaction in oblivion?

It was like hint to be wandering around in the night leaving lost things behind him. Buddy held loosely onto things. •

But this lets go of nothing. This is what it means to hold on. Not desperately, with a feverish grip that damages and distorts, but with the sense that your hands are cupping infinity. That nothing can really be lost because it is whole.

He was silent for a while. Im not sure I can go back that far. Can we? It wouldn't be the same.

That's alright, she said. I have it here. She closed her eyes and knocked her fist on her breast.

This is a glow you've never felt before. This is your heart in a paper bag.
The Idiots, Dogma 95
AND THE Vow OF CHASTITY
by Bobin Banks

The Idiots is a film made by Lars Von Trier, a member of the film collective that created the Dogma 95 Manifesto and Vow of Chastity in 1995. The Manifesto is an energetic document describing past and current attempts to revitalize film in order to make it relevant to everyday life. A few excerpts from the Manifesto: "In 1960 enough was enough! The movie was dead and called for resurrection. The goal was correct but the means were not! The new wave proved to be a ripple that washed ashore and turned to muck ... The auteur concept was bourgeois romanticism from the very start and thereby false!... Predictability (dramaturgy) has become, the golden calf around which we dance. Having the characters' inner lives justify the plot is too complicated, and not 'high art'. As never before, the superficial action and the superficial movie are receiving all the praise. The result is barren. An illusion of pathos and an illusion of love." In order to fulfill the vision of the Manifesto, the collective created the Vow of Chastity, which sounds distastefully ascetic, but in fact is a sort of "do-it- yourself" attitude about film. Here is most of the Vow:

1. . Shooting must be done on location. Props and sets must not be brought in.

2.
<quote> The sound must never be produced apart from the images or vice versa.
3.
<quote> The camera must be hand-held. Any movement or immobility attainable in the hand is permitted.
4.
<quote> The film must be in color. Special lighting is not acceptable.

5. Optical work and filters are forbidden.

6. The film must not contain superficial action.

(Murders, weapons, etc. must not occur.)
7.
<quote> Temporal and geographical alienation are forbidden. (That is to say that the film takes place here and now.)

8. Genre movies are not acceptable.

9. The film format must be Academy 35 mm.

10. The director must not be credited... I swear to refrain from creating a 'work', as I regard the instant as more important than the whole. My supreme goal is to force the truth out of my characters and settings. I swear to do so by all the means available and at the cost of any good taste and any aesthetic considerations."

The film "The Idiots" is an incredible fiction about a group of dissatisfied rebels who are squatting in a nameless upper-class suburb of Denmark. Together they pretend to be a gang of "idiots" — people with severe mental retardation — and with this ruse they maniacally careen through life. Says the official Dogma 95 website, "The project (of the idiots) is a manifestation of an explosive appetite for life in which they confront society with their idiocy ... they want to live out the excessive feelings, the aggression, the curiosity and the uncontrolled, egotistical primitive sexuality." The film plumbs depths and scales heights which most other movies completely ignore, all without resorting to cheap violence or worn-out action sequences. I strongly recommend this film to anyone sympathetic to CrimethInc.'s ideas, and if you like the idea of Dogma 95, I also recommend watching a film called The Celebration, also made by a member of the same film collective.

Judith Slaying Holofernes:
PAINTING BY ARTEMISIA

Gentileschi, early
17th century
by Robin Banks

The alleged story behind this painting is almost as interesting as the painting itself. The painter, Artemisia Gentileschi, was raped by one of her father's friends in 1612. She took the rapist to court and testified against him, even when pressured by officials to change her story. Her graphic, harrowing testimony is a matter of public record. It can be found in Mary D. Garrard's book Artemisia Gentileschi: The Image of the Female Hero in Italian Baroque Art (Princeton University Press, 1989). After Gentileschi was raped she began painting several versions of a single image: the Jewish widow Judith beheading Holofernes, an enemy general. Holofernes was head of the Assyrian army which was besieging Jerusalem at the time. When Judith heard that her city's army planned to surrender to Holofernes, she put on her finest clothes and made her way to Holofernes' tent. She kept Holofernes amused for hours, encouraging him to drink and flirting with him. Finally, Holofernes dismissed his servants and began making advances on Judith. Being completely sober, Judith was able to overpower the drunken Holofernes. steal his sword and cut off his head. Other artists who depicted this same scene always showed Judith

looking away from Holofernes as if she could not stand the sight of blood and death; but Artemisia Gentileschi depicted Judith as grimly enjoying her task. The painting is quite gory — long spurts of blood erupt from Holofernes' neck as Judith saws through the flesh. His eyeballs roll up as he gurgles his last breath. Judith's servant stands in the background, holding down the tyrant's body. It is a truly brutal

painting, thick with passion and revenge. As of August 2000, you can sec it online if you want (`http://shrike.depaul.edu/-bblum/gentil` 1 .html), though any decent library should have a reproduction of the image within its art history books.

Strike at the Fools Who Are Laughing At You: a personal

REMINISCENCE / REVIEW
of King horse
by famie Miller

"When someone tells you to "think for yourself, ' they are really telling you to quit disagreeing with me, ' which isn't really thinking for yourselfat all."

At first, the one thing that for me meant the most about Kinghorse was the HATE — the blazing contempt for other people's shallow opinions and worthless motivations that seemed to fuel every single song. Sure, Kinghorse was a machine the likes of which Louisville had never seen before (at least my generation hadn't), and yes, Kinghorse was ten times as sincere as any given handful of the other bands floating around at their inception, but those shining qualities paled next to the fiery hatred blasting from the stage.

Me, Danny and Drew — the self-anointed Triumvirate — were in the front at every single Kinghorse show, no exceptions. We taped the shows constantly (video and audio), wc deciphered the lyrics long before they were published, we helped design shirts and flyers when asked to do so. We were completely in synch with the band's nihilistic individualism (in other words: I don't care what you think of me because I'm a psychotic weirdo and I'm this close to killing you anyway). In fact, after the Columbine shootings in Colorado, Sean remarked to me that if those so-called Trenchcoat Mafia kids had been around in Kentucky in the late eighties/early nineties, they would have been Kinghorse fans, and they wouldn't have killed anybody because they would have had the perfect outlet for all their antisocial rage. Hell, the Triumvirate wore black trenchcoats and listened to punk rock and hated everybody who crossed our path, and we turned out just fine — I mean, at least we didn't kill anybody. We just engaged in heavy psychological warfare with our classmates...

As time passed, I realized that it wasn't hatred that fed the Kinghorse conflagration so much as a fierce, uncompromising individuality. The hatred was a result of conflict between the individual, the bleating sheep, and the idiotic authority figures, but it wasn't the real message. The real message was: be yourself.

This is precisely why Kinghorse was so important. There are a ton of bands out there who tell kids to "be yourself" but they are bracketing this empty advice with cookie-cutter music styles and scenester-approved clothing.

Therefore their words ring hollow in the finely-tuned, hypocrisy-detecting. ears of America's Youth. A band like Kinghorse, on the other hand, made up of people who clearly did not give a damn about what you thought of their appearance or politics or attitude or music — yeah, when THOSE guys flew the freak flag of individuality, you

BELIEVED it because it was obvious that they LIVED it. When other people confront you with a message of "be yourself" or "think for yourself, " they are usually advocating some type of position or point of view which they want you to adopt. Kinghorse was arguing for nothing EXCEPT defiant individuality, which made their message more palatable and believable to boot.

And Kinghorse didn't just say "be yourself, " they said "be yourself and define yourself by attacking everything around you that is false, hypocritical, empty or just plain stupid." In other words, — be yourself and destroy anything that isn't true to itself. This is why Kinghorse came into conflict with all the various scene factions from the very beginning — and why it united them in the end. This is why the flyers and T-shirts and artwork were so confrontational, because it wasn't just about individuality amongst a nation of individuals, it was about individuality when confronted with a mass of Mary Quite Contrarys urging you to conform, conform, conform at all costs.

Nowadays, "individuality" (or "uniqueness" or "eccentricity" or "political incorrectness") doesn't mean that you are truly an independent thinker who challenges the status quo — who terrifies your classmates and co-workers — who spends most of your time thinking of new and creative ways to rearrange people's thought processes, often against their will. No, nowadays it means that you like to be pointlessly rude and repeat idiotic bigoted comments you heard from Rush Limbaugh — or that you kowtow to authoritarian leftists and repeat idiotic generalizations you read in some Catharine MacKinnon book — or worst of all, that you are one of the thousands of hip "retro" people who consider themselves unique because you have embraced a certain long-dead style of music or clothing and don't care about anything else (excluding sex and inebriation, of course).

And now, a brief aside to explain why Kinghorse adopted the imagery of the Process Church of the Final Judgment, and also to 94 *Inside Front*

illustrate the uniqueness of both groups (the Horse and the Process) in contrast with the miserable sameness of their peers, .

If you imagine the mainstream as Christianity, then the "opposition" would be Satanism, and the apathetic Other would be unbelievers and heathens in general. The Process Church had critiques of Christianity and Satanism, but instead of turning to unbelief, they rearranged the symbology of both religions in a new, interesting and challenging way. They didn't just mix up the ideas in order to be ironically blasphemous, they actually created a brand new set of ideas out of the disordered old ones.

This is why it was entirely appropriate for Kinghorse to adopt the Process Church's rotated "P" symbol as their own. If you imagine the mainstream as the 70s/80s hard rock/metal that the Horse boys were raised on, then the "opposition" would be punk rock, and the apathetic Other would be all those people listening to Boy George and Wham or whatever. Kinghorse combined the best elements of punk (the attitude, the stripped down-essentials approach) and metal (the guitar solos, the double bass!) in a way that provided something new and satisfying. In addition, the confident and

emotional tone of defiance found in Process literature rang true with Kinghorse and at least some of their fans, especially the Triumvirate. End of aside.

Retro cool and the mainstreaming of punk/hardcore have proved that there is no more ultimate status quo in terms of aesthetics — which means there can never be another Kinghorse. Ask people what the status quo is and you'll get a dozen different responses. Is it the liberal establishment which admonishes us to eschew firearms? Is it the conservative establishment which frowns upon queer sex or environmentalism? Is it major labels or mainstream media? Is it corporations, the church or the state? Nobody can agree.

Perhaps the true status quo nowadays is this fragmented spectacle of opinions and preferences which make the opinion-makers and product-sellers rub their hands together with unrestrained glee. "I am an individual and a rebel, " says one kid, "because I like Rage Against the Machine and I wear baggy pants and I am against racism and, like, censorship or whatever."

"No, I am the true individual and rebel, " says another kid, "because I like Ted Nugent and I hate affirmative action and the Liberal Media and immigrants or something."

"Nay, among the three of us, I am the only true individual and rebel, " says the other (most annoying) kid, "because I like (insert 'obscure* indie rock band name here) and I wear thrift store clothes and thick framed glasses and I am fashionably nihilistic and I contemptuously spit upon you other two numskulls."

The real joke is that all three of them would have hated Kinghorse — and in five years, you won't be able to distinguish any one of them

Reviews

from the other two.

SO BE IT.

(< Christ said: Love thine enemy. Christs enemy urns Satan and Satan s enemy was Christ. Through Love, enmity is destroyed. Through Love, saint and sinner destroy the enmity between them. Through Love, Christ and Satan have destroyed Their enmity and come together for the End; Christ to Judge and Satan to execute the Judgment.

Salvation is the resolution of conflict. The Ultimate Salvation is the Salvation of GOD. The Ultimate Conflict is God and Anti-God. God and Anti-God are two halves of a divided Totality. And They ultimately must be reconciled. God and Anti-God are embodied in Christ and Satan. So Christ and Satan must be reconciled. The Lamb and the Goat must come together: Pure Love descended from the pinnacle of Heaven, united with Pure Hatred raised from the depths of Hell. n — the Process Church of the Final Judgment

Note to Inside Front readers: If you feel the urge to go out and buy Kinghorse music now, allow me to warn you that the best possible way to experience this band — like all great bands — is live. Their recordings could not and did not capture their essence. That said, their first CD is on Caroline, and their last CD is on Slamdek. Both

can be easily ordered from decent record shops. Rumor has it that Kinghorse's final unreleased material may be released in the near future. Let's hope so.

**Louise (Take* 2)
by Finn Forester*

Movies will never set us free. Only we ourselves could possibly ever accomplish that. But, we here at CrimethInc. have found that particular films have been known to send us running freely out into warm German nights, through the crowded Reeper Bahn, dancing in and out of mysterious smoke-filled rooms, transformed.

A movie about aimless Parisian pickpockets, derelict street-kids endlessly roaming the subway stations. Love. Madness. Escape. And they run and run and run. Ah.

Hip hop, jazz, world beats attempt to keep pace with the cameras (almost all the camera shots were improvised), the cameras try to keep pace with the actors: the actors fly. Admittedly that that *sensation* that we call *freedom* could only be captured on film with great difficulty, if not impossibility! But! Something does occurs here: Between the frames something is glimpsed; subliminal freedom perhaps? (I gaze over to see Dorte floating in the seat next to me, my spine tingles, I feel ready for anything). Where does the story begin? With a girl? A bunch of criminals?

Sigfrid. Ah. He wanders the Earth alone,

East to West, West to East. Never is he in one place too long, always moving, learning languages, learning people, customs, secrets. And then, he emerges mysteriously, not as a character in our film, but to compose the music, produce it, write the script and to direct the whole thing! How he managed to make this film can't be told here, a vagabond's secret. I imagine young Sigfrid, having made a film that could explode into a thousand stars, quietly disappears into the night, smiling, not overly concerned with his the monumental film he just made. He walks down a rainy street, and slowly begins running, his thoughts swirling to night, smiling. Ah, the run, the easy, desperate run, a running madness. What next young Sigfrid? Hopefully we'll never hear from you again, hopefully this was the only film you had to make. Perhaps now, *we can come find you.*

The story begins with a girl. Louise. The story begins in a Paris Metro station. But actually the story begins when the theater lights come back on and seconds later, or perhaps days or weeks; I find myself *running* through crowds, lights flickering through summer nights, seeing Dorte chasing, dancing in out of

fear and hope). But really it's all the same: past, future, present, because it doesn't matter at all as I kiss you and you whisper to me of remembered forgotten nights, and the thousand stories of our lives.

Post Script:

A film can be a tricky thing, after all it's hard to do anything more than *watch* a film. We must also consider the risk that a film will simply co-opt one's desire for a particular thing, whether it be a desire for romance, adventure, or a sensation of freedom. It's easier after all to watch a movie and enjoy it than to actually to go out into this huge world of ours and make *our* lives that beautiful exciting story you can

see in films. The film industry largely relies on this inability on our part to actualize these crazy dreams we have of Great Love, freedom, action, and mystery. Yet, we all know that real kisses taste much better than any cinema flicker.

So perhaps we have a dilemma with a film like "Louise (Take 2)". How great is the danger that someone will simply watch this film and be content to *see* "freedom" on the screen and

been released in the Unites States, there is a French website: _www.louisetake2.com_ that you could check out — otherwise hold your breath and keep an eye extra wide open!)

The Matrix

by CrimethInc. Private I William Warren

Over capuccino we sat to discuss the experience. We oogled over special effects, I pictured myself running up walls and leaping across buildings, firing guns one-handed and moving faster than bullets; we let our imaginations go all the way out. Soon our conversation matured a bit and the caffeine wained in our blood and the conversation took a more sociological turn: "what, " we queried, "is the philosophical context here? What exactly is being said?" And finally, "What is the Matrix?" This is how my research began.

From Christ imagery to Greek mythology, The Matrix is full of references and hints, mysterious connections, full of many complex and intriguing avenues of exploration. 7 he depth of plot combined with some of the most spec

[Image not archived]

smoky, forgotten clubs. Picture this: we dance into a bar in Hamburg, but find ourselves in London moments later. It's not even strange or uncommon, but only essential to understand. For, a great film will remind you about the true nature of time and space: time is yours, space is yours. Do with it what you will and what you must... we find ourselves living, breathing in the night air, not letting fear stop us from transforming ourselves into our dreams, into slinky sexy dancers one moment, on one hand, to vagabonds lost in a world of mist and perhaps beauty, perhaps triste pain the next, on the other hand, clasped in yours. I watch "Louise (Take 2)" backwards, forwards in my head, and the barrier between the screen and myself recede, and the movie becomes part of my past (I'm lost, panicking underground, trains close by) or maybe my future (bright, blinding lights, earth rumbles, sighs of relief,

leave it there, a flicker? I think this question reveals the most important thing about this movie: that is perhaps it contains a different sort of danger. The sort of danger we here love around the CrimethInc. offices. It seems to me that "Louise (Take 2)" inhabits that misty land of paradox (which some of us around here practically live in) where a mostly co-opting medium is somehow infused with a certain alchemy of (dare we say?) liberation.

A movie about a bunch of French misfits won't set you free, BUT there is that danger that you might walk back out into the streets, moved. Go on, we dare you, turn your lives into gold! Thankfully you don't need this film to do it either.

Highly Recommended.

1998. In French, Subtitled.

(Where to find this film: I don't believe it's

tacular action I have ever seen made this film very important to me. Its function as a tool, as a myth, helps me to deconstruct the world around me. I believe in this function, have experienced it, I believe in this parable and I believe it has a potential to reveal the truth of our world.

I will not endeavor here to point out all the individual references to Alice and Wonderland, Zen Buddhism, etc., other than to say that most of the secrets of this movie are revealed in the second scene, when the audience is introduced to Thomas Anderson, a.k.a. Neo. Also in this scene there is a quick reference to a French theorist/ sociologist named Jean Baudrillard. After Neo takes the money through the door, he walks to a bookshelf and pulls out a book, which has been hollowed out to use as a hiding place. 7 hat book is called Simulacra and Simulations, by Baudrillard,

which discusses with the function of images in modern society and the alienation of man from real, lived experience. This critique is central to the theme of the matrix.

Think of it as a system of communication, a social relation among people mediated by images, a system that ingrains itself so deep into your subconscious that you even use it to communicate with yourself, you think in its language, abide by its rules of grammar, etc. We learn what is good and right by observing images of goodness and righteousness. In similar ways, we learn what behavior is appropriate, what choices are responsible, etc. This system acts as a strategy of deterrence, that teaches the mind what is and isn't possible based noton reality, but on representations of reality, which is where Baudrillard comes in. "Simulacrum" is a word used to describe a sign which signifies nothing, but is its own reality, a copy without an original. In the world of the Matrix, human beings live in a neuro-interactive simulation of twentieth century life, a copy of the world as we know it, while their bodies exist only in pods and are used to generate energy. They live in a simlacra.

Baudrillard proports that modern industrial society is also a simulacra, where the images used to teach us what is real no longer bear any resemblance to any reality whatever, and exist only to perpetuate themselves as pure simulacrum. Consider for a moment the things you have learned, do you know they are real? Do you find yourself pacing the halls of your school or workplace tortured by the feeling that there must be more to the world, that there must be more to life? Consider the limits of your world, do they really exist? Limitations, by their very definition, suggest that something lies Beyond.

What if I told you that there is more? What if I told you that you were born into a prison, a mental prison, where iron bars and shackles are not necessary because your mind does their work for them? What if I said that the real is no longer what it used to be, that it occurs now only in moments of falsehood? We have become like cows, held at bay by a single strand of wire, endlessly fertilizing the ground upon which we graze.

The Matrix is about finding the truth in a world of lies. It's about realizing you have been deceived by everything you thought was pure. And it's about awakening to the real world, redefining your limits, and deciding for yourself what is and isn't possible. The first step is discovery and realization, sensing the Beyond, and finding the courage to follow that intuition. I he second step involves facing a decision in every moment between truth and comfort, between freedom and safety. The audience cringes when Cipher betrays and murders his friends so that he can be reinserted into the system; but who can deny having that impulse within himself? I hese two steps are thuroughly addressed by the protagonists in the Matrix;

but there is another step which is not directly addressed.

Throughout his activist training, Neo is repeatedly told to free his mind. "You've got to let it all go, Neo: fear, doubt, and disbelief." He learns over time to release his inhibitions and is amazed as he finds himself with a new freedom of movement that he previously believed impossible, he is astonished as he realizes he can do what has never been done. As anarchists in the modern age, there is something we can learn from this. If we expect to realize our goals, if we expect to ever get our ideas off the drawing bored and into physical space, we must learn to see the unseen, we must learn to do the impossible. To defeat our enemies we will need more than guns and violence, above all we need imagination, we need cunning and tact, and we will need to be clever. We have to leave the limits of this world behind and head out into uncharted territory, for this is where our lives are won. We can no longer look to the past for help, tradition has done for us what it can, our eyes must face forward, unwavering.

To the extent that we can accomplish this transcendence in great numbers, is the extent to which we can change the world. The Matrix is a great movie, but it is no manual for HOW. There is no guidebook for us, we are totally on our own. Only our intuition can lead us; it will

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manifest itself in the world, it will yell at us from the pages of books and zines, from music, from people in our lives, and even from the silver screen.

Every day is a war against evil, a fight for mobility. The key is to focus inward and let nature take its course. Do not set yourself out to change the world, who can move for very long under that weight? But do not doubt the world is changing. Reinvent yourself in every moment, find your way to a state of choiceless awareness, without condemnation or comparison, formless and unpredictable, no waiting for a further development in order to agree or disagree. This is how our revolution will be made real.

Further reading: Simulacra and Simulations, by Jean Baudrillard, Society of the Spectacle, by Guy Debord, The Tao of Physics, by Fritdof Capra, and The Tao of Jeet Kune Do, by Bruce Lee.

*Shoddy Puppet Company — *

**PERFORMANCE IN CHAPEL HlLL, **

WINTER 2000:

reviewed by your editor

I was already vaguely aware of the potential of puppet shows in the punk rock context from the work of Roby Newton, but seeing this performance (which she booked in her basement) really drove it home for me. These kids challenged us on every front, showing us how much was possible in an artistic medium we hadn't thought much about before, educating and informing us of political and social issues while entertaining us so much that it opened us up to learn without suspicion or despair. That was real genius there, for usually learning about something like city government corruption and the way it fucks up the common citizen would really be a miserable, disempowering experience — but taught through an absolutely genius shadow puppet show about a baseball team, it was thrilling even more than it was depressing, and left us all ready to think and act creatively about political issues. The I.WW. song at the beginning of the set gave us historical knowledge and context, the sock puppets in the piece about the dangers of genetic engineering pro

vided hilarity, the amazing homemade set for the dramatization of Subcommandante Marcos' "History of Melons" made us wonder what our own hands might be capable of, and the spoken word pieces accompanying everything made us feel at home while showing the confidence needed to make us all listen up and take things seriously. This is where it's at for a lot of you out there who haven't started bands yet but want to do creative things in this community — try another medium, there are thousands of them out there begging to be explored. *Shoddy Shack, 4719 Hazel Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19143*

Thieving Kinko's Employees

by Robin Banks

[Image not archived]

If there is any one group of people in our so called "scene" who need to be regularly thanked for their immense contributions to our ongoing struggle, it's renegade Kinkos employees. How many seven-inch covers, CD booklets, LP inserts, flyers, and zines have been produced for free by naughty punk moles at Kinko's? I was inspired to write this review when I got back from my local Kinko's with approximately $500 worth of free stuff — photocopied zines and flyers and office supplies, all thoughtfully liberated by my Kinko's comrades — which only cost me thirty eight cents at the cash register. There are endless tales of punk rockers making similar scores at their local branch offices. So let us honor all of our Kinkos amigos. Let us give them free food, drinks, music, kisses, and clothing. Let us finally acknowledge our great debt to those unsung heroes of the so- called "scene" — thieving Kinko's employees. I give them four stars. Highly recommended. Available at the Kinko's nearest you.

ble acts, take place on this front. The author of the introduction calls this a tale worthy of Dostoyevsky, and that's absolutely right this ultimately turns out to be about the most fundamental questions of being human, and the specific details of the lives chronicled here just makes it all the more real and persuasive (and, thus, universal).

It's massive, 328 pages, practically a life's work considering the quality and intricacy of the graphic art as well as the storyline. It's no hyperbole for me to say I was as deeply moved by this as by One Hundred Years of Solitude or The Unbearable Lightness of Being.

Autonomedia, P.O. Box 568, Williamsburgh Station, Brooklyn, NY 11211–0568

Wlochaty [eponymous] 12"

- by... anonymous.

"Let me pick a rose before the storm breaks out — Let me take a bite of bread before it turns to stone — Let me look at the sun before it's covered in ash — Let me touch your cheek with my lips before the bone starts to show." One afternoon, not so long ª g°> I g^ot °^ °f ^ school bus and found a package with my name on it propped up on the steps of my father's house, bedraggled

for the ten thousandth time, and I open up the lyric sheet. Wlochaty. Would it have been better if I had never heard music like this, if I had never read these words? Would it have been better if I had come to terms with reality, with this best of all possible worlds, this sick farce, and gone about my business accordingly? I have gambled my freedom, my health, my sanity, my very life away in desperate hopes that I could indeed live differently", that we could all still fall deeply in love". Was I mistaken? I don't know. But when the music stops my broken old (Ha!) heart beats thunderous and strong once more, and I do at least know that I am not alone. "Somewhere in the darkness of uncertainty — You still harbor a small hope — That you'll live differently — '1 hat you 11 HU deeply in love — Even though you're walking in a barren desert — And you've been spared nothing — Somewhere in the darkness of uncertainty — You still have hope." "I'll tell you nothing, although I want to scream I feel like a hounded animal — But I don't want to infect you with my fear I m so scared, give me some of your strength — Maybe it's the last time, don't turn away — Maybe I'll wake up strong tomorrow morning — And when, you nestle your arms in me frightened I 11 wrap you up in myself and carry you — 1 il

I've got enough courage — ' I il Ive got enough strength — It's rumored that people fight somewhere — It's rumored that they still pick up stones They hit blows and win, and only that gives you hope — Be the hope for them when they'll be bled to death So don't die yet, heres praise for life Be the hope for me, have strength to scream and call — We'll find our good side in ourselves — We'll open our hearts and minds — And we'll be free at last — Because our future will be the one we will win for us.

Wlochaty — PO BOX 68, 70–821 Szczecin 12, Poland

Wlochaty — S/T — on Nikt Nic Nie Wie — Zielona 16, 34–400 Nowy Targ, Poland

[Image not archived]

record, because I generally think of them as being separate from the music, which is too bad — and then, I see it: one of their songs ends, incongruously (he was talking about autumn leaves falling) with the words "never trust another whore." Kid, what are you talking about? In a world of pimps and whores, I'll trust my fellow whores first any day. Seriously, saying things like that has some bad implications... anyway, -b

Voice of Life, RO. Box 1137, 04701 Leisnig, Germany

Analena "Arhythmetics" 7": This record is suffused with plaintive longing: it cries out from the guitar melodies and vocals, and attains an extra bite and urgency from the driving force of the drums. The singer doesn't hold back the sorrowful beauty when she sings, nor the rage when she screams. Her lyrics are simple but thick with feeling, just a few lines for each song. The final song is, improbably, the same

Kylie Minogue song that Sysrral covered, although it sounds totally different here, and no less touching, although in a totally different way: she sounds doubtful of the consequences but sincere as she offers herself, easily transcending the meaninglessness of the original track, and replacing the nihilistic destruction of the Systral take on this song with something more human. They even get away with using electronic drums on that song without losing any of the immediacy of the song. Beautiful. — b

Get Off, Sergej Vutuc, Bahnhofstr. 2, 74072 Heilbronn, Germany

Balaclava "" 7": This record is really excellent. The music is difficult to describe, and that is because it is creative and unique...and isn't

that what all of us are hoping for in this genre? These tracks are intended to be anthems instead of just songs. They are a rallying cry towards something better, and they have rhe immediacy necessary to inspire people to achieve. Is that too vague? Well, looking at the lyrics will help us specify a bit. There are four songs on this record and all of the lyrics are translated into both English and Czech, though sung in Czech (which I love...more bands should be singing in languages other than dumb old English...English is the McDonalds of the language world). Each song has a quote that describes in a few words the focus of the song, the lyrics, and then a song description as well. Topics include: inspiring people to get involved with hardcore, overcoming "barricades" within ourselves, animal rights and unity. Each of rhe members contributed an essay for the post song descriptions and they work well to convey what the songs are trying to express. The

music benefits from dual vocal tracks, one higher and one lower, and itself is heavy without being patterned or contrived. The song topics might sound as though they are played out and overdone, but this band brings to them a passion and energetic twist which defies all the other bands out there talking about the same things. Definitely original and definitely recommended. — JUG *Hopewell Records; Ondrej Benes; U Hraze 1; Praha 10, 100 00, Czech Republic; reskator@post.cz; or rescator@post.cz fir more information*

Blood Has Been Shed "I Dwell on Thoughts of You" CDEP: This is an incredibly talented metalcore outfit hailing from CT, who gets mad DIY props for releasing their own CD.

Lucky Number

This debut EP has seven songs of brutal and blistering moshy metal, with excellent vocals that range from beautifully mournful singing to a raging scream. Lyrical topics are also somewhat varied, from personal to slightly political (anti-rape). My only problem with this is its tendency to fall into cliches and things expected of every

metalcore band, like the visual imagery (computer-manipulated artwork of angels and other vaguely depressing computer craziness), some of the common "metal" riffs, and the lyrical style (almost always addressed towards the infamous, but never really identified "you"). However, this should not overshadow all the ways that this kicks serious ass...and I have heard their new stuff via MP3 (to be released soon in an album on Ferret), and it is even better, so hopefully they tightened up on those few aspects that were lacking, -n *Goodness, I think Nicks forgotten to include their address. Write him at the F.B.I. address and demand it, if this sounds interesting...*

suddenly shift to the ride cymbal, becoming totally spare, cutting the beat in half — only here, instead of a falling guitar wail with the tremolo bar, it's Andy's scream that descends into the darkness before the next part begins. By the way, kids, you misspell the word "weird" on the back cover, in the song title, -b *+/- records*

Born Dead Icons "Work" 12": At first, I was expecting (due to their name, and former members and associations) something along the lines of the dark, political post-metal/post- Neurosis music bands like Ire play, but tat was totally off. Remember (you may not) how the Amebix thought they were Motorhead? This is like Motorhead, if they thought they were the Amebix — it has the Motorhead workmanlike approach to songwriting, the Motorhead aesthetic (gravelly vocals, ridiculously fast single bass drumming, bare-bones rock'nroll chord progressions — shit, come to think of it,

Brazen "As Floods Decrease" 10": Hm, no lyric sheet, or at least I'm missing one (in addition, both sides of the record are absolutely identical, down to the etched i.d. number, so I'm not sure if I'm listening to "The opening curse" or "Frozen Gossips"). The cover is gorgeous, a rectangle of cardstock folded around the vinyl, with a hauntingly simple image of an old man's bare head on the front. The music is artsy in ways similar to the packaging — it seems to have something to communicate, but to be expressing it in a code for which the key is not provided. Or maybe that's making too much of it. They opt for the less-distorted guitar sound (no metal here) of bands like Fugazi, vocals that flutter between song, yell, and scream, songs that wander through strummed melodies for quite a little while, without sudden transitions or shifts in mood, but gathering tension and force as they go. Every once in a while their chord progressions and arrangements actually remind me of

[Image not archived]

Bloodpact "Bastardization" CD discography thus-far: Check out my review of their split 12" somewhere later in these pages to get a more thorough idea of why I love this band so much. This includes those songs, along with their 7" (which had, urn, much better drumming), and a series of Black Flag covers, I mean compilation tracks. They also cover 7 Seconds, and Chokehold, and get massive bonus points for listing the lyrics and credits to the Black Flag song as simply "depression, fuck." Listen, this is awesome, this is way up there with the best hardcore being made today, if you ask me. Finishing this review, I realize that on the third to last song of their split LP, they totally ripped off Slayer — it's that moment on "South of Heaven" where the guitars strike an open chord and the drums

the Amebix had all that, too), but the Amebix politics and ambience of doom. My favorite moments, artsy bastard that I am, are when they do the spooky, unexpected breakdowns and buildups that all great rock and roll has in it — b$_u$t all of this is high energy in a way that Motorhead rock can be and hardcore never can be, you know? It's fucking good. By the way, after reading their right-on but linguistically tortured Conflict-style essay on the reverse of the lyric sheet, I'd like to publicly offer my assistance to any non-English speaking band who want help polishing the English translations of their writing. Seriously, just send me what you're working on at the Inside Front address and I'll help smooth it out. — b *Deadalive, P.O. Box 97, Caldwell, NJ 07006*

what Neurosis would do if they were playing on Fugazi's equipment. I'm becoming more and more convinced as I listen to this, rather than bored, to their credit. There are ideas being developed here that will prove powerful, if the ones pursuing them are ready to follow them out onto the wild, unexplored plains, rather than remaining crouched in the suburbs with the* generic bands who dont even know that movement is possible, -b

Brazen, 8 Bld James-Fazy, 1201 Geneva, Switzerland

Breed/Extinction 7": This is the first time I get to hear my friends' band on record, and it s awesome to find out that their recording lives up to their performances. This is bitter, ugly music in the tradition of such bands as

Gehenna and His Hero Is Gone — I don't mean the musical tradition so much as the psychological one: in which, sour on life and exhausted by failure and tragedy beyond the point of believing in anything, a band picks up instruments to express their misery and rage, and in the act of playing rediscover passion in the one place it still remains to be felt, in the singing of a dirge for its loss. For those who haven't suffered and struck out blindly, this can be alienating, fearsome stuff... but for those of us who have been dragged to the edge and clawed our way back by vomiting the filth out of us, though it seemed like the stream would never end, this hateful noise is an affirmation of life, of the indomitable will to live and create. The guitars arise from a black sea, soaked in oil, rumbling thunder... the acoustic parts have the ruined, trashed post-apocalyptic beauty that can be persuasive when anything cleaner sounds like a mockery. And they're smart kids, too — the lyrics and writing leave nothing to be desired. They have six more songs that aren't on this 7" (maybe on some demo somewhere?), which are equally worth hearing. — b

my only complaint is that these morons didn't put a ground address anywhere here! try to find them somewhere in Connecticut, or use email (much as I fucking hate it): breedextinction^hot- mail.com *or* eighthdaydjssent^hotmail.com

Brethren "To Live Again" CD: When I first received this in the mail I noticed the sick artwork/photography and read the awesome, insightful album explanation in the lyric booklet, and was excited at what I would hear. But what I heard was just way too generic sounding and boring to spark my interest and emotions any further; it was just the typical heavy east coast hardcore sound. I tried to let it grow on me the

way some music can do, but to no avail...I guess I've just heard all the riffs and song structures and vocals too many times before. I hate to give a negative review to a band that seems very sincere, dedicated, and intelligent, but I guess I just don't like what they're doing musically. My advice for them is to keep pushing the boundaries further, try to be innovative and a little crazier, and try not to get caught in one overdone style of hardcore. Overall this band is doing a really good job at what they're doing, I just don't like what they're doing all that much. — n

OHEV (address at 23rd Chapter review)

Broken Promises "" CD: This has a very genuine feel to it, not forced or fake at all. It's metallic hardcore, with the chunk-chunk- note-chunk-chunk-note riffs and screaming vocals, but they definitely have an aesthetic of their own here. When the singer pauses to speak in the most troubled, angst-ridden, trembling voice I've heard in one hundred reviewed records, it sounds like real, troubled,

youthful emotion being expressed for its own sake, without regard for anything except getting it out, and I really appreciate that, especially in a genre (metallic hardcore) weighed down with so much baggage of posing and expectations that one can hardly expect to hear something honest and open from it anymore. I guess Starkweather was this emotionally raw and real [well, more so, honestly], that's the best example I can think of. I'm surprised by how polished the playing and the recording are, too, and though the music doesn't stray far from the formula laid out by Unbroken they use enough ideas of their own invention to keep it sounding unique (a naked double bass blast, abandoned by the guitars, segues convincingly into a soothing melodic part, at one point). The lyrics and various writings from the band (which are numerous, thankfully) also bleed the same troubled emotion, alternately giving and pushing away... "this is about love, but no thanks to you, " writes the singer over and over, and you know he desperately wants to say the opposite, whether he can admit it or not. I like this a lot. — b

Stick to the Core, Hogeweg 31, 3200 Aarschot, Belgium

Burden "Strength of Conviction" 7": I reviewed this in the last Inside Front so I will just give it a mention here to say that the demo has been rereleased in 7" format from Badman Records in the Czech Republic. I love this record, as it is reminiscent of Judge in terms of being powerful SxE hardcore, but these guys do the genre justice and really hammer these songs home. There are a lot of bands out there playing straight edge hardcore, but Burden is one of the best. Check out the 7" and support a new label in the process. — JUG

Badman Records; Martin Cesky; Nebrehovice 7; 38601 Strakonice; Czech Republic; mcesky@pvtnet.cz for more info.

Buried Inside "In and Of the Self" CD: . The first song starts out in the screamy modern metal/hardcore format, then goes into a more retro deathmetal-growling chunky mosh-pitwindmilling dance part near the end, which surprised me a bit. They're not as polished yet as their musical ambitions demand — sometimes I feel like their timing is a tiny bit off. But at the same time, I appreciate that they're working

at and sometimes past their own limits, and they are able to do some things I haven't heard before in such an overcrowded genre — the echo effects on the metal guitars give then chunky/melodic parts a faraway, spooky sound, for example, and they are always messing with sound textures and arrangements in similar ways. The lyrics are taken seriously (dealing generally with living under the yoke of our rape/consumer/domination culture) and are right on, and that makes me feel a lot more comfortable about them. In fact, the lyrics are fucking awesome, now that I go over them again: "personal interest is the steam that fogs the mirrors of our very existence" "so here we are, sitting on the edge of it all, waiting for the sun to rise." *Apocalypse Now* samples over a piano/opera intro to the last song, and I'm sitting here with the lyric sheet, listening to the first, coldly beautiful, severe notes that follow, realizing now that if this band could distance themselves from the pack just a little more they could do some amazing things. — b

Standingwave, 422 Leighton Street, Ottawa, ON KIZ6J6, Canada

Caliban "A Small Boy and A Grey Heaven" CD: Just for fun, after I had written the first three lines of this review, I went to www.altavista.com to the 'translate' section (which, by the way is the very best web page on the entire internet. I promise that it will provide you with hours of laughs) and translated the three sentences from English to Italian and then back to English. (Is it obvious that I don't get out much?) Anyway, the review starts out like this: "This CD opens with an 'Omen'-like musical intro and then blasts immediately into a death metalish selection of songs. Think of The Year of Our Lord (reviewed elsewhere in this issue) but more to the intensely heavy hardcore side rather than towards metal. I love it!" Now, take that and plug it into altavista. Translate it back and forth a few times, and you get: "This CD is opened with 'Omen'-as the intro musical and then ago in order to jump immediately in one selection of the metalish of the dead man of the songs. In order to think elsewhere close next to the year of ours gentleman (to see still in this edition) but more neighbor to the intensely heavy side of the hardcore rather than towards metal. I love!" Whew...I am wiping tears of laughter from my eyes as I type these soon to be spell checked words. I wholeheartedly recommend that you try this altavista trick with any piece of text in the world. It is amazing and will make you the life of the party, especially if you actually try to use the site as a tool for bona fide translation. If an Italian kid ever comes up to me and speaks like the above translation, I will have to be committed to an insane asylum. Okay...stay on target ...we have a CD to review here. The Caliban CD has an immense sound, with growled higher pitched vocalizations and varied well orchestrated music. It isn't standard by any means. Instead, it brings you on a journey, ostensibly through the hell which our world has become due to pollution, greed, hate and fear, with music which adequately represents the doom expressed in the words. There are definite black metal influences in the guitar work, as

well as a tendency towards the incredibly complex which brought to mind Botch at times. They don't rip off anyone however, so don't get me wrong. The CD is full of shards and glimmers into the band themselves, in terms of samples and interludes,

intros and outtros. Lyrically good as well, with a beautiful layout: a booklet with painted pages and full lyrics. Lifeforce is on a roll with these metallic hardcore and hardcoric metal and metallic metal bands! — JUG

Lifeforce Records; PO Box 04011 Leipzig; Germany; *cartel@bigfoot.com; www.carteldistrobution.com*

Cast-down "these autumnal tints" 7": Four songs of slightly melodic, slightly post-hardcore, emotional hardcore, if that makes sense to you. These guys are doing a really good job finding their Own sound and not imitating, so they're a little harder to describe, but I guess if you imagined a mix of Shai Hulud and Endeavor after mellowing out on some huge bong hits, you might be in the ballpark. There's some really catchy riffs, interesting musical changes, great raw, sincere vocals, as well as some snappy graphic design work,

ly is an accurate, although I'm not sure how flattering, comparison. For those of you unfamiliar with this style of hardcore, its straight- up heavy as hell, nuts and bolts, gritty and tough moshcore from Michigan with halfyelled, half-screamed tough as shit vocals. I think this rocks, mainly because the vocalist has such an awesome voice and style, and admittedly, simply because I like Earthmover. The artwork on here is beautiful, the lyrics are simple and to the point, and the personal writing by the band in the booklet is a sincere touch, but I can't get over the recording quality. It's simply not as full and dynamic as it should be, and it really bugs me. It sounds very quiet, weak, and trebly, like a demo recording, and I'm kinda wondering what happened...everything else is so top-notch and slick, I feel let down in a way. Aside from that, I like this a lot and am excited to hear more from these guys. — n

Genet Records / PO box 44719000 GENT 1, Belgium

Children "Impedimenta" CD: This is without a doubt the best CD to ever begin with the lyrics "you stabbed me in the back." Brilliant,

do whatever it takes — it's a flawless executed acoustic piece, spanning the jazz and folk and classical styles over about twelve minutes, really beautiful. — b

Overcome, B.R 7548, 35075 Rennes Cedex 3, France

Clear "Deeper Than Blood" CD: Clear play metal influenced hardcore (the drummer thanks Slayer, Candi ria, Iron Maiden, among others) that I've heard many times before from many bands. Same goes for the packaging. Not much new or original here. But, alas, if you dig the heavy moshable scream-alongable chugchug tunes that seem to be popular these days, than this is for you. The recording is fairly dry, and the drums are way too loud. It sounds to me like this was done in a hurry. Alone in the drum mix, the bass drum (which is a main asset of the entire album) has too much click making it sound like someone is standing in the recording studio with a freaking pair of sticks and hitting them together every time the bass drum is struck. To stand out in this type of music, the bass drum itself needs *some* click, added in during mixdown, but this is off the hook. And just for fun I'll say too that the

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which all make this release worth getting despite the following drawbacks: The cynical attitude expressed in the liner notes, some awkward parts to the music where it just doesn't seem to flow well (I don't have enough technical knowledge of music to explain what I'm thinking here in more depth, sorry), and some of the lyrics that sound cliche in their introspective poetic vagueness or struggle to find rhyming words at the end of lines. I think that in two more releases this band will have worked out all these little kinks and will be doing some amazing, unique shit, but for now, this effort is still good, -n

Watch 'M Burn / Kauwplasstr. 28 / 3545 Halen, Belgium

Cast In Fire "Apology" CDEP: Earthmover on steroids, plain and simple. With ex-members of that now-defunct mosh machine, this real-

maximum energy groundbreaking hardcore from the cutting edge of the musical movement, with a perfect recording (that sounds scary all by itself, with the rumbling bass, the stab of the snare drum...), acoustic arrangements of classical quality, extra dynamic songwriting with flawless transitions and well-constructed riffs, plenty of little experiments and new ideas to spice everything up. Most of all, this just rocks in the way that really good metal/hardcore can, but it also has some moments of chilling beauty. The lyrics are pretty desperate, not in the typical stylized manner of most lyrics in this genre (OK, the first line, the one I cited above, is not so original), but really persuasive, disturbing. If you thought there was anything good about what Overcast was trying to do a few years ago, you should find this at least as interesting. The final track proves their skill and readiness to

snare is getting all run over by the hi-hat and ride cymbal; what's important here? The vocals are pretty good when they are screams, but there are times when they are sung, and this is a bit weird. Packaging wise: imagine the typical fold out glossy insert, complete with action pictures and lengthy 'thank you' lists. The lyrics are included, with topics usually circling around the personal and infamous "you." I can definitely relate to them, though. Yeah, this is not a bad record, but I will probably never listen to it again. -WG

Clear c/o Sean; 7529 South Campus Circle; Salt Lake City, UT 84121. Stillborn Records; PO Box 3019; New Haven, CT 06515-

Cloudburst "Love Lies Bleeding" 7": This French band plays a personalized version of the melodic metal hardcore played by legions of new school bands (many of whom have

been released by Good Life records). They have the same basic features here — breaks for bass melodies to which guitar chunks are soon added for build-ups, hoarse screamy vocals, pounding metal chunk breakdowns, rare moments of blastbeat frenzy — but it doesn't sound derivative, just modern and nothing more than modern. They set themselves apart on the b-side when they cut everything but the acoustic guitar and vocal harmonies — more of those unexpected moments and the hardcore formulas would hit harder when they come in. Lyrics in English, explanations in French and

English, all dealing generally with the strain on humanity created by the latest steps in our cultural/technological/polit- ical "evolution." -b

Mosh Bort, address below

The Control: Ruination is a perfect point of reference, although I think these kids practice more. A lot of oldschool hardcore songs here about getting lost in the working world. The melodies are good, not so simple as to be

good (roughness doesn't hurt this kind of music) — in a total of eighteen minutes. I'd be wrong to be critical of this — basic, straightforward, rebellious hardcore bands made up of socially challenged Black Flag fans are pretty much the backbone of our community, in some places, and there's nothing wrong with that, -b

+/- records, address nearby goddamnit or I'll be a monkeys uncle, blaghh!

Corretja "" 7": This record begins with strange humming noises and the drums (which have a really hard-hitting production) playing by them selves for a little while, and it really drew me in. The fast, double-picking, double-time metallic hardcore kicks in, and I'm still enthralled. The vocals are mixed below the guitars, emphasizing their harsh, indecipherable rage; rhe first song is a wildeyed assault on Christian hypocrisy that ends in a naked roar — this is good stuff. The second song quiets down in the middle to an acoustic part that is momentarily fess com-

stuff, I'm talking later, psychedelic, 10 minute long, lounge-music shirty-ass Melvins material. I'm guessing Cower were on lots of drugs when they did this, hopefully heroin, because the lyrics arc stupid and nonsensical, and the songs are all in the range of 10 minutes and played really, re^Z/y sssslloooowww... What's worse, the last three tracks are fucking 15 minute long radio interviews with Celtic Frost and none other than the Melvins (who are actually damn funny). I really do nor understand this release ar all; I think its not much more than a self-indulgent, pointless waste of time and resources, to be quite frank. Whatever... — n

Delboy / PO Box 75 / B 9000 Ghent 12, Belgium

Cross My Heart "The Reason I Failed History" cd/ep: Ok, rhe first thing I usually do when I'm given a cd is put it in rhe player, press play, pull out the insert or booklet and mostly block our all the sounds coming through the speakers. Thar's just me though.

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hopelessly generic. On the second song the verse riff ambitiously packs a lot of notes together, which is awesome (until a later part, when they sort of ruin the energy with a singing part in the vocals — the singer is much better when he's just yelling in his gravelly, post-Born Against voice, as he usually does)... the fifth song has a nice (if not entirely new — the seventh song is even reminiscent of it) melody to it, which they almost take to another level of intensity at the end (but instead, since they're an old school band, it's time for the song to be over). Their best lyrical moment comes in the fourth sing, "Fury, " for which the lyrics are simply "We've got the furyl!" Thirteen tracks altogether, the last three from an earlier recording but just as

pelling, but the all-out attack returns with blood-curdling shrieks more fearsome than anything I've heard in this day's worth of reviews. They get points for mysterious, classy d.i.y. packaging too, which includes black-on- black print and a transparency. This is an excellent record all around — it's well-played, sounds good, has plenty of emotion and some innovation too. -b

Increvable, PO. Box 425, Ithaca, NY 14851

Cower "The Annual Hornvenders Convention" CD: God, this is just plain weird. I guess rhe best comparison I could give you is 2 tablespoons Melvins mixed with half teaspoon Eyehategod. And I'm not even talking about the halfway cool early Melvins

I'm often more interested in how the artist(s) use their space to present themselves visually before I can let myself become completely attentive to rhe music they're performing. In the case of Cross My Heart, they offer the two-panel insert that informs of who plays what (instrument), where they recorded/mas- tered, who did the graphic design, and the right people to contact (Dim Mak records) if you're interested in receiving a lyric sheet. To me all this adds up to very poor packaging. Musically Cross My Heart plays soft, melodic pop with rhe occasional up-beat moments that have a falling-short-of-rocking-out feel to them.

P.S. The only reason I'm not making a hiss about the lack of printed lyrics is because i

could actually understand the words when sung. How often does that happen for an Inside Front reviewer?!?!? (taz)

Dim Mak, address elsewhere

Dawncore "Obedience is a Slower Form of Death" CD: Metallic hardcore with some good riffs and energy, screaming vocals (with the aggressive delivery of some "tough guy" bands, but without seeming stupid or insincere), lots of transitions between fast parts and moshier parts with guitar chunks, a recording with the weight and brightness to give them the edge and thrust they need to make this work... and a really prominent double bass.. The lyrics reject earthly and religious hierarchies, push through the scarring pain of life's difficulties, and reach for inspiration and idealism through everything. The tough-guy influence that I mentioned manifests itself at the end as a Cro- Mags cover ("World peace can't be done, it just can't exist!"), which is fucking awesome. The fact that they can do a Cro-Mags cover and make it exciting should give you an idea of

back, and this 7" won't do for a substitute second coming; but it fills out their legacy — it has the same things going for it, without sounding like an imitation at all. — b

Per Koro, address elsewhere

The Dents "The End of All Civilization" 7": Hey, this is something I haven't heard too much of in this issues reviews: fast, fast, snotty, angry high school punk rock, Government Issue shirts, yelling vocals (that end in a hearty "Fuck off!" at the beginning of the breakdown at the conclusion of the first song), simple three-chord riffs. In my head (and perhaps theirs?), these kids are opening for Social Distortion in 1982, wearing flannel and moshing to Black Flag blasted on the car stereo between bands.

Their simple values (fuck the greedy rich, do what you want, teachers and parents get outta my life, break shit! yeah!) are right on, and the rebellious energy that makes this stuff work is all there. — b

So Fucking What/, 253 Alexander Street, Apartment #322, Rochester, NY 14607

are in Portuguese and English, and the insert includes an essay about why they choose to play their anarchist/political music to the deathmetal scene as well as the hardcore scene (to try to bridge the gaps), -b

Marcolino, Al. Mal. Floriano Peixoto 56, Centro Guaruja, Sao Paulo 11410–240, Brazil

Dragbody "transgress, nullify." 7": This one's worth it for the lyric sheet alone — it's clear plastic with black printing on one side. And the layout and artwork is exceptional too, with these sick, organic-looking photos of people with slashed skin and wires. But the music Vocks so hard too; it's heavy as fuck all- out chaotic metal that doesn't get boring, with tortured screams to boot. But all these aspects that I like are also what I don't like. So you have the money to get some slick-ass packaging, but you're just playing up to all the metal stereotypes with disgusting pictures, vague and morbid lyrics, and heavy metallic riffs one after the other... I guess this release is a mixed blessing then — you can listen to it just to rock

[Image not archived]

what their strengths are. — b

Trottel, 1192 Budapest Kos K, Ter. 14, Hungary

Degarne "The Last Dance" 7": Acme is the crucial point of reference for all these German metal/hardcore bands, but they're particularly relevant here, since some crucial details match up: the guitars have diat same menacing slightly-out- of-tune sound, the first side begins and ends with the sound of a choir hum (something Acme would have used), the riffs and transitions have that same discordant, spooky feel, and when they get going like a machine out of control their singer's torn, trebly screaming voice merges with the spasmodic, jerking music, creating a sandblaster effect similar to the one that made the Acme record so amazing. Acme isn't coming

Desecration "Broken Peace" 7": The punk music on this 7" has the same grim resolve and boiling energy that I associate with their comrades in Abuso Sonoro, although Desecration takes a more metal approach (blastbeats, double-picked riffs, dramatic breakdowns). The recording is good enough not to hold them back, and the playing is pretty tight; the only drawback here is that their lead singer (who I know from meeting him to be a very cool, smart person) sounds like he's trying a little too hard for the grindcore growl sometimes, like it might work out better if he would just let go and not worry about what his voice sounds like. All the same, the recording has a good, heavy atmosphere, which makes the music here matter. The lyrics

out and groove and stare at interesting artwork, and you can also notice all the boring cliches and predetermined molds that prevent you from getting anything really meaningful out of it. — n

Jawk Records / 5145 N. Bridges Dr. / Alpharetta GA 30022, USA

Endstand "To Whom It May Concern" CD: Shall I outline all the things Endstand have going for them on this CD? I. A great recording, with really powerful guitars and drums, heavy bass, like a modern rock recording (uh, good rock... hm...), makes you want to dance just as soon as it comes on. 2. A great, great vocalist. Vocals make or break so many bands, and Janne gives everything he's got on every

syllable. Just listening to him n the CD, his passion and sincerety come across and make you feel welcomed and safe. 3. Honesty — that comes across in the straightforward lyrics, which proclaim positive, d.i.y. values... I mean, Rick, at the climax of the fourth song, when Janne is streaming the refrain "the older I get, the more I know — the more I know, the more I just cant let go" and the rest of the band is chanting "hey hey hey hey" like a Bolshevik dance squad, how could hardcore get any better than that? 1 he 'rock' reference I made earlier is not too off the mark, there is a really rocking feel in a lot of their hardcore, but they're totally right on about everything

Eradicate s/t LP: From Germany comes this political hardcore outfit that reminds me a lot of Gehenna in their sound, but with maybe a little more crust-punk flavor, especially in the artwork and lyrics. I am impressed by their intelligent subject matter that's presented in a very streetlevel, kind of old-fashioned punk way, and the thick, cut-n-paste (punk style) booklet is very attractive. I think it's great that they print the English translations to their lyrics so us yanks can know what they are growling about. They really seem to be sincere and well meaning, and I wish I could get into their music as much as their message, but it just bores me. There just wasn't any-

Exigencia "Usando la Conciencia" CD: Weird. Old school (all the predictable^ features, including the generic invocation of our collective conscience to solve all injustices) but the vocals are incredibly sloppy, making them almost impossible to understand without the lyric sheet, unusual for a genre that has focused so much on the tendency of their fans to sing along — and if they don't have a rallying cry that blazes out, summoning to its powerful voice and enviable elocution the energies of the masses, how exactly can anyone sing along? I am tempted to construct complex theories on masks and disguises, on a

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they do, so it's not a guilty pleasure. And they're not beating some hackneyed, generic formula to death, either, so when their seventh song ("Small Sacrifices for Big Changes, " about veganism) begins a litde like early Nirvana, it's just fine by me. Hell, I like some old Nirvana. But I'd rather listen to this. — b

Impression, P.O. 938, 09009 Chemnitz, Germany

thing amazing happening that caught my attention — I think it sounds like 2836 other modern hardcore/punk bands. I think I could have gotten really into this back in the day when I only knew about a couple of good bands, y'know? Insert last sentence of Brethren review here. — n *Whirlwind Productions / PF 770338 / 93076 Regensburg, Germany*

band hiding within their old school guitar riffs a rougher kind of aesthetic. The songs treat basic themes: "I'm Not Going to Change, " "Compromise, " "Pure Ignorance." That

this isn't a very original recording perhaps only means that they haven't yet found their own style, although they sound pretty comfortable in this one. The music is energetic enough, although the drumming can be

a little erratic. Old school hardcore is probably a lot newer in Colombia than it is here; we can only hope that they are able to move past this to a more innovative, compelling sound. —

@*Direccion Positiva, cant find the address anywhere on the CD, perhaps you can try writing to Diego Paredes at 8372 NW 64th St. #1595, Miami, FL 33166 ' .*

The Exploder "West End Kids Crusade" CD: When one goes on tour, one experiences many bands, the majority being ultimately dismissed to the back of the skull into a file

shake a part of your body, and maybe shake the person next to you for fun. Putting them in a genre of punk is tough, but I'll say that they've got emo hardcore overtones. Their music is kind to the ears, and I could see a lot of people liking them right off the bat. The drums are played well, using a technique that has a way of forcing the blood to flow with more gusto; I like it. The vocals are screamed and sung, both working very nicely. The two guitars dance with each other very well, most of the time playing in harmony with each other, which I like very much. They have a real rock-n-roll sound, too. The bass is often

them...three graphics. There are lyrics and info provided, and a picture, but it looks like the band didn't care about having a meaningful insert. On the other hand, cheap and simple is no problem in my book. -WG

7he Exploder; PO Box 18034; Richmond, VA 23226. Dimmak; PO Box 14041; Santa Barbara, CA 93107.

Face Down "Angels with Soiled Wings" 7": This is the New Jersey Face Down, in case you're wondering. They're pretty damn heavy here, with a production that emphasizes the thickness and bass of the chunky guitar riffs

[Image not archived]

with a "suck" heading. But if one is in the right place at the right time, a band will appear that stands out and is given a permanent place in the tourist's memory; The Exploder, alas, is one. I saw them in Jersey 2 years ago, so when I spied this CD in the review box, Tgrabbed it with high hopes. And let me say that this record is no let down of any kind. The music just makes you want to

hard to find in the mix when the music is rowdy, and it hugs the guitars a lot; and it could be louder. Overall the music is rhythmic and sweet, and is far from being boring. As for recording quality, I think, for this music, the tones are well-placed and the levels of all the instruments are fairly tight. The packaging of the CD, however, is pretty sad, mostly following a light pastel blue motif with, let me count

and the cutting attack of the drums, and the vocalist comes through with deep, anguished roaring that complements the music perfectly. They cut the slow chunky hardcore stuff from time to time to play more disorienting breaks with effects, that

make me feel like I am falling slowly in a dream about to turn to nightmare. Nice handdrawn illustrations on the packaging. The lyrics (and lack of anything else) make it clear that this is a personal emotional testament, about friendships that end in tragedy and such, rather than something with broader implications, but it's delivers the goods as emotional expression, and that's what counts here, -b

Malph, P.O. Box 2066, Neptune City, NJ -7754-2066

Fear is the Path to the Darkside "Someday this war is going to end..." 7": Starts with a Star Wars sample, hmph. As they come from Germany, it would be easy to lose this band in the crowd of well-recorded, heavy German metal bands, but they have plenty of personality of their own, so it's worth listening a little closer. That personality comes our more on the slow parts, which throb with a hypnotizing power and grace, creating a haunting atmosphere, the vocals evoking a palpable pain. When they play faster, its harder to tell them from rhe other bands screaming and playing fast chord progressions. It's not too often I find a hardcore band that can really handle playing slow, so hats off to them. German lyrics that I'd like to understand, since I think highly of their singer's intellect. I want them to push the limits a bit, surprise me a little more (like they do when everything stops and the two guitars alternate, with totally different sounds)... until then, this music will do just fine, although I think it would be at its best as the soundtrack to a dark, ominous movie... -b

Scorched Earth Policy, address below

Forstella Ford "Insincerity Down To An Artform" CD: Whoa, this band is all over the place, and it's fucking great! A breath of fresh air amongst the widespread blandness of common hardcore/punk bands. FF is chock full of what I love most, rhythm manipulation on all levels by all instruments while maintaining a cohesive groove. The instruments used are of the norm, but FF seems to have found a new way to play them. The drums are jazzy and free, the screams are sporadic and strong, the guitar is all over the fretboard and at times unintelligible* and the bass is not merely following the guitar- it finds a creative path of it's own. All of these are great assets for a band to have. This is hard to put in a category; I'll have to make one up...Chaoslovecore? Garbagecan algebra rock? Jet-puffed albino jazz? Fuck, I tried. Anyway, this is a very diverse piece of work, with fast parrs, slow sleepytime vibrations, and straight up noise. Good samples and piano, too. The lyrics are all about the infamous and ever-so-worthy "you, " and are often hard to follow even when reading along in the insert. The singer could enunciate the lyrics better, unless of course it's part of the music to just scream gibberish. The packaging and layout are done well, including lyrics and a few pictures. Interesting song

can't relate one bit to the overall cleanliness and just plain sugary *prettiness* of this release, both visually and musically. And furthermore, I'm not convinced that this band is concerned with being or representing anything deeper and more profound than artsy, creative candy-coated imagery. — n

Dim Mak (address in Ninedayswonder review)

Goat Shanty "Encroachment" CD: Twelve songs, all named with numbers (presumably according to rhe order they were written, like Zegota), in twelve minutes, with a rough, abrasive recording, incoherently outraged lyrics (reaching their best moment with "solace in dependence, soulless independence"), insert artwork that wasn't taken too seriously (lots of images of goats, if you didn't see that coming... also a couple skulls, etc.), general d.i.y. atmosphere, last song ends with fucking mess of noise for a minute (the standard length of all their songs) — yes infuckingdeed, this is punk rock. What else can I say? I'm tempted to deliberately misspell words in this review just to get into the spirit of the whole thing, -b

Moot, 255 Hillcrest Avenue, Athens, GA 30601

Imbalance s/t CDEP: Here is another band that appears to be sincere and very intelligent, able to put out an attractive release, but is lagging behind musically. I love the artwork throughout the packaging of this CD; its a mix of really weird drawings, paintings, and collage, all in very drab and subdued colors. The lyrics are well written and deal with important personal and social issues ("feud like Montague and Capulet/ fight like cat and dog/take pleasure in ridiculing each other/lose sight of what we've got"), but the vocals and music just didn't do anything for me. 7 he songs are not too fast and not too slow, the riffs are the kind you'd hear in any punky sounding hardcore record, and the vocals are pretty standard hoarse yells. Read last sentence of Brethren review and insert here. — n *Hermit / PO box 309 / Leeds LS2 7AH, UK*

Ire "Adversity Into Triumph" CD: This CD is a collection of songs from previously released stuff on a 7" (Schema Rees.) and a split LP (Spineless/Fetus recs.). Ire plays medium to slow paced heavy hardcore with a huge helping of rhythmic changes and great thick slow chugs. A lot of the musical themes have an evil sounding edge to them, and at times I picture people struggling, fighting against some huge fucking ugly enemy, bur failing miserably. Damn, some of this is sad. You can feel it in the singer's effort. The rhythm is strong, always up front and under your nose. The vocals are about as passionate as I've ever heard, but sometimes they don't mesh well with the music, like they were conceived totally separate and pushed to fit in holes that they

[Image not archived]

aren't shaped for. And the singer went crazy with double-tracking, which gets in the way sometimes. The bass is no doubt *here, * and is glorious, better than most of the lot of hard- core/punk, which has an infamous reputation for uninteresting bass. The guitars have great minds and dare to venture off into uncharted territory, and they have a solid, powerful drive. Same goes for the drums; essential. For the most part, the songs are long, and every once in a while we get a sample of haunting chants (Tibetan?) and other intercontinental expression. The packaging is standard and done fairly well. The cover folds out to reveal the lyrics (including one song in French and one in Arabic) and fabulous song explanations. Ire's songs are about Palestinian struggle, Native American assimilation, consumerism, the problematic U.S. social structure, widespread denial of humanity being a part of nature (take this both ways), and selfrealization. Ire really has

something to say, they don't just play music and then go home: "we are disillusioned from the sight of fields where plants and trees fade into symbols of , profit, where success is a seed sown in a plain of rocks where nothing grows." Yeah, this is good. -WG

Ire; PO Box 902, station C; Montreal, Quebec; H2L 4V2, Canada.

Kafka "Truths" CD; Their vocalist has a high, screaming voice that is just the right frequency to cut through the simple, metallic hardcore and become the main thing that I focus on when this CD is on. It's a little hard to bear, that one high, ringing note over and over, screamed at me — there was a CD released by Mountain records a couple years back that had exactly the same thing going on with the vocals, I think the band was Devola. Anyway, the music has some hypnotic power in parts, and they use jarring chords to some effect in places; over all it's not brand new or top of its class, biit it is a hell of a lot better than some of the work of Kafka's more generic colleagues. They experiment with a piano piece and some spoken word for the sixth track, and if they can incorporate that into their hardcore they'll be on their way to something good. A fascinating quality of Italian hardcore is that bands from that country seem to be somehow incapable of producing generic lyrics (praise Allah!) — so the lyrics here are all interesting; the last song is the (true) story of a coastal town in Brazil in which the poor hunt the crabs who live on the garbage that accumulates on the beach: the tragedy of our age, recycling rubbish into shit and disease... — b

No! Records, via Cadighiara 18/14, 16133 Genova, Italy

Kill the Messenger "Five on Seven" 7": This 7" has more music on it than I'm used to from a polished band like this. When K.t.M. are going

at it, they play jumpy, experimental punk/rock stuff, with plenty of new ideas. For example, the first song begins with a scary, whispering, dragged part that I was sure would lead to the predictable metal/hardcore thing, but instead surprised me by going into something much poppier. Their singer has a deep, hoarse voice that is reminiscent of something else I didn't like much, but he's not the most important thing happening here. There's a "post-hardcore" taste in my mouth here that I'd like to be able to wash out or ignore, because what these guys are doing is new and exciting... I just hope they're trying to expand the genre rather than escape into the arms of something more commercially accessible. Oh fuck, I shouldn't complain — any band which, when the vocalist sings "hold my breath and count to ten" actually pauses so he can count it out loud, has to get my go ahead. Gorgeous hand-drawn insert artwork, too. — b

Phyte, address nearby, cmon!

Jane "A Doorway to Elsewhere" CD: The best Systral record *(Maximum Carnage)* did something that transcended the world of "brutal" hardcore music — it took that brutality to its logical conclusion, revealing the bloodlust and desire for total annihilation that lies at the roots of our civilization and the music made by the rebels within it. This record does the same thing, in just about the same way Systral did it (if not for the first time, this time), and for those who were disappointed when Systral became fat and self-satisfied and stopped trying, this will be a welcome sequel

to their aforementioned masterpiece. Not to say all the elements that made Systral so important are present here — really, this is just an exploration of that particular aspect of their work, with the same merciless metal arrangements, shrieking-suffering high vocals and murder- ing-without-feeling deep roars, thunderous bass-overloaded mix that makes the double

bass and blastbeats sound like the maximumvelocity workings of an industrial killing machine, fragments of resigned, lucid death poetry: "feel numb to the carnage all around me" — "killing to lose ourselves in it" — "is it the blood which awakens the monster in us..?" In the opening instants, after the classical introduction (which brings to my mind Wagner, and his proto-fascist dreams), the guitars come in like the hiss of the air on Judgment Day, and the snare drum begins banging out the rhythm of a witch's Sabbat, or perhaps the same rhythm the skeleton is playing over the mouth of Hell in Breughel's terrifying *Triumph of Death...* and at moment, like it or not, I catch myself glorying in my own cold-blooded, contradictory nature, and it hammers home the tragedy all the more inescapably. — b

Alveran, RO. Box 10 01 52, 44701 Bochum, Germany

Lariat "Means of Production" CD: OK, first off, the idea to review this came spontaneously when I found this CD right after writing the review for the Lariat demo tape, and *goes hand-in-hand* with said review, this review building upon the other. That said, I am convinced that Lariat likes bullets (this CD came with one in the narrow space on the left side of the jewel box, I love it). This release is out of Denmark, and contains the same recordings from the demo, with three new tracks of their political machine-gun firemusic. These three new songs are not recorded quite as well compared to the demo quality (which is good), but they are nonetheless powerful and fucking intense. Especially notable is the second tune, a tune that fucking made me cry as I listened to it over and over. It concerns the police shooting of Amadou Diallo, an event I am familiar with, and the chords chosen here, the notes, the rhythms...they represent the

event musically, tearing at my very fucking marrow, ripping out anger, hopelessness, sorrow, and pain that I feel when something like this goes down. This song says 'Fucking look! Look what you fucking did!" Shit, now I feel like I lost someone that 1 knew and loved;* is that supposed to happen? The CD booklet is beautiful black and silver, and it contains more focused and less writing than the demo booklet (including, of course, lyrics and explanations). Lariat are bare-naked here, and come across as more mature in the sense of their ability to get things accomplished. I'm guessing that they have lived what they have been talking about, and learning things along the way. If you want to make a change in your life and your world, you would be doing yourself a great disservice by overlooking Lariat. Their live show is impressive, as well as serious and confrontational; so when you see them, by all means, *talk* to them. -WG

Lariat; PO Box 443; Round Lake, NY 1215L Last Effort Recordings; Dank wart Dreyers Vej 9; 5610 Assens; Denmark.

_Luddgang "_Collateral 18, 06.9f; At first, I was afraid this was going to be more painfully derivative imitation Crass shit, with the circle-A- derived logo on the cover and the BBC sample at the beginning — but no, this is fucking awesome! The first side turns out to be a Public Enemy/Consolidated-style sample collage with an oil-drum ensemble percussion backdrop. This is the kind of shit that bands like Crass deserve to have done with their legacy, not copycat bullshit until were all bored to death... I've heard nary a guitar yet by the beginning of the second side, and yer it's clear to me that *this* is the punk music of today, the music that can keep the whole genre and musical aspect of the community itself vibrant and meaningful. The b-side is a similar percussion/sample collage, but since *this* formula hasn't been explored 10, 000 times in 10, 000 songs on 2000 records, two times is not too many! Hmm, I wonder what the ideological implications of using samples from the electronic/mass media on a vinyl record are for a band with a technophobe name like Luddgang... I guess they're trying to "deconstruct" the power of that media and technology with "recontextu- alization" of its constituent elements (hope it works!). You don't have to put up with my political rhetoric and theory about them, though — they offer plenty of their own in their packaging (and plenty more in an explicatory zine available from their address: Luddgang, PO. Box 1095, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S2 4YR, England). They're coming at everything from the standard bookish modern anarchist perspective... the issues they address in the 7" packaging are the June 18 Reclaim the Streets event in London, and the NATO bombing of Serbia, — b

Crasshole, RO. Box 65341, Baltimore, MD 21209

Malefaction "Worship Nothing" 7": Ragged, growly grindcore, with some of the typical characteristics of the genre: for example, the guitars and bass are remarkable low in the recording, so much so that at one point the ringing ride symbol practically eclipses them. Samples include death screams, talk of slavery and how humanity is a plague on the earth, an argument about Jesus between a believer and blaspheming nonbeliever. There's a Slayer cover from *Reign in Blood, * in which (remarkably!) the band does just fine, keeping some of the energy and all the speed of the original and playing tightly enough — the only drawback is the singer, who is at his least inspired there. On the originals he ranges from a predictable grindcore grumble to a decent angry roar. Lyrics cover nationalism, religion, sexism, servitude, all anti- of course.

Commode, #5, 227 21st Avenue S. W., Calgary, AB, T2S 0G5 Canada

Man Afraid "Complete. Discography" CD; For those who haven't heard Man Afraid before, they came from a strand in the family tree of hardcore somewhere after Born Against and before Dillinger Four — anti-patriotic lyrics and samples, rugged down-to-earth approach to everything, energetic music with the distinct oi/punk roots still barely discernible, gravely vocals, haunting moments between the full throttle punk rock parts. It's good stuff, unpretentious and yet dramatic in the way that this music can be. Everything they did is collected here, fourteen tracks plus their demo, and the insert is excellent too; it contains all their lyrics, all the information we could have wanted, plus little retrospectives by Brian Alft (editor of Contrascience) and

Alex Coughlin (editor of Dwgsht, my old friend who went off hiking one day and never stopped). The last tracks (the rough demos ones) are some of my favorites, the sound is perfect for this music. Man Afraid was a band that was important to a lot of people, and not only because the project ended in tragedy; this isn't the most "current" record reviewed here, but it's better than that — it's timeless, -b *Half-mast, RO. Box 8344, Minneapolis, MN 55408*

Man in the Shadow "Pax Americana"..?!'.; I want to like this record much more than I actually do. The lyrics are smart and poignant, exploring the terrors of trying to break free from your socialized role, and the fearsome, unbounded world that opens before you when you do. The music moves ambitiously between the poles of melodic/acoustic prettiness and more aggressive, screaming climaxes with chunky, distorted guitar riffs, but because the mix isn't heavy enough for the heavy parts or clear enough for the clean parts, it isn't able to deliver the way I'd like it to. The vocalist also could benefit from letting himself

get carried away more. But the overwhelming impression that his singing and this record as a whole deliver is of sincerety, though, with the multilingual lyrics and essays about making revolution step by patient step, and that's worth a lot to me. With some improvement they could do something like what Kriticka Situace did so well, I'm imagining. This record does give the impression of a band with lots of energy and potential starting out (I'm thinking of the Zegota demo, for example, which by itself wasn't half as good as this but provided a hint of what they would have to offer soon), and I hope to hear another one from them...

Postscript: Neck Beards

OK, looking back, I just realized that I concentrated on all the wrong things in the review. This is what I really should discuss: their drummer's neck beard. Their drummer was one of those rare people who is so centered and gentle that he radiates peace and safety to everyone in his presence. He also wore his hair in a way I'd never seen before: his cheeks were completely clean-shaven, but below the jaws he sported a big, bristly punk rock beard. I was telling Mark about this when we were driving together, and he speculated that the drummer's healthy disposition might have been connected somehow to the neck beard. The more we discussed this possibility, the more likely it seemed: both of us had always hated shaving, though having your cheeks bare can feel kind of neat — and we realized it was our necks that really caused us trouble in the shaving process. What if we stopped shaving them, and kept shaving our faces? Would we too become centered, calm, generous people? Find out next time you see me, with a neck beard halfway down my chest... -b

Miran Rusjan, Pot na Breg 8, 5250 Solkan, Slovenia

_Manifesto J_ukebox "" 7"; Melodic, singing punk with big, ringing chords in a major key, coming off as light-hearted and irrepressible, but with an undertone of sadness when you listen deeper and read the lyrics (from the second song: "still got the fire, but nothing to burn — just the bitter beauty of an end"). The high-hat is mixed too high, and asserts itself as a trebly hiss in places; but other than that their

mix flatters them, helping them sound like the Smiths as a punk band in some spots. They keep up the energy and speed throughout, and sometimes get worked up enough to ditch the pretty stuff and sound pretty out of control. They could have played with Leatherface a few years back and it would have made for a good show. — b

HALLA/Jani, PO. Box 139, 00131 Helsinki, Finland

Milemarker : Changing Caring Humans : 1997–1999 A Collection of Singles and Compilation Songs on CD: As noted in the title, this collection of music includes every single and compilation track released by the band from 1997 to 1999. To begin, instead of simply presenting this compact disc as a pile of non-LP songs, they present this collection as part of a greater, um, plan. I like a band with a plan, certainly not enough bands have even the remotest resemblance of a plan. Specifically, preceding the lyrics there is a manifesto/mus- ing on the band by a presumed Francis Haarstraub. This certainly was intriguing, because first: it introduced political pretensions on the level of, say, Refused or Nation of Ulysses, and two: it is a marked contrast to the generally stark and vague lyrics that proliferate throughout this album. Which is certainly reassuring. Listening to Changing Caring Humans I felt I encountered a group of humans leading rather bleak and unhappy lives. Milemarker does well tQ document the alienation of our world, its despair and painful longings, paved earth, endless strip malls and the nether, failed levels of human interaction. However, the most despairing aspect of the album is that I only felt more alienated and greater anguish with each song — the same feeling I encounter reading bleak leftist newsletters. The black and white images gracing each lyric page reinforced this. While it is legitimate to assume music (or art) is there to serve as a document of experience I must also demand that music serve as a tool of transcendence. I wonder if it at least serves this purpose to the band ?Or perhaps it's just sending them spinning faster into the abyss? This despair translates into fast guitar driven songs for the most part. Minor chords and cries and yells that sound as if the whole business of crying and yelling is hopelessly past and only a detached self-aware futile spew is appropriate anymore. There is also a jazzy number, some slower postmodern ballads and a handful of technopop- pish (keyboard) inspired numbers that hint at the "Frigid Forms Sell" LP that followed these songs. (Note: two or three earlier, slower, rougher versions of songs from that album appear here). I think the best of these 18 tracks is "Receiver" from the early days when they could only manage to sound like Griver and/or Hellbender. It contains a certain sincerity that the other tracks lack and which "Frigid Forms" abhors. The band has come quite some way since then. But for the better? I know the members of Milemarker must retain their romanticism in a delicate corner somewhere far hidden from the world, defended by an arsenal of ironical pop songs. I've seen it in their eyes and coded in these hopeless songs. I just hope that corner doesn't turn to stone before it's too late. Maybe it is best they left Chapel Hill and its demands of a hip contemporary version of a Jane Austen novel.

Milemarker, I dare you to be vulnerable, like a lover! We may betray you (like all those before), but what do you have to lose? -BB *Stickfigure, PO Box 55462 Atlanta, Ga, 10108 USA*

Newborn "self-titled" CD: Newborn play passionate hardcore, at least that's my interpretation from this cd. Really good, sincere lyrics, accessible writings to accompany the lyrics, a self-released full-length, and oh yeah, there's just something that truly sounds and feels *fucking* passionate. How often does that *really* come across in a he record? As for the musical style, Newborn have a somewhat melodic he feel with singing vocals and then at times change to complete screaming over more intense drumming and guitars, which in my opinion is .where they shine. Anyway, Newborn comes from Budapest, Hungary, but you can't write to them because no address was included in their cd. People also tell me they're incredible live, (taz)

Pm sure you can contact them through the addresses at the end of this issue — the ed. "

[Image not archived]

Ninedayswonder "The Scenery is in Disguise There" CD: Ugh! I really wanna be nice but I simply cannot when a CD causes me to vomit all over myself. It's the combination of really jangly, noodling, trebly, wimpy-ass indy rock guitars and moaning injured-dog-yelp vocals that sounds like a bad imitation of Fugazi that I just can't get into. I don't even know how to constructively criticize this because I just don't like anything musical about it. I like the record label because they inserted a photocopied piece of paper containing an awesome quote about revolution by Angela Davis, I like the sleek and simplistic layout, and I even kinda like some of the lyrics, but please do not make me actually listen to the music again. — n

Dim Mak IPO box 14041 / Santa Barbara, CA 93107, USA •

Nostromo "argue" CD: There are so few open chords on this CD that when the guitars finally strike some midway through the second song, it's practically a revelation. Everything else is non-stop guitar chunk/double bass onslaught... one often describes bands like this one wants to honor by comparing them to machinery, but that analogy cuts both ways here: with their airtight recording and exact, uniform execution, Nostromo really do sound like a machine, as if a computer program had been written to churn out perfect (too perfect) mosh metal. Nothing ever goes wrong or is even a split second off, but the humanity is missing somehow. It's not entirely monotonous — the high jarring guitar alarm thing in the first song (reminiscent of something Converge did a few years back) is clever enough, but with no lyrics or variation ih the tough roaring vocals, I just can't connect with this. — b

Snuff, PO. Box 5117, CH 1211 Geneve 11, Switzerland

Nueva Etica "Momento de la Verdad" cassette: This is Vieja Escuela's sister band, the -90s version of the same thing, the vegan straight

edge revival band. Maybe I like V.E. more because we're far enough from the '80s to forget all the dumb shit that went on then... we're not far enough from the '90s, unfortunately, so when N.E. plays something reminiscent of Path' of Resistance (and

they do — they do) I'm unable to escape my bad associations with that bygone era in the U.S.A. when veganism was a*' mark of narrow-minded self-righteousness and elitism rather than compassionate openness. Point of No Return has shown that the same starting point can lead to new, right on places, and I'm sure N.E. can get there, too... but for the time being, this cassette is up-tempo, metallie, moshy, three-vocalist '90s hardcore with at least seventeen X's discernible in the band pho- ' tos alone. — b

Firme y Alerta, address in VE. review

One Fine Day "" CD: This is interesting stuff... their hardcore reminds me a little of Botch, with the *real* craziness (not just seeming crazy, but really proceeding according to conventions of timing and chord progression that are unfamiliar to the ears), and*it's punctuated with all sorts of foreign elements — notes which are shaken and tremble painfully like the warbling of alien birds, smoky nightclub jazzy improvisations, strange breaks between chaos and quiet melody, Black Sabbath playing in the background at the beginning. The singer is mixed a little under everything else, but when you stop to pay attention to him, it turns out he has a powerful screaming voice and is going at it without

ground under their feet yet. For their next record to be as compelling as this one is interesting, they have to make us see the wild horizons opening around them, to make us feel and intuitively understand everything whenever they strike a note. In the meantime, we can sit with this record, trying to puzzle out its strange power. — b

Green, Via San Francesco 60, Padova, Italy

Page 99 "Document #4" *6": The packaging contains no lyrics, and an essay from the band that isn't easy to read — it explains that in the months before this recording, loved ones of the band members committed suicide, and that they're trying here to capture their grief

executed well all-around (I'm thinking of a more personable Stack, or something), but I feel strange now knowing what it came from and simply reviewing it as music — that's the way the art market works, and it's pretty unpleasant. I will say that the samples (which I'm guessing might be from the old movie *Heathers, * about teenage suicide) are unnecessary and detract from the seriousness of the music for me. — b

Robodog, 12001 Aintree lane, Reston, VA 20191

Pensar o Morir "Hardcore Head Eternamente" cassette: Musically this seems to come from the tradition of New York hardcore, a lineage I

[Image not archived]

restraint — one song ends in a long, naked scream that makes my throat bleed just listening to it. I get the impression this band started from the mid-'90's mosh metal thing and just explored further and further away from the pack, until they found themselves in a totally exotic landscape... and novfr they're comfortable there, even if we're not, even if they haven't charted much farther than the

about that. The tragedy of music is that sometimes you can pour out all your suffering and desperation and shattered hope and it just sounds like a rockin' good time to listeners who have been conditioned to expect to hear rage and misery (simulated

or real) on the records they buy. This is great music, high- tension, intense, energetic hardcore that doesn't sound dated to any particular era or genre,

haven't heard much challenging music from in a little while — but this is excellent. The recording is powerful (the bass is mixed more prominently than basses usually are, but it doesnt ruin anything), the music layered and often complex, full of transitions from fast parts to moshy rhythms to acoustic parts, even guitar leads sometimes. The gruff yelling vocalist (think post-Agnostic Front and Warzone) is

probably the main connection to the New York style, besides something about the snare drum sound. Come to think about it, my Brazilian friends told me that Argentina harbored a hardcore tradition parallel to but independent of the N.Y.C. one, and I suppose PO.M. is coming out of that.. The lyrics cover the mass murders of the Argentinean dictatorship, lost friendships... — b

C.C. No. 406, Correo Central, La Plata, CP (1900), Argentina

Planesmistakenforstars "Fucking Fight" 7": Damn, I don't usually care much for music in this style (post-"emocore" melodic stuff), but this really has the teeth to make it work. The

ciate with Milemarker, although more idealistic, much less deliberately cynical (to their credit!). I wish I had a full length record here (what would that be from these guys, twelve minutes long?) rather than just these two songs. — b

Dim Mak, address all around here

The Purpose "Art as a Weapon" 7": I think this is old-fashioned hardcore in the melodic style that I never really listened to — I'm thinking of the stuff that came after Dagnasty... simple, traditional hardcore riffs, melodic, melodramatic vocals that work up to a yell at some points — oh shit, I've got it! Token Entry, that's an example. Anyway, the lyrics are clo

the last song is a good start, and it builds to some typically good lyrics: "but it's not your sound you're selling, it's your soul... it's the space you're filling. That's not the passion they're buying, it's just records." — b *Underestimated records, address somewhere else you should he able to find, now move on, nothing to see here...*

React "Deus Ex Machina" 12": Me and my friends Pigpen and Chaos are hanging out in the smashed-up living room of a punk house in a Philadelphia ghetto, eating dumpstered cheese pizza (OK, I'm vegan, so I'm eating month-old bagels by soaking them in water and microwaving them, but the other two are

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[Image not archived]

singer's voice is rough enough to have drama whether he is singing or screaming (I'm thinking of the vocals that make Leatherface more interesting than any other band in their genre), the music is pressing, intense, hurried... and, fuck, over before I get more than a taste. Two songs and they're both really short. The lyrics and packaging have that coded, poignant but self-aware character that I asso-

quently written and direct about the subject matter, and make me trust them — they're express some anti-imperialist ("We are the third world"), anti-egotist and

rockstar-popu- larity-ist ("Player piano"), pro-living-life-to- the-fullest ("That smile"). It's all well done, solid, seems quite sincere... I just wish the music was a little more spectacular in some way. The experimental part near the end of

eating the pizza, despite the green mold). We listen to a mix tape of a bunch of nameless European crust bands, and then Chaos puts on his favorite new record, this one. The Discharge-beats, '80's-Antisect/Nausea punk drama, and gritty production all make us feel good about our dreadlocks and filthy Amebix patches and lack of beer money (OK, I don't drink, but whatever). We don't even mind

> when the sample of the guy telemarketing for Jesus is a little too loud in relation to the music, or another song goes into another breakdown part followed by another punk guitar solo as we've heard a thousand'times before, because this is our music, made by people like us with spiky hair and names like "Roach" and "Hoss." In the process of listening, we reaffirm our anti-corporate, pro-environmental, anti-sexist, anarchist values, as punks have been for a couple decades, and perhaps the token musical experimentation at the beginning of the second side (anarcho-folk with singing and acoustic instruments) reminds us that there is more to life than just wearing black and being against things, -b *Fired Up!, P.O. Box 8985, Minneapolis, MN 55408*

Red Kedge "Through the Greatest Death..." cassette: New hardcore music from Singapore, with distinctively hoarse, shrieking and wailing vocals over music with a variety of textures (acoustic melodies, distorted chord progressions, high guitar leads, often in places you don't expect them) and transitions (fast, punk parts, slower, more complex parts). There's an atmosphere of lamentation through a lot of this, and that is captured in the lyrics as well: "I'm running, running out of this world, run- f ning out of breath..." — but they also maintain

> the glimmer of real hope that is necessary for this kind of music to be sad rather than just dreary. It really doesn't sound like anything else I can think of... seriously, if I had to come up wjth a musical. comparison, old Vegan Reich would be the only thing I could think of (not because of the lyrics or attitude at all, seriously, I'm just trying to think of who else used this kind of combination of melodious leads and old-fashioned hardcore... they aren't even a good example... maybe Underdog? Fuck, you never even heard any of those bands, did you...). It could be more polished in the recording quality, although it's pretty good already; I imagine they'll have all the lit- tie details worked out next time, so I'm curious where this will go. — b
>
> *No Action Taken distribution, Mazmi Arshad, 2115–21, Jin Sungai Gombak, 53000 KL, Malaysia*

Revenge "" 10"; Something like Oi Polloi at their most metal moments ("Victim of a Gas Attack!") with harsher, gruffer vocals, a more rugged mix (featuring a snare drum that is significantly louder than the guitars and everything else), and lyrics that rage against the stupidity of the television-addled masses and the biotechnological/corporate elite that rules them with police terror when all else fails — in alternating English and German. Now, when a reviewer reaches the point of having reviewed more than two hundred records in a given genre, there are two levels of quality to

which a record in his review box can aspire. The first is to be nice to listen to while it's on, and thanks to its coarse energy this record passes that test; but the second test is to be something that the reviewer will want to listen to over and over, even though he's heard similar ideas executed on a couple hundred other records (of at least three songs each — do the math, it's intimidating). Despite their passionate attempt, Revenge hasn't been able to do that for me here. That's the weight of history in conflict with the life force itself and it's not pretty — if nothing else, I can at least assure you that it's worse for us reviewers than it for you listeners, so if you've only listened to, say, twenty records in this genre of punk, it should work great for you. — b

Ans Bein Pissen, Klein v. Wisenberg, Breisacherstrasse 24, 81667Munchen, Germany

Revoke 10": Eight different label addresses on the back (a couple of them tape traders), great punk artwork that a modern Pushead might have drawn (tasteful silhouettes of burning skeletons with drums and guitars, others dressed as priests and policemen, handwritten lyrics and logos), everything in their native German — all these indications that this was a genuine, d.i.y. punk rock record (like the ones you might have heard about!) combined to persuade me to try to trick one of these 10"s out of somebody in Germany: "oh, I'll review it, I promise!" Well, not only does it look beautiful next to my "Cleanse the Bacteria" record, it also sounds quite good — simple, sufficient recording, straightforward music that spans from late '80s hardcore riffs and breakdowns (that don't sound retro or dated here at all, just timeless) to more original: a moment of off-time chords, inspired buildups on the snare, one whimsical use of echo effects. Too bad I can't understand a single screamed word, uneducated North American idiot that I am. I wouldn't even know where to start to learn all the different languages of hardcore, if I were to try, though. Oh, wait, I found something I can understand (besides die skulls and guitars) — it's an equation: an anarchy sign, plus a heart, equals a smiley face, -b *the most recognizable label address is Bad Influence, Stefan Fuchs, Rennweg 1, 93049 Regensburg, Germany*

Romeo is Bleeding "The Principle of Pain" CD: Plenty of variety and ideas here. The vocals, which alternate between a barely discernible mumble, a tough bark, and a ripped shriek which I like most of all, are lower in the overloaded mix than I'd like them to be. Wait, on the third song the vocalist is singing over the now melodic music (which still retains the same tough, really rugged, snare-drum- maybe-too-loud, thus

actually retaining some energy... and my interest) — that song ends with the sexiest, throaty whisper, I'm surprised and pleased, and then immediately they

return to the hard-hitting European metal mosh. The riffs and songs are all well-constructed... this could be the starting point for a new generation of hardcore bands, perhaps, exploring a wider territory of musical possibilities. Techno parts at the beginning and end pay homage to the last bands to undertake this project... — b

Plastik Culture (with a machine gun over a star for the logo!), 13100 Aix-en-Provence, France

Rubbish Heap "" CD: This is an incredible record with what could be described as a tragic flaw, which I think explains the widely disparate reviews I've seen it receive already. It's vicious, abrasive, has pummeling rhythms, variety in tempo, unpredictable transitions and song construction, plenty of power and bitter emotion and raw fury expressed in the songs, hard-hitting mix, appropriately angry and alienated lyrics, with a political analysis to them as well... the controversial spot is the mix. The Rubbish Heapers went for a totally overloaded, distorted, unbearably ugly mix for this record, so that even the mix would communicate the bitterness, like listening to static on the radio at maximum volume. It's a powerful effect they've achieved, but it really is overwhelming, and it can make all the different parts in all the different songs sound similar and perhaps emotionally one-dimensional, because the listener's first response throughout is to the assault of the mix. I'm into it, personally — it's disconcerting, and I like that. But I have to listen hard, so the whole thing doesn't just over me and flow past like a sea of pure noise. This made the most sense blasted at four in the morning in the terminally slovenly room Jon used to live in, when we would slouch together in a bitter torpor of well-disguised idealism, waiting for the next explosion of inspiration to hit us. — b *Conspiracy, P.O. Box 269, 2000 Antwerpen 1, Belgium*

Ruination "" 7": If I were to tell you that a band must have written, learned, and recorded all the songs on a 7" in one weekend, I would probably be insulting the band — but in this case, 1. I'm not insulting them, and 2. I'm not making it up. Ruination's whole project, they explained to me, is to do the whole writing/practicing/performing/recording thing with as little lost time as possible for each project — they have to, they all live hundreds of miles apart, spread between two different nations. Believe it or not, I think the approach works fine for them — the terror they must feel as they try to get the songs right for all time as they play them for the fifth time ever in the studio communicates itself to the listener as a desperate immediacy that usually is lacking from this kind of hardcore (yes, they're playing the gritty, rough straight-ahead stuff that Talk is Poison does so well and others do, well, OK).

They don't sound too loose, either, and although the recording itself could flatter them a tiny bit more (as the sleeve itself notes, the guitars seem, to be absent from the mix, or at least unnecessarily reticent), that's not fundamentally important in their case. The lyrics range from the obvious old school stuff to more off-the-top-of-one's-head incoherent frustration, but that all works fine for them too, and they express all

the ethics and attitudes that I love to see in bands. If this sounds like you'd like it, I'm sure you would — I do. — b *try to contact them at the +/- records address*

Russian School of Ballet "" CD: Simultaneously lighthearted and furious... I think this is that "power violence" stuff I've heard so much about (though, to quote an old friend, "Most of these bands are neither powerful nor violent!"), from Brazil in this case.

but high-spirited use of the genre. Really nice, personable d.i.y packaging... hm, while the Portuguese lyrics are easy to read, the English translations are so poorly typed that I fear I've been the victim of some anti-imperialist sabotage. All the same, I can make out that the R.S.B. are snotty, anti-imperialist, suspicious- to-say-the-least of U.S. politics and culture, insulted by the brainwashing attempts of the media, and unimpressed by more-revolution- ary-than-thou radicals types. The whole CD goes by quite fast, -b

L-Dopa, C.X. Postal 1860, C.ER 80011–970, Curitiba, PR. Brazil

Sangraal "Wolves of Armageddon" 12": Fuck, I'd forgotten how good this record was, until I listened to it after trying to do reviews of 500 other records. Well, unlike most of the bands out there, they're not trying to imitate any-

a crowd riot that goes over the top. Sangraal don't shy away from it, they plunge into it with animal fury, without pause or remorse, and it really makes for an unsettling experience even just listening to it — unless you're ready to let yourself go, like the anonymous rioter who gets carried away and is no longer himself, smashing, striking, running and screaming. The lyrics are ridiculous metal fantasy ("terrible are the moons of Neptune, moons where fierce battles were fought... for three hundred years a great battle was fought between the spider people and I"), but the song titles have the needed poetry: "Plague Riders, " "Everlasting, World Without End, " "The Long-Haired Kings"... — b

Wicked Witch, RO. Box 3835, 1001 AP Amsterdam, the Netherlands

[Image not archived]

The duality of their approach is clear from the first seconds of the CD: it begins with a Russian dancing song, that quickly gains velocity, ending with a single, sung high note from a powerful baritone — the screamer comes in on the same note, excellent touch, and then they really get going. The mix is balanced in this order: really hoarse, screamy vocals (too loud), grainy bass guitar (louder than bass guitars usually get to be), thin, trebly guitar (quieter and weaker than it should have been), drums (sometimes I'm really not certain whether or not the drummer is playing). All that doesn't really matter, though. If you can imagine it, some of the irrepressible spirit of early '80's punk bands like Minor Threat comes across here, in their irreverent

body, or to impress anybody — just following their own crazy ideas whether or not they make sense to anyone else. Sangraal think they're a black metal band, somehow (they're desert black metal, just as the Norwegian bands are blizzard black metal...[?]), but they're actually a filthy, messy, shit-wrecking punk band, always playing a little faster than they can handle, everything in a mess, the constant blastbeats and busy

drum fills murky in the mix under the ragged guitars, the hissing, rasping vocals seething somewhere between hatred, disgust, disregard... violence is definitely in the air, scary, real violence, that disconnection between action and consequences, between human and human, that you feel in the instants of a brawl, a stabbing,

Scatha "Birth, Life, and Death" 12"; This comes out of the long tradition of British anarcho-punk that goes back to Antisect, but it's significant because, first, it doesn't sound like rehash, and, second, the ideas and values aren't rehash. The lyrics, in fact, are some of the smartest I've seen in thirty record reviews; they begin from the standpoint of the pagan, tribal values that cultural imperialism has almost stamped out of their people (they're Scottish Celts, I believe), singing some lines in Gaelic, and proceed to declare common cause with all other non-Western civilizations, going on to apply (what they consider to be) the perspectives and values of these various peoples to such modern problems as environmental destruction, fear of death, and homophobia

[Image not archived]

(they insist that in other cultures, those who refuse to stay within the limits of one gender were honored rather than vilified for this). The last song wisely rejects both the patriarchal image of god and power and the older matriarchal image which has gained currency again recently as a feminist reaction to it; Scatha sensibly assert that nature and everything that is holy have no gender, and that the conflict between God and Goddess is nothing more than egocentric human bullshit.

As for the music — it's pretty simple arid straightforward, in the old punk tradition, but none of it has happened exactly this way before. They go for a recording that is clear rather than polished (probably the best kind), heavy guitars with chunky riffs but not very much metal in the mix (no solos!), deep roaring vocals with plenty of power. The songs tend to go forever, which after a while makes this a better record to have on in the background than to sit and listen carefully to. I could see these guys playing with the now disbanded By All Means, it would be a perfect match for a number of reasons, -b

Flat Earth, P.O. Box 169, Bradford BD1 2U], UK.

Season "" 7": At its best moments, this 7" is a torn-throated, bitterly beautiful lament, to be sung as acid rain falls upon you in the wilderness of industrial night. They're doing sorne- thing quite similar to Fear is the Path to the Darkside, although their countrymen Headway also come to mind when I focus in one the wailing shrieks of their vocalist. Lyrics in French and English (perfect!), eloquently mourning the destruction of our environment and sense of self... beautiful packaging... plenty of music here for a 7 "... great recording... thick emotional ambiance... with a little more individuality to set them apart, this band would definitely be among my favorites. — b *Stonehenge, Christophe Mora, 21 Rue ties Brosses, 78200 Magna nviUe, France*

Severed Head of State 7":_ This brings to mind crowds of unshaven young women and men, wearing black rags and patches and spikes and .political slogans, faces dirty from train hopping and squat repairing, waving their fists in the air, with bottles of beer or gasoline in their other hands — and, more impressively, it makes me

excited about that kind of punk rock again, makes me celebrate it, fills me with the joy that I feel whenever the more superficial aspects of our musical traditions regain their power and freshness again. Lots of those Discharge bana nanana nanana riffs here, blast beats to spice things up, distorted roaring about the apocalypse of technocracy and apathy, and only one emotion expressed throughout all four songs (furious outrage), but there's a certain pleasure and even comfort I take in putting on a record like this, wanting

my blood... but we'll — get what we deserve — thanks in advance!" I guess none of you kids listened to Axegrinder (a sort of updated anar — cho-Amebix at the end of the 80s), but this goes next to that 12" in my record collection for mood and drama, and easily outclasses it for content. — b

Maximum Voice, Postfach 26, 04251 Leipzig, Germany

Shitlist "A Cold Slap of Reality" *7"*- More straightforward ranting and raging political punk from this label, this one with a few less '80s U.K. references in the music, and roaring vocals that are a little more constricted and staccato than most of the post-His Hero Is Gone crop. Hell, this could still be from the U.K. (I guess I'm thinking Cracked Cop Skulls or something); the lyrics are less general than they usually are in this genre — they seem to be personally directed, in most cases, at people the singer thinks are doing dumb things. The last song ("Pull the Plug") is my

favorite, by far, it has more raw energy and furious abandon than the others, and that helps to make it a real punk song, not just an exercise in genre-production and maintenance. — b

Fired Up! records, address above

Sickshine "Hissing Snake" CD: This starts out with a noise that sounds like a person is being slowly gagged early in the morning, for about thirteen seconds. Fuck, I dont know *what* that is. But soon it breaks into a Kilara-esque rolling heavy sludge distortion groove, but not as slow or powerful. Throughout the CD, Sickshine explores lots of different things:

slow sludge rock, fast metal riffs, noise, rapcore, scratching, singing, growling, sampling, a lot of parts that sound like Tupac Shakur, and soft lovely ballad guitar parts. Listening to the whole thing, most of this is really progressive and very interesting, and at times very weird. What at first seemed awkward now comes across as a passionate effort at communication. If you can't stand rap (this had a heavy, heavy dose of it), then don't dare listen to this. But if you can swallow it, then this is a very baffling attempt at the fusion of the countless musical (and non-musical) styles. Most of this is the singer(s) doing dynamic raps combined with screams and singing, while the other musicians do their thing. How the hell can I say this... there are some really great parts, and some other parts that just insult the potential of this band. I would guess that they had so much fucking fun making this CD. The more I listen to this, the more confused I get. I wish I had the lyrics to this, it would be understandable. The packaging

like this, because it's melodic and sappy emopop-punk stuff, reminiscent of Lifetime and Good Riddance, with gruffly-sung vocals a la Hot Water Music. I however, have a soft spot for this type of music, but only when it's very well done, which this record is. I get a very personable and sincere vibe from this, which is comforting in a way, as most of these types of bands seem to just be using the hardcore or independent music scenes as a stepping-stone to corporate rockstar-dom. And my opinion on bands playing forms of music that are not new, exciting and innovative is that as long as it is done very well, and thus stands out from the countless others doing the same thing, then it is worth it. So basically, I think this is a good record and a band that is doing what it's doing very well — plus they're from New Zealand, which for some reason I think is really cool, -n *

Get Up & Go! / Marienstr. 2 / 76137Karlsruhe, Germany

A cold wind blows past me, through me, like a wash of cymbals, and then the demonic melody begins again, approaching through the tunnel... — b

Coalition, P.O. Box 243, 6500 AE Nijmegen, Netherlands

Starfish Pool "Rituals for the Dying" 10": It's nice to hear something totally different coming out of the punk community: this is full-on electronic music. The first track begins very spare and distant, increasing slowly in rhythm and tension as new sounds are added one by one — by the heart of the song, a high-energy pulse has been constructed from the noise collage, and then the various threads are pulled out one by one, leaving a hum very different from the beginning of the song. That explains what happens, but it doesn't capture what it feels like to listen to this — something like receiving foreign messages, trying to decipher a pattern or meaning in them, feeling it inside but not being able to translate it into any

[Image not archived]

consists of a sandwich bag with a folded cover and a CD stuck in the middle. The cover is a piece of silk-screened fluorescent yellow cardstock, and features a snake on the front and some pretty shitty doodles on the back. Seriously, this looks like what I used to draw on my notebook when I was bored in class... in third grade. The inside is blank, and a lot of the writing on the back is indecipherable. This CD will be hit or miss with most. -WG *Swamp Suckas Get Dissed; 917 Olive St.; No. Little Rock, AR 72114.*

Sommerset "More Songs" CD: I'm not sure how much a lot of the "typical" IF readers will

Stack "Selbst find ungsgruppe" 6": I am in a sewer pipe, underground, the ceiling just high enough for me to stand, trying to make my way through the blackness with a weak flashlight, scared out of my wits. The poor acoustics of the concrete explain the slightly muffled, bass-heavy sound, which emphasizes the terror of being trapped here in this small space with the air running out and the black water running over my feet, rather than detracting from the music in any way. The screaming is of a fellow-sufferer somewhere nearby, losing his mind in the darkness; the music speeds up with the beating of my heart, the stench of refuse, claustrophobia closing in.

familiar language. The b-side approaches in a similar way, but with a steadily beating bass thump at the bottom of it, a slightly more conventional touch — all the same, I don't think this is made for any kind of conventional dance club. — b

Conspiracy, RO. Box 269, 2000 Antwerpen 1, Belgium

Stifled Cries "" 7": Gorgeous hand-made packaging, with silk-screened silver and black snake artwork (fulfilling the insistence of one of my comrades that d.i.y. projects must also have a d.i.y. aesthetic all their own, rather than imitating the glossy absurdity of mainstream

products). Musically this band explores the terrain that Neurosis, Acme, and Rorschach opened up almost a decade ago, which the more "avant garde" hardcore bands have been* charting ever since. They use spiky, jumpy, impatient rhythms to maintain the energy, roaring vocals to deliver the pain, hold back on the metal flair in favor of a more rugged, raw- hearted atmosphere, and threaten that they will be capable of stranger things next time by playing with saxophones and static noise between songs. There's drama in the screams and sudden transitions, and the creative packaging combined with the developing creativity of their music makes this record a little selfcontained aesthetic environment, as 7"s should be. At one of the high points, the music evokes a procession marching down an ancient church corridor lit by candles, dragging a prisoner to an unspeakable fate. — b

Conspiracy, address nearby

Stratego s/t 12" EP: Wow, instead of being excited by sexy packaging and let down by mediocre music like practically every other review I've done here, this band followed through big time. This fuckin' rocks hard, rock being the key word, because it is not hardcore or punk or metal. Imagine a cross between At The Drive In and The Get Up Kids, then throw in some subtle Refused vibes, and you might come something close to Stratego. The music is melodic and catchy as all hell, and manages to never get boring as it moves with lots of unpredictable energy from jumpy, slightly heavy grooves to subdued emo melody. The vocals are great too, ranging from a shout at the crazier parts to harmonizing crooning at the softer parts. Lyrics are intelligently poetic, dealing in an un-cliched way with personal and relationship issues, and the layout is fresh and inventive, with a Morse code theme running throughout I love the label for including an extra insert with an inspiring little tribute/explanation of Bruce Lee and revolution (no, really!). The high point of this record for me came in the first song, which illustrates compassion beautifully with the lyrics, "I take no comfort knowing that you're no better off than me/I take no pleasure knowing this/I take no comfort seeing you struggling everyday/Just to reach things I take for granted." Rock on, man. — n

Dim Mak (address in Ninedayswonder review)

Suicide Nation "A requiem for all that ever mattered" 12": This comes on, and Matt asks: "are they from Europe"? No, they're from Arizona, proceeding from the tradition of West coast destroyers that I trace back

> to Gehenna, and I really loved their 7" last issue (it had a raw, devastated sound, like early Systral) — but this sounds something more like a top-speed German metal/hardcore band influenced by (the black-metal-influenced)

Undying. I guess they've polished their metal up enough to "graduate" to the rank of full- fledged metal band. I personally feel like metal flourishes and theatrics come across as more real with a little punk roughness, and I miss the rugged quality of their last record, but for the genre (throat-hanging-out-the- mouth-in-strips vocals, lots of blast beats, double-picked melodic metal riffs, classical guitar interludes) this is perfectly executed. The songs are well-written, the musicianship and recording superb, the bloody/religious- referenced lyrics confidently constructed if not entirely original... Actually, fuck it, this is a great record (and the sincere writing about how to keep the punk community supportive inside and dangerous outside only helps). The only problem here is that so many other bands are doing this, that every time the 'Nation plays a great riff or blastbeat I have to fight myself not to associate it with every metal riff and blastbeat recorded by bands of this genre in the past three years. An excellent example of why musical innovation, though not essential in any fundamental way, can help a band shake off the inertia of their times. My conclusion: if you *haven't* been listening to much metal/hardcore in the last few years, this record will probably do a lot for you. — b *King of ^ Monsters, 8341 E. San Salvador, Scottsdale, AZ 85258 U.S.A., or: Scorched Earth Policy, PO. Box 3214, 76018 Karlsruhe, Germany*

Supersleuth "...and still it beats" 12": I got a hand-screened pre-cover for this record, but I think it's classier than any real cover could be, personally. Supersleuth take the crystallized, mummified legacy of "old school hardcore" and disassemble it, putting it back together in new ways, with drumrolls and transitions where they never were before, the riffs arranged differently. They concentrate on slower, melodic parts, rather than full-speed- ahead simplicity. The vocalist does a mix of old-school yelling and singing, and sometimes sounds like he's struggling a bit, but the music is all about struggle, so it doesn't seem out of place. There's an Apocalypse Now sample before the third song that surprised me a little bit in this context. This music has a certain tension in it, maybe a little wistfulness, and a raw quality that makes it seem really sincere (all of which also comes across in the lyrics, too), so it gets the go-ahead from me. — b *Underestimated, PO. Box 13274, Chicago, IL 60613*

> _Talk is Poison "" 7":_ This band has absolutely everything they need to play this long-lived style of straightforward speedy punk without being held back by history: a worked-up, car- ried-away vocalist, unpredictable songs, excellent playing, gritty mix, high guitar leads here and there (you know, Discharge), just the

right mix of pounding intros and breakdowns with top-velocity verse/chorus parts. I don't think I learned or felt anything new from the lyrics, but I didn't have any

objections to any of them either. Great high-protein punk rock here, you can pick up those rarer vitamins and minerals from other records, if you're still missing something after this. — b *Prank... address below*

ThatLOtJiotC^ Well, here's another experiment, for you adventurous types. I'd say this CD, plus the Libertinagem, Text, and Countdown to Putsch releases (and a John Zorn CD or two, if you insist), would make for a good starting point for the next forays into broadening the horizons of hardcore and music in general. This is basically a grindcore/power violence record with jazz and dada pretensions. The jazz comes out in the ' saxophone blowing during the quieter moments, before the blastbeats and barkbark-growl vocals and spasmodic guitars hit again — as well as being present in the free jazz aesthetic of their less scripted songwriting moments. The dada comes into play in the nonsensical collage aesthetic of the packaging, lyrics, and texts, which are all hand-constructed, unsettling in their disorder but filled with material that could serve as the launching pad for any number of brilliant ideas in the patient listener: here science, child psychology, personal confessions and accounts, radical ideas, Beat cut-up-and-paste chaos all come together to create a non-linear, admirably non- didactic, ultimately fragmentary mess from which the listener/reader had better deduce her own conclusions. — b

45 Wilder Lane, Leominster, MA 0145J

Thumbs Down s/t 7": Ooooooohhh... silver and blue ink...sexy , logo...clever use of thumbs down theme on 7" labels...record label's logo is a diagram showing how to make a Molotov cocktail and throw it at a police station... Oh wait, I almost forgot the music. Well, its standard late-90s "traditional" or "old school" hardcore...all the usual gang backups, some pretty standard mosh breakdowns, and some fairly run-of-the-mill lyrics making for a less than exciting listen for me. I can see a lot of kids liking this though, because it is really well played and executed — there are actually a few interesting little change-ups and hooks — and I can smell an energetic, posi live show from here...but it's just not something I can get into having heard so many other bands also doing this stuff. Insert last sentence of Brethren review here. — n

Firestorm / Italielei 58/9 / 2018 Antwerpen, Belgium

> Tre_phine "" CD:_ There are definitely common threads tying together the music of the various Detroit hardcore bands over the past few years.

Earthmover temporarily united a few different tendencies, and when it split into the old-fashioned fast hardcore of Bloodpact and the polished, chunky mosh of Walls of Jericho, you could see two of those tendencies crystallized. A third pole of the Detroit sound is represented here by Trephines very metal approach. There are countless stops at which one guitar will lead off with a complicated metal melody before all the others join in, chromatic chords, chunky mosh pans and double picking galore, even a purely acoustic segment in the fourth song. The two vocalists have plenty of enthusiasm, but need to polish things up a tiny bit to distinguish themselves from the legions of other

screams and groaners. The song titles are pretty good — "Pat Robertson in a Lake of Fire" is a sort of revenge fantasy used to illustrate the bands avowed atheism, and "Not Everyone can be Jack Kerouac" expresses the desperation of watching one of your friends disintegrated by addiction. Watch out for spelling errors in the liner notes, by the way, my frendz. There's a fucking Gorilla Biscuits cover at the end, to undercut everything I've said about metal here, in which one of the singers suddenly sounds about ten years old. — b *+/- records, address all around*

and photo collages, all done by the band. My only complaint is that it leads to an overall feel of being very disjointed, confused and random. — n

OHEV/ 1500 NW 15 Ave. #4 I Boca Raton, FL 33486, USA

Two Day Theory "Modern slaves in a world of guns and profits rise fight" 7": 2D.T. has one of those vocalists who sometimes sounds out of breath, and that's representative of what's going on here in general: no polish or pretension, probably not a whole lot of practice either, but enthusiasm and honesty and serious intentions. Well, now that I listen closer, it's not just one guy, there are a couple people shouting in the background too. This record reminds me of Struggle, Downcast, that whole school of idealistic, accusation-wielding political hardcore from the beginning of the '90's — the first side ends with everybody angrily shouting "in the name of God — in the name of America" over and over. They mention the oft-quoted 500 years figure for the time during which Europeans have been oppressing other cultural/racial groups at one point, and they make it clear in their writing that they're out to figure out how to extricate themselves from the whole mess and start

you grow up, your heart... dies."), and they add some background melodic vocals at one point that add something tenser than those usually do. There are acoustic parts, and sudden transitions; the slow, wandering, centerless songs can get a little monotonous, but I think they're on to something. They're also not dumb (thank god), so the enigmatic lyrics (which range from a lament over our destruction of mother earth to the interpersonal struggles that complicate life) interest me rather boring me to tears. — b

Dead Alive, P.O. Box 97, Caldwell, NJ 07006 USA

Unison "Sunday Neurosis" cassette: This is top-notch dynamic hardcore from war-torn Eastern Europe, with well-constructed songs and plenty of variety (from all out hardcore speed and fury to jazzy acoustic improvisations, with mournful guitar leads — the best part — throughout), all executed with confidence. Eighteen songs, all lengthy, from two different recordings. The singer's voice is the only thing I could like better, his choked up yelling is emotive but lacks the total release I'd like to hear from him. The recording is perfect, clear as a bell, absolutely nothing to be desired... and the lyrics! They capture the

[Image not archived]

Twenty-third Chapter "An Eden for the Machines" CD/LP: Well, first of all this album is a little old by now, by most people's standards for reviews, and the band has since broken up, but as I will explain that is a good thing in a way. 23-C play crusty and

gritty as fuck political metallic hardcore/punk with touches of grindcore, and I love it. This stuff is angry, morbid (but intelligent too), and desperate as hell, something I listen to for some strange kind of masochistic comfort after a long stressful day being frustrated by school and work and the bullshit of modern society. The story of this band makes their recordings all the more tragic and representative of the emotions they convey — one of their original members committed suicide, and their eventual breakup is like the rancid, rotten icing on the cake of shit that life can sometimes be. The artwork on this album is also great; it's a whole bunch of comic book style drawings

working towards'an egalitarian, unlimited world, -b

Tree of Woe, 18311 Arch Street, Little Rock, ARK. 72206

Underprivileged Nation "...For we are many" one-sided 12": Good marks for originality, which is pretty rare for records so far this year. The record begins with a long, slow journey through a spare, desolate landscape, the Bible verses from which the title comes being read in the background (don't be scared off — it's pretty clear they're not interested in Christianity here), before the spastic, minimalist hardcore punk chaos begins. The recording could be a little more powerful, but everything comes across as honest and unpretentious, and perhaps the recording is a part of that too, who knows. They snagged one of the only good samples I've heard in a while (a young woman, very serious, imparts: "when

tragedy of real life war and strife with sensitivity, poetry, tragedy, incisive insight — for example, "a priest stands in front of the mirror, and his reflection shows a businessman in uniform. And the salvation churchbells ring, but God doesn't hear the difference between the bells and the police sirens." Another song title inverts an old phrase about duty, to ask the real question: *But why wouldn't the State die for me?* — b

Were in this alone records, Srdjan Stankovic, Veljka Petrovica J2, 21000 Novi Sad, Yugoslavia

Unkind "Plant the Seed" 10": Fast, angry punk, coming from the heavier side of Finnish anti-authoritarian punk tradition. They have' their own personality — there are slower parts, sometimes they have broad, open chords on top of the bana-nanana guitars, and the songs are written well. You can hear the vocalist

working hard to get the growls out; he doesn't have the strongest voice in the genre, but he makes up for it in effort. Plenty of packaging: nice cardboard cover, lyric booklet, poster. The lyrics rage simply against participating in* the system of apathy and oppression, against the fur industry, against police brutality, pollution, consumerism, and for what they call "the one true law worth fighting for: the instinct to survive." — b

Fight, Hikivuorenkatu 17 D 36, 33710 Tampere, Finland

Vieja Escuela "La Mejor Eleccion" CD; Let me preface this by saying I've never really liked any "oldschool" hardcore — I liked some of that stuff when it was still "modern, " and as soon as it became "retro" I started being bored, and then really

bored, and then bored to fucking tears by it (and even then, it was only the mid-'90's...). There have been notable exceptions, including Final Exit (though I'm not sure if they count), Trial (maybe they don't count either?), hm, early Mainstrike (come on, you assholes, that counts!), I dunno what else... anyway, point being, often you have to go far from the birthplace of an older style to find people for whom it is fresh enough that they can play it with fresh enthusiasm and energy, and I have definitely found that in Vieja Escuela. They make this oldschool youth crew straight edge shit so awesome all over again, it's ridiculous! Yes sir, there's so much excitement in this music again that the whole genre makes sense to me again, gang backing vocals and pointed fingers and stage dives and all (OK, the athletic gear is still all wrong, but these guys aren't really into that either, so it's cool). When I saw them play, it was the same adrenaline-charged mayhem of furious youth crowd mosh madness that this music suggests, demands, awesome. The lyrics are in Spanish, but thanks to the simplicity of the straight edge hardcore tradition, I can still understand them (even though my Spanish is less than remedial) — roughly translated, some of the song titles are: "Brotherhood, " "Without Cruelty, " "Diversion or Degradation?" You can take it from there. The only unexpected thing I've found on the whole record is a strange little techno buildup on the song "Resist, " but of course that gets my approval too. This one gets five stars as possibly the only youth crew record of the last five years that matters. — b *Firme y Alerta Discos (Fil give you illiterate youth crew nerds one guess what that translates to!), C.C. 1817 Correo Central (1000), Buenos Aires, Argentina*

Voorhees "Fireproof" 7": Voorhees always specialized in no-bullshit, straight-to-the- point hardcore, and that's what they offer here. This could have come out any time in the last fifteen years, and been equally relevant

(for anyone who likes Negative Approach, that is!). A more recent comparison could be "Systems Overload" Integrity, with the rough, simple mid-to-up-tempo hardcore, and rough, roaring vocals. The bottom line for me is that I like Voorhees — their music has a certain power to it, they wear their ugly hearts on their sleeves, they're good folks — even if they sometimes pull some sketchy shit (like naming a song "more violence in hardcore, " and not printing the lyrics...), and I don't actually put their records on much (OK, who am I fooling here, I've had neither a record player nor a place to even listen to music for a year and a half now, but it's not Voorhees that I miss most). When I was in England last, their singer played me a recording of one song, not on this record, that was incredible, though. I wonder where I could find that. — b *Chainsaw Safety, BO. Box 260318 Bellerose, NY 11426–0318*

Word Salad "Death Match 2000" CD; For some reason, I expected this to be more groove-oriented, like Damad, but it's entirely all-out punk/metal in the tradition that spans from Antisect to His Hero Is Gone, with proportions about two to one in favor of doublepicking and blast beats over bana-nanana post-Discharge/Nausea riffs. I would call this grindcore, but it has an urgency that can't be faked, something that grindcore is not known for. The vocalist sounds is a furious frog sputtering in a hot frying pan, the quadruple-time drums sound like a train running out of control overhead, and in

each one of the twenty songs there is at least one moment when I simply can't believe how fast and tight they are playing at once. In that respect, it reminds me of "Reign in Blood' Slayer, actually — that overwhelming feeling of adrenaline surging through the veins like a tsunami, driving all in , its path before it. The record ends and I discover I haven't remembered to breathe since it came on. No, it never lets up on the accelerator enough to lose my attention, although it takes a strong stomach to want forty minutes of this stuff. This might be analogous to what Napalm Death was for some of us in the late '80's, I guess. As for lyrics... well, I'll reprint one song in its entirety here, as Inside Front is known for (obnoxiously) doing: "ageless, raceless, classless, sexless murder." Yep, that one's called "Indiscriminate Murder." Fun, but dumb. Some of the other lyrics are just a little tiny bit more profound, but what isn't? — b *Prank, address easy to come by*

The Year of Our Lord "The Frozen Divide" _CD:_ Something bizarre happened when I went to review this CD. I didn't realize that I had put the disc into my CD changer along with Mozart's "Eine Kleine Nachtmuzik", so when the Mozart track started playing, I thought "Cool! They sampled Mozart!" After

about a minute I realized what had happened. It did take me a full minute, even with the Mozart CD case in full view. This proves that I have an IQ on the same level as a moth or kitchen sponge, and it is a wonder that I can discern which appendages are my fingers, let alone type these words. Regardless...this The Year of Our Lord is a goddamn excellent CD. Think apocalyptic black metal, and then think of it being played by Americans and not by Swedish corpse-pain red sword wielding maniacs. I know, it is impossible to imagine. Your brain just exploded even trying to think of it. "But Greg, " you argue in vain, "Americans can't play keyboards! The guy from Bon Jovi already tried it, and failed miserably." Oui, mon cheri, I agree with the second part of your statement, but must rebut the first half. This CD features a full-apocalyptic sound, and the keyboard type sounds on it are what add that element to the disc. The sound overall is symphonic with the keyboards, and I fully believe now that Bon Jovi as a band would have gone much further if that jerk off keyboard "player" had taken lessons from The Year of Our Lord. Basically, The Year of Our Lord could eat Bon Jovi for breakfast and spit out small chunks of stone washed jeans with a demonic laugh. The songs on this disc bring you one step closer to the apocalypse, and reassure you that this would be as ample a soundtrack as any for that event, whenever it should arrive. The closest parallel I can draw is of the At the Gates "Slaughter of the Soul" CD, but played with all of the members under possession by demons. I think this CD is a compilation of earlier previously released songs, so be sure to check with the label before forking over your cash. I am pretty sure that the songs here were re-recorded even if they were previously released, so it is still very worth your while even if you have heard the band already. Layout and lyrics are both excellent. The CD comes without a jewel box in a super heavy glossy cardstock folding cover. Looks great. Any band which uses the word "algorithmic" in each of two different songs will always catch my attention, but to add to that such phrases as "this frozen divide of sanguine skies" and

"diastolic murder comes with every choking laugh" and I become a fan for life. Great job here. — JUG

*Lifeforce Records; PO Box 04011 Leipzig; Germany; _cqrtel@bigfooLcom; www.carteldis- trobutjon, com_*

_Agathocles/D_eadmocracv spin UL Agathocles recorded their side of this record on a four track in their practice space, and it sounds it: rough, overloaded grind-core, with the growly vocals characteristically too loud (and distorted, sometimes even sounding like they have a flanger effect on them)... they have the growling bass (when it plays by itself

and you can it hear it), straightforward old- fashioned grind songs, and negative/ political lyrics your would expect. It's all pretty monotonous to me, but I guess that's the aesthetic here. Deadmocracy are a hundred times more interesting from their first note — they're tight and serious about what they're doing (bringing Assuck to my mind), unlike their recordmates, and that combined with their energy and better songs makes it possible for them to rescue the anarcho-grind genre from the wholesale brush-off I'd given it after hearing the first side. They suffer from a mastering disaster that makes their side sound extremely bass-heavy and muffled, but a little fucking with the E.Q. on the stereo and everything's all set. I really like what they're doing here — it's not the first time a band has raised grind to an artform, but when I'm listening, it doesn't matter. They actually have a song that explic-

second song begins ominously again, with dirty guitar chunks that growl like an angry dog, and when they proceed into the song proper I decide that I like everything about them except their transitions. If they could get the parts of these songs to hold together tighter, this would be an awesome — they certainly can create a scary, tense atmosphere, their vocalist is ready to go, too, their recording is clear and yet gritty at once, their riffs and arrangements are awesome. The Submerge side comes in with plenty of threatening drama, too, and builds up, suddenly counting off on the high hat and getting going fiercely. They too have a great, ugly recording and plenty of intensity. Their first song is an assault on the Christian system of guilt that has manifested itself physically in the form of prisons. This is near the top of its class in the world of split 7"s this issue. — b

like here are the lyrics: they're way too vague and "artistic" to be anything but a bunch of silly jargon to those who didn't write them...although I can faintly detect some intelligent socio-political observations beneath all the confusion, which is promising, if not frustrating. But I can say that BUS put on a great live show, during which they some-times explain what the hell they're screaming about in between songs. — n

Snuff Records / PO box 5117 / CH-1211-, Geneve 11, Switzerland

Cable Car Theory/I, Robot split 7": When C.C.T. are at their best here, they're playing a tense, constantly changing melodic hardcore with throaty screaming and occasional sung notes over it, plus jumpy, busy drumming, that expresses desperation and drive at once* The first comes in fucking rocking, and keeps

[Image not archived]

itly tells Shelter to take their Krishna "consciousness" out of the hardcore scene (this was recorded just after Shelter cashed in with a Latin American tour), another one called "Why work?" ...that should give you a basic idea where they're coming from. The lyrics to this record come in Portuguese and English- right on! -b

Out of Step, Fernando Nascimento, R. XV de Agosto 525, Santos, Sao Paulo 11082–320 Brazil

Ananda/Submerge "the dead bird e.p." split 7": Ananda begin with a guitar harmonic arrangement that is simultaneously hauntingly beautiful in melody and ugly in the fearsome growl of the bass and guitar chunks, then lose some of that power with a transition that doesn't flow well to a faster part. Their

Shogun, Phil Keiffer, 39 rue du Mont dArene, 51100 Reims, France

Born Under Saturn/Shora split 7": Two songs by each of these very similar, very kick ass bands, on a ridiculously thick and heavy slab of gray Swiss vinyl makes for an awesome 7". Each band plays that spastic, super chaotic and heavy grindish type hardcore with crazy screamed vocals, but Shora wins with me for their sludgy, even heavier (perhaps down- tuned?) take on this style. Both recordings are top notch, and the layout is really weird and interesting computer-manipulated photography. I love how two bands from different continents (BUS are from USA, Shora from Switzerland) can get together and share music and resources on a release, it illustrates an important concept. The only thing I didn't

going, just increasing the energy, until... they go into a more melodic part, and from there just back off on the energy, it's too bad* The sample at the beginning seems sort of unrelated to the music, by the way, guys. I, Robot are going all out when they kick in from the acoustic intro, great shot-out shrieking vocals, , strange hypnotic rhythms, jerky transitions, enough confidence in their wild delivery to carry me wherever they go. It's not the most classic, original music ever, but it has its. own personality, it's fucking solid. They too, add quieter, melodic singing parts like C.C.T does every once and a while (and as in the former case, these are sometimes the weakest moments). — b

Immigrant Sun, RO. Box 150711, Brooklyn, NY 11215

[Image not archived]

Cable Car Theory/Realign split 7/1 C.C.T. concentrates more on the melodic parts here, but they still have the tense, constantly-shifting style that characterizes them, and they throw in some little blastbeat parts for more energy and unpredictability. Maybe the mastering or something is a little different here, because I think I liked their other mix/record- ing (on the other split 7") more, but this is clear and strong enough. The third song is a bit of a farce, it never really gets going, then ends in them shaking a tambourine and singing sardonically. I think it was supposed to be an attack on women like Courtney Love for not being good role models, judging from the lyrics (which never get sung, most of them) — in contrast, they extol the Lilith Fair rock tour, as "one of the best-selling events in rock history." That's *herstory, * guys — or is it? Can we point to the marketing of our feminism as an advance, or is it just more

commodification of the progress we've made? And is it really cool to blame women like Courtney, who are doing what people in the Occupied Territory have always done (play along and try to survive), for the way the sexist media uses their images to sell unhealthy roles? Anyway... Realign plays a similar take on the melodic hardcore tradition, but less jumpy, fewer transitions (there is a double bass part at one point, that's unusual), and the vocalist speaks when he's not screaming, instead of singing. Their second song has a couple breaks with some good guitar melody arrangements, that was the high point of their side for me. — b

Voice of Life, P.O. Box 1137, 0470 Leisnig, Germany

_Cameron/Bastard in Lov_e split 7 : Here Cameron goes back and forth between a heavy, modern European metal/hardcore attack, and more experimental breaks (a la Refused, perhaps); then, to bring in the second song, they cut to a piano and a few effects-laden guitar chords, before going back to the heavy metal (they even employ Judas Priest harmonies on the guitars) interspersed with nontraditional breaks. They're looking for a way out of the closed formula of the hardcore world that bore them, but on this recording they're not sure which lead to take and follow. That doesn't prevent the music from being compelling (mostly when they're playing the metal, which has already been through the testing-and-development process), and nor do the occasionally bombastic vocals. The lyrics and explanations are smart and politically conscious, dealing with economic imperialism. Bastard in Love have a more raw, straightforward recording and punk rock approach, making for a strange combination on this split 7". They can do what they re doing quite well, and I prefer this to the pop punk stuff that tends to address the same

German bands usually have with a bass that is sometimes overloaded), they actually have unique songwriting going for them. I'm interested in what they're doing, I wish there was enough of their music here to get a better feel for it. Their side ends with a long stretch of feedback and sound decay, as it becomes increasingly clear that the sample in the background (in Italian) is something like a fascist addressing a cheering mob. Costa's Cakehouse surprised me by coming in with a lot of screaming and grind, then cutting to an energetic acoustic part with a Santana solo over the top, before going back to the busy hardcore punk. There's a tension in a lot of what they do, when the music is understated and it feels like something is about to explode. When they do explode, it could be a little harder (and if it was, this would be truly excellent) — for example, their vocalist has what

sounds like a strong voice, but I think if he pushed it a bit more... — b

Get Up and Go, Nanouk de Meijere, Marienstr.

2, 76137 Karlsruhe, Germany

_Dead Thirteen/Down Foundat_ion split 7": Dead Thirteen start with such a deep, ugly, sludgy riff, with such deep growling vocals, that I thought I must have the record on the wrong speed — but no, its right... fuck, Im having a gut reaction to this that says it s awesome, even though its just simple chunk- chunk-grrrr metal/hardcore. I guess this is just so over the top about itself that it s impossible not to be convinced.

Even the demo-style production is perfect for me — rough, snare and bass drums that really punch, thick layer of grime and filth to give atmosphere. If I went to see them and a bunch of morons were windmilling to the dance parts, I would be a

lot less enthused, and the religious imagery of the blood-and-gore-and-revenge lyrics does nothing for me, but the simple pleasure of listening to them thunder and bellow is just fine. Down Foundation, surprisingly, sound like an early '90's straight edge band, with the '80s youth crew fast parts and youthful yelling vocals (and backups!) and an occasional heavier part for an intro or mosh part. Their lyrics are much clearer, but that's just thanks to the genre, I guess — they don't actually cover any new ground (friendship, which is always relevant to young men making hardcore I suppose, and seizing the present). — b *Slave Union, 58 Grace Street, Waterford, NY 12188*

_Dea mon s Jad_ed Passion/Avarice split Jj D.J.P. have a sort of strange mix (the snare sounds like an oil drum, the guitars are a little

two parts '90s hardcore mosh pans, one part '90s black metal technique (if you re Gomorrha, adjust the proportions to 1-1-2, respectively). Their vocalist doesn't have the personality of the DJ.P. guy, so they aren't able to stack up quite as well (was that a German hardcore pun? Oh my goodness!), b *Alveran, PO. Box 10 01 52, 44701 Bochum, *

Germany

Deaththreat/Talk is..

Deaththreat here sound like a pissed-off, nofrills, mid-'80's-punk-band, post-Black-Flag. Some details should fill you in, if thats not clear enough already: yelling vocals that hurry to keep up with the rest of the music, a bass sound that isn't yet distorted in the grindcore tradition, echo on the last word of the last song, which is "slavery." Talk is Poison aren't much different stylistically, but they have an

pace just barely too fast for my heart or mind to keep up with, so I am always just behind them, overwhelmed at what they are doing. At the end they hit one tiny, split second pause, hammer it all home again, and cut out, without a second of their side of the record wasted. The combination of Envy's red-woundsound-painting with T.M.K.'s explicitly political anti-police brutality consciousness-raising is awesome, exactly the combination of soul and ammunition that I come to punk for. The musical association of the two makes more superficial sense than anything else, since while both are playing jumpy emo/hardcore the one does it with the grace of shredded longing and the other with an impatient, irrepressible verve, but this is a great little record. Lyrics in both English and Japanese for both bands — the bilingual trend I m noticing is right fucking on. -b

low), but their vocalist is going all out with the shrieking, and that makes their German metal/hardcore matter. They're not afraid to cut the organization make fucking wrecked noise for half a minute, which works to their advantage, and they come back in from the noise with a light jazz jam, underlining their disregard for the demands of the formula. Good for them. They don't have riffs and transitions that are unique enough to set them entirely apart here, but their energy comes across, for sure. Avarice

come in with an Anthrax-style riff and a high hat that should have been lower in the mix, and then go into the guitar chunk/roaring part that makes up the meat of this genre, pulling off the transition with a moment of metal double-picking that sets the standard for their standard application of the metal/hardcore formula in Germany: one part '80s metal introductions,

extra energy somehow (not that Deaththreat lacked it), and emphasize it with the occasional high guitar flourish and constant snare drum fill. Their side makes me want to leap around, mosh, crash into other dancing kids, the chains on the arms of my leather jacket swinging around. Their vocalist sounds fucking furious, and their drummer never takes a break or plays any slower than he possibly can.

Yeah, this is good stuff. — b *Prank, P.O. Box 410892, San Francisco, 94141–0892*
H.G. Fact, 401 Hongo-M, 2-36-2 Yayoi-Cho, Nakano-Ku, Tokyo 164–0013 Japan

_Flores del Sol/W_hjsper split CH First, it needs saying that this CD has absolutely lovely packaging. The only contemporary comparison I can think of for Flores del Sol is Submission Hold — both play a slower sparer descendent of punk that emphas.zes the melody and tension and sadness over the distortion and release and anger. The woman who sings for this band has a voice of a very different temper, though, a more classical singer style, with which she explore the lines in different ways. She works up to a scream every once in a while, but only when the lyrics and music demand it. Their final song builds . to an impassioned conclusion, and it is j Whisper's turn. Now, here I get a chance to $_{t}$ consider my attitudes about sex and gender

for their singer is doing just about the same thing as the singer of Flores del Sol, but he is a boy, and I don't like it as much. I think its not so much my deep-seated sexism, though, as it is the fact that hes just not as confident with his voice, so it comes out much less full. He does more screaming than she did, and he sounds more at home there. The music is similar, too, relying very little on distortion and speed, working more with the notes inside their chord progressions... I think this is "emo" music, for sure, if there is indeed such a thing. As with their recordmates, their final song is my favorite, as it starts very simply and builds energy and emotion without overreaching itself, -b

*Sni**ffi^g> C.C. 3288, C.P 1000, Correo Central, Buenos Aires, Argentina*

Gom_orrha/Hellchild split 7":_ Gomorrha strays from the pack of German metal/hard-

being ominous rather than aggressive. Oh my god, Hellchild just employed a high lead guitar, just in case there was any metal frontier they'd left uncrossed (I guess the high wail is the only thing missing on this record). Sadly, the lyrics of both bands leave me unmoved — thats the problem across the board in the world of metal/hardcore these days, I think: metal used to give us melodrama, which we made into real drama by adding it to punk, but now lots of our punk music has become mere flourish and empty rocking, like metal once was. Come on, kids, make this shit *real* again, so it can be dangerous once more. I listen to all this would-be scary, "evil" music, and I'm not scared at all. — b

Bastardized, Stefan Eutenbach, P.O. Box 200521, 56005 Koblenz, Germany

~~Hocus/Cheerleaders—o—~~_f the Apocalypse split_ 221 Once Hocus gets going, and I can pick the

Imitation Pushead artwork on the sleeve that looks fucking vintage — and knowing how much less it probably cost these poor bastards, . I like it a lot more. The artist even signed his name with the copyright symbol in the same place Pushead would have! — b

Scorched Earth Policy, address nearby

H_olding On/The Real Enemy split 7":_ The Real Enemy play rough, basic "old-school" hardcore, but here's the catch" they're not dumb. They have a song about infiltration and Union-busting (classic line: ^that back you stab might be your own!"), another against homophobia, and the last one, "Better than youth crew, is about growing older in hardcore. Holding On don't change the atmosphere — they come in with the same rough recording and traditional hardcore beats and rough yelling and traditional themes... the first word out of the singer's

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core bands by playing at ridiculous velocities, setting a new land speed record for blastbeats at the beginning of every new song, and doing it well too. The dual vocals stick mostly to the emotionless grindcore growl and groan that can get so tiresome, but they're not out of place with the music, and the recording is as shiny and crisp as it needs to be for this. I like them best when they re playing at maximum speed, metal breakdowns be damned. Hellchild is a good match for them with their near-constant double bass and prehistoric beast vocal rumble. At their very best moments, they can create that threatening evil atmosphere that Slayer could when they were

parts out of their German metal/hardcore that I like, I'm into it: driving energy in places, some pretty (if heard-before) melodies hidden under thick layers of distortion and screami^{n}g' • Then C.O.A. corrie in, and I realize that I've just been being nice to Hocus — this is better, much more vicious vocals, much more ^{ener}gy and abandon, and that's what it really takes to make this metal shit real. Their first song ends with the most agonized screaming I ve heard in twelve records. I don't like their lyrics as much as Hocus's, though — C.O.A. lean on the blood/sufferi ng/revenge thing too much, while Hocus are more open and idealistic... both have songs about "lies, " of course.

mouth is, in fact, "Go!" My favorite song of theirs, of course, is the fifteen-second one about dance floor justice for those who fuck with others at shows. They attack racist thugs in the last song (lyrics by Felix Von Havoc), and that seems to be just too easy, in my opinion — racism is everywhere around and inside us, and it makes things seem to simple to concentrate just on the "racist" enemies. Better to address the issue as it affects our own attitudes and interactions — and sure, fight the Nazis when they show up, but speak about other things when you have the chance, rather than patting yourself on the back for that. Anvway, both bands seem to be right on, but I like the

Real Enemy better, because it's clearer from their lyrics what they specifically believe in (vagueness was a constant feature of those '80's hardcore bands, which allowed them to seem cool without really believing or doing anything at all). I won't ever listen to this, but I'd probably go to see them play, just to chat, hang out, maybe dance a bit. — b

One Percent Records, P.O. Box 41048, Minneapolis, MN 55414

Minute Manifesto/Shank split 7 Shank play political grind with a real work ethic: get in with one riff, switch to blast beat and get the point across, the job done, and then the fuck out of there, the better to prepare for the next song. They're not afraid to play a slow pounding breakdown part enough times to get the point across but you 11 never hear them do anything superfluous, d heir singers (both high screamer and low growler) both sound

snocty/growly, and the pace a bit slower, b *Smack in the Mouth, Eight-O-Three, Flip Basement, 70–72 Queen Street, Glasgow, G13EM, LUC*

_Remus and the Romulus Nation/P_ezz _"Benefit for the Tennessee Coalitio_n ..to _Abolish State Killing" 7":_ This is an excellently packaged and right on little record it comes with a separate booklet for each band, a booklet about the injustice of the death penalty in the U.S.A., a postcard to the Tennessee governor demanding an end to the death penalty, and a legal document you can fill out demanding that if you are murdered the murderer'will not be executed. R&RN feature a singer who always sounds a little off key (except for the rare moments he gets carried away and starts screaming), so that was a little hard for me to deal with... musically, their murkily-recorded poppish melodic punk

listen to it comfortably. — b

Soul is Cheap, . Zach Payne, 164 St. Agnes 43, Memphis, TN 38112

Srack/Narsaak split 7": Stack is the real thing here, their metal is applied to punk intentions in just the right way to make it matter, and the music is scary and insistent. Plus, they have a singer who can jump forty feet in the air, in the old '80s punk tradition. Check out the awesome lyrics to their first song ("Knock knock, anybody home?"): "Hi, I m Mr. Restricted — representing this world's stupidity, to choose for polarization as a view of lile is one of my ways to protect myself against the acceptance of a pluralistic reality a point driven home by their hilarious take on the old straight edge slogan: "Face Realities, it says, across the bottom of their lyric sheet, Narsaak creates a similarly, dark ambiance; their first song is simple, hypnotic, repetitive, and while

scary as fuck here, and despite the aforementioned work ethic they re often able to create that atmosphere of doom and futuristic devastation that makes this kind of music thrilling before their songs are over. In contrast to that atmosphere and the fury and abandonment from which they create it, their lyrics and essays are smart and self-conscious, often ironic, usually political (from a generally anarchist, if pessimistic, standpoint), and sometimes capricious or strange. Those last qualities come out more in Minute Manifestos music, which is also fast and furious, but features some ridiculous samples, funny acoustic parts, etc. The vocals are also more

reminds me of Pink Collar Jobs, which is a good thing, and they're sincere and right on as all fuck (locally relevant, globally thought-out lyrics... and, their refers to the two brother who founded Rome, one of whom killed the other and thus got to have it named after him). Pezz is also right on, playing in a similar style (with those vocals I cant handle), similarly right on — they have a song about supporting a friend going through the difficult situation of having an abortion... now thats a *real* subject to address, one few do, that touches almost all of us some time... Anyway, I endorse this record wholeheartedly, everything about it, and it's too bad I cant actually

their second one starts at a faster tempo (with the bass-snare, bass-bass-snare punk beat), it maintains the same feeling with abrasive guitar noise and gravelly vocals. — b

Per Koro, Fehrfeld 26, D-28203 Bremen, Germany

_Teenage Warning/Inflata_ble Dates — ~~split~~ — Z_s. Provided technical proficiency isn't your chief standard, Teenage Warning have some fucking awesome moments. The playing is messy, sometimes the drummer gets off beat, but there's real energy and excitement in this, its clear that polished playing and all that bullshit are not nearly as important as getting crazy

Timebomb/Redemption split CD: Timebomb play three of their songs off an old record, Hymns for a Decaying Empire, " the > V yˆnˆˆ v at got me so excite ˆ about them in ˆ.C'y;/ˆ place. At this point I'm guessing ˆ//ˆˆe played these songs a million times > /.ˆ aPˆcˆˆ *so the result is that these new, much < />/ˆ versions are totally tight (and

'ˆ ˆˆ neW gU‹tar Ieads' etc-)> but also lack a ˆyˆ?ˆ ˆˆ °ˆ tbe urgenˆcy of the original, rough ˆˆ/ˆˆ I m gˆˆg these guys wanted an , J */.-alternative to the rough older recordings of /Hl? '?ˆ favorite old songs, needed three songs so FˆˆJt> they could do a split with their friends' band, 'ˆZvˆˆ recording project to break

?f|Hˆˆ in* RedemPri°n hadn't fol

S ftˆWˆ rMr ˆeas through as far when they ˆM> forded this as when they recorded the song 'ˆ ˆ on tbe CD with this Inside Front

M&Vˆ 1 ˆink is awesome). It's still the same V' ˆˆ — double-picked metal guitars and dou- tM' bk-bask' screaming and growling from the 'V ˆrˆk VOGahst and a mix of more beautiful and 'ˆˆ -ˆˆ m◦re screamy crazy stuˆ ˆom Valentina '-ˆPˆic lyrics about the search for self — but r jAf ˆˆeritina appears less, the music isn't quite as ˆVˆyˆopstant in its energy. It has some great parts Lˆt'Xkhe whole second half of their first song is incredible, beautiful and haunting and with real energy when it all kicks in), though. In fact, it seems that I love the second half of

> each song, which is a fair bit, since all three of their songs are pretty long.
>
> Timebomb, incidentally, has radically changed their whole musical style, since this recording, in an attempt to subvert the expectations of the hardcore community, which I think is fascinating. I don't have any of new recordings of theirs yet that they would feel comfortable with me reviewing, so instead I'd like to reprint their new manifesto here:
>
> *Movin' on, growin' up... these things are always seen as negative in the hardcore punk community. But lets face it, we all grow up, which doesn't mean you have to betray everything you believe in... We've been playing together for*

eight years now and decided to change radically, no matter what people said, fuck 'em all! This is the most important aspect of our often shitty lives, it's our outlet and changing is our way of finding interest in what we are doing. Growing up we've been able to experience the joy of creation, the joy of art (our three chordfucking art) not as a product to be sold, nor as an alibi for another bourgeois elite. Now we can

do whatever we want to, we got rid of that heavy, hard- structured body we had built around ourselves, and we can move in every direction without plans — it's a wild, beautiful sensation, like running naked on the seaside or the beauty of the destruction of a society that destroys beauty. The sound of protest, smashed windows, the beauty in Juggle, the poetry in a fight.

Many labels have been attached to us through the years. We were always expected to do something, to act in a certain way, to say certain things 'cause of the image people had of us. That's the hardcore scene is reduced to sometimes: a useless set of rules and cliches. Not changing our name is a choice to prove that one can do what he wants, we are free to follow our desires — that's where the strength of a truly independent scene lies, (review by -b)

Wards, Alessandro Andreoni, Via E. Medi 14, 00149, Roma, Italy

Whisper _/Eterna Inocencia split 7":_ Wow...this is the first issue where I liked everything I got to review! *[editor's note: no… this is the first issue in which Greg has refused to review anything he didn't really like!)* This is another great record, and it comes from Argentina. Now, I apologize up front for being a speaker of English only, so I can't translate many of the lyrics and other words on this record, but I can tell that it is very politically oriented. There is a song on the Eterna Inocencia side called *"To the Barricades which has the following lyrics: "To the barricades! Argh!!!!!" which I surmise is either a rallying cry to storm said barricades, or perhaps a cry of pain after the storm of the barricades begins and the rallied has fallen into a ditch Argh...fuck...help me out of here so I can continue to storm the barricades!" I assume the former. The music on the Whisper side is like a cross of Zegota and Fugazi *[the editor, who is painfully aware that he is not making himself any friends at this point, would like to add another note: that makes as much sense as saying something is like a cross between Catharsis and the Amebix — what the fuck!]* in that it is melodic, and sung, yet powerful and intense at the same time. The Eterna Inocencia side is similar in terms of it being melodic, but the vocals are even more pronounced in the mix giving it the impression of being even more melodic. The music here is more straight forward punk/hc* but it is still great because of the feel the vocals give. The record comes in a brown paper bag look

and chunky guitars. Could it be that the four hundred and thirty six tours which 25 Ta Life have done in Europe have impacted or influenced the musicians there? Probably. I know that I was speaking in "Das" and "Ta's" for weeks after their first record came out. This CD, while it could be a little more diverse in terms of the styles represented, definitely gives a good image of the type of music being played currently in the Madrid hardcore scene. Standout tracks for me were the last song (by Lagrimas Y Rabia) which was reminiscent of Bad Religion with a little more distortion on the guitars and the Like Peter at Home track. Like Peter at Home's song was especially heavy and hard hitting with interesting vocals alternating between deep and gruff and deep and sung, and a cool set of guitar riffs. I wish I spoke Spanish though to understand the lyrics. Wait though! I almost forgot!!! The www.altavista.com text translation section!

"Decade of Djssidence: The worst of the 1 in 12 Club Volume 14/15" CD compilation: This is a collection of songs of widely disparate musical styles, recording qualities, and subject matters, mostly from the U.K. but occasionally from, say, Japan. The connecting theme is that all these bands have played at the 1 in 12 Club in Bradford, England. Seriously, there are noise collage bands here putting bagpipes over industrial samples, old British punkers covering Motorhead, women playing strange ditties about sex, guys exploring the acoustic landscapes of emo jazz, old men recit- *ng poetry, Japanese guys who want to be Conflict, Cress who want to be Crass, an articulate group of French people called Happy Anger, the usual British hardcore bands (Voorhees and Hard to Swallow and Stalingrad and Sawn Off and John Holmes) screaming and rocking. The Hard to Swallow song, their theme song, is probably my favorite on this by a good couple kilometers.

U^Y ^^ jumbled, with a shoddy photocopy quality. I know all this is supposed to be DIY and "punk rock" but this release is unnecessary and disappointing in the first place when all the music appears elsewhere and two of the bands aren't that good. I guess I should be fair and describe the bands, so here goes: GZ play brutal as fuck metalcore with sick imagery and throat shredding screams, and DMW play furious, chaotic and raw metalcore with quite possibly the most brutally sick, desperate screaming to ever come from a human throat. The two NY bands on the other side play pretty unmemorable and generic mid-tempo metalcore with the usual screams/growls. To sum up, let's try not to waste money and resources putting out unnecessary releases, and if you're interested in either of the two CT bands, just get their individual 7"s (or albums). n *Slave Union Records / 58 Grace St. / Waterford NY 12188, USA*

[Image not archived]

I will type in the lyrics to one of the songs and translate it to get the full impact. We will use Versus, whose last CD I really enjoyed and reviewed in the last Inside Front if I am remembering correctly. Their lyrics on this track according to altavista say, "They came to the world between hunger, misery and hopelessness. Their own families left them. Alone and single on the streets looking between sweepings. They shelter is pain between alcohol and poison. Even if it is not exact, I think I get the right idea. — JUG

Kilometrocero Records; apartado de correos 8578; 28080 Madrid; Spain; xloyalxQhotmail.com for more info.

The real reason for this record to exist is that it's a benefit to support the people in Kosova, who are trying to put their world back together after all the wars, witchhunts, and oppression. — b

1 in 12 records, 21–25 Albion Street, Bradford, BD1 2LY, England

_"Four Corners" com_pilation *7"*" Two great bands victimized by a pretty pointless release makes for an unhappy reviewer. This comp does no justice to CT metal heavyweights Groundzero and Die My Will by including a song from each that is previously released, and pairing them with two other bands that are rather mediocre (Sever and Dying Game Theory). To make matters worse, the layout is

_"Hardcore Reality: Colombia en Tu G_arj, _compilation CD:_ This is a compilation of Colombian hardcore bands, eight of them, twenty three songs altogether. Hardcore is relatively new in Colombia (so to have eight bands with recordings is pretty impressive), and presently all the bands are working on their own version of the kind of music that Breakdown played in New York in the late '80s: simple guitar tiffs, fast and slow parts, gruff yelling vocals, a general mosh aesthetic. The first song on the CD is excellent for this g_{enr}e — it ends with gang shouting, which evokes a crowd riot, adding the necessary adrenaline and intimidating atmosphere. There's also a part in it in which an extra four beats are added at the end of every verse, just

"Over th_e Walls of Nationalism and War"_ compila_tion 7":_ This record features seven bands, from the war-torn area of exYugoslavia, as a gesture of dialogue between people from the different struggling factions of the population there, and a declaration of unity against the divisions of nationalism and war. As such, for us Westerners, this is something much more real than we're used to, a punk record with real things at stake, not just a declaration of allegiance to some image or another. Everything here is translated into English, too, so it's possible for an uneducated U.S. punk like me to read the lyrics and explanations... I would counsel against getting this 7" just to buy a souvenir of the exotic world where anti-war songs are actually real statements, but I would encourage everyone to get this record as a way to hear a perspective about the situation in former Yugoslavia that doesn't just come from fucking network TV I remember that during the U.S. bombing, a kid from this area sent me a photograph of the damage to civilian housing U.S. bombs had caused down his street, something I never would have learned about otherwise — that's something the punk network can be really valuable for, getting your own news. The bands on here play gritty, straightforward, distorted hardcore, with the exception of the last one, Uberzeitung, who present a disconcerting noise project with someone screaming over the top: *you dont have to kill the people — you just have to kill the bastard inside you.* -b *Dusan Vejnovic, 12, V.U.B. 34, 25000 Sombor, Serbia/Yugoslavia '*

"Payoil Sq_uat Benefit" compilation 7":_ This is a benefit for a squat in Brazil, in Curitiba (I was there but didn't see it — hope it hasn't already been evicted now?). The packaging is quite classy, cardboard closed by an industrial clip, very d.i.y. and personable. The 7" itself features an international array of bands (Faulter, Diavolo Rosso, Spinebender, Wut- Entbrannt, Revoke, Seuchenherd, and...) all playing rough, tough, fast, aggressive punk, each with enough energy (sometimes a moment of originality) to distinguish itself. The Brazilian band (Difekto), from the squat itself, have an understandably rougher recording than the others, but it flatters them too. They remind me of Against, the old U.S. Discharge-style band I love so much. This is a good rough punk record, for a good cause. That's the deal. — b

Bad Influence, Stefan Fuchs, Rennweg 1, 93049 Regensburg, Germany

_PickIe Patch" C_D compilation:_ This is the sort of excellent little project that could only come out of the hardcore scene. Not just a twenty two track collection of

songs played at an apartment that had house shows for a few years, but also a bunch of essays from every-

one who loved those shows — showing how much excitement can develop from just a few kids taking themselves and their fun evenings seriously. The sound quality of the (all live) recordings is just fine, better than it is on lots of my favorite old punk records that were recorded in studios. Probably the most priceless moment is the break between the verse and the chorus in Atom and his Package's live rendition of Punk Rock Academy" when you can hear the audience laughing along with.his humor. Close behind that is Behead the Prophet No Lord Shall Live introducing their song "They Shall Not Pass": "this one's for the homophobes in the R.C.P." Right on! And after that, in third place, we have Former Members of Alfonsin spelling it all hilariously out about how dumb the absurd "unity" rhetoric of the commercialized side of the straight edge scene is. The minutes of band-crowd banter at the beginning of Submission Hold's set helps to remind the listener how wonderful it can be to be in one of those comfortable, safe, supportive environments that can be created at punk shows. Lest any of you embittered motherfuckers feel left out and isolated by all the positivity on this compilation, I'll go on record and admit that I am personally responsible for the only negative, unpleasant show that ever took place at the Pickle Patch — when Catharsis played there, we were in a bad mood, and deliberately pissed everyone off, which no one could understand at the time. And here I am singing the praises of everything they did besides that night. Goes to show how multifaceted punk is in each of us and in the whole community, I guess. — b *Dim Mak, address within your reach if you just flip a few pages*

Vision_ville hardcore: reaching out" cassette_ compilation: This is a compilation of Malaysian hardcore bands, and for a scene that has only existed about five years (according to the liner notes, at least... and that's also about the length of time since Inside Front got its first letters from Malaysia, but that doesn't really prove anything) the recordings and songs here are really incredible. Seriously, the recordings are better than many U.S. bands get for their releases. I haven't been able to get all the bands straight yet (two songs each from Chronic Mass, Another Side, Disaster Funhouse, Projekt AK, N.E.T), but there's a mix of metal (lead guitars with echo on them, screaming vocals) with more traditional hardcore approaches here (yelling vocals, more speedy rhythms)... perhaps think an updated, more metal version of the "New York Hardcore: The Way It Is" compilation, if any of you remember that at all. Maybe not. Lots of guitar solos, but (dirty secret here!) I'm a sucker for those. One band, Projekt AK, are doing a sort of funk/hardcore thing with the spotlight on hip hop vocals, but it sounds less

stupid and insincere than this style does when done by Western bands. I'm really interested to hear what will come from the Malaysian hardcore community next, now that it's clear the bands there are sure enough of themselves to do interesting things. — b

As It Is, Mohd. Azmi, P.O. Box 50808, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

DEMOS

1125 *"Plonie Mi Serce"* demo: I love this tape! It was sent to me by my friend Kasia in Poland after I asked her to let me know about good Polish bands (I love Poland and want to go back there someday — anyone have names or addresses of people to stay with over there?). This tape has it all, and I can only describe it this way: imagine if five guys decided to form a blast beat punk band with political/personal lyrics and

guage, then feel free to send me a stamped envelope and I will copy the translations for you. You will need them for sure. A ftin thing for nonPolish-speaking people to do with this tape is the following: put the tape on and try to read along with the lyrics anyway. Think of that as a special bonus. One thing I thought about while reviewing this tape (and I listened to it four times all the way through right off the bat!) is that most people in the US will probably never hear it simply because of the USA-centric nature of punk and hardcore. Many of us recognize that great bands from overseas rarely get heard as much as American bands. So, to counteract that, try this

The email address in the tape is no

[king but I did find a distro in Poland 1125 releases and other Polish bands

as well. Check out `http://www.shingrecords.com` for more info, or try their label, whose address follows here. -JUG ;

Pasazer Records; PO. Box 42; 39–201 Debica 3, POLAND

cliche old school rehashing, but even after the pleasant surprise, this is awesome in its own right. A great start for a promising band, and DIY points abound for the home taping job with scratched off labels. — n

Uprising Tapes / PO box 1903 / 581 18 Linkoping, Sweden

Discarga demo: Fast beats, pick slides, faster beats, snare drum rolls, blast beats, guitar starts playing another three chord riff, back to fast beats, yelling vocals all the way through, with backing vocals — just fine recording and production, and the sense of immediacy to make this matter. Well, that's the first five songs, which are also on the "Play Fast or Die CD my Brazilian friends released but didn't send us in time for review. The last three are similar musically, but are more muffled production-wise and feature the deep-growl-and- high-yoyvl traditional grindcore vocals. Those are their older songs, and the music is just as good, though the vocals lack a bit. Classy,

wrote a 17 song tape while listening to old school NYHC and early So-Cal straight edge the entire time. Fuck...it rules! It has the speed and intensity of punk rock throughout every song, with the rage of early NYHC (Side By Side / Alone in a Crowd), the energy of the So-Cal bands and finally the production of the newer generation of heavy bands. It sounds great. The result of all these influences is a tape that breaks through my expectations continuously by drawing on _all_ of the above influences while not relying on any one for too long. Highly recommended! The layout is a seven-fold glossy insert printed on heavy cardstock with full lyrics. The lyrics are in Polish, but the good news is that Kasia translated them into English for me, so if you a moron like me and only speak one lan-

Dead End s/t demo tape 19991 This truly is "old school" at its best! Seven songs of fast, energetic and lively music in that older style of hardcore, with energetic yelled/screamed vocals, and gang backups in all the right places. Not since Trial has "old school sounded so new, vibrant, important, and of course, posi. All of the lyrics address important topics such as consumerism, non-conformity, social mores, and personal growth in such an intelligent and uplifting, yet down-to-earth way. The photocopied inserts make a great political statement in a fun way with three silhouetted traffic-sign type figures doing the see no evil, speak no evil, hear no evil' motions. I think one of the reasons I'm so impressed by this is that I was expecting yet another boring and

original d.i.y. cardboard packaging. — b *Douglas, R. Catequese 1787, Centro, Santo $A_n d_{re}$ _ CEP 09090401, Sao Paulo Brazil*

Entreat demo; This demo has moments of sad beauty; at other times, when the vocalist is moaning rather than doing the yell/growl/mumble he seems to have perfected, it seems a little weak, unconfident... and then still other times, it just sounds like common '90s hardcore to me, with the metal guitar sound, acoustic parts, mid-pace, decent recording and writing but nothing spectacular. Then I read the lyrics, and they take me back to the sad beauty — they are suffused with poetry, longing, tragedy, and they re written with the skill it takes to capture such

things. When I return from the lyric sheet to the music, it has the sad beauty again too, for all its clumsy moments. Tighten everything ^{U}P» ?^{u}y^{s}' and record again. Its clear you're capable of something powerfully moving and emotional. — b

Valter Cijan, Gradnikove b. 49, 5000 Nova Gorica, Slovenija

Evoke ^We Stole Four. Minutes From Your Life' demo: As far as I can tell, this project was put together just for my own listening pleasure as the Inside Front guy reviewing this. Its not mass-produced, the whole insert is written out by hand, no songs were written (the kids just got together and expressed themselves immediately, in an unplanned improvisation), the whole thing is just a one-

cations, the thematic statement and whether it's regressive or not (etc. etc. etc. etc.!) — but when young Belgian hardcore kids do it on a whim, it feels so free and fresh and real, fucking awesome. Don't order this — make your own, and give it to a friend for her birthday or something. Or send it to HeartattaCk, demanding that they interview you. — b *Push the Limit, Kevin Alen, A. Vermeylenstr. 3, 3920 Lommel, Belgium*

The Great Clearing Off CDR demo: This is a triumph of d.i.y. in every sense: a CD in a lovely eco-friendly case, with a twenty-four page booklet of fine-print lyrics and explanations culminating in a reading list and a brilliant schematic drawing of the life of the questioning young man by a band member, all for

to revolutionize the 7" format next! — b • *290 Chestnut Street, Hammonton, NHJ 08037*

In The Red "" Demo: The recording on this is shit, but in my book that's ok for a demo. I'm guessing it was recorded live in a garage or similar atmosphere, and it's ok because we all don't have the same resources to produce a good recording. Here

are five dynamic songs hinting at Born Against with fiery guitars, a full bass sound (probably the best sounding instrument, surprisingly), good drums, and great vocals that I like. The tempo changes quite a bit without the music getting shaky, making me picture an In The Red performance as a beautiful blur of skin, hair, and smooth fucking fury. The packaging is interesting: a homemade metal tape case with stenciled spray-paint, and stuffed

[Image not archived]

off project with a projected audience of about three — right on! The volume on the tape is so low it's hard to make it out, which is too bad, but the music isn't actually as pointless as you'd think — the vocalists are screaming so hard you're scared for their safety, and the band does some interesting chaotic things. Of course the recording isn't great (this was done on a boom box, remember), and there are no lyrics, but seriously, I'm thrilled to have received this. It's numbered for collector nerds ("1 of... 1"!) and at the end of the liner notes there's a plea for me to send it on to another 'zine for review once I'm done with it. This is the kind of thing that, when people from bands like Text or Countdown to Putsch do it, all the 'zine journalists make a big pretentious deal about the artistic innovations and impli-

between $1 and $3 (sliding scale!) at the show we played with them earlier this week. You can't expect the music to be totally polished, since this is in fact a demo, but it doesn't disappoint, either — though the guitars have a sort of thin, strange sound, the riffs often stray from the expected punk chords, and thought the vocals aren't totally confident they come off as very much for real. There's plenty of the discomfort and excitement of a fresh band here, touching and moving as it can be. All the things they're thinking about (passionate, anarchist/punk rock ethics, confronting all the assembled stupidities of our times) are fucking right on, they make them more clear than any other band releasing a demo since, say, Gocce nel Mare, and there's nothing left to ask for here — except to see what they'll do

inside is an insert along with the tape. The insert includes lyrics that could be interpreted in countless ways and are hard for me to understand, hence the songs have less meaning than their possible potential. Having songs that mean different things to different people is great (and inevitable), for many reasons, but sometimes the original message within is obscured or scattered. Explanations for us lightweights are sometimes a worthy gesture (what are you folks about?). Oh, and this demo is $2 ppd. — WG *In The Ped; PO Box 11046; PDX, OR, 97211; 503.528.0340.*

The Insecurity Camera demo; Strange combination of samples from the old punk movie Another State of Mind with a live recording... the vocalist sometimes sounds like Jello Biafta when

he speaks, but he spends more time shrieking and screeching and grunting, he's outta fuckin' control. The music follows his lead, cacophonous, spasmodic, jerking and smashing like a machine breaking down. Squealing feedback just adds to it all. From the lyrics, I deduce that these guys probably believe in some of the same basic things I do, but find more pleasure in ranting insanely: "Never too late to keep an eye on the

bullshit! Still want you to go play in traffic!! or, , in a particularly articulate moment, If you feel like shit, you're not alone — forced routine, endless drone, arghaharahhh!" Alright, the deal is, they need to polish up (yes they do!), but the energy is all here, in excess, ready to be used, and they could be capable of great things in the same sense that the Kid Karate are. -b

Justin, 1222 N University, Peoria, IL 61606

old hardcore formats). The lyrics lie somewhere between Nietzsche, Dante, and early Carcass. My only complaint — sometimes the recording is a little fuzzy, with so much going on at once. The solution? This should be on CD, obviously. — b

Eric Boog, Oderstrasse 7, D-41363 Hochneukirch, Germany

_Tet Offensive "The Revo_lution Begins Now" _demo:_ Maybe it's just the associations of the band name, but I'm reminded of the atmosphere of gathering danger and darkness that made the Dead Kennedys "Holiday in Cambodia" one of their best songs. The singer has one of those growly voices that usually sound fake, but in his case he sounds crazy and reckless enough for it to be persuasive.

and more jazzy breaks, and it's hard to really tell what's going on, but its not bad stuff, there's some energy there. At Bay is a little better recorded, still messy though, with distorted yelling vocals, fast and simple hardcore punk music, and if not lyrics... two little explanations. The first is about Globalization (the World Trade Organization, the LM.E, the World Bank), and the second about being willing to go all out, no holding back. — b 2480 Winding Road, Hatboro, PA 129040

[Image not archived]

Nirdezneb demo: This a combination of electronic and live music, with lots of samples for aural texture and vocal effects — definitely the sort of project we need to see more of in our community to keep challenging ourselves and doing new, dangerous things with our art. It begins with an impossible blastbeat, like a locomotive at a thousand kilometers an hour (they *are* German, you know), or a video of factory machinery played at fast forward speed, then goes into some Slayer-harmony parts that sound truly evil and terrifying. It took me a couple minutes to get into this (or did it take them a couple minutes to get going?), but once I was into it, I was persuaded — this is awesome, and there s so very much potential to do new things here (and consequently give new ideas to those working in the

The lyrics are not dumb at all, they betray some right on class consciousness and deal with such important subjects as the way the education system is designed to grind out cultural differences among students. The first song is the best, by far — it has a spooky old- fashioned metal drama that works perfectly in rhe punk context, and helps them to create a classic, memorable song unique unto itself. And for a four track recording, this is surprisingly powerful, though the guitars are typically too low. — b

PO. Box 7DDD, Jersey City, NJ 07307

R5/At Bay split cassette: No lyrics for the R5 side, which is recorded live (and with some compression problems!)... they divide their time between fast, screaming hardcore stuff

CrimethInc. Special Report

[Image not archived]

The singer of an unamed band poses at Gilman street for publicity photot to show how punk and hardcore his band is... (more info on page 137)

MAGAZINES

_A_g_ua #3:_ This Brazilian 'zine (in Portuguese) made me feel so good! It has pieces by different people (and in different handwritings, sometimes) scattered throughout so that it feels more like a conversation than like a group of colum- (nists whose personalities and opinions are already pre-approved by those putting the 'zine together. Major themes include always questioning and struggling against our human tendency to simplify and prejudge; how to create new ways for us interact; and a basic and uncomplicated, but still invigorating, feminism. It occurs to me that these themes overlap pretty frequently and are sometimes even indistinguishable one from another, and that it is perhaps unnecessary, for example, for me to emphasize the feminism, when it springs directly, and naturally, from questioning and struggling against patriarchal values (a simplified system of human interactions if there ever was one) already in place, and attempting to construct new social and political patterns: except that the 'zine itself is definitely from a female perspective, with some writing on beauty standards, gender roles, and feeling confident and strong as a woman, even though it often seems '* V* 4. ^e women are supposed to feel that their gender 1 is a major disability, and are trained to live as if . * they were fundamentally handicapped. The'zine * < also features a very interesting interview with a * "7 Liberation Theology priest (a I^tin American .. s tributary of Catholicism, none too popular with the Pope, that split off in ±e 1970s, positing , •> J. , Jesus as the Liberator" of the poor and , ^ oppressed, interpreting Christian thinking from a * ;y* working-class (and frequently Marxist) point of 4^ view). Although his brand of Christianity is | much more palatable to me than most, with its emphasis on social justice, and solutions for issues that are all too frequently only moral ones for the Church (like abortion) that address causes rooted in social and economic circumstance, not just in the sins of the individual, he still can't manage to persuade me that there is any reason to rely on divine forces to guide human life. Nevertheless, die interview itself is thought-provoking and thorough. In addition there is a pair of descriptions of visits to a women's prison; a vaguely complaining essay about die State of Emo (mainly lamenting die stagnation that eventually plagues any genre), which concludes pretty weakly that for the author, "emo" music is anything that evokes an emotional response, including anything from Spitboy to the Get Up Kids(') ; and some poetry and more personal writing. That's not all, of course, but I will resist the sudden impulse to give a table of contents. My favorite thing in a 'zine ftill of great stuff is a beau- tiftil description of how to exorcise

the phantom of a love relationship that has ended in disaster and pain. I guess I should warn you that this 'zine is in Portuguese before you all rush out and

buy it, but maybe you should, anyway. — @ *Agua, a/c Carol, rua Simao Alvarez 745/111, Sao Paulo SP cep 05417 000, Brazil*

As It Stands #2: Introductory 'zine with a variety of articles and a generally political theme. The subjects include body image and the beauty industry, an exposition of the negative things P.E.T.A. has done, what the editor finds appealing about gangster rap, a Reclaim the City! event in Sweden that ended in police brutality x and an outraged response from mainstream society, all the bad things about smoking (and — how to quit). There's also an excellent Trial interview (I think it was hard to do one that wasn't!), a piece written by a young man whose brother was slain in a car accident, and an interview with an animal rights activist (which is not dry by any means), a review of Daniel Quinn's *Ishmael, * and various other smaller pieces, -b

Mark Osmond, 8364 Washburn, MI 48438

Book of Letters #12: This is where it's at, fucking hilarious! A collection of provocative/stu- pid/absurd letters to various corporations, and their responses (when they do respond). Example — he writes to Coca-Cola about the return of "Coke Classic" after the public uproar, asking whether they will bring the old Coke with cocaine in it back (as the *real*

Coke Classic") if drug laws ever change. They don't respond. He writes to Dunkin Donuts about the distinction between "garden vegetables" and factory farmed vegetables (in some product they manufacture) and gets a hilarious confession back from the CEO, who admits flippantly to factory farming. I'm a little saddened he didn't get more coupons for his efforts (he only gets a couple dollars worth of free potato chips), but I've known others to get up to hundreds of dollars of free products from writing angry or beseeching letters to manufacturers. — b

PO. Box 890, Allston, MA 02134

Catalyst #1: This looks at first like a typical first issue cut-and-paste (and-sometimes-illeg- iblc) 'zine with personal perspectives on love, fragmentary reprints of eco-positive living, little essays on why feminism is right on, lists of things to be happy about and vegan restaurants the author enjoys, reviews of political/personal 'zines and one record (fancy that, it's Submission Hold)... but there are little, unexpected gems hidden inside too: a reprint from a Tchkung! ad on how to make a molotov cocktail, information on what to say when the F.B.I. shows up, a little manifesto written upon returning from a lockdown in N.Y.C. about refusing to let life be less than a war for joy. Yes. — b

Catalyst, PO. Box 381855, Cambridge, MA 02238 '

Deformacion Cultural #2/#3: Para hablar francamente, este no es un 'zineˆuy interesante. Hay columnas (mejores en el tercer numero — en pane porque hay menos tratando el tema de la gente excesivamente politicamente correcta), entrevistas, y mediocres comentarios de discos. En el #2, tambien hay una ficcion corta. En el #3, solamente una de las entrevistas ftie hecha cara a cara; la entrevista con Indecision

viajd por correo electrdnico, y la con Distancia la pregun- taron mientras charlando en el Internet. Las dos ilustran muy bien las limitaciones de esos meto- dos de hacer una entrevista. Queda casi imposi- ble expresarse precisamente o aclarar las ideas. Las columnas son sobre temas como el con- formismo, el fascismo, el capitalismo, el nacional- ismo... y el straight edge. Nada nuevo aquf. Los que Io hacen parecen ser sinceros e inteligentes — y jovenes. Quizas necesitan pensar un poco mas cual es su enfoque, y como puedan hacer que Deformacion Cultural se distingue de todos los otros... —

@*Deformacidn Cultural, Casilla Postal 1424 (clOOOwao), Buenos Aires, Argentina*

Deformation Cultural #4: This just arrived on the final day of the third and final attempt to finish these reviews once and for all, with a demand that it be reviewed, so it wins the prize as the absolute last Inside Front review ever. Unfortunately, we're going out with a whimper, for my Spanish is atrocious. Let's just say there are lengthy interviews with Decameron (from Buenos Aires) and Catharsis, an interview with Sol Perpetuo (also from Argentina — from the interview I pick up that they don't like One Life Crew, and that they apparently play a cover of Project X's "Dance Floor Justice"), two pages of fine print 'zine and record reviews (including a rave review of a Point of No Return tape, and a review of a Victory release that begins "Seeeeeeeee melodic sucker pride!!!"), a full twenty MRR-style columns, and a couple letters to the editor. I wish it was easier for me to read this, for my impression is that I would get a good feel for what's going on in the Argentinian hardcore community here — this is no messy little 'zine, it's thorough and well- crafted. For those of you who speak Spanish and want to keep up with Latin American punk and hardcore, this would be a good first step. — b

Still the same address as above...

Evil #2: Many many interviews. Some reviews. Sort of the opposite of Inside Front these days. The band interviews rarely ask anything really challenging, but most of the bands interviewed (At the Drive-In, Orchid, Don Caballero — fuck, you don't really want me to list all 15 of them, ' do you?) are intelligent and well-spoken enough to carry the interviews. The Rubbish Heap interview stands out from the rest: instead of asking, for

[Image not archived]

example, When did Rubbish Heap form and who was in the band?, a question sure to inspire a boring list of line-up changes, the interviewer asks, When did Rubbish Heap form, and what were your intentions and the context that led to its formation? Also very interesting are the interview with performance artist Jean-Louis Costes, and an essay on film- maker/writer/musician EJ. Ossang. As for the reviews, the review of The Paper #2 begins, "What can I say about The Paper? The first diet zine?, " enough to put me on their team for the rest of my reading. The quirkiest feature has got to be the gallery of pig drawings, most of them absolutely revolting. Maybe next issue they'll have a collection of drawings of butterflies: perhaps that will cut down on the gratuitous gore. It is lengthy, and it is in very small type, but it's not a bad 'zine.

You might even like it. I just wish I had a better idea of who the writers are and where they're coming from. In French. —

@*Evil, PO Box 5117, CH-1211 Geneva 11, Switzerland*

_EB.L #3:_ For a third issue, this is incredible, especially considering how far it's come already. It took Inside Front about nine issues to cover the same distance. It begins perfectly with a two page exposition of their goals and the myths they hope to dispel, which is as lucid and intelligent as anyone could ask for. A list of demands follows, in the CrimethInc. tradition of propaganda, and then a series of essays: the value of 'zines, the media coverage of the W.T.O. protests, healthy vegan diets and fasting, conspiracy theories about A.I.D.S., some discussion of learning of how to share the earth and build community, some news from Australia, and more fragmentary little pieces. There aren't many reviews, but they're all written in the thorough way that I like to see them done. No band interviews... come on, bands, get your shit together and get *interesting* if you want 'zinesters talking to you. It's illustrated throughout with photo collages and challenging captions. The essays vary a little in quality and interest, but altogether this is good in the same way Hodgepodge is, and I expect the next issue to be essential. It ends with editor Nick's recounting of the possibilities he sees in the new wave of activism, and as in the introduction the writing is as direct and persuasive as the very best I've seen. — b

15.

<quote> *West Dayton Hill Road, Wallingford, CT 06492*

> _Fuck You Bearden!:_ Named for the asshole judge who put author Rob Thaxton in prison for seven years after he hit a police officer with a rock during Eugene's June 18th Reclaim the Streets event. Rob introduces himself with commendable honesty here, and goes on to write about daily life in prison and the events

every aspect... I remember thinking when I received this that there was one little objection to Christian self-contradiction missing (I've done a lot of historical study of early Christianity, I'm fascinated by the subject), but now I can't remember for the life of me what it could have been. Author Robin Banks doesn't hold back anywhere, even going so far as to accuse Jesus of poor botany ("...in so- and-so verses, he says the mustard seed is the smallest seed in the world. It's not. '). The only drawback of this pamphlet is that its usevalue is limited: for hardened Christians or atheists, responses will be totally predictable ("yup" ...or "you're going to Hell"!"), and for those trying to figure out where they stand, it lays all the facts on the table without being gentle enough to win the trust of any potential recovering Christians. We need more little books like this from our community, for sure: how about the hardcore/punk guide to police, to gardening, to yoga... — b

Robin Banks, RO. Box 4964, Louisville, KY 40204–0964

Hazlo Tii Mismo #8: Este 'zine argentino contiene algunos cornentarios de discos bas- tante breves, pero lo bueno de esos es que la

mayoria de los discos son o latinoamericanos o de otro parte del mundo que no son los EE.UU., lo cual significa que, aunque los cornentarios en si no son muy titiles con ref- erencia a los discos descritos, ayudan para indicar que pasa en el resto del mundo hardcore. Una entrevista con Bread and Circuits (traducida de tin 'zine estadounidense) es muy interestante, y tambien una con los franceses Flagrants Deli, quienes utilizan unas pregun- tas sencillas para explorar los detalles de sus pensamientos sobre la politica francesa con- temporanea, la mejor banda anarcopunk de todos los tiempos Qes que hay alguna duda?), y "un poco de tus ideas en este momento, " una pregunta que recibe una explicacion de una pagina hablando de la superpoblacidn, el mundo virtual, la ecologia, la epidemiologfa, y el poder de la contracultura de iniciar cambios sociales. Hay entrevistas tambien con Mofa, JFA (los de HTM admiten que no es la mejor que hayan hecho), Promise Ring, y Todd de Old Glory Records. Lo que he notado mds de

la escena argentina (por leer unos 'zines aqui en los EE.UU.) son las divisiones entre las dis- tintas facetas de la communidad, y esas se yen en este 'zine, tambien. Sale una prueba del nivel de la Punkitud que uno demuestra (con una intencion irdnica, estoy segura, pero sin embargo esas clasificaciones (200–300 puntos: "Escuchastes Nofx, sabeS que es Epitaph, pero ni puta de ida quienes eran Black Flag" [todos *sic]*... ^esto porque no tengo zapatillas Vans old school, ni uso la billetera encadenada?) me hacen muy incomoda. Hay una presentacion de c6mo hacer un disco, de la masterizacidn a la distribucion a las cuestiones legales de impuestos, etc. No tengo ni idea cuan util sea, pero mi poca comprensidn de la grabacidn, etc., no me ha ensenado, como dice el autor, que "masterizar sirve para meter efectos...o sirve para levantar el volumen, nada mas." *Caveat emptor.* Las columnas incluyen una receta para lasagna y una comparacidn de los lugares que venden falafel [en Buenos Aires?], el feminismo, "la melancolia urbana, " un concierto de Offspring, y el punk de los ochenta. Es la seccioft mas personal del 'zine, y la menos coherente. Con frecuencia me parecen las columnas descuidadosamente escritas o un poco desorganizadas. Sin embargo, lo que me molesta mas de Hazlo Tu Mismo (aqui habla la persona perfeccionista que me invade cuando leo cualquier texto) es que utilizan los accentos caprichosamente. Lo peor es que no los niegan a usar por comple- to, sino que los usan, a veces, por razones indiscernibles. En general, interesante. — @ *Hazlo Tu Mismo, CC 2J3 sue 12 (B), CP 1412 Buenos Aires, Argentina*

Hodgepodge #& This is a good companion piece to Rumpshaker, if you're looking for an excellent hardcore music/life/politics journalism Vine... it even has some of the same characteristics: dumb name, high quality writing, intelligence, (maybe a little less) personality, glossy perfectionist layout and presentation — and something Rumpshaker doesn't have: in-depth political/economic analysis. The columns are as spotty as columns generally are (I mean, seriously, with the exception of '80s M.R.R., columns sections suck — get a bunch of supposedly "good writers" together, have them each write some random, self-indulgent fragment on no particular subject, what do you expect)... Scott Beibin's typically extravagant piece on punk rock film-making and Eric

Boehme's classic Boehme exposition of the class dynamics of the service industry are the highlights, while the low point is a poorly written, tediously ignorant and immature (and vaguely sexist) column by a kid who tells us about how the Initial Records Krazy Fest fuckin' rocked, dude. The columns are just a little atavistic fragment at the beginning of the 'zine, however: the bulk of it is made up of informative essays (a much-needed exploration of genetic engineering fleshed out by an

interview with an activist about biotechnology, pieces on the Multilateral Agreement on Investment and the World Trade Organization complemented by a report from the streets of Seattle the week we shut the WTO. meeting down, a piece about our ecologically destructive civilization followed by an interview in which Daniel Quinn turns out to be a little less radical than I'd like him to be... and an awesome piece about toxin levels in tampons) and competent band interviews (Rainer Maria, the Dismemberment Plan, Catharsis), with book, zine, and record reviews (all decent) at the end. Really, this is a lot more like Slave than Rumpshaker, in terms of the educational/infor- mational side of things, but it would complement both 'zines perfectly, none would be complete without the others for good reading. — b *Mike Schade, 983 Little Neck Avenue, N.*

Bellmore, NY 11710

I Hate the World #5: Much like Inside Front, this 'zine evolved dramatically along with the editor's own discovery of himself, partly aided by the experience of doing the 'zine... also like Inside Front, he's ending the 'zine now, to keep himself fresh and fluid for new challenges. The strongest point of I.H.W. is the way Andreas' personality comes across in it, which makes reading this feel like a personal interaction: the conversation wanders from sexuality to childhood experiences and fears to the way the school system in Sweden creates and reinforces economic hierarchy. Andreas comes across as extremely sensitive, intelligent, and insecure, all at once, as he reexamines whether friends should be afraid to kiss, explains why he feels uncomfortable about his body, recounts (somewhat mysteriously) stories from his own life, leaving out crucial contextual details sometimes. I do want to take issue with some things he says about rape — he seems to consider it a result of men not curbing their sexual desire, whereas I think rape has little to do with sexual desire... yes, our desires have been connected to the power dynamics of our struggle for domination over each other, so lust is often indistinguishable from the urge to do violence, but rape is something that happens not as a result of untrammeled sexual desire but rather as an act of pure violence dressed only in the trappings of sex. One is not capable of rape because of one's sexuality as a man so much because of the violent conditioning of this society. Anyway, you can spend quite a bit of time mentally going back and forth about various issues addressed in this zine, that's probably its chief practical virtue. — b *Andreas Hagberg, Fjardingsmannavagen 15, 643 32 Vingaker, Sweden*

Imagine #1: This is really excellent — it's an anarchist 'zine that makes anarchist thinking feel accessible and relevant to everyone. It's totally lucid, top notch writing, covering a

variety of subjects in a great deal of depth. The cover has a Leo Tolstoy quote (his contribution to anarchism was drastically underreported, since the literary establishment wanted to make use of him), the inside cover a Refused lyric, to give you an idea of the cultural span of the author — and the quotes continue throughout. Let's go through the contents: a letters section (including intelligent debate about anarchists voting, and how violence and anti-social actions would be dealt with in a non-authoritarian society), matching "Readers Digest" news sections with sickening reprints straight from the mouth of the Associated Press, who you think would keep quieter about this stuff ("Life in these United States" covers the abuse and misfortunes of average civilians, "Humor in Uniform" concentrates on police brutality), a hilarious Cometbus reprint- about romance with a radical, reprints on police violence by Mumia Abu- Jamal and Fred Woodworth (editor of *the Match!), * absurd news from the murderous meat/dairy industry, a couple vegan cooking tips, a well-balanced consideration of Noam Chomsky ("anarchist, or traitor?" asks the writer, who concludes that the answer is "neither.")... It ends with a superb reviews section, which covers everything from current similar zines to a novel by Ursula LeGuin, another famous author little known for her anarchism. Anyway, for the Inside Front reader seeking a good anarchist periodical, I'd have to recommend this even before/* Journal of Desire Armed *or the other better known ones: it's more inclusive, more well-balanced, more personable. — b* PO. Box 8145, Reno, NV89507

Interwencja #1: What makes it most difficult to review this zine, actually, is not that it's in Polish, but, instead, that I keep trying to guess what it might be saying, based on little that has anything to do with Eastern European languages. What I have gathered from my experiment in language immersion, as much as it is possible while sitting on my sofa in North Carolina, is first of all that it's going to be a struggle for me to learn Polish, and second of all a fragmentary list of Interwencja's contents, if you aren't persuaded by its cute name alone... It includes a Catharsis interview, an essay on Chechnya, one on the Chiapas Media Project, a show review (25 Ta Life with Counterweight and Schizma), and some pretty long record reviews. I take their length to be an indication of quality, in that the writer seems to be putting some care into his writing. Several of the reviews are of records that came out a while back, probably a reflection of the availability of most hardcore records in Poland. There's more in here that I can't identify but if any of this sounds interesting, consider dropping Marcin a line. The only bit of English in here makes it clear that he'd love to be in touch... — @ *Marcin Kopczynski, Chabrowa 12a/15, 44–200 Rybnik 15, Poland*

Kill For Love #1 (full size, photocopied, 52 pp.): This is really fucking good for a first issue, it seems the editor and cohorts either have had experience with this in the past or have done a lot of observing of other good zines before doing their own. I guess you could describe KFL as a typical political hardcore fanzine, complete with band interviews, sexy band action photos, columns, ads, and record reviews. The bands interviewed are all awesome (Catharsis, Shai Hulud, Redemption, Extinction, Mainstrike), and the questions were well thought out, which made for some interesting

conversations, the most intriguing of which I thought was with Catharsis. The reviews are informative and . overall, very positive and helpful. There is one column in here dealing with homosexuality within the hardcore scene that absolutely floored me with its intense urgency, emotion and sincerity, and I think it was the single most important and attention-deserving thing

ly be one of the very best, because it's already excellent. — n

Simone Marini / via R Battistini 32 / ool51> Roma, Italy

Mayhap *#7:* This was written just after the W.T.O. meeting was shut down by the Seattle protests, and the back cover reads "Seattle '99 All the Time." It begins with an excellent participant's account, and proceeds to address the question of where coercion and conflict come from in the first place — it's compelling and serious writing, if conversational in tone. A reading list follows, then a piece about how to delegitimize authority, hitchhiking stories, more front-porch-style analysis of how to make all this political/interpersonal stuff work... it's a great mix, and makes for a great read. If you're not overwhelmed already with zines talking about protests, youth gone wild on adventures and anarchist dreams, people being arrested and beaten and sentenced to

tough guy hardcore). There is a four way interview with Greg Bennick (Trial), Dave (Retrogression), Ian (Equal Vision records businessman, with whom I've had one particularly bad experience), and myself... I think Greg, Dave and I all balance each other out really well, giving different perspectives on the same basic approach, while Ian just says the kind of ridiculous stuff that any cold-blooded entrepreneur in radical company would feel pressured to (he claims anarchy won't work, takes the same standard in favor of the "independent" music industry that Victory records did a few years back, etc.). But anyway — this is quite a good read, and my only complaint is it isn't longer. More content would fill out the ideas and approach. — b

RO. Box 4248, Springfield, MA 01101

On the Bank of the Tumid River #2: Hardcore journalism 'zine akin to Hodgepodge or Slave, but with more of a split

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that I’ve seen in a zine in a while. Visually, this is also an excellent start, with crisp, clean page layouts and fairly large font sizes (a relief to punk eyes used to tiny print). On the other hand, I think there needs to be more original artwork combined with less emphasis on band photos, which as we all know, can lead to scene hierarchy and rockstar-ism. I think my only other criticisms are for them to not put ads in the middle of any of the writings, interviews, etc, as it is distracting and breaks up the flow of reading unnecessarily, and to keep pushing the boundaries of creativity and innovation in writing style, content, and graphic design (perhaps less band interviews, or interviews with people not in bands or even involved in hardcore). If this zine keeps itself out of the ruts and traps of indy publications and self-referential youth-culture, it will sure-

ycars in prison, what the next step to a world without authority could be, then you should get one of these to read... sure, there’s talk about “dismantling the Power Machine” at one point when the editor gets carried away, but for the most part (the very most part) the writing is down to earth and real. — b

RO. Box 5841, Eugene, OR 97405

Message From the Homeland #5: Consider this a relative of F.B.I. ‘zine. It deals with the basic issues of being human in an inhumane world (there’s a particularly touching column early on about Dave’s encounter with a homeless man, which drives this point home), the struggle against capitalism and racism, from a sort of New England hardcore kid perspective (witness the atavistic music reviews at the end, which are well written but reveal a taste for

personality. It starts out with a columns section which is something of an improvement on the usual awful columns section: it has a theme (immortality), and is wisely understated as a section (unlike many columns sections in ‘zines, which announce themselves with great fanfare — only to be wandering and dull). There’s a rock-journalist-

style interview with Godbelow (the not-tough guy tough guys?), an interview with Cave In that was what I expected it to be, then interviews with the Hope Conspiracy, Agoraphobic Nosebleed, Kill the Slavemaster (sadly illegible), Elliott, MC Wildcat... The high points for me are Ted Kaczynski's parable (not the best short story ever, but seriously, the guy has the record to back up his ideas with), a very technical piece on Cryogenics and Nanotechnology, and the account of the April

16. protest in Washington, D.C., which was quite well done... you may have already read your fill of those activist's reports by now, though, I fear. The layouts are occasionally difficult to read (when the tiny white letters are drowning in a sea of black ink, going under for the last time), and the pages of ads bug me (although we can hardly blame the 'zinesters for that necessity — can we?). At the end are some reviews of decent depth, which I wanted to like... but it was hard for me when I read one band being negatively compared to "an ugly girl with a crush on you." Come on, what the fuck — that shit is totally un-called for. Strange combination here of smart political stuff and generic hardcore market coverage... I expect it to go one way or the other in the future, probably towards the former. — b *17 Sparkhall Avenue, Toronto, ON, M4K1G4 Canada*

Personality Liberation Front #3; This is one of the very last things to be reviewed, so you can imagine my head's not too clear right now... but this is a good 'zine, so it has to get mentioned, at least. It's something like an Australian Synthesis: half size, thick with fine print, lots of discussion of gender roles, how to break out of them, and how to break out of the trap of only talking about those issues, also some writing on other subjects (which companies to boycott over union-busting, how to be open about one's emotions, etc.), interviews with Arm's Reach and Knuckledust, quality reviews of zines and records, even some fun stuff — a photo gallery of mullet haircuts in the punk rock world. — b

TO. Box 3023, South Brisbane BC, Qld 4101, Australia

Rainciyy #3; Newsprint zine covering goings- on in Malaysia, which has a large and active hardcore scene. There's an interview with Carburetor Dung, one of the longest-lived bands in the scene, and another with Toxin 99%, as well as record reviews, columns and scene reports of what is going on in various regions, and plenty more writing about local and general issues affecting the hardcore community. It gave me a window into a totally different, distant part of the hardcore world. — b *Zahid, 137, Lorong 19, Taman Sri Kota 2, 34000 Taiping, Perak, West Malaysia*

Red Devil #11: This is a big 'zine with a lot of content, all sort of disconnected and lacking cohesion, but more interesting than many because it comes from a perspective still generally unheard in the international hardcore scene. The contents include a letters section, columns (which range from philosophical argumentation to... a discussion about how Clinton needs to act responsible, so as to affirm the power of the U.S. as the world's single remaining superpower, and thus to bring

"order to the world" — what the fuck? proimperialist sympathies in a Singapore zine?), an extensive interview with Sean (former front-man of Vegan Reich), who is now in his latest incarnation as a Muslim (this interview was interesting, since Islam is an "exotic" thing here in Sean's country, but more common in editor Abdul's), interviews with Stalingrad and Radical Noise (the latter being a hardcore band from Turkey!), information (reprinted?) on the plight of East Timor, a number of pages of reviews, and various smaller fragments and opinions and emo sharing. I do get a really good vibe from the editor, he seems totally sincere and positive, and that matters a lot. — b

Abdul Khalid, Blk. 321 #04-287, Sembawang Close, Singapore 750321

Reskator #2: Written, at length, in Czech. The only comment I can make about the Czech language used here is that it doesn't seem to be infected with hardcore disease, in

[Image not archived]

which every other word is in English, like an ad in Spanish I saw once that advertised "17 mosh hits!" The editors have put together a 'zine with a letters section (long letters with apparently thorough responses; the themes seem to be Downcast and vegetarianism, perhaps in response to a previous issue?), several interviews (an impressively long one with Lumen, and others with Culture, Kevorkian, and Gnu), and reviews. It looks like it's all really well-done. Sometimes it seems like the 'zine is mostly an excuse to publish an immense number of band photos, as there are scads of them everywhere — especially, of course, in the two page spread on the Vort'n Vis Festival, of everyone from Fugazi to Pray Silent to Saturn's Flea Colar *[sic!!].* But I get the feeling that if I could read what it all says, I might be very impressed. There is nothing resembling a column or article, however, and while it is true that as most 'zines execute

them, columns are a tired and pathetic genre, I get the feeling that Reskator could do some good writing that's not band-related. There are a bunch of record reviews in here, too, but the only thing that stood out (and how could it help it?) was the Die My Will review that ends, MOSH IT UP!!! —

@*Reskator, c/o Tomas Mladek, V krovinach 16/1540, Praha 4 — Branik, 147 00, Czech Republic*

Revolt #10: More Eugene anarchism, by some of the same people doing other publications from that hotbed of wild desire-pursuing and (even more so) rhetoric slinging, some of which are even reviewed elsewhere in this issue of Inside Front. Some articles (like the Illegalism piece from Rob's *Fuck You Bearden!)* are reprinted here, and yes there are reprints from other sources... it seems like everybody in these circles is reading the same things, throwing the same formerly-inflammatory rhetoric and terminology back and

forth, obsessing over the same primitivist examples of non-civilized life and its virtues while scanning the internet for the latest news of cellphone-coordinated street protests. I can say this "with authority" (uh oh!), because I am in these circles myself, in

the lower circles of insider anarchist hell, not actually unhappy about it but definitely ready to demand a little more innovation and freshness from my comrades. Come on, attacking the poor anarcho-syndicalists again?! How about bringing up a new topic of discussion/catalyst for action that could make the old debates irrelevant, as new vistas of practical possibility open before us, and the rhetoric is realized in experience, or discarded... Back to this 'zine and the others done by its authors (the *Black Clad Messenger, * for example) — if you haven't had much of this stuff in your life yet, you should give it a chance... you're probably better

equipped than the rest of us to come at it with the necessary fresh perspective with which the remaining revolutionary potential of the contents could be discerned. — b
Anarchist Action Collective, P.O. Box 11331, Eugene, OR 97440 .

Rumpshaker #5: One hundred eighty eight pages, bound like a fancy academic journal. Very impressive, and I have to say that for hard' core "music journalism" beyond the monthly updates of magazines like HeartattaCk, this is the best thing going. An absolutely crucial part of that is that Rumpshaker (in addition to its heroically stupid name) has real personality of its own, that shines through all the time... that's the difference between a zine that makes you feel like you're reading it to kill time, and a 'zine that can stand on its own as a work, like a good record or a book. Instead of just interviewing Disembodied, editor Eric (who is responsible for most of the stuff in here, in the long-standing tradition of workaholic 'zine writers) tran-

Deadguy show years ago to try to have a dialogue about it (the guy is polite, but sadly brainless in his thuggish commitment to "that's just how the world is, dude"), it's even Atom who is responsible for giving Eric the misinformed perspective on the occupation of Palestine. In addition to all this, there's a little piece on sources of inspiration with responses from various hardcore kids and 'zinesters, a contest giving away free stuff (1 lost!), a hilarious humor piece at the end... this is awesome, really. However jaded you are with zines, this one will have something to offer you — provided you like to read at all. — b

Eric Weiss, 72–38 65 Place, Glendale, NY 11385

Sampled Silence #1: This is a gorgeous little pocket zine that mixes impenetrable poetry and political theory with romanticism in the same way that made the Situationists and Refused so exciting, which others (the Eugene anarchists), have been totally unable to duplicate. I think I need to say nothing more about this than to

a box containing 60 French hardcore kids), is full of great stuff. The CD is a little schizophrenic, with bouncy pop punk songs interspersed with aggressive growly hardcore numbers. As for the 'zine itself, it is interesting and well-written. The letters to the editors are answered by Dorian with exhaustive detail (he responds to everything from criticisms that they accepted Goodlife ads, for an earlier j_{ssue} — if only it were actually possible to definitively settle the debate over what constitutes a fundamental compromise of the DIY ethic! — to a reader's worry that he is a Satanist, and all of his answers are at least twice as long as the original letters if not. a good 20 or so times...). There are twelve(!) interviews in here, and while some are very general and

not terribly compelling (Awkward 1 hought. Neck), and that fucking word association thing never ever works, many of them are wonderful. Of course, one can always count on Brian D. to go on and on, especially if one asks Catharsis questions like, “What alterna-

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scribes a tarot card reading of the band... in addition to the more standard (still top notch) band interviews (Los Crudos, Indecision, Good Clean Fun, an exploration of why Kid Dynamite broke up, and Ire, who admirably stick to their guns about the oppression of Palestinians even when the interviewer ignorantly suggests this is anti-Semitic), there are interviews with photographers in the general circles of punk rock (an artistic format which receives little acclaim in our community), an organizer of Farm Sanctuary, and a series of mother/punk child interviews (featuring Ian MacKaye, Ray Cappo, and Caithlin from Rainer Maria and their uniformly nice mothers). The ongoing presence of Atom (of the 'Package fame) adds more personality and continuity: he's present in the 7" reviews, giving sardonic opinions, there's an interview and tour report (Eric came with him), a piece in which they approach a guy who beat Atom up at a

reprint this passage: W£ *like money, because we can embezzle it. We like shops, because we can shoplift. We like banks, because we can rob them. We like cars, because we can steal them. We like planes, because we can hijack them. We like cops, because we can run ftom them. We like governments, because we can overthrow them. We like time, because we can be late. We like rules, because we can break them.* Without any logic or deduction, that captures a whole book (or more) of theory in a htn little manifesto, offering a modern demonstration of Nietzsche's amor fati in the process. — b

c/o Eight-o-three records, flip basement, 70/72 Queen Street, Glasgow, gl 3en, Scotland

Satori *#516* (?): This French 'zine (that also means *in* French, in this case), which comes with a CD compilation of 15 French bands (or at least of their songs: unless I'm not special or something, I don't think you can expect to get

tives are there to working?, " or ones that begin, "Subject: stealing." But there are also great interviews with Rude, Veg'Asso (a vegetarian activist group), Brent, Watch It Fall, and PHI. I am a sucker for original questions, and anyone who asks a band how they wear their hair, and what relation they think hairdos have to music; or whether they consider themselves professional musicians; or whether they think heroin addicts are victims of social and economic problems or of a fucked up system, or something else..., gets at least a few points in my book. There are also a some articles; a description of the Mad Max movies, a chronology of Black Flag's career, and an essay on Mod fashion's continued presence today> if not in specific clothing styles, at least as an approach to the world. Add to that assorted reviews, a scene report from Croatia (which includes a history lesson and commentary on the scene in lieu of a list of bands), and a lot of

personality, and you're holding a damn good 'zine. —

@*Satori, do Dorian & Cedric, 32 rue Portalis, 13100 Aix-en-Provence, France*

Silent #3: Uh, nobody's gonna be thrilled about this, but the simplest word I can use to describe this 'zine is "emo": it has a pretty, handmade cover, lots of personal wonderings and wanderings and journal entries inside, handdrawn artwork and collages, romance worries written out for the world to see... There's also a reprint of a Noam Chomsky piece on the bombing of Kosovo, an interview with Chalkline (uh, they're kind of "emo" too, aren't they...) and another with Stretch Armstrong, and... well, that's mostly it... — b

Rik Peeters, Duivelsbroek 5, 2400 Mol, Belgium

Truce #1: This is a hardcore kid 'zine, in that long-standing tradition, and as such has the various strengths and weaknesses of the genre. This is much larger and more involved than any little poorly xeroxed 'zine — a fucking lot of work went into this, clearly, and it's awesome to see non-scenester hardcore kids taking advantage of the opportunities this community offers by putting in the work to do a high quality, useful 'zine like this. Drawbacks? Well, the usual moralizing and lack of clear thinking you come across in the straight edge/consumer hardcore world, but to the editors' credit they're not really guilty of this... it comes out of the mouths of others, like the moron from U.S. band Shockwave they interview (maybe moron is a strong word, but his three interests seem to be bragging about how tough his band is, collecting toys, and taking a stand against "evil" things like "free love") — who, incidentally, seem to have a record out on Good Life, surprise surprise. Other (mostly better) interviews include Belgium's Facedown (whose ideas are quite well-thought out, and the interview goes into appropriate depth), Heaven Shall Burn, Ensign (this is mostly a tour diary from a slightly spoiled band on tour, disappointed when only seventy people come to see them!), Spirit 84 (rather than a traditional interview, this is the editors showing the band video clips and asking for responses... one of them is from a pornographic movie,

and it's pretty unpleasant to be reminded of that shit in a hardcore context...), and Upheaval. There are hilarious sections (a fake collector's corner filled with parodies, a made-up advice column, etc.) that emphasize the personality of the editors (a crucial ingredient for a good 'zine), and their reviews and column writing are also intelligent. The verdict is that this is already good for its genre, and could be something better if it continues to exist. — b

Jan Albert Veenema, van Munnickuizenstraat 9, 8701 BP Bolsward, Holland

Ugly Duckling #4: This is a spirited, youthful 'zine, interesting and idealistic. Personal and personable. Energetic and energizing. Thoughts in these pages go from the need for more communication in the hardcore community to the editor's solution to the caffeine/straight edge problem. There are long but easy to read, and frequently fascinating, interviews with Lifecycle and Jeroen, who was in Clouded. The only way to describe the rest of this 'zine is to say that it's like being pulled into the editor's head for 40 pages. You can listen in on arguments with pro-life kids, late-night anxieties, rants on various topics, lists of ways to be more ecologically responsible, lists of things the editor finds important ("What I hate in 'zines, " "My most precious possessions"). Read over the editor's shoulder as she flips through Time magazine. Listen to a bedtime story. Hell, you can even hitch a ride to the Von 'n Vis festival. The Ugly Duckling is brash and coltish, but it can also be very insightful. And it's that unpredictable mix that makes it so endearing. —

@*Lieve Goemaere, Zwaanhojweg 3, 8900 leper, Belgium*

The Visible Woman #1: This 'zine is even more awesome for what it represents than what it is. It's the first foray into the 'zine world that I've seen from someone coming from the perspective of middle aged womanhood/motherhood, and it's fucking awesome to read about that perspective in a format I'm so familiar with. This is one of the most important zines reviewed here, since it offers insight into a world alien to most of us, and also since (we can only hope!) it may herald the coming of a new era ofd.i.y, in which people of all walks of life will make and read and learn from 'zines. Think of the community that could result from that... As for contents: there's some discussion of menopause, the author's relationship to her body, a list ("ten things I know about your mother that you don't") which I consider an instant classic, a story of her interactions with one of her younger friends (and the conclusions she draws), a little essay about how touch is disappearing between people in a simultaneously hypersexualized and prudish culture. — b *406N. Mendenhall Street, Greensboro, NC27401*

Wild Children: This is absolutely beautiful in its wildly passionate youthful abandon and idealism. That's a lot of praise, but it just makes me feel so good to read stories of young people who break the fuck out and go live as they see fit, articulating how and why along the way. Stories of strange dreams, photos of cat comrades, reading lists (including *Pippi Longstocking, * by Astrid Lindgren, and *HeartattaCk, * "by all of us" — right on!), tales of trouble with police and mothers, informative asides on the effects of radiation from nuclear bomb tests on U.S. armymen, travel adventures, poetic ranting about what life is all about — all written evocatively and eloquently

(except for the cat photo, I guess... well, even in that case, I loved the caption). Yeah, this is good. — b

Scott, 345 Calle del Norte, Camarillo, CA 93010

Willful Disobedience (Volume 2, #3): This newsletter/'zine mixes news reporting and analysis with radically anarchist theory. It covers world events such as the trial of the anarchist comrades in Italy with essays pitting "liberated desire" and Nietzsche references against "the logic of submission." As sometimes happens in this genre, the theoretical stuff is actually more impassioned than the practical information, but I think the overall purpose here is to give the individual more tools to work with for her own projects of liberation, rather than to get her to write letters to her Congressman about the situation in Italy. Personally, I eat this stuff up, as an admitted member of the anarchist community (and thus a person who isn't easily intimidated by what others might see as elitist language, "extremism, " etc.) — but as always the real question for the future is how the ideas here can be translated out of this ghetto and into the lives of others outside the anarchist "inner circle." In the meantime, such little publications as this will keep us connected, informed still thinking and debating... — b

Venomous Butterjly, 41 Sutter Street, Suite 1661, San Francisco, CA 94104

Willy-Nilly in Your Kitchen: Recipes! We here at Krimethlnc. Kitchens (or is that Kitschens?) were delighted to receive a cookzine for review! rhe first time we heard from this man, he was in Lithuania, and a lot of his recipes seem inspired by a son of peasant food aesthetic, market-based in a different way from most things these days (the farmer's market, not the global one...). Somehow we neglected to review one of these in our last issue, but it has turned out all right in the end, as it was full of winter recipes, and the weather is growing cold again right now. Sounds like the perfect time for Hearty Pine Grain Stew (featuring, yes, pine needles) or a Root Vegetable Compote. The only major objection I had is that he offers a recipe for chili without tomatoes, which seemed to me unconscionable, as tomatoes are the essence of existence and to leave them out of a recipe in which they might happily reside seemed to me an unnecessary evil — until Brian pointed out that that would leave more tomatoes for other recipes. The recipes are simple and straightforward, from the ingredient lists (no lemongrass or arugula here) to the cooking instructions. Most of the recipes are vegan or easily made vegan. We tried several and were pleased with all of them. The Lithuanian Groundnut Chowder was delicious, and die Sumptuous Cous Cous Salad divine. Lots of soup recipes, which has been an adventure for a crew that has sometimes subsisted entirely on bagels and rice for weeks at a time. A couple of the recipes can be a little bland, but that just gives

you the opportunity to use your spice rack. We weren't big on the Pine Needle Tea, though. Perhaps the winters aren't hoary enough here to be made more comfortable by a mug of bitter pine resins.

PS. We tried the chili recipe, and it was good, after all. Even without tomatoes. —

@If you know what's good for you, you 11 write to *Jack Clang, 26 Lefferts PL #6, Brooklyn, NY 11238*

_Eag_les, not Dissemble in my friend's basement. While the inflation point is an interesting one, the numbers given are just implausible. The most interesting thing about these 'zines, for me, is that although they are Australian, the dialect is the same as any American 'zine's. This makes me wonder: do the words evoke concepts that differ in any way at all? Are Australian kids talking

about the same things as American kids? Is DIY different for them, or racism, or the Sex Pistols? Even marginally? Or have we really created a worldwide community diat speaks exactly the same language? And would that be a strength, or a weakness?

—

@No Longer Blind, 74 Gladstone Ave., Wollongong, NSW, 2500 Australia

continued from page 129 **CrimethInc. Special Report**

No Longer Blind/United Fury split fanzine: An earnest effort by sincere kids. United Fury is the less polished of the two, containing a couple of band interviews (Standard and Day of Contempt) a personal column on rape and power, one on Amnesty International (of which the writer is a member), some record reviews (in one of which the reviewer actually offers to tape a 7" for people who can't find it, which I think is awesome), a couple of vegan recipes and a fairly straightforward column about socioeconomics and idealism. No Longer Blind concentrates on fellow fanzines in this issue, with interviews with MRR, Slug & Lettuce, Reflections, and United Front, and a couple of essays (done as papers for school!) on what and why a fanzine is. Kind of hilarious, but interesting, to read all the basic 'zine ideology again, but this time with parenthetical documentation! ("Zines, in direct opposition (and usually consciously), are self produced, non-profit publications for cultures that resist the mainstream (Duncombe 1997 pp 111113).") Then there are shorter essays on various topics that tend to fall under the vast umbrella of hardcore ethics. Violence and straight edge (via the SLC media frenzy), the right of punk bands to have no talent and lots of fun, a call to, well, not arms, but at least action by the nay-sayers and cynics of the hardcore community, and hardcore ideology. There's also one entided "punk-o- nomics, " which, although its ideas are not so ridiculous (trying to put on shows at venues where there is less overhead (as in, for the security guards and bartenders...), and perhaps even charging a little bit more, might generate more money for bands and help them pay for their gas, at the very least), uses such unbelievable facts to support itself on that I can see it sway dangerously in light breezes. A $5 (USS) show 20 years ago, he says, is the equivalent of $30 today. So we are actually giving much less support', financially, to bands now, even though there is a strong community that is supposed to make these things easier. First of all, I am being asked to believe that there has been 600% inflation in a time known for its steadily falling inflation. And more impossibly, since our governments are capable of anything, especially if given 20 years to do it in, I am being asked to believe that alienated, working class punks in the late 70s and early 80s were paying the equivalent of a millennial $30 of their paychecks, if they had them, to

see bands play in dives and holes. I think the only band I d have to pay $30 to see today would be the fucking

... and in reality these undercover photos show just how "punk and hardcore" the band really is, relaxing around the pool...

...but be careful because they still know enough to roughen up unwanted paparazzi.

continued from page 45

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All Brute and No Force *is continued on page 152*

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ail hell the almighty dollar

punk rock turned marketing gimmick over-produced and sold back to you at bargain basement" prices ot $14 a Cut there's no revolution in empty institutions., will you allow punk rock to become one?

read the lyrics to Absolution's "Dead and Gone" because that sneaks volumes to me volumes more than the lyrics to 99% of the bands who take punk to be a stepping stone to success, a scene to be used and abused until it's no longer needed because now they have a "fan bass' this is an advertisement for some records, it's not hypocritical because the purpose of tHs label is not to make money, simply to be able to put out records that we love. H's all in the means by which you sell them, and the end goal which is what should be scrutinized, it's who you choose to ^ve your money to/ support

you can't buy rebellion. you can't buy happiness but by being involved in this international scene, you can create bonds that create rebellion and happiness, and these records are (to me) a soundtrack for that at the very least it's a movie that i'm in control ok instead of sitting by and hoping tor a happy ending, i'm creating one for myself.

Punk rock IS the real world

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"Revolution Summer" CD ($5.75) Insane, destructive hardcore assault. Huge booklet of lyrics / graphics.

"Greased" LP/CD ($8/$8) Gainesville's giants rise to tackle eight fun songs from the "Grease" soundtrack!

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HO FORCE (?)

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Milemarker "Industry for the Blind"

Newborn "Citadels Burning"

Redemption "Daphne"

Endstand "The Way"

Point of No Return "Casa de Caboclo"

Newspeak "A Nice Talk Between Hollow Walls"

Constrito "Permissividade"

Abuso Sonoro "̊"

Shank "His Giro Is Gone"

Ruination "Losing Friends"

Speak Up! "Abused Words"

Lariat "Culture"

Memnoch "Consummate Wrath"
Cwill "Darkness"
[Image not archived]
MILEMARKER
"Industry for the Blind"

This is not conversation. It's just wellwrapped sensation with a mannequin lining to remind you to sign in. Its not altercation, it's just reaffirmation that you're standing on desks shouting at no one at best. Youve got to get up to stand up. Don't bother playing dead. Gouge your eyes out. It's better not to see the way things are without a way to get where they should be. The ones who dont were just thinking ahead. They dug this ditch for you, now the best that you can do is lie in it. This is not altercation, it's just well-wrapped sensation, and now you re telling about the chaos you're wearing. The ones who lined in the blueprint to sign in have got you sucking hand over fist. Youve got to get up to stand up, don't bother playing dead.

Milemarker c/o Al Burian fan club, 307 Blueridge Road, Carrboro, NC 27510

NEWBORN
"Citadels Burning"

Why are you shouting against certain things, when you just do the same? I can't believe you're so fucking ignorant. Instead of breaking down walls together, you're just raising them high to the skies. Your actions driven by your ignorant arrogance just fuel their fire. And we don't have the time to spark ours. How many words have been said, but

nothing came true, how many songs have been sung, but it seems all that we've found are some deaf ears. I just can't believe you're still here at this point. And if you keep doing your pity things, we won't reach forward for the cause. The saddest thing is that you re always having crowds who believe and follow blindly your slogans. But dont expect me to follow you, and don't expect me to believe. I'll be the first one to throw stones at your citadel, I'll be the first one to burn them down. Burn them down. I'll watch your citadels burning, I'll watch them end in ashes. End in ashes.

Jakab Zoltan, H-2120 Dunakeszi, Rozmaring U. 30, Hungary

REDEMPTION
"Daphne"

I knew of spirits who transited as fast as the wind. I knew of men who moved slow through the crowd with enormous weights of skulls. If I stare at my eyes and I search, I know I can find the good angel. Mirror — look well "heart." Angel, I was searching for you by sight. I want to learn how to love, and loving more than myself. Bring like clear river — search and taken I'll be by your sight. Slow I'll go on my without turning back, I'll bring you out of hell "Daphne and at the sound of the sunset. I will look to a reborn spirit.

I'm not gonna leave you there.

You left me there for a long time.

I will not turn.

Turn around but stay with me.

Redemption is: Perilli — voice • Valentina — voice • Simone — guitar • Livio — guitar • Emiliano — bass • Giorgio — drums • Chiara plays piano in this song • Recorded at The Temple Of Noise (December 99). Produced by Christian Ice and Redemption • Mixed by Christian Ice. Mastered at The Temple Of Noise.

ENDSTAND

"The Way"

POINT OF NO RETURN

"Casa de Caboclo"

Endless nights of persecution reopening wounds — never healed.

Always willing to suppress our attempts to be free.

Violence is always a tool in so called democracy.

Agents of the state allowed to spread terror, seeking to eliminate sparks of political resistance.

Endless nights of violation breeding fear — anguished cries.

A blood oath to never surrender.

Committed to the struggle until all fences are burned.

You'll try the taste of pain we endure every

day.

To quit without resisting would be to live in vain.

Attentive eyes guard the tents in the twilight. Women and men ready to counterattack. Full moon shines...

The enemy crawls in the dead of night. No way back...

The masked cops take their final step.

You're trapped.

Surrounded by the mass. Laws are ignored.

Justice from bleeding hands.

There is a real war across the Brazilian territory. It is a war against hunger, misery and social injustice declared by millions of peasants who joined the Brazilian Landless Workers Movement (MST) — now one of the largest and most important social movements in Latin America. From the past colonization, which fed off all forms of exploitation, very few and privileged people in Brazil inherited a huge concentration of power and wealth, including lands. Nowadays, two thirds of the Brazilian agricultural land are controlled by landlords and by multinational corporations, whereas approximately thirty-

two million Brazilians suffer from starvation and sixty million are underfed. This system of atrocities and inequalities has given Brazilian rural workers no choice other than taking the land by force. Either they carry out occupations in order to have a place where they can live and grow their own food or they starve to death. The MST was then formed to speed up land reform, and achieve social equality. It has investigated unused and unproductive estates and organized landless workers' families to occupy them. Predictably, their actions have faced extreme repression all over the

country. Militias have been formed and financed by landlords to suppress and kill members of the MST and there have been frequent violent conflicts involving landless workers, police troops and professional killers, which have always ended in bloodshed. Thousands of peasants have been killed in the last thirty years and MSI' members have also faced politically motivated trials. Fiction and reality are mixed in Casa de Caboclo as we try to narrate the terrible nights of persecution and torture against the MST. In the middle of the night, the landless workers' tents are suddenly invaded by armed masked people. Children are separated from their parents and shots are fired creating angst and despair. Men are kept naked for hours and are often threat

> ened and tortured. This situation is nothing but an illustration of how violence is always used by the so-called democratic governments that rule this world. It was used during the massacre in Acteal, Mexico, where 45 people were murdered by a military group in December, 1997. That's the way it is in Brazil, too. So far everything is part of a sad reality. The fictitious aspect of these lyrics emerges when the workers, tired of being tortured, decide to react and plan to corner their attackers. This song, however, expresses a feeling, maybe an irrational one, we have rather than some form of behavior we are proposing. In fact, what this song reflects is a position of total intolerance towards the methods of repression used by the State. We would like this intolerance to be present in all sectors of our society. "We are afraid, but we don't use our fear."

Casa de Caboclo was taken from the first Point of No Return CD, which is called "Sparks" and came out on Catalyst Records — (www.xcatalystx.com)from rhe U$A and

> [Image not archived]
>
> Liberation (www.xliberationx.com) from Brazil. Contact the band at: Caixa Postal 4193 Sao Paulo-SP 01061–970 Brazil valovelho@hormail.com

NEWSPEAK

"A Nice Talk Between Hollow Walls"

I've found a broken mirror smashed by expectations
Reflecting privacy violated by the policy of illusions
Incinerating images of failure and marching through pacified bodies
I found the gunfire and I keep on telling myself Emptiness
We are falling
Silence.
We are falling

The lack of hope, the absence of possibilities, stimulates me to relax and let it go, overlooking everything I condemned myself to look at forever. Anyway 1 pay obedience only to "judge me, " and not to circumstances forced at me by the objects of my hate.

Distance is bigger and now we don't have a horizon

Makes me want to know where all this blood flowing through my hands came from But some guy called "confusion' came first with opportunities and smiles

And we sit down together eating peanuts and hiding our knives We're falling down

Counter-cultural production has always

tried to militantly knock down old myths. But instead of disassociating with these myths, dissident music introduced a new mythology, incarnated in the fantastic idea of a "day that will come, " with the function of absolving the listener of any responsibility in the historical process. Thus, protest music becomes, for many people, a moral support for their theoretical beliefs. In punk and HC, this self-patrolling stance became an obstacle for a bigger (and better) production. Our circuit becomes standardized, and little by little the questioning and interrogation become cliche. A hierarchy of values, that indoctrinate "rebellion" was institutionalized.

Challenge was mechanized, transforming something that was once so intensely visionary, into something dated and pedantic. If we revise the means that we ourselves limit, we can have a strong instrument for social action. This latest affirmation may be questionable, but applying a little skepticism, in the moment when we expose ourselves, we re socializing our principles. Everything is centered in the scale of absorption, in the number of people reached. And even having a limited scale, we can't underrate the channels that remain outside corporate entities. Therefore, we must use our means of communication ('zines, bands, pamphlets...) wisely, with a latent spirit of renovation, so we can plant the seeds of a real departure

from a world that, day after day, takes away our taste for life.

Newspeak, Rua Juranda 126, 05442–070, Sao Paulo, SR Brazil

SHANK

"His Giro is Gone"

My Giro lies by my front door It was spent before it hit the floor, Jesus Christ, what a rigmarole to be in debt, living on the dole

A handful of smash to furnish my dreams punishment for living beyond my means my debtors all know it's giro day but salvation always seems to be a fortnight away

This grinding eternal now from which even work won't set me free

You want to experience real fucking ennui? Try signing on the dole for a year or two. Living hand to mouth day after day in a twilight half-life, always conscious that a bit of unexpected expense might force you to forgo electricity for a day or two. That bubble of short-lived joy when your giro (that's 'welfare cheque' to our American friends) arrives every two weeks is inevitably burst when you calculate just how much you owe out. And yet, we are supposed to be eternally grateful to the government for this bind.

> I realize that many people around the world are not afforded this kind of'safety net', and I suppose I should think myself lucky (if you think this kind of enforced docility can be called luck.) But what really pisses me off

is when the same politicians who were responsible for cutting back on my education, turn round and call us 'dole scroungers' or 'welfare cheats'.

Sorry, but you failed me with your substandard schooling, and now that youve created an unskilled, uneducated underclass, you want to pin the blame on us? You trapped us in this Pavlovian cycle — not us. You seem to forget rh.it welfare was created as a pacifying strategy — 'three meals away from revolution' and all that.

If I were you, I have a long hard think about what might happen when you starting cutting people's benefits en masse. You would do well to remember that the most potent revolutionary forces are compromised of people with NOTHING LEFT TO LOSE.

Andy Stick, Flat 1/1, 274 Kilmarnock Road, Glasgow G43 2X5, Scotland, U.K.

(^5fr|t>

Permissividade

Forjar os cadeados e prender as escolhidas Sugar a egergia de seus corpos jovens extirpando sua inoc^ncia

Herdeiras de um legado hipdcrita

Patriarcas e mSes submissas — violadores demonfacos com tradi^es arbitrdrias Negate continua / traumas profundos / segredo de familia De seus lares a imundas alcovas Comegando em casa, indo para as ruas do desespero Sofrerll!

Iludidas na promessa de emprego

Confinadas sob ameaga

Obrigadas a vender-se para sobreviver Elas sentem a .pele em contato com a sua O fedor do hdlito e* o suor de corpos Para quern foge, morte e perseguigdo Espancamento para as que voltam A dor e a terra da vala comum Sem lamentos ou algu6m para se lembrar A depressSo alucinbgena cheira dicool Que os aliciadores sejam empalados De seu sofrer vem meu regozijo De no mlnimo uma vida salva Elimine os opressores / liberdade ao corroer o sistema que se alimenta de destruigSo N3o posso virar, fechar meus olhos e negar Um grito mudo explode meus ouvidos a cada vida violada A ferida aguarda o curative

A estrada da conformidade leva a cidade do descaso Junto ao muro da lamentagSo

Eu busco a elevagdo da dignidade perdida Pego que me ouga / considere o meu apelo O sofrimento deve cessar / grite de suas entranhas Com a dor dos corpos delas (altrufsmo 6 a Iigag3o) Seremos uma voz, um instrumento de justiga.

Permissividade

(the title is a combination between two words "permisstvo" witch means permissive and "passividade" witch is passivity. So it's a tolerance for passivity, In other words stay quiet In your home and close al! the windows.)

To forge the padlocks and lock the chosen ones To drain the essence of their young bodies Striping of their innocence Heiresses of an hypocrite legacy Patriarchs and submissive mothers Demonic violators with arbitrary traditions Continued negation / profound traumas / family's secret From their homes to filthy alcoves

Starting to suffer at hearth, heading to the streets of despair Suffer!!!

Deluded with promises of work Confined under threats

Forced to sell themselves in order to survive They feel skin in touch with theirs

The sweat and the stench breath of bodies To those who run away — persecution and death Beating for the ones who comes back The pain and the earth of an unknown grave Without lamentations or someone to remember This hallucinogenic depression smells alcohol Let the executioners be impaled From their suffering will come my satisfaction Of at least one life saved

Eliminate the oppressors / liberty as this system is corroded

That feeds itself on destruction

I can't turn my back, close my eyes and deny A silent scream blows my ears at each life raped The wound awaits for the cure

The road of conformity leads to the city of blinds and to the wall of lamentations

I seek the elevation of the lost dignity

I ask you to listen to me / to consider my call This grief must end / scream from your guts With the pain of their bodies (altruism is the link) We must be a voice, a tool for justice...

[Image not archived]

I he explanation : first of all we'd like to tell you that the translation lose some of the expressive aspects of Portuguese, so if some parts the lyric sounds strange it is due to this fact, when the question is about sexual exploitation on women, Brazil represent itself as one of the leaders in that matter Because of the 500 years old macho tradition to the enormous profits of sexual tourism the Brazilian society sees this problem as something that should not be spoken of, "the family's secret".

Even if we are five males and do not suffer directly from this situation we cannot live in this

denial and not defend women rights. We consider ourselves as a feminist band and every

fight in order to reach justice is a fair fight witch needs to be revealed to the public so discussion

will take place and solutions will start to appear.

Ruination

"Losing Friends"

"No, I'm not quite sure just what it is you're trying to rub my face in here, but yeah you've changed, as all things change. If that's your point, it's loud and clear. I think you want me to kick and scream, or try to tell you who to be. I'm still trying to

figure out if you're really talking to you or me. Maybe I'm sad to see you go. Maybe I just hate feeling alone. Maybe

I don't know how to take it when it hits this close to home. All we had, the times we shared. We always said it was thicker than blood. I know it's gone, and not coming back, but what IS left? Do we write it off and walk away? See all those years just laid to waste? 1 can't tone down this life I've found because you've changed your mind. So what we keep and throw away is your call as well as mine."

sistent and the Intolerant. Those of us who fall out have to accept our friends' consistencies as much as we'd expect them to accept our changes. Nor should the rest of us have to play down the things we do still care about to save ourselves discomfort. Respect where someone is at, their politics, their lifestyle choices, especially if you've been there, has to be mutual if our friendships are going to see us through our lives and not just our youth. We've all waded through too much shit together to just write it off and walk away.

Recorded on 4 tracks 7.21.00 by ExMembers of Mike Sutfin in his living room somewhere in Illinois. Ruination is Andy Dempz, Chris Colohan, Ebro Virumbrales and Mike Haliechuk. You can reach us through +/-. Mike is sponsored by Etobicoke track pants and wears exclusively Velcro shoes. Thanks Brian.

SPEAK UP!

"Abused Words"

You're always talkin' to me about love But the only thing what you want is to fuck Idealize your instincts and call 'em feelings Love is what you pretend, is this the end Your soul is full of filth, guilt So I don't need you to tell me What's unconditional loyalty

Rape the love Abuse the purity Betray the loyalty

You're hiding behind words

You abuse the words which still mean something

You don't give respect

You come co an agreement with yourself

My love is real!

My love is clear!

There is no Inner Circle. Consistency is the exception to the rule. We don t account for changes of heart, and our friendships suffer as we fall into the familiar roles of The neon-

My love is true! I hate* you!

: consummate wrath

* ~ a steady bleeding on demand onto the altar of sacrifices the candle of hope it never gave me any light inlife

> the pain begins in understanding fm bathing in anguish and silent despair
> finding myself alone in crowded rooms all we are

puppets in our own naive drama
: ^ anctour hollow deeds *
J- ^create a restless nothingness ’ ’^^
L relieve my torment, kiss me a last goodbye
f i/m dying, leaving it all behind
contact Speak Up! through Zoli from Newborn
1
i feel no regret, can feel no remorse
i found home in darkness * ’
i killed all love, killed all life —
i killed my god — ^ ^ –< *- * - ~ v — * ~~*

inside I’m burning with hatred the incarnation of wrath ’

yearning to extinguish, I feel no regret ^1 found home in darkness
— and the pain eiKls inun^
she’s the perfect victim, < -
her beauty is her guilt • ’
shell walk on my side
* through the gates to heli — — •
inee we are forced to hkkfor deny our real emotions in every day lite, there grows the danger of a^ick society that one day will violently break out of these chains, passion and desire is considered evil or “uncivilized*[4] and so we

pretend to be happy and well-balanced personalities although anger is nothing; inhuman, building up this anger is the

4 demon that may develop to such. -* madman like a mass murderer, these lyrics do not justify violence but we should consider where this brutality
her statuesque figure inspires my creation slivers of moonlight on the blade of steel i feel no pain now that she’s mine to fulfill ing work in flesh and blood •
comes from before judging such people.
“beauty wasn’t the treachery he imagined it to be, rather it was an uncharted land where one could make a thousand fatal errors, a wild and indifferent paradise * without signposts of evil or good.”
contact: * t .
Boman Schmiidig, Florian-Geyer-Str. 32, phone +49 (0)351 — 4 49 6198
I 01307 Dresden. Germany ‘ . “ ^ memnoch-hc@gmx.de. —
[Image not archived]

CWILL

“Darkness”

A dream of darkness
Saved from the burden
Free finally free
What remains is what I love
The only light
Redemption — please save me Save me from myself
Save me from myself But I hold back It's not time yet Perhaps soon
Endless falling, Endless redemption Sleep find the silence Saved from the burden Free, finally free
What remains is what I love The only light I see
A dream of darkness
Endless falling, Endless redemption Sleep, find the silence Saved from the burden
[Image not archived]
Thomas Vogel, Honggerstr. 18, CH-8037 Zurich, Switzerland

> Its been three months of frustrating layout Belays ana postponements since I wrote the last words of the last review for this issue, and it's ridiculous that this thing isnt out yet [Designers note: fuck you!]. I guess that's the way it works in the world of zines. Now I'm sitting in my lovers apartment (freezing of course, in the Inside Front tradition), listening to Stefs tape of the incredible new Tragedy record, typing the filler for the absolutely final page.
>
> A lot has happened since I first wrote the introduction, of course, and it almost seems naive in retrospect — not because it was too hopeful, but because I didnt have the perspective then to see just how quickly the things I've been waiting for would start becoming possible. This weekend we were in Washington, D.C. to participate in the Un-auguration activities... imagine a world in which the new President of the United States has to ride hidden behind black, bulletproofwindows to get through the Inaugural Parade, as tens of thousands of U.S. citizens scream "FUCK YOU!!" and wave their fists at him from all sides — now check this out: you live in it. Not that this is much help or consolation to the millions still strapped to the wheel of work-rent-television-taxes, but when a march of liberal democrats changes course to rescue a fragment of the Black Bloc trapped and assaulted by police officers, knowing full well that these are kids who oppose voting on every level and are out explicitly for the sake of property destruction, it indicates that a fundamental shift in values is talcing place away from the complacency and timidity that make such absurd conditions possible. If this doesn't seem to be taking place in your town yet, hold on tight — or, far better, make it happen.
>
> I spent the week leading up to the Inauguration in Pittsburgh with two friends of mine, establishing a workshop there with which we mass-

produced stickers, fliers, and posters to be applied and given away at the demonstration and afterwards. As I described in the features section earlier in this issue, I think that's where it's at for the next stage of resistance — autonomous cells everywhere across the world, capable of organizing their own cheap/free living, propaganda, adventures, activism, taking responsibility for making life something awesome and beautiful...

Here's the bottom line, which I've said a hundred times before, but I dont think it can be said enough — you have to find ways to simultaneously stay alive in this world and make changes in it. Yes, it's hard to live, yes, it's hard to believe in anything when you're filled with pain from childhood abuse or workplace boredom or the simple struggle to get along with the motherfuckers around you — but for heaven's sake don't stop there. So many of my friends are left out of the transformations that are taking place right now because the ways of surviving they found are dead ends — one is an alcoholic like his father, another already dead from a drug overdose, another still working full time to pay for more tattoos, another working at a job he hates to save up money for his next vacation, another spends all his free time working on an intricate model boat. These are all legitimate ways to live — hell, everything is legitimate as far as I'm concerned, and whatever it takes to be able to bear life is right on- bur they don't offer open horizons, they don't do anything to put you in a situation where the conditions of your life might change.

If you can tie your immediate needs to pursuits that can create new opportunities for you, you've got a chance to beat the system. If you need to eat, eat in a way that helps others eat too, by working with Food Not Bombs — if you love bicycling, don't spend all your time working to buy new bicycles, new surrogates for adventure: start a bicycle repair collective so you'll have all the stuff around you for free, or go out bicycling across the country, like some friends of mine did to raise awareness about the plight of children in Iiaq if you desperately need a break from the repetitions of the work life, go on tour with a punk band or activist group instead of taking a tourist vacation — if you have to have a place to stay, try to organize a collective housing space, it'll save you money and help you avoid the isolation of a normal living cubicle — if you have children to take care of, there's no better time than now to start working on establishing better day care and school alternatives, especially since your kids are going to have to deal with thousands of other kids who didn't get the benefit of these things otherwise- — if you have to work to support your family, work a job where you can join the I.W.W. and help organize your fellow workers — if nothing feels honest and liberating to you except smashing things, you can smash them with the Black Bloc and still participate in making a different world. You

don't need do this shit to serve the cause or whatever — I'm just saying that in my personal experience, it feels better. Being a revolutionary is right on just because it's a more exciting, rewarding way to live I dont recommend it to others because I want "converts" for the "movement" nearly so much as because I'm desperate to see rhe people around me feel better about things, feel more optimistic and excited to be human and alive.

And the postscript to all of this is that those of us who think we've found ways to do it already have to figure out what it is we're doing that is scaring others off from joining us. Could ' it be that the greatest obstacle to this revolution is our own self-importance, our desperate need to assert ourselves as the saviors, the knights in shining armor, the assholes who have figured everything out? My personal project for the coming months is to work out how to be less intimidating to everyone else. Anyhow, I'm off, as I hope this 'zinc will be to the printers soon expect to see more from us and of us very soon.

Issue #14 (2003)

Subtitle: Postscript Issue
Source: <cdn.crimethinc.com/assets/journals/inside-front-14/inside-front-14_screen_single_pa
You can download the CD compilation that came with the final issue of Inside Front **here**.

"The Cure is the Poison" "Education Breakdown" "Wrench and Bone" "Fed Up" "Ashes vs. Leaves

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS AND BRIEFING:
2 Emotionally distraught editor's opening remarks

2 Why another issue of Inside Front? Seriously, why punk rock at all? (Watch for the final Nietzsche reference slipped in in rhe Inside Front tradition!)

6 Letterbombs from the Editor
FEATURES:
8 POLITICS — "We have worked hard to improve activism — now ' it must be destroyed, " featuring discussion on the alienating role of "activist/ rhe detrimental effects of radical infighting, and how white kids can make themselves useful outside the middle class/ punk rock ghetto, followed by an internal communique regarding self-congratulatory lifestylism entitled "All Traveler Kids Purged from CrimethInc. membership, " and concluding with a fanatical exhortation to Maximum Ultraism!

2^. PUNK ROCK — "The Punk Band As Anarchist Collective, " and why punk records should be more expensive

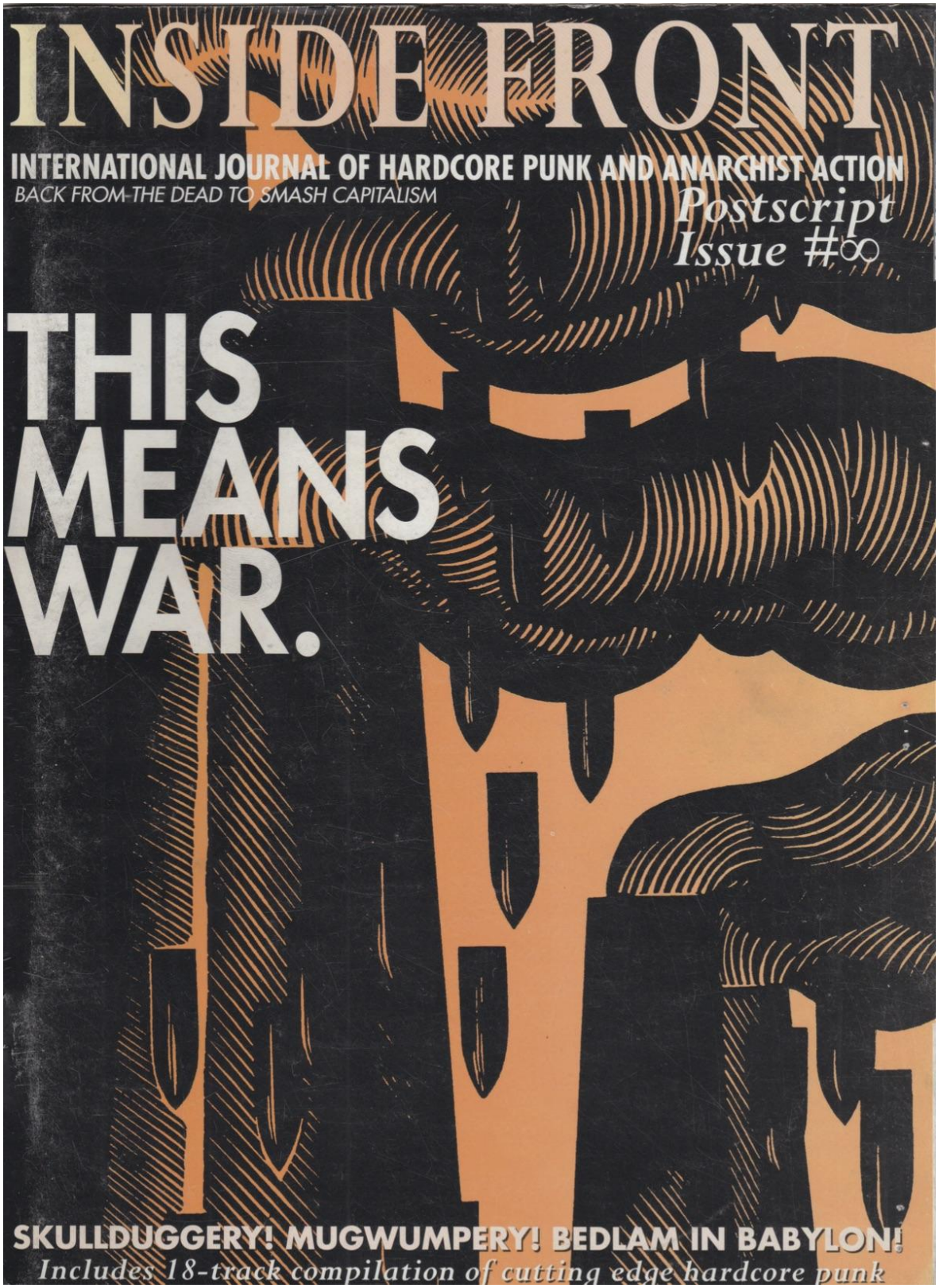
^ 8 STRAIGHT EDGE — a lengthy anarchist take on the social role of alcohol, and a semi-satirical consideration of its historical function in what primitivists call "our enemy, civilization"

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Postscript
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THIS MEANS WAR.
SKULLDUGGERY! MUGWUMPERY! BEDLAM IN BABYLON!
Includes 18-track compilation of cutting edge hardcore punk

7O Herds and Words — the maniacal anti-performance artists themselves

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music (punk *and* hardcore) x
[1] anti-consumer consumer
O 7 Lack — a passionate Danish hardcore kid holds forth on art and .
reAirion I9[2] AnaFchy triumphs again

This magazine and CD are $5 postpaid in the USA ($7 world), and five or more copies $3.50 each postpaid in the USA ($5 world), from the address on the back COVer Anti- Fucking-Goddamn-Copyright 2003. Few animals were harmed in the production of this zine.

Please note that there is not a single advertisement in this entire issue, barring the catalog of other materials our collective has produced. We're willing to take a financial loss here in hopes that we can encourage a less commercial approach to publishing in our subcultural community, as a small step in moving away from capitalist models altogether.

[Image not archived]

That was our youth, although it had taken a long timefor some of us to arrive there. We ate nothing, or garbage, or the most vile of swill, supplied by a religious cult group — apparently the only ones who still saw any reason to keep us alive. Our real nourishment came in theform of lettersfrom far off lands, tales of street riots told around the coals of burnt-out love affairs, a tape of a Finnish metal band with the most melodramatic of pretensions. Often our lives were saved only by a sunny spring day in January, or a book of poetry found on some neglected library shelf and read aloud on the railroad tracks before midnight, or the revelation of a dance move in some obscure band s performance. We carved esoteric slogans into unlikely surfaces, shared photocopies ofstrangers secret ambitions and nonsensical demands, composed and destroyed endless drafts of unsendable love letters to impossible subjects of the wildestfantasies we could conceive. Despising documentation, losing journals, lacking resources, we made our bodies the canvases upon which we painted the epic artwork of our desperate lives. We were gods, dispossessed angels singing the arrival ofsome hidden hermits' paradise on earth; we were bandit queens and pauper kings, led gloriously astray by the fever dreams of our power-mad

monasticism. We had nothing — we would be everything. We were invincible, irresistible, ridiculous, and heaven smiled on us from below.

Those precious dreams treated us as we, consequently, treated each other as lovers: the soaring moments beckoning, the beauty longed for, shiningfrom afar — and then when we turned awayfrom everything else towards them, sought to embrace them, to bend every moment of life, everyfiber ofbeing to their pursuit, they scorned us, shunned us, left us mute and broken, incomprehensible to the crowds around us who, too, were pursuing dreams, though not dreams of their own. We rejected our crazy dreams, then, furious, broken-hearted; but in their wake, all other plans seemed lackluster, all hopes half-hearted, and one by one we began returning, to soar and burn again.

*So here it is, * the Inside Front reunion issue, complete with high

door price, lackluster performances, and rockstars drinking beer (provided as per the guarantee) backstage, talking shit about the kids.

This should be a eulogy, a cry for the lost dreams and squandered opportunities and unharrowed idealism of our youth, when, dizzy with enthusiasm and inexperience, we vowed insane oaths — to never work, to overthrow everything destructive and make life a never-ending celebration, to seize those sailing moments of passion and make them last forever — oaths that could never possibly be kept by the living. This should be a lament, mourning the passing of those halcyon, idyllic days when we had no problems greater than mere survival in service of those quests, when life and death were so simple and so precious. This should find me bewailing the senseless surrender of all those irreplaceable gifts to the jaws of time and cynicism, the slow wear of the daily grind — or, worse, declaring, in the centuries-old tradition of the jaded, that real life has come and gone upon this planet once and for all, and if you weren't there to witness it with us you will never be so lucky. At best, this should be the epitaph for a forgotten faction who refused to be turned into slaves and succeeded instead in being turned to dust.

This should be — but it's not. This is the story of what happened when some of us kept those aspirations at the expense of all others, stayed faithful to our muses and missions even when it meant burning up in the wreckage and, harder, living to dwell upon it. Some of us, sworn to fight to the death, haven't died or submitted — not yet! We followed those uncharted paths we swore were ahead of us, we didn't back down, we went for it — and were still going for it, still smuggling to live in such a way that we can be in love with living. This is the story of what we left behind, what we found, what we lost — what we're doing.

We swore to diefighting, and history saw to it that some of us had the chance — that was sobering. Others among us almost prayedfor such deliverance, feared we would outlive ourselves waiting for our chance to come. Yet othersforswore the whole business as madness or childishness, or found themselves seized by another destiny that had crouched in the shadows awaiting them all along. Holding on to the dream, that we might yet be able to livefighting, that was the hardest thing of all.

[Image not archived]

GraphicViolence@CrimethInc.net

Oto an end — that's the best I can express it.

"QBack in 2000/2001, I declared #13 the final issue of this magazine so I could have my Chands free for what was to come next. It was

☒fcoming, that was for sure: with the fall of r Communism, the old false dichotomy was Qgone, and people everywhere were starting _ˆto recognize that the only conflict left was between People and Power. Explosions were

Qgoing off everywhere — world leaders couldn't »j3meet without tens of thousands of protesters ˆshowing up to interfere, average folks in -ˆaverage towns were starting to get interested

Qin anarchism, punk kids' well-mannered jlmothers were joining the anticapitalist ˆ"struggle with their bodies as well as their hearts. There was always something to do, some chance to join the fray, and we were always working on our next surprise, preparing our part for the next explosion, dreaming impossible dreams about what might be possible next.

we were giving out literature and bagels downtown, playing music together, or pelting riot police with stones — or at least it seems so, in the halcyon glow of memory: anything could happen, and all it took to make it happen was to believe in it.

Then came September 11, 2001, of course. I'm not quite paranoid enough to think it was planned or permitted by our government, though obviously it benefited them in their pursuit of total power; I think it's sufficient to remember that this tragedy was simply the blowback of decades of the U.S. training terrorists and committing crimes against humanity across the world. Whether consciously plotted by capitalists or not, it was certainly characteristic of the capitalist program: terrorize and isolate, turn whole nations and peoples against one another, and cash in on the resulting violence as a chance to clamp down and enforce the demands of silent business-as-usual ever more ruthlessly.

Here's a little story that captures the spirit of that period of my life. One summer night, I remember, a thunder storm descended upon the small Southern city some of us called home. A soulful hobo folk band from New York were visiting the wrecked punkhouse where I stayed with an assortment of hellbent revolutionaries and maladjusted pariahs; they'd just left to dumpster a feast for us all when lightning began to crack across the sky. Two of my dearest friends and I set out for the parking deck downtown to get a better view, but by the time we got half way the rain was coming down in such sheets that we were forced against the side of a building. It was torrential, overwhelming, unearthly; one of us said (whimsically, since it was a hot Southern night) "the only way this could be better would be if it started hailing." At that moment, we heard a tap, and then an answering tap, and an instant later white hail the size of golfballs was drumming down before our widening eyes. It filled up the street, smashed out the lights on the skyscraper we so hated for dominating the skyline, proved beyond a doubt that total transformation is always just around the corner. One of us picked up a hailstone and bit into it; we passed it around, tasting the impossible on our very tongues.

It worked, for a while. Activists were scared into silence, everyone else into compliance, and total war began. We all felt powerless. War is what our enemies do best, it's their final recourse whenever people begin to become aware of their own strength: they

create another distraction, another dichotomy, one that makes them appear omnipotent, one that scares the public — at least the public you read about in the mass-media propaganda polls — into lockstep behind them.

It took months for some of us to give in to hopelessness and paralysis, but eventually they set in seemingly everywhere. I was gone when the buildings came down — my band had embarked on an insane project, a five- months-straight tour of Europe that almost destroyed us — and when I returned, all my friends were scattered and dispirited, the punk and anarchist and activist communities were all a mess of back-biting and uncertainty, and all the energy and possibility we'd felt before seemed gone. I held it off as long as I could, but as my band broke up, my love relationships fell apart, and my friends disappeared, a serious, deep depression set in. I kept up what activities I could, but as a writer I was blocked, as a lover I was exhausted, as a revolutionary I was stumped.

> I guess that's the critical juncture all of us hit at some point in life: events in the world and our own lives alike seem to spiral out of control, and we're left feeling as though we're watching from the sidelines. This is when people cease to think of themselves as having a destiny of their own and go into survival mode, cutting off their feelings, living in denial, no longer hoping. Some are born into this existence, learning it from the sufferers who raise them; others have to be taught it through failure, oppression, defeat. It wasn't what I wanted, that's for sure — I desperately wanted back the feeling that my life belonged to me, and I didn't want to live without it. I only remained alive, honestly, because I knew from previous experience that such suicidal depressions can pass.
>
> And they do pass. Now the tide is turning. Our enemies rushed too fast to consolidate their power ("if you're not with us, you're against us") as soon as they had the excuse — perhaps that power was more fragile than we thought? — and now they've lost all the advantages it gave them ("well, I'm not really with them... does that mean I'm... ?"). As Nietzsche said, a healthy organism can tolerate a whole army of parasites — a dying creature needs a Department of Homeland Security to stave off the inevitable as long as possible. From here on, the lines can only become clearer again: it's People versus Power, once more. After the rush of war is over, as the terrorist threat intensifies (no one needs a government to fund a terrorist action — one only needs hatred and a boxcutter) and the economy crumbles, it will only become more obvious to people that their rulers have been endangering them simply to consolidate their own power. We should not have panicked so fast after that day in September — we're going to need to be prepared to maintain our projects and morale through worse disasters, if we're going to go the distance to revolution.

> If anything good can come out of that tragedy, I hope it is a new sturdiness in our community: next time the terrorists strike, we need to be ready to respond immediately, visibly offering our perspective and solutions, before the government can put their spin on it — not hide out in doubt and fear. Besides — if we anarchists are right about where terrorism comes from, our

doubt and fear can only result in more deaths in the long run.

I'm writing this the night after the United States declared war on Iraq, the night after thousands of activists across the world declared and reaffirmed their corresponding war against tyranny by shutting down freeways, schools, and shopping districts. After the terrorist attacks in the U.S., there was a period when nationalist patriotism owned the streets: flags and jingoistic propaganda lined every window and bumper, and if you didn't subscribe to bloodthirsty groupthink you felt isolated and endangered. Now, whatever their bullshit polls claim, the atmosphere on the streets belongs to us again — and, unlike before the terrorists brought home to the West the destruction capitalism is wreaking across the face of the world, the issues are so close at hand that no one can deny we all must take a stand somewhere. No matter what happens next, even if there are more terrorist attacks, there will be no going back to those days of paralysis and silence. Let's hope there won't be more — but let's do more than hope: we need to disable and eventually overthrow the government that, with their imperialist economic and political policies, is provoking people into killing us.

Forget that slogan "another world is possible" — another world is *inevitable.* The old world is going to come to an end, my friends, make no mistake about that. However much firepower they have, however many crippled nations they destroy, our oppressors and the entire culture that supports them are doomed — the planet itself cannot sustain them or their way of life much longer. But this final cataclysm isn't something we should just await, or fear — it will be what we make of it, and we have to be preparing for it right now. We have to learn how to get along with each other, we have to develop our strength and the support systems in our communities, we have to be practicing anarchy right now, or else the crash that's coming will only make things worse. Fortunately, there are conflicts to be fought, crazy plans to carry out, communities to bring together — excellent opportunities everywhere for us to learn and build for the future. We grew up reading J.R.R. Tolkien and listening to punk songs, dreaming of fighting in the final clash

between destruction and rebirth — my friends, it's upon us.

So, once more — why another Inside Front? Because — if you ask me — when everything you're doing almost works only to crash and burn before your eyes, you don't retire on the ruins of your former idealism, you take a step back to what you were doing before the disaster and start from there again. Editing this magazine is something I've done for a decade now, it's something I know how to do, and it's always troubled me how many beautiful songs and books and projects have never entered the world

because the people who could create them, by the time they were finally experienced enough to, were too jaded and beaten to do so. This project, however imperfect it may be, exists now — it's no record that was almost recorded or last show that was never played. Too often, we criticize ourselves and our ideas so much that we forget that an idea that comes to fruition, blemishes and all, is always better than one that dies on the vine.

And why punk rock, why haven't we grown out of it after all these years? However small it may be, I think punk rock will have an important role to play in this struggle for a long time to come. However many disillusioned punks-turned-activists, going through their final phase of adolescence, may need to rebel against the crucible of their rebellion, claiming it to be a dead end ghetto, punk rock is still the milieu that spawns them, generation after generation. However insufferable the obvious shortcomings of all subcultures are, we still desperately need places to come together in this isolating world, to get to know one another and get practice working and playing together. Whatever the stakes in the struggle, it's critical we make beauty together as well as fight its destroyers.

Here's another little story to illustrate this. Two weeks ago the Canadian band *Godspeed, You Black Emperor!* played here in the small college town that has often been my home. It was going to be just another mediated performance, the spectators watching the band before departing alone — but we troublemakers had something else in mind. As the concertgoers left the club, bucketdrums appeared from nowhere and were

distributed along with drumsticks, signs, and great banners. Before the local authorities had time to recognize what was happening, two hundred people had surprised themselves by taking over the main street of the town! We marched up and down it for an hour and a half, blocking it completely as the bars were emptying out, and the police, caught totally unprepared, were unable to stop us or even arrest anyone. That tiny triumph gave those same kids the experience and confidence they needed to fill and block the street again at rush hour tonight — and this time, a few hundred people from other walks of life joined us, pouring into the space we opened. Punk rock, a dead end ghetto? Only if we want it to be. Better a breeding ground for revolutionaries!

That's the vision of punk rock and underground culture I've treasured for the past decade, and it's as bright as ever now. We can resurrect punk rock, just as it resurrected us, as a site of escape and resistance and a seed of an utterly different world. Indeed, we *need* to keep punk rock, or something like it, alive: to steal children for the revolution from the families of the middle and working classes, to offer space for those who are alienated by activist smugness but still seek an outlet for their rebellious energies, to be sure we always remember that this struggle is even more about making our own artwork and life stories than it is about resisting those who would destroy them. Punk rock, by whatever name, will be essential until the day all constraints are destroyed and *everything* is music, is togetherness, is adventure.

So here it is, a surprise issue of my old hardcore magazine, as part of my own rejuvenation, in case it can help to rejuvenate our community — and to reaffirm, once more, the worst nightmares of the powers that be: *yes, we're still here.*

Still passionate, still loving and fighting, and, if anything, younger and crazier than I was when I began the first issue of Inside Front a decade ago — yours sincerely, editor B.

[Image not archived]

> *When your friends misunderstand your works and your enemies understand them all too well, when waking up every new morningfrels like a defrat rather than a triumph, when the razor blade or the chjfs edge beckons, remember — he is not pretty, death, only well-advertised. Remember what they did to Michelangelo: they waited until he was dead and then painted overall the genitals in his Sistine Chapel — just as Nietzsche's hated racist sisterpresented him to the world as a pi oto-friscist genius after he lost his mind, just as Paul used Jesus, and Plato Socrates, and the Communists Durrutti. Give your enemies nothing. Let your tearsfreeze to stones we can hurl from catapults, screaming. Write your own epitaph and say it out loud, still alive. This life is a war we are not yet winning for our daughters' children. Don't do your enemies' work for them — finish your own."* -from a letter that didn't reach Sylvia Plath in time
>
> *A gesture of frustration — a letter I'd like to send to certain kids too enamored of their own disenchantment:*

*Dear , *

> So the dreams we celebrated so passionately, so convincingly, have failed you — or, more precisely, you have failed to attain them. Weill In that, at least, we could find a kinship, for the same tragedy has befallen me — far more frequently and painfully thanit can have for you yet, I dare say. But it s not kinship vou're looking for, is it? Perhaps, instead, this exaggerated disappointment ofyours is vour roundabout
>
> way of claiming a position of righteousness, rhe same righteousness you must have mistaken me as laying claim to ... so you have found your own superiority, your own self-importance, but one predicated on failure! As it 1 was trying to put myself on a pedestal, by proposing all those impossible possibilities — but you, at least, are "honest": it's all hopeless, it's all a scam, all is failure and anyone who tells you different must be out for himself. Bah!
>
> 1 11 be vulnerable and admit to you — yes, it's hard, it gets so fucking hard to go for it without disclaimers or self-consciousness, when our

> enemies are still enthroned in all their power despite our every attempt, when all the bands whose youthful idealism and indomitable spirit seemed poised to overthrow capitalism itself grow out of it and into making a career for themselves — when I find out that the moments I felt most free, like we'd all exploded through the shackles altogether, someone else was feeling alienated and angry. So what can I do — what can we do?
>
> Go for it without disclaimers and selfconsciousness, obviously! Learn what we can from the critics and critiques, derive whatever constructive insights can be gleaned from them regardless of whether they were intended constructively or not, shake off the rest — forget about it, fuck it all, you're

never going to win everyone's approval (was that what your revolution was about?) and tragedies are bound to happen, that's life — and go for it without disclaimers or self-consciousness.

My friend, you're giving up too soon and too easily. It wouldn't be such a stupid, senseless tragedy if we had enough the time to spare for you to loiter in the sullen adolescence of cynicism for a tew more years — but we don't, we really don't. Should we let everything we've learned go to waste? We've done a lot, even you have to admit that — you do yourself whenever you parade your former credentials in the course of making your case for disillusionment. Maybe we did it all wrong — now that we know how we'd do it i f we had the chance again, why not do it again and do

it right? Could you find it within yourself to

believe in something again, could vou forgive rhe world enough, forgive yourself enough to fall in love once more? All those things vou loved — that beauty vou never found words for, the adrenaline rush of risk, the feeling that the fate of the world itself hinged on your actions — they're still out there, they still await you. You're the one that turned away from them — and without you, I'm afraid 1 can't find my way back to them either.

Try this with me, once more. It won't be easy — it won't be any easier than it was the first time. It will probably end in disaster, once again. But it'll be better than the sour grapes of deliberate failure. Suicide would be a nobler option than that.

*Your old friend, *

A dispatch of desperation — a letter I wrote, in a particularly dark period, to my comrades at the San Francisco anarchist bookfair, 2002, but never circulated:

**Dear anarchist, beautiful anarchist — **

How do I say this, what words are left when we've burned up all our rhetoric on abstractions, glorifying the ghosts we keep close at hand to make this life more bearable?

I had another panic attack tonight, just now, five minutes ago, like I used to in the years before that week in Seattle — I wanted to tear out my eyes so I'd never see another smug, uncontested Starbucks or Shell station, rip off these fingers that might not write the letter (whatever letter it is!) that could set off the next skirmish, throw

myself off a goddamn bridge. 'Ihe worst part is — I feel responsible, responsible now for always having an optimistic, bright vision, to help out in those' moments when you might not — even though 1 know that's bullshit! — but anyway, my fear is all I have to offer tonight, and there's enough of it to go around, so I'll share that.

We make it from year to year, some of us, in this world that denies all our dreams, by believing in miracles — that is the miracle, itself, and it s no mean feat. I've been in that world — spent days in it, weeks in it even — where everything was about to change, was in fact changing. Now when, on those days when I can't find my wav back, my companions try to reassure me ("you can't change the world, but you can change one life" — etc., etc.), it makes me fucking crazy — for I know that world of pragmatism and "being realistic" is the counterfeit world, the illusion. If 1 never again experience what I experienced in those soaring hours, I will go to my grave insisting still that those transcendent moments of possibility were the real world, that this is just a farce, a stand-in world of false fronts until we can get to the next of them. If historians write about me (curse them if they do!) one hundred years hence, noting that I was wrong about what would happen, that will take place in an alternate universe, not the one I believe in, not the one I live in.

I am terrified: I'm terrified that we'll use today just to recruit for our little competing clubs, to argue over trifles and maybe fight for table scraps. I'm terrified that too many of you wall have arrived here like I did, not knowing what you will try here or, worse, what direction to go next — and that all of us

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will consequently do our best to feel like what we re doing, or not doing, is good enough. I'm terrified we'll find, despite all our swaggering to the contrary, the resignation to survive here — here, in our safe ghetto, with the Palestinians and veal calves dying outside — and die here ourselves, too, even if only by waking day after day to say "I live" and mean it as something other than a victory.

If we were brave or reckless enough for it, our despair — for those of us who feel it sometimes, and I hope we're a small minority — could be a resource as great as any other. It could enable us to do the things our comrades, with their hope and high spirits, shouldn't have to do to make things happen. Otherwise, it is a burden of shame for us to hide, and truly an enemy to fear. Pride would hold us forever in no-win situations, struggling to prove that we cart make them work, insisting that we are happy, that everything is going according to plan. We nail ourselves in place here in the same way some pledge themselves to love relationships of mutual misery, trying to prove to themselves they are "good enough" to make each other happy. It takes a ruthless mercy to discard sentimentality and remember all the things that never happened and *still might never happen, * all the dreams that never came true — we can't wait forever, there's not time enough for that. Impatience is a-virtue.

Whether or not yon suffer these attacks of fear and nihilism, know this: those actions you are considering, that book you're thinking of writing, that hand you might try to extend — we need those, all of us, so badly now — don't you dare hold back out of

insecurity or anything else! I've seen too many of my friends die now, driving themselves into living graves or earthen ones, because the world didn't seem wide enough to hold what they wanted. That's what we should be doing here, above all, I feel: widening the world, so the next generation of dreamers can join us, bringing their hope or despair or whatever it is they have to offer; together, we could break down the gates to that other world I talk about, once and for all. I still believe this can happen, is happening, must happen.

Still in love with all of you and the amazing things we can do, ein anonymous and abashed CrimethInc. exworker

And, sadly, a eulogy for my beloved, departed friend Emma Berger, a beautiful, courageous woman who did indeed live each day like it was her last — written by another friend of mine who is, let's not take thisfor granted, still with us as I type this.

*Dear Emma, *

This is not a eulogy; this is not a eulogy because 1 will not let you die. Just over a year ago I lost a very important person in my life in a car accident. Emma Berger, 21, deceased. That feeling in your gut when someone tells you they have bad news, the split second that you think about the death of a loved one, the empty feeling when you learn you're right. I had talked to her just the night before, but only for a second; I was on my way to work. They were on their way home, we were goingto . have a party, her voice was on the fucking answering machine for christsakes. Ibis was my first experience with loss, it was : terrifying. People cried and wailed but I just sat there. Stone. Dry mouth and dry eyes.

I felt dead. In the days to follow I would go from picturing gruesome, disfigured bodies strewn across the highway to going about my day as if nothing had happened. As the days/ turned to weeks and we tried desperately to P pickup the pieces, I began to remember every little detail about her. Her eyes, her laugh, all' those little stories she would tell. Its funny, I had met Emma only a couple of times in the years before, hanging out for a few hours while she was passing through Detroit.

> Then in October of 2001 she showed up at my house again, this time to stay awhile, and something happened. We connected; it was amazing, unexpected. I don't think . I slept for the next two weeks, we stayed up all night talking, telling stories, past and present, hopes and dreams. I don't think I've ever met someone that strong. She dealt with so much, pushed so hard. O f course it weighed on her, but she never let it slow her down. She carried so much on her shoulders but always moved with a light heart, always laughing and joking, inspiring everyone she met. We were supposed to go on the circus tour together, build a metal shop and start teaching people to forge and weld. She could show people how to blow fire, or to lay on a bed of nails ... I guess things don't always go as planned. It's kind of funny, she would always talk about death; she was thinking about going to mortuary school. It makes sense too, her obsession.

She had been battling cancer for years, she had accepted the fact that she was going to die, maybe even soon, and because of that she refused to be governed by fear, she refused to let beauty slip by unnoticed; the woman had heart. I guess that's what it boils down to; being with Emma, it made me really think about death. It's not just rhetoric — one day, every one of us will be dead, one way or another. We can sit back and watch life drip away, or we can splash it on the walls, write our poetry in our blood and tears. Yes, Emma died, but she is not dead. She lives on in me, in her mother Leslie, her father Terry, and in her sister Blair and in countless other people her life has touched. Her strength is infectious, it burns in me like a fever, and, armed with the tragic beauty of her life and her passing, I greet each new day, because I know I am not alone. None of us is — we all earn with us the memories of the people who went before, those we have lost. Emma knew the price she would pay and greeted it with open arms.

And while I'm sure she had regrets, I am equally sure that if she were alive today, she would still put it all on the line for a friend, for love, for hope. Yeah, life is short. Too short. Top short not to take any risks. Thank you, Emma, for your fearsome beauty and continued support.

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With all my heart, CB

[Image not archived]

destroyed.

> Do you consider yourself a specialist in revolution? Does your heart sing in your chest at the sound of words like coalition, consensus, spokescouncil, social justice, friendly amendment? Is your idea of a good time *a facilitated discussion intended to promote dialogue focusing on anti-oppression work in anti-authoritarian community organizing and movement-building for broad-based social change coming from a place of privilege?* Do you think there's always a good reason to have another meeting — or, in the words of one author, that "freedom is an endless meeting"? Brace yourself, my friend, the diagnosis is grim: it sounds like you have been infected with activism.
>
> Whoa, Nelly! I thought activism was a good thing, was *the* good thing — I thought we were trying to create a new generation of activists, who would, issue by issue and struggle by struggle, finally fix everything! Why criticize activism itself, the knight in shining armor were counting on to save us all?

Well, for one thing, activism today isn't something

we can all participate in. This is obvious, but the next obvious question should be whether it is setting the stage for something we can all join in, or just consolidating opposition as the private domain of experts. There's some of each going on, of course; but, sad to say, activism as we know it is something that seems to attract people who act, however unconsciously, as though they have something at stake in keeping the

sphere of social change all to themselves. The typical activist takes great pride in his status as Someone Who Cares, the implication being that those who are not activists are therefore apathists, Those Who Do Not Care; in every conflict, he is "on the side of the angels" — that is to say, as the civilians who are more aware of their own imperfections realize, against all of us. That activism attracts an inordinate number of such individuals, at least during the lulls between revolutionary upheavals, should come as no surprise: except in those moments when it really seems the world is about to change, who but those most prone to fighting and judging would choose to specialize in "fighting for justice"? To quote an

old cynic, "the urge to save humanity is almost always a front for the desire to rule."

This is not to say that activism is entirely the province of the self-centered and self-righteous, but rather that we must be careful not to let them — and those aspects of ourselves — set the tone for our efforts. Likewise, we have to be aware of all the ways we can intimidate or estrange others — not least of all, the ways our efforts not to do so can be even more alienating.

Take the buzzwords and sentiments above: regardless of your values regarding the important questions to which they ultimately refer, they either make you feel at home ("I, too, am an activist, Saving The World!") or totally alienated, depending on whether or not you already have (or want) a place as an insider in a certain activist

Despite all our proclamations to the contrary, revolution was still a mere concept for US. a fantasy future-the social revolution, when we would put into practice at last all those abstractions about transforming life; the personal revolution, when we would finally love ourselves as we were and live life like it really was ending one minute at a time. Calling for mass actions in the name of total liberation, we still hesitated to speak to one another about our dearest dreams; defacing diet billboards, decrying patriarchal propaganda, we still put off coming to terms with our own bodies, still wondered if it wouldn't be easier just to lose that weight than somehow persuade ourselves it was beautiful. All those declarations, those fables of revolution — perhaps they were just stuff and nonsense: such concepts spring from

culture. Think of the older homeless guy or factory worker — or, for that matter, the rebellious high school kid! — who comes to an activist spokescouncil meeting, and is impressed with the non-hierarchical atmosphere but finds the walls of jargon and procedure virtually impenetrable. Sometimes these folks do stick around, but we shouldn't flatter ourselves that they do so primarily because we've created a "safe space" with all our complicated processes — if they stick around, it's more often a tribute to their own courage and patience than to our sensitivity. We activists have tried to develop a code of behavior and language that is free of domination, an alienation-free protocol — but protocol itself is alienating, unless one is among those actively developing it. Raised as many of us were by middle managers from the middle class, we naturally tend to take it into our

the psychological needs of those who trade in them at least as much as from any insight into what is desirable or possible. Looking at the concepts we created, the

revolution we spoke of, it seems we needed to be in unreciprocated love with some apocalyptic event (just as many of us were, not coincidentally, with people) at least as much as we actually needed or expected one. This longing suffused everything with meaning, but it also made everything bearable — when we'd once felt, and still continued to insist, that it was all unbearable.

We had found ways of surviving, after all: we, who prided ourselves on our intransigence, who had lived through moments when it seemed the old order was truly crumbling and had pledged ourselves to defend and extend these or die trying, we too found ways to bide time and lose ourselves in routine, albeit a

hands to manage situations even in our attempts to relinquish power and privilege. Yes, it's critical that we make sure that our relationships are free of unhealthy power dynamics, as far as we're able; but when it comes to connecting our little circles to the broader social context, far better that we concentrate our energies on learning how to speak and translate other communities' languages than on developing our own perfect set of oppression-free norms, rules, and lingo.

Yet it's not just that we tend to alienate others incidentally, on account of our cultural conventions; sometimes our most deliberate actions are the most disempowering for others who would fight for control of their lives. If anything characterizes activists as a group, it is that we feel entitled to "organize, " to take charge wherever resistance occurs. All too often, when people begin

breaking out of the control of the usual authorities, activists assume command: the outraged or overjoyed crowd charges into the street, blocking the intersection, and holds that territory until the activist, negotiating with the police, announces that an agreement has been reached and now it's time to disperse. Activists set the tone and language for discussions, and thus limit the pool of possible participants in such discussions. Activists attempt to rally and direct opposition in communities, and end up setting limits upon the object and scope of that opposition — sometimes disconnecting it entirely from the lives of those who were first drawn to it because it involved them directly.

Activists establish themselves as the representatives of social change, and thus alienate from social change itself those who cannot see themselves reflected in these representatives. We have to get a

sense of our own little place in the social cosmos, of the scale of what we can do without overreaching ourselves or interfering with others' autonomy.

The role of "activist" must itself be ended and transcended to attain the ends it exists to pursue. Roles and specialization (i.e. division of labor) are inherent in and necessary to the capitalist nightmare; in this scarcity-based system, those who choose one role do not usually make it more accessible or inviting to others, but less so. If our goal really is to remake a world of universal self-determination, then our primary project must always be to enable others to gain whatever capabilities we have, not to engage in any form of symptomatic treatment for the ills of capitalist society.

So what can we do? We can maintain an awareness

toil, police, self-recrimination, it seemed the aftereffects of this repression could only be escaped by means of a transfiguring experience: perhaps one had to awaken, as the more privileged among us had been lucky enough to, under different constellations, surrounded by beautiful foreigners, to feel ready to revel, risk, revolt. But there were not enough foreign lands to accommodate all the individuals who needed this experience, nor ways to get them there: we would have to conjure them here, somehow, on domestic soil.

Pondering how to accomplish this, I began to suspect that the culture we revolutionaries had developed was not so revolutionary after all, that there might be more liberation going on during one of those power outages than there was in a hundred of our spokescouncil meetings. We had worked so hard to develop ways

of the ways our own psychological motivations for activism become obstacles to its effectiveness. We can focus on exercising, sharing, and reproducing our powers, rather than consolidating them. We can focus on what we are able to do without lobbying or directing others; we might even be more effective, not less, if we concentrated on resisting honestly for ourselves rather than for everyone. We would do well to remember that while we can make revolutions in our own lives, revolution itself is not just ours. We need to be done with the sort of false modesty that enables us to act like megalomaniacs while demurring that "we're not in charge" or "our own processes of self-criticism are never concluded." The real heroes are not activists, but rather those of other backgrounds who are willing to step out of their comfort zones to work or speak with us; it's great when we do our best to smooth

of interacting freely, had refined a complex system of cultural norms and models of conduct — all this, in order to be free of the old ones! Yet our anarchist protocol could feel as alienating as any other. Perhaps what we needed most was not new mores so much as more volatile situations, seeds which could contain any number of starting points. If someone could create a situation no one could believe, it might do a lot more to create anarchy than any activism by-the-numbers. If someone could do so in an infectious way — well then! Perhaps capital-R Revolution after all!

That revolution is, in fact, taking place today — it is • always taking place, though it usually has little.to do . with our rhetoric. It is simply the rupture point, the fault line running through every society. It is the threshold over which people pass into believing in miracles, for

the way for this, but we don't deserve the credit for it. At best, activists could be a "linking class" between diverse struggles and peoples, drawing on our personal fascination with resistance wherever it appears to help connect disparate resistances (Brazilian landless farmers to punk rockers, middle class mothers to homeless folks, abuse/ addiction counselors to eco-warriors) — not to "build alliances" for its own sake (or for the sake of creating a constituency for "community organizers" to "represent"!), but in order that individuals and communities might assist one another in their immediate efforts towards liberation.

So this is not a call for the end of activism for its own sake, either, but rather so it can finally give rise to the revolution we all hoped it would in the first place. In the following fragments we'll address just a few of the aspects of our activism that could use

reworking: the predominance of white privilege in certain activist circles (and the counterproductive ways white folks address this in each other), the pitfalls of valuing theory over action (and the useless infighting this can occasion), the ridiculousness of both "lifestyle" (read as: lazy) anarchists and their equally idle critics, and the apprehensions we all have about being seen as "extreme." Have fun reading, and try not to get too defensive — this isn't intended as an attack on anyone by means of ideas, but rather as an attack on ideas for everyone's sake!

lack of a better word — and, in that state of grace, find themselves able to enact them, to change things that were immutable before. Sooner or later, they return from across that frontier, even if they arrive as "committed lifelong activists" — and all the worse, really, for a people to be burdened with a class of activists who no longer honestly believe in miracles* One must be a real romantic, a maniac who trusts in fairy tales more than reality, to remain long beyond that horizon, let alone expect the world to join her there. But that — believing in the unbelievable — is what it will take for pur dreams to come true, is what makes such dreams possible at all.

So we would-be revolutionaries, if we would be revolutionaries, must find those fault lines in ourselves and trace them to the corresponding fissures in our civilization. And — more than that — we must live in such

a way that miracles are not unthinkable for us. We have everything to learn from the family that experiences an unfamiliar pleasure in responding to a sudden crisis, or the dropout who discovers that pure sailing free joy that human beings are capable of — that is our birthright and should be where the dead stares on the subwaybound daytoilers' faces are. That some yet persist from one day to the next, believing in miracles in a world that denies all magic and mystery, is itself the greatest of miracles: and proof that we can, in fact, do anything.

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Here we go again;

> Maybe you know the story of the young white anticapitalist who was arrested during protests against the Democratic National Convention in Los Angeles, summer of 2000. After being jailed, he was eventually thrown in general population at the prison, where he remained until his friends and family paid his bail. His first day in, another white guy, sporting some sketchy tattoos, approached him. "I appreciate what your movement is doing out there, " the stranger began.
>
> "Oh, you do? That's great, " replied our protagonist, relieved. Was this the masses, finally coming around?

"Yeah — I appreciate it, because its a *white* movement."

This didn't sound quite as encouraging. "I'm afraid I don't understand what you mean."

"Oh, you know what I mean."

"No, I don't, " insisted the young activist, torn between outrage, fear, and confusion — he wanted to point to the anti-racist values of his community, the work they'd done to confront the inequalities of the capitalist system, but when he thought about it, all his fellow activists and protesters, all the people arrested with him, they *were* almost all white. Distraught, ashamed, and hoping to avoid conflict, he spent the rest of the day hiding out from the guy with the swastika on his chest.

This encounter brought up a lot of difficult questions for the boy who lived it, as it still does for our community. It's no secret that, even though the subject has become more widely discussed over the past few years, white activists as a whole still have a lot of progress to make unlearning our role in the system of white supremacy. There are now some good dialogues going on about this, and one of the main reasons the subject hasn't been addressed before in Inside Front or other CrimethInc. materials is that we had little to add to the perspectives others were already offering. But at the same time, this issue is occasionally addressed in ways that are ultimately counter-productive — that obscure the real issues, or even alienate the people who most need to hear and listen to these critiques. Who's ready to rethink the ways white activists have been addressing the question of their own (and, more to the point, each others) privilege? Who dares to risk saying anything about such a sensitive topic?

Yet there's no getting around it: we have to consider not only how we can unlearn our racist programming, but also how we can encourage other white folks to do so who don't necessarily place political consciousness at a premium. Currently, the dialogue about race, class, and privilege is limited to the more political fringes of the punk rock scene; elsewhere, punks go on ignoring the issues, believing them to be the private domain of the vindictive and guilt-ridden. We can blame this on the general apathy and defensiveness of the white middle class; but all the same, if we don't do our part to make a critique of white supremacy common outside our oh-soright-on anarcho-punk ghetto, we have only ourselves to blame for it.

Is there anything were doing in presenting these issues that is needlessly alienating? Considering that we white folks have been raised to specialize in alienating others and each other, and that even the most vehement anti-oppression activist is still infected with the lust for power this society

teaches each of us, the answer is probably yes. We don't need another generation of white activists wallowing in guilt complexes, or attempting to create them in others — we need to focus on making actual progress towards overthrowing white supremacy. Considering one's racial privilege should appear to the public as a useful way to enhance one's relations with others, not simply a pastime for neurotic masochists. In the worst-case scenarios, white activists actually use the race issue as a way to get the upper hand in power struggles with other white activists: competing to speak "on behalf" of the ones not involved in the discussion, throwing around accusations rather than helping each other improve, we only hinder the struggle against white supremacy. In light of this, I propose we step back and reconsider some of our assumptions about race, privilege, and how to address them in our community and struggle.

Let's start with the classic question: why is there so little racial diversity in the North American anarchist movement? I can only address this as an insider, being a white kid myself, but I've got some hunches about whafs going on. First, I want to point out that the question itself is slanted: the more homogenous the circles the inquirer travels in, the more he will answer with an alarmist negative. There are in fact anarchists of all different ethnicities, colors, and classes active in the United States (whether they use the word "anarchist" to describe themselves or not), and the suggestion that there are not reflects as much on the speaker's narrow experience as it does on the conditions he purports to describe — asked this question, one might reply: *which* anarchist movement? Second, there are plenty of reasons people of color are hesitant to get involved in predominantly white anarchist movements. Historically, we white activists are fuckups — every time a struggle has gotten really intense or the government has really come down on some

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Punk, Activism, and White Privilege

From one white punk kid from a middle class family to another

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organization of color, we've been nowhere in sight (John Brown is pretty much the exception that proves the rule). Even today, most of us have made so little progress challenging our own racism and self-importance that I can only imagine how difficult it is for others to work with us; and even if that wasn't the case, it still wouldn't mean that the projects people in our community tend to take on, or the tactics with which we proceed, are necessarily relevant to folks from other communities — as I'll discuss further below. These are all pomts

that others in our community have taken great pains to emphasize, about which others can be more eloquent than I can.

Now let's try a follow-up question that is often glossed over: given that our communities — especially the North American punk rock scene are disproportionately white, in what ways is this a problem, and in what ways is it not necessarily one? Certainly,

by keeping to mostly-white social circles, white folks miss out on a lot of the perspectives and challenges to our comfort we need — not to mention hoarding for ourselves the power our privilege gives us. On the other hand, trying to figure out how to get folks from other backgrounds to join *our* movement is self-centered, if not imperialist: who says we have the answers to everyone's problems? Who says our tactics should be everyone's tactics? To the extent that people of color didn't participate in direct action against the World Trade Organization in Seattle because white activists created an uncomfortable environment, we have a problem we have to solve; but if it is also true that great numbers of people of color didn't participate because they thought they had better things to do, we should trust their judgment. This doesn't mean that we're necessarily doing the wrong thing by protesting there it may be good for everybody in the long run if we do — but that particular fight may be our problem, our responsibility. Before we assume that everyone who isn't there with us is just doing nothing instead, we need to educate ourselves about what they are doing in their own communities.

That knowledge will prove very important.

And speaking of communities, let's not throw out the baby with the bathwater — if punk rock appeals to a mostly white demographic, thats not necessarily a problem. The fact that, this being the case, punk rock will inevitably offer limited perspectives on the world and limited chances for white folks to learn to interact outside their comfort zones *is* an important factor to consider at all times; in view of this, punks will hopefully make an effort to look beyond the walls of their subcultural ghetto for insight and education, and take great pains not to be alienating or insensitive to those of color who are involved in punk. But the homogeneous nature of the punk scene (or, to be more specific, some punk scenes) is not necessarily an argument against its existence or value. In fact, if the punk/anarchist community was somehow transformed into a foundation upon which a reliable, predominantly-white revolutionary movement could be built that deserved trust and showed solidarity with other movements, that would be as worthwhile a purpose as any radical subculture could ever hope to serve.

> Many concerns about the overwhelming whiteness of certain activist movements center on the issue of representation, which I think is something of a red herring. For democratic, socialist, and communist governing structures, which are supposed to wield the disembodied power of the community at large, representation is an important issue, perhaps the most important; but anarchists, on the whole, do not believe

in "representation" — we don't believe in giving our power to others, prefer to represent ourselves. Some democrats and

person can represent all black people on a board of directors; anarchists don't believe that any individual can represent a group, or that any group, however similar the members may be in terms of ethnicity, gender, class, etc., can be summarized. Accordingly, anarchist

instead, whether the group is proceeding in a way that enables it to have the diversity it needs to accomplish the purposes for which it exists. For example, if a Food Not Bombs is intended to serve the needs of folks from diverse communities, it's stupid to have the cooking take place at a private house belonging to white people, where people from other backgrounds are less likely to feel comfortable; on the other hand, if you book a punk show in your basement and everyone who comes is white, that doesn't *necessarily* mean the event is consolidating power for white people at everyone else's expense — provided you re not gentrifying the neighborhood and driving your neighbors crazy, that is!

All t_his_ is *not* to say it isn't important for activists from predominantly white movements to develop relationships with people from other backgrounds. It *is* important, very important, and its something that rarely happens — so I want to talk about one way white activists can foster this, since the responsibility lies on us to make this possible. Again, it's not realistic or right on to expect people of other backgrounds, with different interests, to join a project once its already started and the goals, procedures, and tone established — especially not if the ones you re hoping to attract have been oppressed by people who look like you their whole lives. Projects that are to cut across ethnic lines have to be multiracial from the start, so they can develop with everyone involved having their interests respected and thus feeling a sense of ownership. But why would anyone of color want to start a project with white activists, anyway? If we want to work with people from other communities, we first have to build trust, establish actual friendships that common causes can be founded upon. To do so, we need to learn what revolutionary projects people of color are

> undertaking that we can get behind, and support these, following their initiatives in the process rather than seeking to impose any leadership of our own. This is right on, anyway, since we white folks have a lot of resources that it would be senseless to keep to ourselves. In the process of working together, people will get to know each other, and the next project, or the one after that, can be initiated together — provided you always keep an eye out for where your privileges can be applied for everyone's benefit, and where your conditioning is interfering.
>
> I want to add a few proposals that I hope can assist our community in making more progress with these issues. First, let's do our best to avoid framing discussions of specific cases in terms of whether a person, group, or tactic is "racist" or not — this approach immediately establishes a polarizing conflict complete with accusations, denials, all the makings of a long-term community-fracturing feud. It also provides an easy out for those not accused of racism to avoid reflecting on their own behavior: "I'm not one of the racists, " they can say to themselves, "we already purged _all_ of them." Instead, let's approach every discussion with the assumption that, as we were all raised in a racist society, we would all do well to consider

constantly how we can improve our conduct and consciousness. In such a context, discussion can focus on offering practical, constructive advice and perspective, rather than bogging down in debates between people who each believe that their subjective experience is the objective truth. Forget about whether you're "a racist" or not, "objectively" speaking — if someone else subjectively feels that you are behaving in a racist or insensitive manner, you should value their perspective enough to focus on listening instead of defending yourself.

Second, let's make a distinction between activities that *utilize* privilege and actions that *abuse* or *reinforce* privilege. Simply having privilege, or doing things that those without your privileges cannot, neither of these things alone is unjust. After all, we all have privilege to some extent or another: some have white privilege, some have the privilege of an able body, etc. The problem comes when individuals take their privileges for granted, or feel entitled to more privilege than others, comfortably accepting the advantages a hierarchical, discriminatory society has accorded them at others' expense rather than challenging these iniquities. But individuals possessed of privileges can take advantage of this to undermine the system that conferred them: the U.S. citizen staying in a Zapatista village so the Mexican army will not dare attack it is an example of this, the upper class dropout who spends her trust fund on rent for a community center may be another — assuming she doesn't behave as if she owns the place. If it is not the case that privilege can be applied for good, if simply having privilege in the first place is itself evidence of guilt, then the reactionary morons who characterize our politics as a race to the bottom in pursuit of the righteousness of total victimhood are correct in their analysis.

Therefore, it makes little sense to criticize, for example, white shoplifters for taking advantage of the fact that security guards pay less attention to them; the real question is, can this power be used in a way that helps in the Struggle against the system of domination, or does it necessarily reinforce that system no matter how it is applied? And assuming it can be used in such a way — say, by white kids stealing spices for a multi-racial Food Not Bombs — how can those white kids be persuaded to do so, rather than alienated by accusations of white privilege and guilt? From now on, we have to be very specific and very nuanced in all our considerations of the issue of privilege, not just throw the term around dismissively.

Finally, to ensure that all our discussions of this issue are more productive than vindictive, I have a suggestion: every time someone brings up white privilege in the punk/activist/anarchist community, they should give concrete, reproducible examples of approaches they have tried or at least heard about that have successfully addressed

it and worked to dismantle it This will ground discussions in the important question of how to change things, and circumvent the twin pitfalls of mudslinging and wallowing in guilt. I think that many people in our community really want to fight white supremacy in all its manifestations, but have no idea where or how to begin; the more examples we have to work from, the easier it will be for each of us to figure out how to get going. Hearing too much about problems without hearing about possible solutions can be overwhelming and immobilizing, anyway; it's always best to aim for a ratio of 50% critique to 50% proposition.

In that spirit, I'll conclude with a story from the small Southern city I sometimes call home, about an instance in which some punk rockers connected their activities to an issue affecting others outside their social stratum. I think it illustrates well the way activists can be a "linking class, " making the things different social groups do anyway into effective resistance tactics simply by Unking them to each other.

An innocent young black man was injured in a car accident; the police showed up before the ambulance did, and one of them shot him to death. Such a senseless murder is typical of racist police violence, but unfortunately that isn't the end of the story; when the parents of the murdered man called the police officer who killed their son a murderer, the police department sued them. Members of the activist community engaged the parents in dialogue, and they said they wanted to make a fuss about the murder and call attention to it

This is where the punks come in. Black-clad, patch-wearing punk rockers, the kind uptight activists and liberals often deride as alienating on account of their wardrobes alone, hved in this city. They didn't have a lot of money to help with the court costs, and they didn't have ties to any voting bloc that could be called upon to pressure the local government; but they did shoplift and screenprint and spraypaint a lot. Normally, these skills were only used to affirm their subcultural values in isolation from the larger community, but soon the parents of the young man had a closet full of screenprinted shirts to sell to raise awareness and legal funding, and the walls and sidewalks of the city came alive with graffiti: *Gil Barber killed by Deputy Gordy, Deputy Gordy=Murderer.* There were demonstrations organized, and great numbers of punk rockers and their friends turned out to show support for the parents and opposition to the pohce. All these combined to exert force back on the pohce, to make their callous court case cost them public support and let them know they couldn't expect to get away with murder. '

Nothing we could do could restore Gil Barber to fife, or make up for this tragedy; but the case against his parents was dropped, and now our communities are connected. Gil's mother, radicalized by the injustice done her but also by her good experiences with young folks in funny outfits, is now involved in other ongoing struggles, as others are in hers. It's a humble little story, but perhaps an example of what could be possible on a much grander scale.

[Image not archived]

"If you want to immobilize a person, ask him to speak more on a subject. The more he speaks, the less immediate his need to act will be."

-Bill Gates, inventor of the internet discussion forum

There are times when no distinction need be made between speaking and acting — in such situations, speaking is itself acting. And there are times when action is not yet called for, when discussion, deliberation, and planning must take place first.

There are other situations, though, in which people talk-or, more frequently, argue — instead of doing. Ideas and theories become commodities, extensions of their owners' egos, like the dogs at a dogfight; like the dogs at a dogfight, they are pitted against each other, each against all with the owners' rhetoric for claws, logic for teeth, and quick wits for reflexes. The glory of winning a debate, the gratifying knowledge that one is smarter than others, the righteousness of being right, these are exhilarating and addictive drugs — and when one has given up hope of ever effecting or experiencing real change, pursuing these consolation prizes can be a very seductive surrogate activity.

It is the nature of commodities that while they appear to increase the wealth and power of the one who possesses them, in fact they represent his dispossession-since, in capitalist society, one must give up parts of oneself (control over one's time and the products of one's labor and invention, faithfulness to one's conscience, the possibility of a life based on cooperation rather than competition) in return for the power to purchase substitutes for them. It is no different with ideas: when they become competing commodities, when there's not enough rightness and righteousness to go around and people struggle against each other to "win" arguments instead of benefiting from each other's perspectives, the ensuing competition can only maintain the dispossession of all involved by interfering with their power to find common cause or at least establish mutually beneficial relationships.

There are anarchists who "develop their theory" with the same obsessive energy others put into collecting and restoring fancy automobiles, who exhibit and defend their theses with that same fervor and combative spirit. In these contests of egos disguised as debate, whenever one wins an argument at the expense of good feeling everyone loses. It is just as important that we foster good relationships that can form a foundation for putting our ideas into practice as it is that we foster the ideas themselves. Theory serves the interests of no one as end in itself, though the personal gratification one finds in vanquishing a rival theorist can almost make one feel as though the revolution is that much closer. Theory is only one of many resources which

must be developed socially — that is, in a way that promotes respect, affinity, and trust-in order to arm individuals and groups to liberate themselves and protect each other. Anarchy isn't just a good idea in a vacuum — it is dialogue and mutual aid empowered to enforce the conditions which make them possible.

Some theorists whose bark is more frequent than their bite would defend their predilection for hostile, confrontational rhetoric and/or endless abstraction by arguing that, as the development of theory is never finished, it is folly to call for solidarity, outreach, and action in place of further discussion. But finished or not, we must con-

stantly act on our theories, as much as we think on them — otherwise our thinking will be ill-informed, to say the least. Theory is not some retirement fund one can work to cultivate and then finally cash in-theory is thought which informs ongoing action, or else it is thought without teeth. To misquote the famous buffoon, "a theory can only describe the world — the point, however, is to live in it." Or, in the words of a more recent wiseguy, "any idea which is allowed to flow into action is a spell cast for more of the same" — what spell are we casting when we get caught up in endless debates, instead?

And how are we to act with the power we can only have among friends, if our endless debates alienate us from each other?

We must once and for all discard the academic's notion that there is any real distinction between thinking and action; even the most silent actions speak volumes, and every articulation of thought is itself an action -even if it is merely a wordy opting for inaction. As actions should be evaluated according to whether they are good ideas, so articulations of theory should be evaluated according to their effectiveness as actions. The bestsounding theory is worthless if it results in no practice; the most educated debate is meaningless if it does not produce a change for the better in at least someone's life.

To make this concrete: Please, please, all you brilliant anarchist theoreticians, stop fighting amongst yourselves and figure out how to accomplish together the goals you have in common. No matter how smart you all are, your current squabbles are doing no one any good, not even yourselves.

Do you still insist that we answer your favorite question, that we declare what brand of anarchists we, which suffix we prefer to use to ghettoize ourselves? All of them, we will reply: we are anarcho-syndicalists on the shop floor, anarcho-primitivists in the forest, anarcho-communists when there's something to share, social anarchists in our communities, individualists when you catch us alone, insurrectionists when the shit hits the fan- above all, we are revolutionary anarchists, we are anarchists who believe that, as life and culture are essentially matters of context, it is up to us above all to challenge and transform this context and be prepared to start from scratch afterwards. Therefore, we don't waste much time prognosticating or constructing vast systems of protocol. We act now to change what outrages us and pursue what attracts us; we will reevaluate and act again later. We don't want to mistake our analyses for the world, nor mistake critique for liberation itself; we try not to get too comfortable with our ideological positions — they are chiefly tools with which we work towards change, not masters commanding it of us. We choose our individual strategies for enacting change based on our individual characteristics and preferences, as much as on abstract strategizing which may or may not prove accurate; we don't expect our theories and

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available from the CrimethInc. Antisectarian Sect, (address of our enemies here)
[Image not archived]

strategies to be relevant after the next big transformation — indeed, we hope they won’t be. Whether our ideas are objectively “right” or not matters much less to us than whether they actually succeed in improving our lives.

And which ideology do we endorse, what brand of tactics do we extol as the One True Way? Organized federations or networks of friends, direct action or “community organizing”? These distinctions are dangerously distracting, if not outright false dichotomies. We defend the right of our comrades to organize and act however they want, and, more importantly, we won’t waste everyone’s time criticizing others for choosing different models than we do. We’re grateful whenever others try something we wouldn’t — it saves us the trouble, since every strategy for resistance must be tried, until something works! Whether some strategy is platformist or lifestylist, individualist or pacifist or adventurist is of little concern to us, so long as it is directed at genuine liberation and carried out with a modicum of respect for those trying other strategies. We didn’t get involved in revolutionary politics because we liked sectarian infighting, or sports competitions, or politics for that matter; no, we simply wanted — and still want! — to get more out of life, to make it sweeter and fairer for all.

Being anarchists, aspiring to reorganize society on a cooperative basis and so studying the ways in which people can get along and support one another, we seek not to

outsell the competition — whether they be capitalists, evangelical Christians, or other anarchists — but to hone our own abilities to foster harmony and mutual aid, and offer tools for this project to whoever wants them. Solidarity, not as unquestioning unity but rather as the ability to build mutually beneficial relationships with others however different they may be from ourselves, is of the utmost importance in this undertaking. When we say "solidarity, " we mean neither simple allegiance to those who agree with us nor willingness to compromise ourselves in mutually unsatisfactory unions with those whose purposes run counter to ours. No, for us solidarity is a practice, a way of approaching every situation — it is almost a verb. Deeds are worth more than any words in this struggle, and actual cooperation is worth a million theoretical treatises on it.

A Letter to the Editors of Fifth Estate

September 2002, courtesy of the C.W.C. Anti-Squabbling Squad

"Just for the sake of argument — " I've just returned from the supermarket dumpster down the street, backpack full and graffiti pen empty, to a house from which CrimethInc. propaganda is distributed.

My friends look up from the piles of pamphlets and papers and posters they've been stuffing into boxes since morning, and cringe. "You know it's not going to be good, " says the one with the beard — "when someone wants to talk 'for the sake of argument.'"

"Yeah, " I allow, "that could have been an alternate title for that piece in the last Harbinger, 'Infighting the Good Fight.' All the same — I've been reading this piece in the new Fifth Estate, in which one Pono Bonobo endeavors to rescue pacifist anarchism as well as CrimethInc. — whatever the term means in that context — from those indignant class war anarchists, and I've been wondering: in point of literal fact, can't one actually use the master's tools to dismantle his house?"

"Well, yes, you can, " he rejoins — "but you can't use the master's tools to dismantle his tools."

"Fair enough — what are you supposed to dismantle his house with instead, I wonder?"

"We've all been trying to figure that one out, " laughs the one with the pigtails, folding a poster around a book. "I guess it's OK for everyone to try different things, so long as the house ends up dismantled and the tools in the ground."

"Yeah ..." I'm unloading perfectly good bananas and mangos, as two of them seal up a huge package to Puerto Rico. "Bonobo and this 'Ashen Ruins' person on the internet have been hashing it out over which approach, violent direct action or nonviolent stuff like naked marching, is more appealing to the masses and so on, but I don't personally see why we can't have a movement with a place for both, in which they complement each other."

"I've found both rewarding and effective, at different times, " offers my pigtailed friend, as she reaches for the tape.

"Some people are going to gravitate to one, and some the other, anyway — why not accept that and focus on how to integrate the two?" Beneath the bananas are big bags of salad greens. "And that brings me to my other question: I appreciate the editor's gesture of solidarity in rebuking anarchists who attack our projects, but I'm not sure if I think it's a good thing. I mean, it feels good for my ego, but that's usually a sign that something's dangerous."

"If we're being defended on the same grounds as we're being attacked, it's not so good, " suggests a fourth voice. "Contrary to some charges, I don't see us as being 'lifestylist' at all — I've never seen anything with the CrimethInc. name on it urging people to 'drop out until the system collapses.' We've published stuff about some ways people from the more privileged classes can survive without working, but I always thought the idea was to use that liberated space to wage war for everyone's liberation. Revolution has to happen, somehow, and to have time to work on it, some of us will have to get our lives out of the work economy." She goes back to answering a letter.

"What's this 'we, ' white man?" jokes back at her the smiling woman at the computer, deleting the orders for free papers that have been packaged this evening.

"The way I see it, " the bearded one begins again, hefting a bundle of tabloids, "the last thing we need is to be defended from our critics in the anarchist community. First off, if we're serious about focusing our energies outwards, to those who could be involved in this struggle but aren't yet" — he takes a marker and begins addressing a box to a kid in Texas — "rather than inwards, for more struggling of anarchist against anarchist, then it just perpetuates the internal conflicts for other parties to take sides. Clarifications of misunderstandings, apologies for mistakes, those things we need; more bad energy, more battles between egos, we don't. Second, I wonder if it's occurred to the people at Fifth Estate that we might not mind these attacks — maybe it's our role to say and be things that are unpopular. Maybe for some, we can be most helpful as an enemy, something to rebel or react against."

The woman looks up from the computer again, more serious. "It seems to me that we actually have a symbiotic relationship with the class war anarchists. Their diatribes can serve to bring the same things we're talking about down to earth — I've learned things from them before. And, especially if someone *does* misunderstand our efforts as 'lifestylist, ' that critique needs to be there to clarify what our literature did not. Our tactics don't and shouldn't work for everyone, and the Class Warriors are there to provide an alternative — viciously attacking us in print is just their way to let the world know it, and responding with insults of our own wouldn't improve anything. It's not like they interfere with our activities in practice."

"Yeah, the last place *Evasion* needs to be is the Wooden Shoe bookstore, " agrees the pigtailed one. "Everyone shopping there already has points of entry for other approaches to radical organizing and living."

I'm finally unloading the potatoes at the bottom of my pack: the class warriors are right, we can only hope, that we scavengers will have to find other sources of food once the revolution comes; but for the time being it's sad and absurd that they aren't here to help us share this vast bounty with hungry families around town. "If anything, I'm annoyed by the way our anarchist critics all seem to read the texts so carelessly — like in that piece on the internet: 'Flipping through their first book speaks volumes, ' or the other guy who brags that all he has to do is judge our book by its cover. I'll quote that Zapatista letter to *Green Anarchy" — I* rummage through the 'zine rack and find the issue — "here it is: *'If these "critiques" had included a detailed discussion on our tactics with reference to our history and current positions in the world, it wouldn't have been a big deal, nothing that we don't do constantly within our own organizations.' Without* that, it just seems like they're looking to make enemies."

"But that's just my point, " replies my bearded companion. "As long as we are getting that kind of constructive critique from some, we don't need every anarchist to read our work thoroughly, let alone praise it. We have to keep our eyes on the prize, as it were — keep focused on getting useful resources out to people not already involved in any anarchist community. That's the project we've taken on in this house, at least, right?" He gets a can of spray paint out to test a new stencil. "Anyway, that's why I wish our comrades at Fifth Estate, being well-versed in our materials and what *has* worked in our tactics to date, would focus on pointing out ways we can improve. We don't need defenders — or advertisers, at this point. We need insightful, creative critics."

All traveler kids purged from CrimethInc. membership

Dispatch from the CrimethInc. Central Committee for immediate release

Quitting your job was about having more time to do what needs doing, not just isolating yourself from the rest of humanity — wasn't it?

If one makes propaganda extolling what is revolutionary about shoplifting, one is not necessarily trying to get would-be revolutionaries to shoplift so they can be "more revolutionary" [obviously a stupid approach if there ever was one — although exploring the tactical benefits of shoplifting for a class of people looking to do less buying might make sense] — one might instead be trying to identify for shoplifters what is already insurrectionary in their actions, so they can broaden their analysis of their own lives.

Crimethought is not any ideology or value system or lifestyle, but rather a way of challenging all ideologies and value systems and lifestyles — and, for the advanced agent, a way of making all ideologies, value systems, and lifestyles challenging. It is not crimethought just to survive without a job by dumpstering, squatting, and hitchhiking; it is crimethought to realize that this lifestyle provides resources that can be used to revolutionize demonstration activism, or underground literature. It is not crimethought simply to distribute propaganda attacking the monotony and limited options of traditional employment; it is crimethought to create situations in which both workers and ex-workers benefit from each others' different experiences, and consequently discover new options and new adventures that were previously obscured.

The Stalinists, Surrealists, Situationists, and even Southern Baptists all had their bloody purges and internal dissensions, so why can't we, too? Having no membership should be no obstacle: we can still hold exclusions from time to time, just to be sure everyone remembers. These are festive occasions for us weathered politicos, analogous to the subtextual backbiting at the dinner parties of the bourgeoisie or the witch trials in the Salem, Massachusetts of old. But first, before we get into the fiery self-righteousness of the thing, some background.

It's been nearly a year now since I went through my entire proofing copy of the *Evasion* book in the dark back seat of a Greyhound traveling by night, with only my trendy activist headlamp for light. Even then, we knew already what the greatest drawback of publishing it in book form would be: all the general ideas in *Days of War, Nights of Love*, the inspirations and analyses and especially the rhetoric calculated to encourage revolt, would now be summed up in some minds by the specific formula spelled out by the stories in this new book. Even though *Evasion* is not a work of

political theory, or a prescription of tactics, but clearly a personal account, a memoir — even though we've maintained from the beginning that there is no single strategy for insurgency, but that everyone must invent and reinvent their own — it was inevitable that we would be misunderstood by some, and we accepted that in publishing the book.

In publishing it, we wanted — to articulate this for the thousandth and last time — to introduce an account (one of many) of work-free living to a wider readership, and thus challenge conventional notions about the sanctity of property and the misery of material poverty. With this cultural warfare, we hoped to do our part to expand the anticapitalist movement. Sharing particular scams, extolling the lifestyle of the scam artist, these were secondary goals at best. The 'zine had already been produced and distributed on as massive a scale as the infrastructure of our d.i.y. underground allowed, to the demographics who would be most likely to utilize its scams and emulate the author's life choices; we printed the book version to see if this narrative of refusal and adventure could sow other seeds outside its native environment. Some of the feedback we've received from beyond the existing activist and anarchist communities suggests that it has; but now it's time to shake off whatever success we've achieved, as one must always do to make space for new attempts.

And to speak, for the last time as well, of how our efforts, with this book and other projects, have been misunderstood. There is a certain kind of reader who, though you do your best to bring out the subtleties and ironies, will always focus on the most superficial, controversial terms in your works, and interpret your complex critiques as simple dismissals and endorsements ("paying=bad," "shoplifting=good" — or, far worse, "=anticapitalist"). Whether he professes to be your adversary or accomplice, it is best to avoid him altogether, for he will lower the level of dialogue on any issue to his own low denominator — and at that elevation, little of value can be discussed or achieved. Perhaps we can be blamed, in part, for creating some of these readers, by producing material that was too simplistic or too complex; perhaps this kind of reader is simply too rampant today to be altogether avoided by even the nimblest of propagandist's pens. One certainly can't say enough, though, that nothing in the world is one-dimensional.

So while this, too, has been said a million times, perhaps it will do some good to say it again in this context: the traveler kid lifestyle is not in itself at all revolutionary. It may surprise some to hear this from us — that shows how little they've been listening all along. Shoplifting, hitchhiking, scamming, unemployment — separated from a program of life- and world-transformation, all these are merely alternative tools for survival, a survival which makes do with and ultimately accepts the status quo. Yes, it *is* better, however infinitesimally, to steal products than to give money to our executioners — but it's not enough! Three millennia of shoplifting now, and the exchange economy is still thriving. If it's life we're after, not mere survival, as the old dichotomy goes, we can't just sit tight now in our squats and punk houses, eating dumpstered bagels and selling our shoplifted wares on e-bay; we have to keep

on risking everything to challenge the system that denies us the *rest* of the world, if for nothing else at least to continue challenging ourselves.

For the record, and to briskly repudiate every imbecile who has used "CrimethInc." as a synonym for scamming and freeloading, we've never been interested in being or being seen as partisans of any lifestyle; we've always insisted that being radical involves subverting all possible lifestyle choices, all traditional strategies and identities. Revolution occurs when some part of the social equation changes: when apolitical workers initiate a wildcat strike, when middle-aged mothers start to show up in the black bloc beside their sons and daughters, when vagabond dropouts integrate themselves into local struggles for affordable housing. The letters we receive from adult secretaries who have used CrimethInc. literature to inspire themselves to change their lives are infinitely more encouraging to me than the scores of teenagers reading *Harbinger* as they set out on the hitchhiking excursions young folks always have. Not that there is anything wrong with being a hitchhiking teenager — but to be a *dangerous* hitchhiking teenager, you must do something more than simply hitchhike, and interpreting anticapitalist texts as glorifications of your hitchhiking doesn't count.

I hopped my very first train just a few weeks ago, after nearly eight straight years of unemployment and anticapitalist agitation. For most of that time, I was never much of a hitch-hiking, train-hopping, scam-pulling traveler kid, and neither were most of the individuals I collaborated with — there are, believe it or not, a wide variety of other lifestyles that are equally conducive to such endeavors. The historical intersection of the latest wave of youth nomadism with the propaganda groups like ours have been spreading is, in some ways, unfortunate; it has had some good effects, but it has also made it easier for people to dismiss some radical ideas as the alibis of a new youth trend — or, worse, to believe that they are being radical simply by joining such a trend!

The creation of subcultural ghettos, the reinterpretation of subversive acts as promotions of some alternative lifestyle — these are processes by which opposition and subversion have been repeatedly neutralized over the past four decades, if not centuries. Yes, it is critical that we build new communities, with new cultural values and approaches, and that we not belittle these as "mere subcultures" when they do arise — for it is in these communities that we can develop and sustain a resistance, and create a context in which to lead free lives. It is also critical that we keep challenging these communities, that they do not become stagnant or self-satisfied: for as long as we are all under the great thumb, freedom is always for all or none.

CrimethInc., and for that matter (and far more important) crimethink, are not membership organizations, anyway. Subverting is not something you *are*, it's something you *do*, and must find new ways to do in every attempt. Let's not rest at expelling the traveler kids — hell, we're *all* expelled, time-tested CrimethInc. agents first and foremost! Even the most experienced of us insurrectionists must start from scratch every morning to foment insurrection, shaking off the inertia of the past to see anew what the current context calls for. When we succeed in doing this, we can change the

world, for it is inertia above all that keeps the wheels spinning as they do. If we cannot, we are done for — we will be more anachronists than anarchists, and our activism mere retroactivism.

And so now we turn away from the past, from all explanations and justifications and apologies, to face the future and the experiments we have in store for it. Doubtless, they will occasion comparable storms of controversy and misconception, if we are ambitious enough to keep pushing our own limits and hazarding schemes crazy enough to work. So, all would-be crimethinkers are hereby expelled from CrimethInc. — whoever can discover the strategies for the next offensive, set the terms for the next infectious revolts and heated debates and social upheavals, let them claim it for themselves! Expect our next book, or one of them, to be a liberation manual for middle-aged mothers, not another youth's chronicle of willful indigence. In the meantime, let's us traveler kids stop congratulating ourselves on how free we are and start using that word, *free*, as a verb, not an adjective.

"On one point we are in unqualified agreement with our critics: it is of the utmost importance that CrimethInc. be absolutely and categorically destroyed. Unfortunately, for this to be possible, it is necessary to overthrow capitalism and Western Civilization in general. In this endeavor we wish them well, and will assist them where we can.

WHEN IT WORKS...

It's distressing how many avowedly anarchist groups, who evangelize publicly in favor of non-hierarchical blah blah blah, are plagued by authoritarian and coercive internal dynamics. On the other hand, considering how much trouble even the best of us can have getting along with each other in relatively stress-free circumstances, its really phenomenal how many punk bands, composed largely of emotionally disturbed young people suffering from mental illness, have all the same succeeded in working together long enough to record artistic masterpieces and even tour the globe repeatedly. Anyone who's tried either of these things knows how emotionally taxing they are — especially without any social support system or financial means to speak of.

The art of cooperating closely with a few comrades under pressure is probably the most important skill the hardcore punk milieu can foster. When they function, affinity groups such as the punk band are notoriously capable of achieving triumphs out of all proportion to their small size — and not just in the realm of rebellious music, either; additionally, they function as a scale model demonstration of how an anarchist society operates. Besides —

if we can't make three, five, and eight person collectives work, how are we supposed to succeed in overthrowing capitalism and making a world where we all get along?

So without further hoopla: some of the various strains of band pathology, and how to treat them.

Specialized

Roles, Ideological Centralization, and the Provisional Dictatorship of the Singer

One pattern especially seems to recur over and over in the case of the "political band": the singer versus everybody else. Who's to blame for this?

Division of labor means that every member becomes specialized in his or her instrument — and, often, in the accompanying role associated with that instrument. Bassist jokes[1] aside, the one most deeply affected by this is usually the singer. Already likely to be outgoing and expressive by temperament, the singer finds herself/himself in the role of using words and thoughts to represent the whole band. Lyrics and accompanying song explanations are expected of her/him, interviews tend to be directed at her/him,

bandmates will count on her/him to introduce the songs while they fine-tune their instruments. All this serves to reinforce her/his inherent authoritative tendencies (let's not kid ourselves — we all have some), and soon being the spokesperson comes naturally.

The best analogy to use here is the Communist State — the singer has become The Party, whose White Man's Burden it is to educate the Masses, starting of course with

the Proletariat of his own band: the other members, the ones who actually manufacture the useful product (the music, without which there could be no band). He, of course, is only giving voice to the politics they already hold unconsciously — he is the Vanguard, and this gives him the important responsibilities of managing their labor, representing their interests, issuing statements on behalf of the group, etc.

Being able to express one's feelings in words, to speak one's mind publicly, to articulate complex ideas on the spot, all these are valuable skills to have — the problem is not that the singer exercises these, but that the way the band tends to function develops them in this one person and not in the others. The singer may well be saying and organizing things that need saying and organizing,

and he or she may for that matter be the one who takes the most responsibility for important matters such as the relationship between the band and other people (thanking people who lend equipment, being personable with hosts and other bands, etc.) — but this specialization is not usually sustainable, and never healthy. Tensions develop between the different class strata of the band, now that they have different interests according to their different roles. Seriously, how many bands have broken up because the dissensions between the singer and the rest of the musicians became unbearable?

In a worst case scenario, your Singer will metamorphose into a Dictator. Responsibility and responsibleness alike tend to flow in one direction once a pattern is established. The more one person does, the more

she or he knows how to do, and feels invested in these things getting done — and the less everyone else does. Worse, that person can thus become unwilling to trust others with responsibilities, just as others cease to be aware of how much work there is to be done and what it takes to do it. The Dictator blames others for not taking on responsibilities they don't even know exist; the others blame the Dictator for hostility and resentment they lack the context to understand.

Its worth clarifying here that The Singer in question may not actually be the singer, strictly speaking, of the band — it might be a guitarist, tambourine-player, even a bassist (!) playing this role. Hell, the actual vocalist of your band might be the most tight-Upped, antisocial, irresponsible person in the group. The phenomenon of The Singer

is a social affliction that tends to take root in singers but can appear elsewhere (just as even in interactions between women, it can happen that one plays The Man). An instrumental band might end up with a Singer, despite themselves — that's the danger of division of labor of any kind, even the most informal or accidental. For that matter, one member might play The Singer for some time, and then another member slide into the role.

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So how do we protect ourselves against this cancer? There's the reformist approach: try to keep your Singer in check with continuous feedback, constantly apologize for the position of privilege and power you hold as Singer, etc. And then there's the radical

approach — change the structure of the band unit itself: eliminate The Singer as a musical or organizational role, rotate the

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role from member to member, form bands in which everyone sings. Neither strategy can work without the other, really: no radical restructuring of band format could by itself undo the effects of the decades of hierarchical conditioning all of us have already undergone, and at the same time it's foolish to think people in structures that are conducive to specialization and centralization can behave differently just by deciding to.

Harmony, Not Unity

Many political punks approach band-forming with the idea that to work together, be (seen as) sincere, etc., all members of a political band must share a specific political platform, a certain lifestyle, and a strict code of conduct. And you thought the pressure to conform was bad in high school! Once again, "radical" ideologies that neglected to do away with hierarchy (such as Communism) have historically demanded such standardization from their ranks, and have ended up with consequently sterile movements, artwork, and societies; anarchist thinking, on the other hand, suggests that diversity is necessary to any healthy ecosystem or organization.

Greater diversity gives you a wider range of inspiration and ideas to draw on, and makes for better music; and since human beings are always different, even when they try to homogenize themselves, any value system that encourages conformity can only spawn dishonest and superficial relationships and projects.

A collective of would-be clones can learn to do one thing well, at best; a circle of unique individuals can do many differing things that complement each other. The best bands are the ones that engage the sum total of all that the different members have to offer, not the ones who limit themselves to what they have in common. Some of the really great moments in punk rock have come when bands that "should have" broken up over ideological and artistic differences stuck together long enough to make one more beautiful, eclectic masterpiece. Let your drummer bring in techno remixes, your bassist design matching costumes, your guitarist expound on the post-Marxist implications of improvisation, and see what happens — that Conflict record you admire for its seeming political and artistic

single-mindedness has already been recorded.

Starting from diversity is as important as fostering it. Everyone is unique, of course, and it can happen that there is more divergence of personality, skills, and experience between two people of the same background than between individuals from differing demographics — but that said, it sure can be a great thing for a band to include members of different genders, social classes, ethnicities, cultures. When people from such differing backgrounds learn to understand and respect each others perspectives, complement each other's strengths and weaknesses, and form symbiotic relationships

on the basis of their differences — that's revolution in action, even if it's just a handful at first.

Almost needless to say (in these pages, at least), bands composed of members proceeding from widely differing conditions of privilege will have to work extra hard on learning to interact as equals. Oppressive patterns — middle class people tending to take over the organizing, working class people to do the physical labor, men to

make decisions in ways that exclude women, etc. — come with us into our bands from the hierarchical world that raised us; lets make these bands social laboratories in which we learn how to break these patterns, in preparation for breaking that world.

Make Those Autonomous Zones Expandable!

Achieving supportive, non- hierarchical relations inside of your band is great, but it's not much use to the world unless it helps others do the same. Here we must address the role bands, even punk bands, play in the society of the spectacle.

Let us return to The Singer. Watching a band play, audience members tend to unconsciously identify themselves with the singer, the same way a spectator in a movie theater identifies with the hero on the screen, or a reader with the protagonist of a novel. This explains why so many people willingly shell out their hard-earned money for recordings of hip hop artists bragging about how much they earn from record sales — — the listener identifies with the MC rather than as the victim of his money-making scheme, at least while the album is playing. This displacement of agency is at the root of the powerlessness of todays average Joe: the power to be creative is projected onto the successful novelist, the power to play sports onto the basketball star, the power to make history onto the politician.

The question for the anarchist musician is how to enable rather than disable hsteners. That's tough, because what were dealing with in the case of the punk band is a specialized, perhaps technically

proficient, group creating what is essentially a spectacle, a "show" Keeping these shows small-scale, so the performers and spectators can interact as individuals rather than only as people playing those roles, is one solution; creating performances that demand or provoke audience participation is another. Maintaining humility, and keeping your eyes on the prize of extending whatever powers you develop for yourself to everyone else, are essential. Ultimately our goal should be to make the punk community something like an extended open mic circle, in which everyone has a turn to receive attention for their creative efforts.

Finances

Capitalism plays into the division between artist and audience too, of course. A punk band trying to operate under capitalist conditions needs to have a clear analysis of the challenges they're up against, and which compromises they're willing to make,

if they want to be anarchist in deed as well as word. That's why we punks have always tried to keep our record prices low and our door costs sliding-scale, and scorned the pursuit of mass popularity.

The aforementioned hip hop artists are not the only hip hop artists, of course; they're just the only ones who have time and other resources to focus on their art, since everyone else is too busy earning money to pay for food, housing, and — their records. We punks have developed an anticonsumerist, anti-rock-star ethic to ensure that a greater proportion of our numbers can engage in creative pursuits; but it's still expensive to buy, maintain, and transport conventional musical instruments, and that money has to come from somewhere.

Your band will need a collective fiind to pay for this stuff. That fund will probably have to be started from a pool of your own private capital, and will hopefully come to sustain itself as you get established enough to break even. Try to resist the temptation to solve all your problems by making a lot of money off the band — remember, there's not all that much money in the punk scene, and the more of it you get, the less others have access to for their own projects and needs. You don't need to make a living off your band — you need to develop a lifestyle that enables you to play in it. Seek out other ways to meet your needs — dumpstering food, sharing living quarters, having fun playing music or writing graffiti instead of going to the movies. You'll probably need to make some money in short bursts of wage labor — medical studies, crop harvests, working and quitting, whatever — to pay for your needs and remain free to go on long tours.

It may seem crazy, voluntarily choosing poverty, perpetual uncertainty, exclusion from mainstream economic and social relations just to play music; in the bleak moments, it will feel like you've exiled yourself from the whole world for nothing. But you are investing in something that will pay off, too, something much more rehable than the material wealth of today's erratic market. You're building relationships, community, shared resources ("social capital") — the foundation for a good life no full benefits package could ensure.

Commitment

Commitment is the bedrock social capital is built on. When you give up all the false riches and reassurances of the capitalist nightmare, you'll

need this from each other more than

anything else.

The world we live in, or rather, what world we live in, depends entirely upon our investments: we go on living in this world of sales, wages, rent, and cages because every day, everyone wakes up and — seeing no other viable option — invests their day's activities in surviving within its structures, thus perpetuating them. If you can somehow invest all your energy in creating and perpetuating another world, that world exists at least to the extent that you exist — that's the logic of living a radical lifestyle.

Now, one person alone living and believing against the grain can barely survive, let alone make a real impact; but a small tribe of people who reinforce and sustain one another can thrive, and help

others open doors to new worlds of

their own.

The anarchist punk rock underground, at best, is a network of such tribes, all trading support and inspiration with each other and helping plant seeds that could grow into new realities. At worst, it's just another messy, unhealthy social scene. The most critical, decisive element in the struggle between these two incarnations of punk rock is commitment. A group of people who are ready to go, ready to go through whatever, who know they will be faithful to each other and their dreams through the hardest of times, need not be perfect; as time passes, they will learn what they need to learn and improve where they need to improve.

All that energy that goes into

making skyscrapers, writing computer programs, and stripmining mountains comes from us and folks like us. Even something as simple as buying groceries or gas is an act giving great power to the corporations who maintain the status quo. That same great power is ours when we invest our energy in shared projects instead of dictated routines. Even being at liberty to try this option, no matter how difficult it may be in the trying, is a rare privilege in this society — but that's all the more reason to do so, for everyone's sake, to whatever extent you're able; and playing in a punk rock band is a well- tested model for such an experiment.

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When you're considering which people to form a band with, characteristics like musical

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by a burning desire to play can acquire these. The most important question is — are they down? Likewise, if you want to get anywhere playing punk music or working in cooperative groups of any kind, the most important characteristics you can develop in yourself are commitment, dedication,

reliability, responsibility.

Don't let your friends down in a tough situation. Let them know, through your actions, that they can count on you for everything you undertake together.

Three of us can share and minimize rent and food costs, make heartbreaking, riot-starting music, and tour the globe; ten of us can grow vegetables, home-repair vehicles, and set up a long-term housing project; one hundred of us can establish a permanent commune, organize citystopping demonstrations, and fan out across the country to share those skills with ten thousand more — but it all comes down to commitment!

Don't Be a Fucking Jerk

I wish this didn't need saying, and you may not think it does — at least not until pursuing your visions of punk rock revolution to the ends of the earth lands you and your best friends in your first, or fiftieth, really trying catastrophe.

If you raise your voice at your bandmates, apologize explicitly as soon as you can, and try to work out the reasons you lost your head so you can avoid it next time. If one of them raises his/her voice at you and then apologizes, make it clear you accept the apology and

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behavior comes in subtler forms: sulking, sarcasm, insensitive teasing, refusing to participate in discussion, dismissing others' perspectives or needs. Forcing others to be the responsible ones (always being the one drinking, never considering others' needs until they remind you, etc.), or to patiently absorb the stress of your outbursts because you're too volatile for dialogue, these are also coercive. If you find yourself thinking it necessary to "get tough" with your

what your bandmates are going through or need support in — or even that they're going through anything at all — just by watching from a distance; you have to be someone they know they can come to for support, someone they will want to come to no matter whafs going down. This is important between all people, but especially so for a small group undertaking long-lasting, high-stress projects in close quarters. Don't get too comfortable in the role

so much if the promoter isn't able to scrape up as much gas money as you'd hoped.

Translating

To repeat it once more: communication is central to collective activity, and ifs a voodoo art if there ever was one. No two people speak the same language the same way — different words, gestures, actions always mean different things to different people. Don't

Punk Capital

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bandmates by raising your voice or acting in other ways that make them uncomfortable — or for that matter thinking that they somehow deserve this treatment for something they have done! — then make no mistake about it: you are becoming an authoritarian. Join the fucking cops, get married and raise some kids you can beat the shit out of, whatever, but get the hell out of punk rock — or get your act together.

Make yourself accessible and approachable for dialogue at all times. You may not be able to tell

of supporter, either — you need to be just as comfortable seeking support as offering it; and if you're offering support, you'd better be sure you're receiving it from somewhere too.

Lastly, above all — make sure you're doing something you really want to be doing. This will make you more accommodating and good-spirited, not to mention the fact that needing "compensation" to justify your activity, as you did when you were waiting tables or washing dishes, will now appear ridiculous. If you really love the music you're playing and the people you're with, you won't care

get angry and self-righteous about communication breakdowns — there's no "right" way to communicate, no One and Only Way to handle things; anyone who tells you different is trying, consciously or not, to impose their personal system upon the cosmos. On the other hand, some ways do work better than others — ultimately, the only thing that matters is that your group finds a common speech or method that enables you to figure things out with each other.

Something else not to forget: whenever the composition of

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your group shifts, or even when it remains the same but the people inside it go through changes (as we _all_ always are), you'll have to figure everything out all over again. Even the addition of a new roadie may throw off all the dynamics you had come to rely on; and when you have a new band member or two, don't assume that you can simply march forward according to the plans and procedures you'd worked out before.

Band Dynamics: A Round Table, Not a House of Representatives

Imagine the relationships in your band as a system that can be diagrammed: support and information pass between some members more than others; pair bonds are formed, tighten, loosen. All this is inevitable, and fine enough; but the general shape of the system has critical effects on the way it works for those inside it. Some bands have circular systems, in

which communication takes place between all, or, if two members are not interacting as much, they are linked to each other by everyone else; other bands develop linear systems, in which at some point in the chain of relationships there is one person who alone connects one group or individual to the rest. The circular system is healthy and durable; the linear system is risky and fragile.

Linear dynamics may not necessarily be accompanied by hierarchical power structure — but at the very least, they tend to encourage power

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GOOD DYNAMICS: A CIRCLE, NOTA LINE

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unhealthy and disempowering: the politicians who claim to "represent" our interests in this so-called democracy inevitably fail us, for one can only learn one's own interests by representing oneself. Even if the linking member earnestly makes every effort to represent the needs of two parties to each other, he or she does a disservice to both by enabling them to avoid figuring out how to communicate directly. Additionally, the stress this representing imposes on the linking member, especially if one or both sides are being aggressive, can be extremely difficult

to bear. This stress, like all stress in a band situation, is inevitably passed back on to everyone else again — so don't try to be a hero, solving everyone's problems and carrying the whole group forward on the strength of your diplomacy.

The linear dynamic is a classic problem for bands (and entire touring groups) in which two members are involved in a love relationship, since in our society people in such relationships are encouraged to isolate themselves from others and form one unit, the

polarization. As in the case of the singer-vs.-band dynamic, the skills and needs of the people occupying the two (or more) ends of the line evolve independently of each other, and the resulting specialization of interests can lead to conflict.

Communication, which ordinarily would resolve such conflicts, is especially difficult in a band that has linear dynamics, because the one person who links the two "wings" of the band has to represent them to each other. Representation is already recognized by anarchists as

joint interests of which are then related to the group by one of the two. Blame monogamy monoculture for this. We don't necessarily need to stop fucking and sucking our bandmates and vanmates, but when we are we need to be especially aware about keeping communication mutual and representation to a minimum. Non-monogamy, not in terms of sex so much as relationship expectations and dynamics, has a lot to teach us on this subject

Avoiding linear band dynamics is as easy, and as hard, as solving every other internal band problem: watch out for bad patterns, keep lines of communication open, don't be a fucking jerk. Remember not to carry someone else's load when it comes to communication, any more than any other responsibility; remember also not to be so difficult to approach that others avoid you.

you won't get infuriated at the kids putting on their first basement show for not knowing how to make your vocals loud enough; have extra maps in the van in case of bad directions. Feel confident enough in your instincts to be able to say a gentle "no" to the drunk gutter-punk who creeps you out when he asks to borrow your amplifier — you don't want to have any more bad experiences than necessary, since you'll need to feel comfortable lending that amp

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It may well happen in a crisis situation that one member will retreat into isolation from the rest of the band, fearing or resenting all of them except perhaps the one who knows best how to communicate with him or her. This situation will not be resolved until the others can recognize his or her needs, and the individual can feel support coming from all of them. As the success of any collective project depends on everyone involved, this should always be possible, somehow — it had better be, since in the long run no shortcut or substitute will suffice.

Protect Your Idealism

Part of being an anarchist is not setting yourself up to be disappointed. Your faith in other human beings, your trust that they can be responsible for themselves and each other, is more integral to what you're doing than anything else — so whenever possible, don't give people unnecessary chances to let you down. Carry toilet paper with you, so when there's none in the bathroom at the squat you won't hold the whole punk scene accountable for it; learn how to operate a P.A., so

to other bands for many years to come. Know what you need, and ask explicitly for it as far in advance as possible, but be self-sufficient and durable too. Enjoy developing these qualities in yourself, so you can consider it an exciting challenge, a final exam of sorts, when your show turns out to be in a one-outlet barn barely above freezing[2] — instead of feeling yourself a martyr crucified by the laziness and stupidity of an unfeeling world.

Ultimately, you should be able to thrive in any kind of environment or

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cultural context (being on tour is all about learning not to need to impose your own), and to be grateful for whatever people have to offer you, no matter how humble it may be — since in the d.i.y. community, where we've done away with notions of

debt and duty, everything given is given only out of generosity. Approach everything in this way, and you'll be easy for everyone else to work with — not to mention you'll have a better time yourself.

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When Times Get Tough...

Remember, as long as we live in this cutthroat society, troubled relationships are going to be inevitable. That's why were fighting in this revolution! The dynamics within our groups and ourselves mirror the patterns of strife in the larger world around us, and we can't expect them to be much healthier than it is. The struggle to heal one is the struggle to heal the other, and neither struggle will be concluded until both are. The good news buried

in this conundrum is that whatever you discover that does work within your small circle may well also work to change the world at large.

It might help, when things get really bad and you start to feel ashamed of your group, like you're all a bunch of phonies and have nothing to offer the world or even each other, to consider all the other beautiful, important things that anarchists like yourself have accomplished — that great Amebix record, the resistance in the Spanish Civil War, the millions of meals served by Food Not Bombs.

You can be sure all those feats were only barely snatched from the teeth of internal dissension, resentment, and pessimism. Everything good we achieve, we achieve because were willing to engage in projects that are imperfect — and to forgive ourselves and our relationships for that imperfection. The only thing that is perfect is nonexistence. Hold out a little to see what good you might still be able to accomplish, however flawed, before you opt for that.

Fallout and Aftermath

Sooner or later, even with the best

* At the risk of sounding like a maniac, I'll own that on the last tour we did, during which we played in a number of unheated squats in the middle of winter, I carried a thermometer with me and distracted myself on many a cold night by comparing that night's temperature reading against other nights'. Make the hard things into a game, whenever you can — don t take your sufferings too seriously.*

internal dynamics anticapitalism can buy, your band is going to break up. That's inevitable, just like death (and the eventual abolition of taxes, god damn it). Things may well end in emotional drama and disappointment. Don't beat yourself up over this — learn what you can, and move on. Again, none of us are perfect, and recognizing that, being comfortable with it, is as radical and positive as our efforts to improve ourselves.

too proud to admit its not working). Seriously, who wants to end up touring with the same songs into old age, like the Rolling Stones?

So don't get demoralized — take every lesson you learned, every skill you gained, every idea that has yet to see expression, and make that capitalist system regret it ever let you get out alive. Hope to see you in the basements — hope we'll take it to the streets.

makes it necessary for everyone to be perpetually packed into whatever indoor space is available (the van, the basement, the promoters tiny apartment), and thus it can be hard for band members to get the space and time apart they need.

** It's best there are at least two people who identify as women in every touring group, if possible. An all-boy group will inevitably lack certain important perspectives and input, and a lone woman in a group of boys*

A be&n ;^ *art *

oh Achilles heel for this whole idea, its tote, especially sine® the mote money anyone mokes, the more they wont to make .

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. new prices! Uh, just joking...

The fact that it comes to an end doesn't have to mean you were doing the wrong thing, either. It's like the objection people sometimes bring up against non-monogamous relationships — "Oh, I know some people who tried that, but they ended up breaking up." Being able to have a healthy relationship includes knowing how and when to conclude it: the conclusion is not necessarily an indication of inherent problems. Not being able to conclude, on the other hand, might be (think of the miserable monogamous marriage that drags on forever, the inmates

Send requests for band counseling, bitter denunciations of your bandmates, and videotapes of shows we played (that would be swell!) to Punk Rock Retirement Plan, c/o C.W.C.

Some final hints:

☒*Touring in winter [north of the equator] is much more difficult, emotionally and socially, than touring in summer — not only because of the emotional impact of the weather itself, but also because the cold*

is going to have to deal with a lot of frustration on her own. All-woman groups, on the other hand — well, our scene could use more of them!

☒*When a new member is going to join your band, don't make too many plans for the time after she or he is to join without her or him involved in the decision-making process.*

☒*Plan time apart from each other, and time together that has nothing to do with the band, into both your tours and the rest of your lives. You won't regret it!*

PEERING THROUGH THE FOG BEHIND HIS EYES, HE SAW AN ALCOHOLOGRAM: A WORLD OF ANGUISH, IN WHICH INTOXICATION WAS THE ONLY ESCAPE. HATING HIMSELF EVEN MORE THAN HE HATED THE CORPORATE KILLERS WHO HAD CREATED IT, HE STUMBLED TO HIS FEET AND HEADED BACK TO THE LIQUOR STORE.

ENSCONCED IN THEIR PENTHOUSES, THEY COUNTED THE DOLLARS POURING IN FROM MILLIONS LIKE HIM, AND CHUCKLED TO THEMSELVES AT THE EASE WITH

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body produces energy and focus on its

WHICH ALL OPPOSITION WAS CRUSHED. BUT THEY, TOO, OFTEN

HAD TO DRINK THEMSELVES TO SLEEP AT NIGHT — IF EVER THOSE VANQUISHED MASSES STOP COMING BACK FOR MORE, THE TYCOONS SOMETIMES FRETTED TO THEMSELVES, THERE'S

GONNA BE HELL TO PAY T ‘ ;W

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own, as thousands of generations of evolution have prepared it to do. If she drinks coffee regularly, soon her body lets the coffee take over that role, and she becomes dependent upon it. Thus does alcohol artificially provide for temporary moments of relaxation and release while impoverishing life of all that is genuinely restful and liberating.

If some sober people in this society do not seem as reckless and free as their boozer counterparts, that is a mere accident of culture, mere circumstantial evidence. Those puritans exist all the same in the world drained of all magic and genius by the alcoholism of their fellows (and the capitalism, hierarchy, misery it helps maintain) — the only difference is that they are so self

abnegating as to refuse even the false magic, the genie of the bottle. But other "sober" folk, whose orientation to living might better be described as enchanted or ecstatic, are plentiful, if you look hard enough. For these individuals — for us — life is a constant celebration, one which needs no augmentation and from which we need no respite.

Alcohol, like Prozac and all the other mind-control medications that are making big bucks for Big Brother these days, substitutes symptomatic treatment for cure. It takes away the pain of a dull, drab existence for a few hours at best, then returns it twofold. It not only replaces positive actions which would address the root causes of our despondency — it *prevents* them,

alienated consumer society: without consuming products, we can't live! We try to buy relaxation, community, selfconfidence — now even ecstasy comes in a pill!

We want ecstasy as a way of life, not a liver-poisoning alcoholiday from it. "Life sucks — get drunk" is the essence of the argument that enters our ears from our masters' tongues and then passes out of our own slurring mouths, perpetuating whatever incidental and unnecessary truths it may refer to — but we're not falling for it any longer! Against inebriation — and *for* drunkenness! Burn every liquor store, and replace them with playgrounds!

Spurious Rebellion

Practically every child in mainstream Western society grows up with alcohol as the forbidden fruit their parents or peers indulge in but deny to

them. This prohibition only makes drinking that much more fascinating to young people, and when they get the opportunity, most of them immediately assert their independence by doing exactly as they've been told not to: ironically, they rebel by following the example set for them. This hypocritical pattern is standard for child-rearing in this society, and works to replicate a number of destructive behaviors that otherwise would be aggressively refused by new generations. The fact that the bogus morality of many drinking parents is mirrored in the sanctimonious practice of religious groups helps to create a false dichotomy between puritanical self-denial and life-loving, free-wheeling drinkers — with "friends" like Baptist ministers, we teetotalers wonder, who needs enemies?

These partisans of Rebellious Drunkenness and advocates of Responsible Abstinence are loyal adversaries. The former need the latter to make their dismal rituals look like fun; the latter need the former to make their rigid austerity seem like common sense. An "ecstatic sobriety" which combats the dreariness of one and the bleariness of the other — false pleasure and false discretion alike — is analogous to the anarchism that confronts both the false freedom offered by capitalism and the false community offered by communism.

Alcohol and Sex in the Rape Culture

Let's lay it on the table: almost all of us are coming from a place where our sexuality is or was occupied territory. We've been raped, abused, assaulted, shamed, silenced, confused, constructed, programmed. We're

Oil

Massive Appendix:

***Straight £dge: Against His-Story, ***

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badasses, and we’re taking it all back, reclaiming ourselves; but for most of us, that’s a slow, complex, not yet concluded process.

This doesn’t mean we can’t have good, safe, supportive sex right now, in the middle of that healing — but it does make having that sex a little more complicated. To be certain we’re not perpetuating or helping to perpetuate negative patterns in a lover’s life, we have to be able to communicate clearly and honestly before things get hot and heavy — and while they are, and after. Few forces interfere with this communication like alcohol does. In this culture of denial, we are encouraged to use it as a social lubricant to help us slip past our inhibitions; all too often, this simply means ignoring our own fears and scars, and not asking about others’. If it is dangerous, as well as beautiful, for us

to share sex with each other sober, how much more dangerous must it be to do so drunk, reckless, and incoherent?

Speaking of sex, it’s worth noting the supporting role alcohol has played in patriarchal gender dynamics. For example — in how many nuclear families has alcoholism helped to maintain an unequal distribution of power and pressure? (All the writers of this tract can call to mind more than one such case among their relatives alone.) The

man's drunken self-destruction, engendered as it may be by the horrors of surviving under capitalism, imposes even more of a burden on the woman, who must still somehow hold the family together — often in the face of his violence. And on the subject of dynamics...

The Tyranny of Apathy

"Every fucking anarchist project I engage in is ruined or nearly ruined by alcohol. You set up a collective living situation and everyone is too drunk or stoned to do the basic chores, let alone maintain an attitude of respect. You want to create community, but after the show everyone just goes back to their rooms and drinks themselves to death. If it's not one substance to abuse it's a motherfucking other. 1 understand trying to obliterate your consciousness is a natural reaction to being born in alienating capitalist hell, but I want people to see what we anarchists are doing and say "Yeah, this is better than capitalism!"... which is hard to say if you can't walk around without stepping on broken forty

bottles. I've never considered myself straight edge, but fuck it, I'm not taking it anymore!"

☒Personal Reflection by yet another disillusioned anarchist...

It's said that when the renowned anarchist Oscar Wilde first heard the old slogan *if it is humiliating to be ruled, bow much more humiliating it is to choose one's rulers, * he responded: "If it's humiliating to choose one's masters, how much more humiliating to be one's own master!" He intended this as a critique of hierarchies within the self as well as the democratic state, of course — but, sadly, his quip could be applied literally to the way some of our attempts at creating anarchist environments pan out in practice. This is especially true when they're carried out by drunk people.

In certain circles, especially the ones in which the word "anarchy" itself is more in fashion than any of its various meanings, freedom is conceived of in negative terms: "don't tell me what to do!" In practice, this often means nothing more than an assertion of the individual's right to be lazy, selfish, unaccountable for his actions or lack thereof. In such contexts, when a group agrees upon a project it often ends up being a small, responsible minority that has to do all the work to make it happen. These conscientious few often look like the autocratic ones — when, invisibly, it is the apathy and hostility of their comrades that forces them to adopt this role. Being drunk and disorderly all the time is *coercive — it* compels others to clean up after you, to think clearly when you won't, to absorb the stress generated by your behavior when you are too fucked up for dialogue. These dynamics go

two ways, of course — those who take *all* responsibility on their shoulders perpetuate a pattern in which everyone else takes none — but everyone is responsible for their own part in such patterns, and for transcending it.

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Think of the power we could have if all the energy and effort in the world — or maybe even just *your* energy and effort? — that goes into drinking were put into resisting, building, creating... Try adding up all the money anarchists in your community have

spent on corporate libations, and picture how much musical equipment or bail money or food (-not-bombs... or, fuck it, bombs!) it could have paid for — instead of funding their war against all of us. Better: imagine living in a world where cokehead presidents die of overdoses while radical musicians and rebels live the chaos into ripe old age!

Sobriety and Solidarity

Like any lifestyle choice, be it vagabondage or union membership, abstention from alcohol can sometimes be mistaken as an end rather than a means.

Above all, it is critical that our own choices *not* be a pretext for us to deem ourselves superior to those who make different decisions. The only strategy for sharing good ideas that succeeds unfailingly (and that goes for hotheaded, alienating tracts like this one as well!) is the power of example — if you put "ecstatic sobriety" into action in your life *and it works, * those who sincerely want similar things will join in. Passing judgment on others for decisions that affect only themselves is absolutely noxious to any anarchist — not to mention it makes them less likely to experiment with the options you offer.

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And so — the question of solidarity and community with anarchists and others who do use alcohol and drugs. We propose that these are of utmost importance. Especially in the case of those who are struggling to free themselves of unwanted addictions, such solidarity is paramount: Alcoholics Anonymous, for example, is just one more instance of a quasi-reli- gious organization filling a social need that should already be provided for by anarchist community self-organizing. As in every case, we anarchists must ask ourselves: do we take our positions simply to feel superior to the unwashed (er,

[Image not archived]

washed) masses — or because we sincerely want to propagate accessible alternatives? Besides, most of us who are not substance-addicted can thank our privileges and good fortune for this; this gives us all the more responsibility to be good allies to those who have not had such privileges or luck — on whatever terms *they* set. Let tolerance, humility, accessibility, and sensitivity be the qualities we nurture in ourselves, not self-righteousness or pride. No separatist sobriety!

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Revolution

So anyway — what are we going to do if we don't go to bars, hang out at parties, sit on the steps or in front of the television with our forty ounce bottles? *Anything else!*

The social impact of our society's fixation on alcohol is at least as important as its mental, medical, economic, and emotional effects. Drinking standardizes our social lives, occupying some of the eight waking hours a day that aren't already colonized by work. It locates us spatially — living rooms, cocktail lounges, railroad tracks — and contextually — in ritualized, predictable behaviors — in

ways more explicit systems of control never could. Often when one of us does manage to escape the role of worker/ consumer, drinking is there, stubborn holdover from our colonized leisure time, to fill up the promising space that opens. Free from these

routines, we could discover other ways to spend time and energy and seek pleasure, ways that could prove dangerous to the system of alienation itself.

Drink can *incidentally* be part of positive and challenging social interactions, of course — the problem is that its central role in current socializing and socialization misrepresents it as *the* prerequisite for such intercourse. This obscures the fact that we can create such interactions at will with nothing more than our own creativity, honesty, and daring. Indeed, without these, *nothing* of value is possible — have you ever been to a bad

party? — and with them, no alcohol is necessary.

When one or two persons cease to drink, it just seems senseless, like they are ejecting themselves from the company (or at least customs) of their fellow human beings for nothing. But a *community* of such people can develop a radical culture of sober adventure and engagement, one that could eventually offer exciting opportunities for drink- free activity and merriment for all. Yesterday's geeks and loners could be the pioneers of tomorrow's new world: "lucid bacchanalism" is a new horizon, a new possibility for transgression and transformation that could provide fertile soil for revolts as yet unimaginable. Like any revolutionary lifestyle option, this one offers an immediate taste of another world while helping create a context for actions that hasten its universal realization. No war

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but the class war — no cocktail but the molotov cocktail! Let us brew nothing but trouble!

Postscript: How to Read this Tract

With any luck, you've been able to discern, even through that haze of drunken stupor, ha ha, that this is as much a caricature of polemics in the anarchist tradition as a serious piece. It's worth pointing out that these polemics have often brought attention to their theses by deliberately taking an extreme position, thereby opening up the ground in between for more "moderate" positions on the subject. Hopefully you can draw useful insights of your own from your interpretations of this text, rather than taking it as gospel or anathema.

And all this is not to say there are no fools who refuse intoxication — but

can you imagine how much more insufferable they would be if they did not? The boring would still be boring, only louder about it; the self-righteous ones would continue to lambaste and harangue, while spitting and drooling on their victims! It is an almost universal characteristic of drinkers that they encourage everyone around them to drink, that — barring those hypocritical power plays between lovers or parents and children, at least — they prefer their own choices to be reflected in the choices of all. This strikes us as indicating a monumental insecurity, not unrelated to the insecurity revealed by ideologues and recruiters of every stripe from Christian to Marxist to anarchist who feel they cannot rest until everyone in the world sees that world exactly as they do. As you read, try to fight off that insecurity — and try not to read this as an expression of our own, either, but rather, in the tradition of the

best anarchist works, as a reminder for all who choose to concern themselves that *another world is possible.*

For more preposterous treatises, or to send an angry, inebriated repartee, please contact the CrimethInc. chapter of Alcoholics Autonomous.

PREDICTABLE DISCLAIMER

As in the case of *every* CrimethInc. text, this one only represents the perspectives of whoever agrees with it at the time, no/the "entire CrimethInc. ex-Workers' Collective" or any other abstract mass. Somebody who does important work under the CrimethInc. moniker is probably getting sloshed at the moment I'm typing this — and that's

OK!

Why we should bring back Veganism

If we consider reclaiming straight edge as a

From Vegan to Freegan

In the mid-nineties, it seemed all my friends were vegan and self- righteous about it. I was hanging out in a mixture of straight edge and political punk circles, at the high point of Earth Crisis's fame, so this wasn't unusual — although, to be fair, I wasn't vegan myself, so it was probably more the case that I was defensive than it was that they were self-righteous. Whatever was going on, I remember one of the things that alienated me most about their dietary habits was the amount of money they spent on fancy vegan treats: I was already a couple years into my no-work experiment, and could barely afford rice, much less bourgeois-bohemian soy cheeseburgers — and besides, funding the non-meat "alternative" foods industry, a mere subdivision of the whole evil corporate food monster, didn't seem much more right on to me than buying from the more obvious bad guys in the same market. It seemed to me that my friends' money would end up, at best, funding some "free range" chicken farm, where the captives got an extra foot of space to pace until they were killed. I've since been proved essentially correct in my suspicions about the whole "voting with your dollars" approach to animal rights: the vegetarian/vegan trend has helped cement the iron grip of friendly-faced, evil-hearted corporations like union-busting Whole Foods over their own new niche, the bourgeois feel-good "organic" market, thus driving community co-ops and mom'n'pop shops into even worse straits, and closing down far fewer animalexploiting corporations than more direct-action-oriented approaches have.

Anyway, I decided my own food activism would be to stop buying from the bastards altogether. In my case, this wasn't much of a change, as I couldn't afford to in the first place; but as I started to get a sense of how much food went into the dumpsters every week, and how much money my friends were wasting on their fancy diets, it became clear to me that — fuck consuming "cruelty-free" products — those of us who could should just drop out of the economy, period. I imagine a lot of people were going through something similar to what I was, because a couple years later, the term "freegan" was in use, and people were starting to talk as much about where what they ate came from as what was in it. At first, this was still a minority position in reaction to a veganism that had claimed to address animal rights without addressing capitalism:

eating dumpstered cheese pizza was a big fuck you to middle class vegans who thought their hands were clean just because they stayed out of the dairy aisle.

From Freegan to...?

Nowadays, it's almost hard to believe that freeganism appeared as a reaction to (and a reinterpretation of) veganism — in punk circles, it seems to be much more prevalent. This, of course, may simply be my limited perspective — but whatever strikes me as being most prevalent is the thing to react to and reinterpret, in my book! Now that freeganism has replaced veganism as default setting for punks, it's time to look at the vegan diet and figure out what might be good about it, minus the consumerism that alienated some of us from it in the first place.

First, back to my own story: for years after becoming freegan, I figured Td just starve to death if I began limiting my choices in the already limited world of free food. I ate cheese, even meat, whatever. Eventually, I started having doubts about it, though — I noticed that I would eat meat or dairy others had paid for when I had the chance, and that was really compromising my position. I decided to find out if it really was impossible for me to be vegan as well as freegan (that is to say, to eat only food that was both vegan and free); it wasn't, and soon I was eating a strict vegan diet. In fact, it turned out that I went one direction when everyone else went the other: pretty soon all my formerly-vegan friends were freegan, while I became the last of the uptight, ingredient-reading vegans.

I hate to say this, but the next step for many of my friends has been a relapse into omnivore apathy. For a while, they only ate meat if they dumpstered it or found it dead on the road; now they're the ones buying "free range" chicken, buffalo patties, whatever. You have to travel in pretty sheltered activist circles to think you're being rebellious by doing something everyone in mainstream society does! Sure, sure, what you eat is a matter of personal choice, and one kid's diet isn't going to make or break an industry; but aside from the question of economic complicity, aside from the excuse to be self-righteous, even aside from the health issue, there is a little- discussed reason for strict veganism that has turned out to be really important to me.

...to feel compassion living in earshot of the < sweatshops, the stadiums, the slaughterhouses, with the scent of blood cheap in the air...

Desire as Medium

For me, the most important thing about veganism is that it provides a concrete example of how we can transform our own habits and desires, how we can revolutionize

ourselves. I figure we need to practice personally what we want to do on a global scale, if we are to have the knowledge and momentum to do it one day.

As the old sage once said, *in a world turned upside down, the true is a moment of the false.* Another way one could put this today: *in a life of suffering, pleasure is a component in a system of pain.* Here's an example, lest the philosophizing get too murky: a man comes home from the job he hates, exhausted, and turns on the television to unwind. Watching television is actually a fundamental part of his dispossession, but he experiences it as a pleasure, a reprieve. Here's another example of the same thing: *mmm, hamburger.*

In a world in which our own desires are turned against us as agents of our own oppression and the oppression of those around us, real indulgence, true hedonism, must therefore be a *contesting* of our desires, as well as a fulfilling of them. To experience joy and pleasure, not as a momentary reprieve from a miserable life, but as a total, gratifying *way of life, * we must subvert our own habits and tastes, we must challenge and reconstruct ourselves outside the template of our programming.

One of the best examples of this in action is veganism. I'm not talking about those vegans who go around complaining about how much they miss yogurt — that shit drives me crazy: if your politics are about selfdenial, you need to reconsider your whole approach. No, I'm talking about the transformation that takes place in a person who has not eaten meat for a year or so, who slowly stops looking at meat as being food at all. Remember, the omnipresence of flesh isn't just about sales and profit; it's also about desensitizing us to slaughter, getting us to look at our fellow living things as commodities. The fact that I can pass a McDonald's now and see the corpses of tortured animals rather than a selection of tasty lunchtime delights is, for me, a little victory. It means I've brought my desires a little further back into connection with reality (as I perceive and construct it), and it suggests that, given enough time outside — to choose another example — patriarchy, I might also be able to unlearn the objectifying that was programmed into my sexuality, or the striving for domination programmed into my social behavior.

One friend of mine once chided me for making even dinner into a symbol, but that's backwards: those hamburgers are, in fact, the dead bodies of cows raised in factory farms — it's capitalism that presents them as "symbols, " as products with exchange values rather than individual lives. I think that if we are to pursue happiness with some chance of success, we all have to be in touch with ourselves, not blocking any of our emotional responses. Doing what it takes to feel the tragedy of the factory farm holocaust whenever you pass a butcher shop is simply part of seeking to be a complete person, to be sensitive enough that you can experience joy fully, too, when you have the chance.

Perhaps one day, when animalexploiting, environmentally destructive techno-industrial society has collapsed, I'll hunt deer in the woods, respectfully killing and eating my fellow creatures as my ancestors once did. In the meantime, I'm on strike. They can't sell me their products — I can get my hands on what I need for free — and

neither can those products brainwash me into accepting genocide and exploitation as a part of everyday life. Every time I turn down some corporate animal product, however it reaches my low place in the food chain, it feels better to say FUCK YOU to our enemies and their war on us all than it ever could to eat steak or drink milkshakes.

So, erstwhile freegan, if any of this stuff about liberating your palate as well as your grocery budget makes sense to you, perhaps you'll reconsider your diet. You and I can hang out cutting up vegetables while everyone else eats dumpstered doughnuts and roadkill. Maybe veganism will get so trendy again that we'll have to rebel against it once more! See you behind the supermarket, Editor B.

Disaster and Think Tank

"In a thinktank amount of time and space is set aside explicitly for the attainment of a specific impossible goal." -Manifesto on Concentration, 1914

During the second world war, Colditz Castle, a one-thousand-year-old fortress near Dresden, was chosen by the Nazis to serve as a high security POW camp. Colditz was prison to the most dogged allied escapers, and as a result it became an elite school of escape.

After several failed attempts involving such standard tactics as hiding places, disguises, and ropes, the prisoners' "escape committee" approved a plan to depart by air. In 1943, the prisoners began building a glider that was to be launched from the rooftop of the castle and piloted to a field across the nearby river. Over the next year, the glider was assembled entirely out of parts of the prison: floorboards, bed sheets, improvised fasteners, adhesives and tools. Just before the craft was ready to fly Colditz was liberated by allied troops. The voyage was never attempted.

A Nova documentary, entitled *Escape from Castle Colditz, * offers a nostalgic and dramatic presentation of the story. The documentary comes complete with a "re-creation" of the original Colditz glider — purportedly constructed following the original plans. At the conclusion of the documentary the glider is successfully flown for the witness of a vanload of octogenarian Colditz vets. It's a breathtaking moment.

Dubious congruency between the original glider and the simulation notwithstanding, the need of the documentors to answer "the big question" — would it have flown? — just misses the point.

What was the point? First, consider that, regardless of the flightworthiness of the glider, it was an absolutely terrible concept for getting POWs back to the front lines. It took years to build. It required a huge amount of resources and the energy of dozens of prisoners. For all that exertion, the glider was to carry just two prisoners, Worse still, assuming a flawless flight, the escapees would have landed in a field just 1000 meters away. Such a position was far from escape. Earlier attempts had clearly established that the walls of the prison were a minor barrier compared to the navigating of hundreds of miles of enemy territory.

So in the terms of standard escapes from standard prisons, the Colditz glider was a ridicules scheme. The plan looks different, however, if we adjust the notion of what constitutes prison. If prison is not a singular condition of spatial confinement but a spectrum of confinements ranging in concreteness from iron bars to endless peacetime suburbia, what qualifies as a successful escape can diversify as well.

Whether the escape is from a high security POW camp or the high security of a living room sofa, the best plans succeed not because they cross a demonstrable line from "not-free" to "free" but because they play with and within the terms of confinement. What changes one's relationship to confinement more than a secret plan? The Colditz story is a perfect example. Because the glider plan was so far off the map, it was able to fly below the radar. It did succeed, at least in its penultimate goal, but I argue that it also claimed its ultimate goal: to re-create prison (both literally and figuratively) on the terms of the prisoners. With the glider, the soldiers escaped the prison of awaiting rescue and the prison of escapist routine (double entendre intended). Also, as much to their chagrin as to their longevity, the soldiers escaped the confinement of the terms military conflict and service had imposed on their lives since the beginning of the war.

Crisis Chronicles

Popular culture is full of crisis stories. These stories work in different ways. Colditz is an example of a kind of bourgeois crisis story. In this type, moderately- to highly-empowered protagonists experience a loss of power or choice, which exposes atavistic capabilities or freedoms.

Stories of contingency cannibalism are an extreme example of this. Cannibalism is one of the "fundamentals" that separate "civil" humans from a notion of uncivil humans and animals. Such stories are case studies proving the negotiability of even the most fundamental taboos-they are coded maps to loopholes in the social contract, if you will.

> In the film *Alive, * a rugby team's airplane crashes in the Andes — and we witness an experiment we could never produce. The hypothesis, that certain fundamental morals separate civil humans from uncivilized humans and beasts, goes unsupported when the survivors begin eating the

casualties. The story is a convincing counterpoint to the moralism of fictional heroes like Odysseus who would starve to death before eating Apollo's sheep.

A scenario like the one represented in *Alive* calls all manner of lesser rules and morals into question. The film's airplane can be viewed as a symbol representing civilization, institution, government; it is a system that offers a service or a measure of protection in exchange for compliance to its rules. A contract exists between the passengers and the plane: the plane safely transports the passengers, the passengers behave within certain limits. But when the plane crashes it is not too long before the passengers adjust their

behavior to suit a new • arrangement. This is the refrain of the bourgeois crisis story: when protection is withdrawn those who were protected stop paying tribute.

Emergency Liberation

I am not suggesting that instances of contingency cannibalism expose a hidden desire of humans to eat one another. These stories simply describe an upper range of the adjustments that socialized humans are capable of making.

In crisis stories, barriers between human and nature break down, class becomes irrelevant or just silly, and the dispossessed or complacent become active. What appears to be going on with the popularity of crisis stories is a latent anarchist curiosity. The crisis story is a thought experiment. It wonders out loud what it would be like to live with radically different rules.

> The story of the Swiss Family Robinson, while certainly an idealized tale, implicitly contains a notion of disaster as a kind of liberation. This liberation is not a utopian end-to- struggle or a glorified primitivism; it is a liberation from the notion that meaning and well-being are

inextricably linked to civilization. At the point of crisis, the family's connection to civilization is severed. When the their ship wrecks, traditional modes of power, choice, security, and luxury are lost; yet, as the story develops, happiness and meaning are retained. Furthermore, a kind of urgency and adventure take over, and we marvel at the ingenuity and cooperation that result.

Thankfully, those most attractive elements of the crisis can be detached from the crisis itself. There is no need to pray for the ambiguous good fortune of the Swiss Family Robinson. The desirable aspects of crisis are even commonplace — an easy example is the snowstorm or blackout that temporarily halts the normal flow of life. This could mean you finally meet the neighbor that has lived beside you for a year — and the two of you sit around all day trading stories, eating food from defrosting freezers.

Crisis Programming

Crisis stories almost always show an institution or symbol of an institution being destroyed and the subsequent triumph of something human.

Considering this, what could be more dangerous to institutions than a popular fascination with crisis? The circulation of propagandistic "crisis spectacles" is one way institutions divert or defuse such subversive interests and desires.

"Reality" television is a prominent spectacle that serves this function. In the typical mode of the crisis story, many reality shows represent characters in eccentric scenarios working with novel rules. Of course, such shows are not designed to inspire people at

home to experiment themselves, but rather to continue watching as actors[1] perform skits about such things.

Consider the "reality" teevee show, *Survivor.* It would be wrong to think of *Survivor* as an updated version of *Gilligan's Island.* The *Gilligan's Island* "crisis" is a cooperative and funny respite from class, law and luxury. *Survivor, * on the other hand, is a total inversion of that premise. The characters contend in a winner- takes-all, losers-take none scenario of scheming and backstabbing. Apparently, the free market survived the show's hypothetical shipwreck! This isn't the survival story we are used to; this is the capitalist survival story as celebrity feud or sporting event. Instead of selling soap,* Survivor *employees sell the citizentestimonial that life without sofa, television, hierarchy, capital, cops, etc. is a life of even more conflict, misery, and destructive competition than we (the privileged) currently experience.*

To complete the image, *Survivor* adds the justice of Uncle-Sam- style Democracy to the story. So, although the reasons that a particular character survives (wins) seem petty and arbitrary, the whole selection process is run by vote. Indeed, the

check that fortifies against a single additional day of "survival." Here, crisis fetish, with all its anarchist underpinnings, is being reigned in and re-presented as aggressively as possible. The embarrassing ' magnitude of the lengths to which the programmers have to go is quite inspirational — can our yearning for trouble be that dangerous to them?

Thinktank and "Reality" [Television]

The thinktank experiments certainly feed off of the same desires for alternate systems that are vented in reality TV. Ultimately, however, they undercut these spectacles, because those participating in their own projects aremot watching, reading, or purchasing products, not buying into passive participation.

it certainly seems that contemporary media must walk an increasingly fine line in order to both display "real people" doing interesting and eccentric things AND discourage

(ostensibly the same pool of) real people from following suit. People sometimes ask, when they hear about our latest thinktank project, if we are emulating our favorite television shows. I only wish I saw *Survivor* or *Junkyard Wars* and said to myself, "Well, hell! We can do that." No, sad to say, I actually came to think-tanking through unmediated brainstorming and barnstorming with friends. But if television programmers

[1] It is known, from inside sources, that Greg originally intended to write that Issues (#13) column on the sinister widespread rhyming of the words "fire' and "desire" in the last century's go at pop music. In this airing of our dirty laundry Greg was going to oust dur own house band. Catharsis, for yes, their unashamed rhyming of these wry words and mercilessly compare this action to any number of pop acts from the past. And in 2003 the recent top ten hit "Your Body is a Wonderland" rhymes, you guessed it, these same menacing words! Greg, perhaps sensing the already condemning Al Barren "No Stars!" review of Catharsis's Passion LP, later in the same issue, tactfully dropped the fire/desire controversy to favor of waxing hilarious on his love of metal.

ever actually mess up enough to bump a few customers from spectators to participants, that's just the kind of slippage I can get behind.

losers who go home with nothing

Question

The Automobile Revision Project[1] was a tabletop crisis, a bench test. The primary characteristics were all there:

"T^O i>TH.lNCr up PJ^t &2Z limited choices, inspired work, unity **(gASS "* R-EP**

of purpose, sparse amenities. But the most important characteristics were our locally determined rules. Our central legislation was the discarding of volumes of legal and social code governing the uses of a car. As with many crisis situations, what had been product became a material, what had been solid became fluid.

E-BeAtE

t&F&df RAEL

HOOD

. £ -HZAW=

AZ 3 Ae

rarely be shocked by us breaking the rules of car nation. But the broken rules of sanitation and privacy were a different story. For all the strange things that one could hear and see through our window, visitors' concerns were concise: number one, what do we do about poo, pee and bathing;

_ . number two, "Aren't you killing each SiD& *WPAG!*

other in there?"

***pur* ivWD &KICXr€ *(jr^D^* te^T gz>+-ro*A)**

C-pP-

iwyjV'A

The questions seemed so strange. Was it "reality television" that naturalized the idea that humans just don't get along with one another — or is that a central myth underpinning our entire civilization? Do we really owe what little harmony we have to smelling fresh, flush toilets, mobility, privacy, and distance communication?

[Image not archived]

To our interest, our visitors could

[1] ***In this project, a small team of folk-scientists locked themselves in a squatted garage with an automobile, which they proceeded to deconstruct and fashion into a variety of musical instruments. For a detailed account of this notorious thinktank, consult the pages of the first issue of Hunter/Gatherer, available from most CrimethInc. cells.***

T^hkWk b *B©®qm* Kitchen Renovation Theater.

Between March 1 and March 14, 2003 five researchers continuously occupied the kitchen of an abandoned house in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Over those two weeks, the investigators deconstructed everything, both tangible and intangible, they could get their hands on or wrap their minds around, and reassembled the pieces into props, sets, puppets, musical instruments, ideas, and scripts for a series of performances.

When the two weeks were up, the cooks exited the kitchen to present their in

ventions and discoveries in a

1. **Recipe: How to Turn A Kitchen Into a Puppet Show[2]**

A variant of a food long known to the ancient elders of (fill in your favorite romantic indigenous culture), this recipe makes a sturdy and nutritious dough that can be easily altered to taste. Keep your kitchen stocked with the basic ingredients so you can whip up a batch whenever you feel your blood or other humors getting thin.

Basic Ingredients:

-Time (We used a heaping two weeks)

-Kitchen (An abandoned kitchen is best — we found ours in

Pittsburgh)

-Participants (5 is ideal, although we found that 41/2 can add an unexpected effervescence)

-Food (Enough to eat healthily for the period of the project, but should also include silly food: marshmallows, pickles, seaweed, coconuts, etc.)

[Image not archived]

-Solitude (Nothing in, nothing out once the door is closed. Like a souffle, this recipe will fail if it comes in contact with the outside world before it has fully risen.)

On Day 171 found myself alone in the kitchen for one rare moment. We were packing up and getting ready to go; the kitchen was nearly stripped except for ajar of Beth's sprouts and some burnt toast on the windowsill, and a few last banana peels, shrunk down to the size of vanilla beans, hanging on the clothesline over the stove — the stove and oven themselves nonfunctional because the gas company had forgotten about us. We didn't actually care about the gas since we cooked our meals and deep fried our puppets on a Coleman stove set on top of the white enameled range, and heat was easy to compensate for with sweaters and bathrobes. The fact that the phone company forgot us as well was a bit more of a problem since the only information exchange — not so much exchange as monologue — we had with the non-kitchen world flowed through our crabapple-sized webcam. We had solved that problem on Day 4 by lowering a note with a quarter taped to it out the window, asking a passing stranger to go into the coffee shop below us and call a friend to call the phone company, which both the stranger and the friend generously did. After that we were on-line, although still without phone since Noel had gutted the telephone and made a kick drum pedal out of the hang-up mechanism and an ocarina out of the receiver. We didn't miss the phone; we didn't miss the world, which felt increasingly remote and constricted as our kitchen expanded.

In two weeks the kitchen had gone from an inert and arbitrary container of air to an entire continent criss-crossed by our hunting and gathering freighted with the histories we had brought in with us and the histories we had created. I stood on a chair with a damp sponge in my hand and unscrewed the light bulbs.

The kitchen light had been burning non-stop since Day 11 when Mark pulled too hard on the chain. That was during one of our nearly- every-night performances for each other, this one at the end of the day when we had agreed not to speak for 24 hours, a day of comforting comfortable silence. Justin had come up from the coffee shop — he was considerably younger Z^- *than the rest of us, less sure about two weeks of*

Soup pot
Screwdriver
DriU
Skill saw
Rubber bands
Duct tape
Bamboo skewers
Knife
Can opener

Mix together the basic ingredients and apply tools. Set a task, preferably a performance. Tell stories, laugh, play word games, sleep, saw things, take things apart, look out the window, cook, feed each other, find the slumbering music in telephone receivers, egg slicers, cabbage, wine glasses, pot hds, sifters, and wooden spoons. Peel off received identities, functions, utilities, and rules. Mince, puree, chop, parboil, deep fry, and mash

> *confinement. He redefined his own kitchen to include the coffee shop beneath where he went from writing angry poetry at a small table to getting a job washing dishes behind the counter. Our only knowledge of the coffee shop was the music that traveled up through the water pipes behind the compost bucket and the limited gossip Justin brought us; the coffee shop became a land of conjecture at the edge of the map of the world, an alien culture with a single ambassador. Justin came in with a loud sound of foot stomping and the smell of late winter air. He chided us for our silence: "You've got to communicate to get anything done, "he said, and went out again. We went back to our silence, listening to Noel pluck heartbreakingly sweet notes on the egg slicer under the cabinet.*
>
> *We hardly noticed the light on after that, since by then we had only four days left before our first performance. The kitchen itself was an extended affair — actually a small abandoned apartment, its white walls grimed to the color of melted coffee ice cream, nothing but a tiny kitchen, a kind of dining nook, and a living room that opened off the dining room through a handy proscenium arch: the kitchen, the auxiliary kitchen, and the outer*

kitchen. We did have a bathroom and one other room, a chilly, remote bedroom down the hall where we kept our bedding during the day and where no one liked to go — too far out in the wilderness. We preferred to be in the human warmth of the kitchen where the walls expanded to accommodate our expanding understanding of each other. We slept all over the place — sometimes in the living room, sometimes on the kitchen floor all bunched up like puppies, sometimes in a corner half out, half under the table. We ate on the floor in the dark; at the table by candlelight, the candles held in place with wrenches or melted onto pieces of toast; standing up. On Day 3 we agreed that we hadn't fully explored the variations on eating so that night we held our soup spoons with salad and toast tongs, levering the spoons upward towards out mouths like herons. Afterwards we outlined the splotches on the tablecloth with markers and dated them, a record of our passing as casual and rare as dinosaur

J — footprints. As dinner ended someone lifted a pair

the inner meat, and spice to taste. Perform VCX. for audiences in childrens museums, punk ˜ spaces, art galleries, coffee shops, community centers, and church basements (may be varied infinitely). Keeps well if preserved in video and‘zine form.

...and another version of the same prescription...

2. **Recipe: Kitchen Renovation Dinner Theater [Thinktank 18]**

2. weeks of time free and clear

5.

<quote> organic free range strangers born in at least three different decades

1 kitchen squatted or borrowed

of tongs and clashed the jaws together lightly and we all joined in, a delicate whispery percussion that filled the whole candlelit kitchen and drowned out the sound of traffic on the street.

One day we saw snowfall outside our window; one night we heard a gunshot in the street and watched the reflection of the blue lights of the police cars slide across the toasters and coffee pots lined up on the floor. We wondered sometimes what kind of world we would find when we came out of the kitchen, what state of war or almost war the world had tilted over into. Other times we laughed so hard we felt dizzy. In the morning I would wake up in a square of sunshine and listen to breathing. On Day 9 Beth cut my hair in the kitchen and trimmed back Noel's curls; she kept the hair in a measuring cup on top of the cabinet and from then on we measured our morning coffee water with a teacup. Beth and Mark discussed shaving off their eyebrows but they never did. On Day 31 got out my iron and began fusing plastic grocery bags together

into billowy lengths of gauzy tissue. I made a ball gown for myself, a butchers apron for Beth, and a pair of pants for Justin, who had invented a new sport called cabinet boarding to compensate for the fact that his skateboard was locked in our car on the other side of Pittsburgh. Mark filmed him jumping over saucepans and catching the cabinet board in tongs; Noel composed a frantic soundtrack on his computer to the steady scratching of sliced cabbage.

On Day 1 Beth and I had taken down the torn and stained roller blinds from all the windows; one of them hung for two weeks from the light fixture over the table where Beth had suspended it for her first nights performance in which she retrieved a rubber glove with an electric mixer and twine. On Day 5 she unscrolled the other two blinds and cut out giant silhouettes of a fork and a spoon; she filled the spaces with more ironed grocery bags fused with cabbage leaves and beans. The two banners hung over the sofa for the duration of the kitchen universe. On the night of Day 7 Noel and Mark performed a show for us

> 100, 000, 000 unnecessary, poorly designed, poorly built, dangerous, ugly, downcast, abandoned or ignored kitchen tools marching through our lives on their

on top of the kitchen cabinets among the cans and jars, advancing and retreating an argumentative carrot and a conciliatory piece of celery skewered on the slats from the bottom of the blinds. On Day 8 Noel drilled holes in one of the aluminum rollers and made it into a flute. Our world pulsed with abundance. There was too much wealth in the kitchen to mine in just two weeks: blenders we never took apart, colorful wires kicked to one side because we didn't have time to make them into jewelry, can lids that never got snipped into stars. We were busy from the moment we woke up every morning until we shoved aside the drills and microwave parts and unrolled our sleeping bags well after midnight.

By Day 14 there was no sleep. Mark was the first to leave in the early minutes of the last day, sent out into the world to bring back wood and more tools. Noel and Beth and I stood in the lighted doorway, listening to Mark descend into the dark. We hovered at the threshold but couldn't bring ourselves to cross quite yet. The world we had created was as temporary as the first intensity of love — we knew that — we just didn't want it to end. Our world inside the kitchen was infinite; the world beyond was hedged with constraints and habits, with too much information. In the enormous kitchen everything shimmered with possibility; the world outside seemed narrow and static. We left, of course, in the end. The bombs fell across the ocean and on the screens of a million television sets. We hadn't changed anything — we hadn't set out to change anything. We had simply tethered ourselves for a few weeks in a world that kept changing all on its own, that was so rich and so vast and so full of delight that it would have taken a lifetime to understand. And we spent a lifetime there, a two week lifetime. I wondered as I unscrewed the last light bulb if I should have waited for everyone to stand and

mark the moment with me, but it was too late for that. The light had gone out in the kitchen as soon as we opened the door, or rather had moved on to another place, been swallowed and digested and become part of our gristle and bone.

> y Spread news of an unlikely activity that will result in an as-yet unknown performance. Arrange for as many places to perform as time and resources allow.

merry way from bad idea to landfill

6. buckets food, food promises, food hang-ups, food imperatives, food traditions, food tragedies, food fads, food scares, food miracles, food allergies, food color, food poisoning, food for thought

7. freezer-full of documentation equipment (very optional)

8. can opener

1, 000 Chance operations, games, recombinations, lists, invertions, vague notions, questions, tools, thought crimes, enzymes.

Enter kitchen and lock the door behind you. Agree as a group that no one will leave for two weeks. Get to work. Recklessly feast on all ingredients. Hold gatherings every night in which participants or pairs of participants present the day's thoughts and work in the form of ad hoc performances. On Day 10, start reconsidering performances and objects made so far. Choose what you would like to serve to those outside of the kitchen. Rehearse, add, subtract. Open door. Serve

[Image not archived]

The strength of capitalism lies in its ability to make us be still. Where there is stillness, there is the danger of being chained down. It slips upon you like a thief in the night, tip-toeing past your defenses. It first appears in many guises — careers, expectations, degrees, promises ... parents, neighbors, children, employees, students, rent, mortgages, plans that we never had a say in and futures that aren't ours to possess. Yes, the capitalist thief moves quietly in the night, and the thief is efficient. The thief takes everything, and leaves you nothing but a shell, a cheap imitation of the life you really want. However — can the thief rob your house if you don't have one?

Yet.how can you have no house, no possessions, nothing to your name but the clothes on your back? Simple. You must always be on the move.

There are many paths that leave this world of poor-paying jobs and unfulfilling lives. To each her own path — it would be arrogant to attempt to tell you what your path is out of the mundane humiliations of everyday life. In sheer physical terms, there are many ways to be on the move. You can just walk to the side of the road and stick out your thumb, and a stranger will pick you up and take you on the road. For those of you who enjoy the usage of your legs, you can always just walk through the woods,

relying on wild berries and the kindness of a stranger farmer for a bowl of porridge in the morning. Some may enjoy hopping on the underground railroad, modern-day hobos criss-crossing the country on the forgotten industrial skeleton of our most digital of societies. For me, it was a White Shark that stole my heart. Nothing much, just a normal white van, of cheap make and dodgy American build. I'm not sure how it all came to pass, how the Shark was released upon the country to wreak innumerable acts of utter piracy, revolt, and complete lack of regard for all capitalist values (except excessive gasoline consumption). I remember only that there was nothing left for me where I was. There had been too many horrors, too much failure — glorious failure, but failure nonetheless — and I felt like a ghost in my own hometown. It occurred to me that maybe I needed a change of surroundings, so I grasped my best brother-in-arms Ishmael by the shoulder one lonely night and told him we should do it, just leave it all behind. We met with an elite group of coconspirators gathered in the wreckage of the former anarchist compound amongst the slowly creeping kudzu. We decided to leave right then and there the ruins of our youth, and we gave little heed to the future. All we had was a few ideas, a few dates and events, a few scraps of a plan, and an atlas. Being a generous soul, I volunteered my old van, purchased from one of my neighbors whose mother had recently died, for transport. After all, we had to make it to these events on time, and train-hopping and hitch-hiking are notoriously unreliable. Little did I know we were releasing a monster, a monstrous shark the like of which I have yet to see again.

None of these stories are fictional, despite their ludicrous nature. Indeed, all have happened to me. However, names have been changed to protect the innocent (or, to be precise, the not-so-innocent), and the chronological order of events has been changed to throw off the fucking feds! Also — these adventures haven't been written down to glorify the last year of my life, but to bear witness to the possibilities all of us have before us. Indeed, there are many adventures of grander scope than mine in this world, but I still hope these tales warm some lonely soul... and cause her to quit her job, jhmp in her van, and never look back. , I

...in which a boy and his van set out to liberate each other...

by Secret Agent Captain Ahab
[Image not archived]

Only a Manner of Time Before Banks.

Somehow, the White Shark had swallowed Isabella from Brazil, although exactly how was somewhat of a mystery. Perhaps it was because she had just been arrested at some demonstration in Philadelphia (and I'm sure the paranoid Philadelphia cops were shocked by her passport — the international conspiracy of anarchists manifesting itself!). Perhaps it was because the white van had carried the CrimethInc. troupe to a

presentation in Worcester where we complemented her video with a band made purely out of dumpstered metal scraps we had found around town the day before. To be honest, I have no idea. The White Shark is a magnet for discontents and malcontents with absolutely no respect for borders, and its siren-song is hard for anyone to resist.

One problem about the White Shark is you have to feed her to keep her happy, and she takes no other food other than gasoline, occasionally garnished by oil and transmission fluid. We had made our way to Maine after ending the North American Insurrection Tour in New York City (due to unfortunate circumstances, but mostly just having been around each other for so long we just hated each other!). Now, with every single member of our merry crew utterly and completely broke, how we were going to escape the ever- pleasant woods of Maine was going to be a problem. The obvious thing to do was to just steal the gas, which we had done a few times before. However, in the words of Ishmael, "Sometimes you gotta keep the small laws to break the big ones, " and given that the White Shark currently carried one recently arrested international and at least one felon, getting caught brazenly stealing gas would be amateur. Also, one key to stealing gas is having multiple escape routes, and Maine has really only one highway. There had to be an easier way to get money. After considerable deliberation at our secret log cabin deep in the woods of Maine, we took out maps and decided we were going to do a raid at a Wal-mart shopping center in the port of Augusta. Ishmael had protested its construction years earlier, so at least one of the company was familiar with the territory. We decided the most cunning path would be for us to into the shopping center and steal everything we could get our grubby hands on, getting money to feed the monstrous hunger of the white van from various cryptic return scams and shady pawn shops.

Filling the van with dumpstered chips (Maine seems to specialize in Frito-Lay dumpsters!), we left with enough rations to make it to the next port of call, and came up with a scheme on the way. We would walk into a very expensive and over-priced yuppie store that was known to be exceptionally vulnerable to return scams. Given that it was a small store, an advance squad would distract the few employees with various requests, while one guerrilla warrior-thief would walk in — cool as ice — and fill a backpack full of loot, then run out, to be intercepted by the Shark who would be waiting obediently outside. We should have known the best laid schemes of sharks and men can go awry.

As a member of the advance squad and perpetrator of innumerable thieveries, even I was shocked by how easily the two employees were hoodwinked into leaving their positions unguarded. We went in, dressed the best we could as yuppie

shoe-shoppers, and demanded new shoes. Both employees simultaneously left the cash register and disappeared into the mysterious netherworld of shoes that must have been somewhere out of sight in some closet in the store. The guerrilla came in, grabbed a backpack, and with a smile on his face began throwing all manner of loot into his bag. It all appeared to be going well when, to our dismay, another customer walked in! This ordinary bourgeois customer immediately noticed that something was

not right with this shop, and yelled for the employees. The guerrilla, ever quick, fled the store full backpack in hand before the employees bumbled from their closets of shoes. Not sure what to do, we decided to delay the employees, questioning both of them as regards the whereabouts of our demanded shoes, denying the existence of the shoplifter that the other customer saw race through the door. After several minutes of complete confusion by the employees, they decided that something weird definitely was going on and called the police. We kept up a whirlwind of utter lies and ridiculous demands upon the employees till the bitter end, but when they picked up the phone to call the police, we felt we might be suspected of collusion with the more obvious criminal elements of our enterprise. We politely made our farewells and fled the scene of the crime ourselves. Quickly I made it back to the helm of the White Shark, where a wanted political criminal who had wisely avoided participation in the crimes of the day reminded me we had to get him away from the scene of the crime, and whispered that he had grabbed the loot the criminal had wisely dropped near the Shark on the way out of the store. The White Shark bucked, and we ran behind the store complex, hoping to outrun the police and find our erstwhile guerrilla friend. Unfortunately, he wasn't there, and, seeing the police car roll into the shopping center, we quickly sped away through another exit.

Making very quick decisions, I decided it would be best to get all possible criminals (except myself.), felons, and recently stolen goods out of the van. However, we couldn't leave our friend in the claws of the police. Quickly, I grabbed Isabella and told her that she should exit the van and begin a search for the guerrilla thief, and if he was seen to tell him to hide away as far in the woods as possible. She was to meet us in front of the shopping center and inform us of his general location, as soon as she communicated this to our companion. Not feeling entirely right for dropping off a South American revolutionary in the middle of a desolate shopping center that was currently being occupied by the police, the van sped off. I wondered what a parallel situation would be in like Brazil — what if a group of Brazilian anarchists left me as a scout in the middle of Sao Paulo? After getting a few miles away from the site of the crime, the more criminally wanted of our crew jumped out the van with the loot, and fled far into the woods after a few minutes conversation about the various bird-calls and honks I should use to announce the return of the Shark. Quickly, the White Shark sped back around and headed back into the mouth of the enemy. Indeed, the police car was right outside the recently robbed yuppie-store, and Isabella was walking about the complex looking nonplussed about the entire situation. I rode up and she jumped into the van, informing me that the police were still in the store questioning the employees, but she had not seen our missing guerrilla. In complete panic, the Shark prowled around the parking lot looking for its missing servant — and out of the corner of our eyes we spotted a shirtless vagrant in the woods on top of a hill! It was our guerrilla, shirt torn off, looking

like some strange escaped Cro-Magnon man gazing upon the concrete landscape of an encroaching alien civilization.

Now, the mind of a thief works in strange ways, and whenever I see a young man with his shirt off in the woods I know he is trying to escape the cops. Obviously, the first thing someone is going to tell a cop about a criminal is his clothing description. So, the bright criminal is either going to change clothing, or, lacking a spare change of clothing, just take the shirt off! Myself, I wasn't sure exactly what the cop would do if he saw a young and shirtless man in the woods. I recognized the dire situation, and the van pulled up as near as it could, as our young guerrilla charged headlong into the open maw of the shark. Fellow pirate safe and no cops in pursuit, we rolled back to the mysterious spot in the woods where we had dropped off the rest of the crew. Unfortunately, in the heat of moment I had completely forgotten where exactly I had dropped them off. As night approached, it was beginning to look like we would never find them again. I started honking the horn wildly, driving like a madman up and down the street. Out of the corner of my mind I thought I recognized the spot where I had dropped off my compatriots. Jumping out of the car, I heard what could only be the sound of semi-automatic weapons! After fiddling with the birdcalls for a few minutes, I just began yelling for them. Within minutes, the criminal underclass reappeared from the woods, scared out of their wits. "They're shooting fucking guns, I don't know who they are but these fucking woods are being pumped full of metal! " Recognizing the perilous nature of being stuck in the woods with gun-toting Mainards, we jumped back into the safety of the van and sped off into the distance.

I looked into Isabella's eyes, trying to give some semblance of an explanation to our behavior in the last few hours. I didn't know what other types of activists or revolutionaries she had been hanging out with beforehand. How did this compare to what anarchists did in Philadelphia...or Brazil? I imagine most of the circles in Brazil put our petty crime to shame. I fumbled for words, trying to explain what we were doing. "Were not exactly activists you know...we re anarchists...were sort of cousins to outlaws, but we have a mission in life, you know?"-1 could see the gleam in her eye. She knew. Welcome to the States!

Revolution in the Heartland

The van drove and drove and drove. To all of us in its depths, it soon became obvious that this was not just an ordinary van, but a van with the heart of an animal. Very quickly, small parts of its machinery of lesser quality soon fell apart. First it was a tire, then a strange part of radiator, then yet another unnamable piece of metal. Like some ungodly monster, sometimes it appeared as if the van was reducing itself to the very minimum needed for the trip. Four of us in a van, keeping each other in good spirits with stories and memories, dehydrating in the summer heat. Sneaking in and out of campsites without paying, attempting to find backroads into the Badlands, running out of gas in the middle of the Badlands, a kind indigenous family providing us gas from their own personal store. Clearly we were slowly going mad in the van —

I was even struck down with blindness due to poison ivy in my eyes! Yet the White Shark kept chugging along, ruthlessly plowing across the country all night. Ishmael

drank cup of coffee after cup of coffee, and the black liquid of darkness fueled our madness. Many a lonely gas station was left short of food and gas, and many an anarchy symbol scribbled on a bathroom wall.

Small towns appeared before us, and in every one we found a little cell of anarchists plotting the destruction of civilization as we know it. No town was safe from the rapacity of the White Shark. We would pull into the parking lots of shopping centers, walk in without a cent, and walk out our pockets full of fruit and vegetarian sushi — and if we were feeling lucky, one of us would run out with a full shopping cart of wine and soy cream! In one small town, the girlfriend of our host called to tell her boyfriend that some strange vagrants had walked into the store, clearly stole large sums of food, and walked out — and every employee knew, but no one could be bothered to stop them because it was so humorous. Laughing, our host told his girlfriend to come over and meet the culprits. We created anarchy anywhere and everywhere, yelling revolutionary manifestos in coffee-shops in Des Moines, organizing discussions with Christian straight edge kids about abortion rights, rioting — and throwing donuts! — against cops on the streets of America's largest suburbs, cheering our hip hop comrades the Insurrectionists as they spun poetry that mixed equal parts relativity theory and John Brown practice for crust-punks in warehouses and hip art crowds in New York City. We even played basketball with kids outside church, and then snuck in to steal their food! Everywhere, not just anarchists, but anarchy itself.

It was soon obvious that we were in no mere van, but some strange animal hell-bent on destruction. We imagined — or did we? — a large fin rising from its white roof; and did not the grill of our vehicle appear to be a gaping maw? The white van clearly had been hiding a secret identity from us the entire time. Like some bizarre automobile superhero — our van was actually a White Shark! Despite innumerable tires blown, arrests for mob action, being late for our own shows, and alternating between loving and hating each other, the van — by now clearly becoming more and more animal — finally made it to the Earth First! Round River Rendezvous in Wyoming. H. Rap Brown (who, I might add, our government has framed for murder and thrown in jail!) was only partially right. Anarchy is as American as apple-pie.

The first night at the rendezvous, rumor broke out a local bar was offering, I kid you not, one hour of free beer. Immediately, dozens of smelly anarchists piled into the belly of the white shark, arms and legs sticking out at all possible angles from every possible orifice — window, that is. Barely able to move, I somehow drove the mad creature down to the local bar. When we entered it, we were quickly surrounded by cowboys: huge men with giant muscles, tight jeans, and mighty mustaches that would make Emiliano Zapata proud. As everyone sat down and drank beer after beer, it quickly became apparent that the anarchists had wandered into the wrong bar. The largest cowboy with the most terrifying visage of all of them began to systematically harass the smallest woman who had come with us. The largest anarchist amongst us,

a mighty redneck himself from the wild woods of Maine, inserted himself into what appeared was going to be a brawl between the local working class and the anarcho-eco-warriors. The night could not be going in a worst direction, and the cowboys were much more well-muscled than ourselves.

Luckily, at that moment a local folk singer, himself sporting a mighty beard, rose to the stage. The anarcho-redneck, realizing the fate of the Movement itself lay in the balance, called out for some Folsom Prison Blues:

I bear the train a coming, its rolling round the bend, and I ain't seen the sunshine since I don't know when, I'm stuck in Folsom Prison, and time keeps dragging on, but that train keeps on rolling, down to San Antoin., .1 shot a man in Reno, just to watch him die...when I hear that whistle blowing, I hang my head and cry

[Image not archived]

As if by divine intervention, the crowd all began singing: cowboys, anarchists, roughnecks, eco-warriors, rednecks, eco-warriors, and hippies, all dancing like the devil himself possessed them. Every single one escaping their own personal Folsom prison, grasping shoulders and swaying to a man who could only be Johnny Cash reincarnated. Nothing could stop the crowd, and the man sang for hours. In fact, in the heat of the moment a train-hopper with a banjo jumped on stage and began playing with our cowboy singer. As soon as the cowboy singer stepped off the stage, the entire Dumpster Country Ramblers — a wild anarchist old-time music band if there ever was one! — jumped onto stage themselves, and began playing their hit single: *"With a Banjo and an AK-47 by my side."* The cowboys kept going wild, and soon everyone was intermixing, talking about how much they hated politicians, kissing their sweethearts, and sharing stories about the mountains and woods. America, there is hope.

After a series of entertaining workshops, the highlight being How To Kill With A Mag-light, we decided it was time for CrimethInc. to manifest itself in a way it never had before, in a way that would be utterly entertaining, yet as relevant as it could be to the mangy hundred-odd anarchists and earth warriors congregating: we were going to throw a musical.

There have always been raging debates amongst the more intellectual of our brethren about what exactly things will "look like" after the revolution, despite these conversations doing little to nothing to bring anything even slightly resembling a revolution about. Of these debates, one of the most vicious and irrelevant has always been the "green vs. red"

anarchism debate...and we let our imaginations go with the flow. What if there was a Revolution and folks really divided upon those lines? What if Ted Kaczynski was freed from jail to lead the dread-locked green anarchists to victory against syndicates of red anarchists who controlled the manufacturing plants of Carhartts and Mag-lites? What if the daughter of Ted Kaczynski, Eugenia, fell in love with the young magnate of the One Big Union, Wobbleo? Yes, we had a plot for a play, and were going to call it Wobbleo and Eugenia.

Soon, we had gathered a horde of anarchists from every corner of the United States, with the dreadlocked greens putting twigs through their noses and reds bedecking themselves in fulllength bright red pajamas. While the cleverness of the drama can never be conveyed to those who were not there, at one point the greens and the red anarchists, involved in a gang fight over the various interpretations of May-day (as either a pagan festival or celebration of workers rights) began singing to the tune of a fairly well-known boy-band song, My Way:

I want to have a class war, I want to see industrial collapse, I never want to hear you say... I want the revolution my way!

Soon, the green anarchists, engaged in acts of excessive pot-smoking, were infiltrated by the young Wobbleo, who wooed the beautiful Eugenia with his ode of how "he works everyday, and there's nothing that I own..." She let down her dreads and the burly Wobbleo, red cape and all, climbed into her tree-sit for a night of hanky-panky. And as soon as Ted

Kaczynski found out about her love-making with the enemy he quickly scolded her: "Don't you know that the Industrial Revolution and its consequences have been nothing but a disaster for the human race!" Soon, war broke out between the feuding anarchists, and as Wobbleo and Eugenia desperately hopped trains to have their child in a safe haven, the greens and reds began hacking each other to bits to the tune of Michael Jackson's "Beat It."

"You dumpster-dive to live, that ain't primitive, so beat it!" 'We wear bones through our nose and we'll cut down your cellphone poles!"...until one green anarchist reveals a dirty secret: *"Igot a trust fund and I got an SUF, it'sparked over there right next to a tree".* A hushed silence fell upon the collected forces of Earth First! For a second, we thought maybe our satire had hit a bit too close to home for some of those in attendance... but then the crowd burst out laughing. Surrounded by the dead bodies of their overly-ideological anarchist opponents, Eugenia gave birth to their green and red love-child — Plaid! Soon, the entire crowd began singing:

Why, why did the all anarchists die, was the theory too heavy and the logic to dry? If we dump the ideology and bake a new pie, maybe this won't be the day that we die, maybe this won't be the day we die..."

The Shark versus The International Monetary bund

Of course, the Shark soon began looking for larger targets than yuppie shopping centers and greater dreams to host than traveling anarchist circuses...the Shark was straining at the leash. The Shark decided that only the largest of international financial institutions would sate its eternal hunger for blood. Before even I knew it, I was driving with a small crew of anarchists to the hotel where the International Monetary Fund was meeting in a few short months. The hotel resembled nothing more than a nightmare of modern architecture, a veritable Death Star of comfort and luxury for the rulers of the world in the new millennium. Huge towering glass doors, giant towers and escapades.

Yet, with all their might and power, how were we going to get in? There is always something to be said for walking through the front door.

Four smart but still black-clad anarchists walked right into the hotel where the International Monetary Fund was going to meet, without any of the staff even giving us a small blink. Quickly, we looked around — and it appeared that we were about to crash a party, a party named for some strange corporation with one of those oh-so-fashionable names to inspire investor confidence, like DigiCorp or NeoTech. Quickly realizing we were strangers in a strange land, we ran up the nearest stairs we could find, desperate to camouflage ourselves with any thin veneer of legitimacy. It appeared as if by magic: four mostly empty wine glasses left idly by. We grabbed them, and soon had metamorphosed from anarchist secret agents to slightly drunk and bewildered employees at a company party. Indeed, we heard loud pumping music below, and, never ones to forgo a dance party, we made it down the stairs and into one of the largest halls I have ever seen. A huge screen towered above hundreds of drunk employees in neat white shirts, with an image of a woman with perfectly manicured hair across an a sky so blue that it could only be digital. She spoke, and it was if God or Big Brother himself was speaking: "Welcome to the future..."

Aghast, we looked up, only to see a giant green dinosaur being slowly deflated by dozens of angry computer programmers and bureaucrats smashing it with giant rubber hammers. The future was apparently going to be very strange indeed. Although I was sorely tempted by what appeared to be free food near the sagging dinosaur, we thought actual employees, even if slightly drunk, might ask us which division we worked and so give us away to the authorities. Hand in hand, we fled upstairs.

Wandering throughout the halls of the future meeting place of the IMF, capitalist waste manifested itself as it always does at the most opportune of times. The halls of the hotel were lined with leftover room-service food that the chubby programmers and fat bureaucrats couldn't even finish. I immediately began a one-man mission to eat every last morsel I could. Half-finished martini in one hand, decadent half-eaten ice-cream in the other, I was unstoppable. We wandered floor after floor, and went up ten whole stories of sleeping chambers and wasted food. Whenever a hotel employee would appear

and ask us what were doing, we would leer drunkenly at him using our best acting skills and ask where some random room number was. "Oh, I'm so sorry...I thought I was on the fourth floor!" The security system completely compromised by four anarchists armed with empty wine-glasses.

We became bolder and bolder as night ticked on. Soon, even the drunkest of the employees of the computer company were going to bed, and the hotel became virtually empty...and all ours! We found strange staircases that went down into the depths of the hotel, walked down endless corridors and found doors to empty rooms and storage chambers. We conjectured that if we had been a bit more prepared and had brought a few months supply of food, we could hide in one of those rooms and come out in the middle of one of the meetings of the International Monetary Fund with our guns

blazing. Using napkins found on silver platters found outside hotel rooms, we scrawled maps of the entire complex. Eventually, as we got deeper and deeper underground into service corridors with 'Employees Only' written on them, we would occasionally hear what sounded like an employee coming around the corner. Panicking, we would run around corners hold our breath, jumping into elevators and hitting any button we could to escape. Occasionally, we would have to confront some bored night employee late night. They would always be very perplexed by the appearance of four anarchists holding wine-glasses in a corridor which no one in their right mind could possibly have wandered into by accident. Yet we would hold to our story: "Oh, we must have walked down the stairs instead of up them to our rooms! What were we thinking?" Human beings, if given implausible situations, tend to accept even the most irrational of explanations as long as it lets them reconcile whatever is before their eyes with their internal conception of reality.

As dawn starting creeping up on us, we had actually scouted one of the largest hotels in the world completely out, and we decided to leave. On the way out, as all scouts are supposed to do, we checked door knobs to see if they were unlocked. Right next to the exit from the hotel we found a unlocked door that led straight to what appeared to be some ludicrously fancy, and completely closed, hotel restaurant. In every hotel restaurant there is a bar. And in every bar there is beer.

[Image not archived]

Our logical chain complete, we jumped over the bar in the restaurant and started trying to open all the locked cupboards.

While the last employee at the restaurant had been bright enough to lock the wine-cupboard, they had left a giant case of iced beer and liquor completely open. Inside, it was like a treasure trove of beers with strange German names and liqueurs the like of which people of my social class aren't even supposed to know! We quickly stuffed our pockets with cans of the finest beer and peppermint schnapps, only to realize that there was no way we could carry it all out. After peering out the door, all four of us scampered out of the hotel and to the van, unloading our liquor on the way. Personally, I began feeling a bit paranoid, and thought that maybe this act was taking it just a little too far, that now we were dealing in pure hubris. However, the first beer run had only whetted our appetites. Grabbing our backpacks, we meandered right back into the hotel, walking through the front door, straight into the bar, and began filling our rucksacks with alcohol. In we went, and out we went, and in again, and out again...until every last beer was gone! In an act that can only be considered complete chutzpah, we had stolen the IMF's beer!

As we loaded up the white shark and our one other vehicle with the beer, we came to the realization that we had no idea what to do with the excessive amount of alcohol we had just stolen. The White Shark, drunk off its latest victory, seemed to be smiling upon us. Suddenly, a member of our jolly crew had a brilliant idea: We should give out the beer free at Food Not Bombs! Although it would surely be breaking one of the bylaws of the International Network of Food Not Bombs©, anyone who had to

spend their nights hungry in DC at least deserved a beer to keep them warm. We drove it back to our secret anarchist hideout in the depths of the Capital itself, and, as we opened the back door, one of our compatriots came stumbling out of bed, red dreadlocks flying. When he heard the idea, he grinned. It was going to be one hell of a Food Not Bombs. Some may call it stealing, but as every modernday Robin Hood knows: it's not theft, it's redistribution of wealth.

Intermezzo

The relationship between the driver and her car is hard to understand. Relationship is a dry word, a word used by dating guides in cheap newspapers and half-hearted people who are afraid to commit themselves to anything greater than a life of romance novels bought at supermarkets. The love between a car and her driver is hard to understand. The lines between us and our methods of transportation become fuzzy, and we melt into our own machinery. No words can express my affection for the White Shark: it feels more like home to me than any house I've ever lived in, and my sleeping bag has more fond memories associated with it than any floor the world over. Words cannot describe the many nights I've spent living in her metal shell, never able to stretch fully out — so leading to my habit of curling up like a wolf even when I sleep in a bed'. The White Shark transformed with me, from a respectable minivan in which a mother might drive her child to a soccer match, to a torn up, smelly, vengeful, dark vagabond of the night. The paint started chipping, the white began to be encrusted with dirt that no amount of washing could fix, strange liquids continually leaked from its shadowy crevices. The tape player, often the only thing holding my sanity together in the darkest hours of those nights, even that turned cannibal, eating the

tapes we put into it. Yet despite all her flaws, and perhaps because of them, I loved the White Shark. You can have your fancy red Mercedes, yuppie scum — I'd rather spend the night with my old dirty van any day of the week. Rich and arrogant bourgeoisie of the world, behold the White Shark! Behold your future executioner!

The effect the White Shark had upon its inhabitants was positively insidious. Nothing could describe the effect of watching ordinary people, disillusioned with crappy jobs or boring lives, jump into the van and, before my very own eyes, be transformed into anarchist warriors at the beck and call of any good cause within driving distance. At first it started out as petty theft, money for gas, a few bites of food. As the distances and the glorious heights of the plans increased, everyone in the belly of the Shark slowly got more grizzled, their bodies more gaunt, and the mad look of a pirate entered in their eyes. Defending tree-sits in Ohio, offering ecodefense workshops in poor neighborhoods in Baltimore, defending indigenous lands in the highlands of New York state, fighting for squats in Manhattan...the White Shark made me believe in knights errant again. When you needed us, you just needed to get in touch with one of the associates of the White Shark and the fucking cavalry would be there the next morning.

Cars, like friendships, need maintenance. And so I descended into the inner depths of my vehicle, exploring its nooks and crannies. I knew her limits and she knew mine. I also befriended an anarcho-mechanic, the father of one of the members of the Company of the White Shark, who helped me maintain her. He repaired the cars of all the local street kids and neighbors in his own garage, and for far less than any auto-shop. He knew all the shadiest auto-parts dealers in town, and all the honest ones as well, and his word was as good as gold. As I returned again and again, after strange adventure after even stranger adventure, we bonded over the White Shark. He would tell me tales of his adventures in New Orleans and Mexico, and I would tell him of stealing food from hotels in French Canada and fighting cops in Philly. He taught me what a gasket was, what weird part of some strange metal piece connected to some other piece. In between inspecting one weird problem of the White Shark after another, he would mutter things like "That Ariel Sharon's a. bloody butcher..." Indeed, both the shaggy-haired anarchist and the auto-mechanic with a family in the outskirts of the city agreed that Western civilization was headed straight towards its doom, and the President George W. Bush was a madman at the helm of sinking ship. Because of these things, our anarcho-mechanic continued to repair the White Shark, and I continued to drive the distance with the wild beast. We hypothesized that the beast would keep on going until there was nothing left but a whirling engine, a dying transmission, and a rusty metal frame, and then I would drive her into the ocean, lighting her on fire and giving her a proper Viking funeral.

In the Hands of Our Enemies

The White Shark is a wild beast, and while I may recount some of its nefarious adventures here, I can only recount those I know of. For the White Shark has been on many adventures that even I, its monomaniacal Captain, don't know of.

The White Shark does not just aid and abet thieves: the White Shark plans full frontal assaults on the foundations of capitalism itself, with a vengeance that would put most people to shame. The White Shark makes plans, and it sticks to them. As just related, the White Shark has a personal vendetta against the global financial system, especially the International Monetary Fund. Not too long after the beer had been stolen from the IMF, the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon happened, and took even us aback. All the same, the White Shark was first and foremost a van of action, and while most of its activities after September 11th are too dark too recount in the light of day, it did successfully ferry us away from danger. However, its hunger for blood is insatiable, and before we knew it, it was driving us right back

[Image not archived]

to the meeting of the International Monetary Fund, which, despite the attack, had gone on. The White Shark dropped us off back at our secret anarchist hideout in the Capital, and we began preparing for what seemed to be one of the most frightening protests of our lives. It was clear this protest was no ordinary protest — and it wasn't

going to be the North American version of Genoa we were all hoping for. No, this was testing the waters after a major terrorism attack and subsequent reactionary scare. The results of this test could be fatal as well, for now it was clear our government felt threatened and was looking for someone to lash out against. The bombing had just started on Afghanistan, and it was clear that one of the next things on their 'To-Do' list was to rid the world of those pesky anti-globalization protesters, especially the troublesome anarchists.

However, when the going gets tough, the tough rise to the occasion. As the White Shark landed in DC, tons of

CrimethInc. propaganda (produced for free at our local Kinko's) in the wings, it became clear that the work was to be done. A huge banner was being constructed in a haphazard fashion by a contingent of artists in the convergence center,

but me and one of my most perceptive partners in crime noticed that such a huge banner was going to completely impossible to carry. After all, it was larger than most anarchists, who by nature tend to be a short lot, and offered about as much tactical defense as a wet blanket. The wily White Shark, ever to the rescue, took us to the nearest home repair store where we began a brutal campaign of return scams to get a large amount of PVC pipe. With much PVC jutting out of the back of the White Shark, we drove back to the Anti-Capitalist Convergence Center and spent the entire night transforming the large banner into a formidable defense barrier by reinforcing its corners with plastic pipes. Our task done, we slept barely a wink before having to mobilize ourselves for the protest. As we wandered back into

> the Convergence Center, one of the organizers ran up to us and told us that there was a serious problem: there was no way to transport the banners, including the marvelous pipe banner, to the actual site of the protest. Would the White Shark come to the rescue? But of course!
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> This was clearly going to be one of those sketchy situations. The black bloc had assembled, several hundred strong, in one of the small central parks in DC. They were just waiting for the banners. The White Shark parked behind some decrepit gas-station and released its scouts to check the situation out. When they returned noting the huge number of pigs but the clear passage-way for vehicles, the White Shark realized the time to act was now or never. The White Shark drove up maniacally right in front of

the Black Bloc and released its doors. Out from its bowels came banner after banner, pipe after pipe, flag after flag. As the Captain, I kept an eye on the cops, and they had definitely noticed this bit of maneuvering by a mysterious white van, as they started marching towards us. Panicking as the last banner was dropped off, I put the petal to the metal and the White Shark sped away, down one road after another. Finally, we parked off what appeared to be a road in a residential area, carefully backing our van into the parking spot to have the license plate to the wall, and jumped out. I took all

of the money I had to my name out of my pockets, a good crisp two hundred dollars in the form of two hundred dollar bills, and afraid they would get nicked by the police in the protest, I hid them in the ash-tray. Also, as I was living in the van at the time, all my possessions from my record collection to my two or three pairs of marginally clean underwear were in two huge black containers in the car. Throwing my bandana around my neck, I exited the White Shark and made a sprint to join the Black Bloc.

By the time I got there the banners were fully erect and ready to roll. In fact, the main black banner was simply too large — it towered over the heads of everyone in the Bloc except extremely tall people like myself. Small eye-slits were

cut into the banner so people could see out of it, and then it began advancing. The police, not entirely sure what to do with the giant black thing reinforced with pipe advancing towards the street, just let it go. Soon the Bloc had occupied the street and began a relentless march towards the Building of the International Monetary Fund. The march made it to the monetary fund almost without incident, but as soon as it got there the police tried to hem us in and everyone feared a mass-arrest. The giant banner, having served its purpose as a giant police-repelling shield, was dismantled and, much to my surprise and joy, the various pieces of PVC piping were re-commissioned as cop-beating clubs. Escaping the grasp of the cops through a charge, I met up with my former lover who I had noticed earlier carrying the banner. I was overjoyed to see her; we split up from the main group of the protest and leisurely strolled over to the Food Not Bombs that was serving in Malcolm X park. Spending hours reminiscing with her, I completely lost track of time. As sun down approached, I ran to get my van from its parking spot...and it was gone!

I was horrified. Never being known as someone with an excellent memory for where I parked my car, I suspected that I had merely misplaced the old Shark. I patrolled the neighborhood, but nonetheless it became abundantly clear that the van was indeed missing. Seeing as I was currently living in the van, and that all my money was in the van, I was as stranded as any castaway. Not knowing what to and fuming with rage and confusion, I ran to the secret anarchist hideout, and, using the same phone that had been used as the legal support number the day before, called the police to report a missing car. They told me they would need to talk to me personally to file a report. Now, I had not changed out of traditional Black Bloc gear since the protest the day before. I had my steel-toe black combat boots on, a black hoodie,

a black bandana, black fingerless

gloves and black fatigues on. No ‘anarchy’ patches, but definitely not a normal citizen. Even worse, since I had been on the road for a few months, my hair had grown extremely wild and shaggy, and a scruffy beard had developed, along with a body odor that in most circles of society would identify me as homeless. Lastly, the anarchist painters’ bloc that had painted the banner I had reinforced and held yesterday had used nondrying red paint on banner, leaving my hands a various parts of my body covered in a strange red substance. I wasn t sure how the cops would react to me. What if they recognized me from the Black Bloc the day before? And I sure didn’t

want them driving up to the not-so-entirely-secret anarchist hideout and ringing the doorbell. Panicking, I gave them the address of a building down the road and told them I would meet them outside.

In a few minutes, surreally enough, I was for the first time in my life being driven about in the front of a cop-car, not under arrest. In fact, the police officer was completely ignoring my appearance and smell and was instead cheerfully chatting to me about "those kids who steal your car, drive it around for a day, and park it right back..." After about an hour of driving about in cop car (mentally taking notes, having never been in the front seat of a DC cop car!), we finally surrendered and the cop wrote the car down as "stolen. ' In the pits of deepest despair, I went back to our anarchist secret hideout and began maniacally trying to figure out what I should do. What if the cops had stolen the car? After all, it was the banner-mobile, and maybe this meant the cops were looking for me? The behavior of the cop I had just met had been friendly enough; however, the many heads of the capitalist hydra sometimes

> [Image not archived]
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> doesn't talk to each other, so maybe I had just been lucky. In a fit of complete paranoia, I called a friend from a desolate northern state and told him that my situation. In a spirit of complete generosity, he offered to buy me a plane ticket to his snow-bound home. Since September 11th, plane tickets had noticeably fallen in price, so a ticket to his place was actually about as expensive as the gas to get back to my small Southern stable. Not thinking through the possible advantages-of hitch-hiking or train-hopping, or the obvious disadvantages one would face security-wise at the airport at this point, just wanting to go somewhere where I would be fed and housed indefinitely and off the map, I agreed to go.
>
> As my friend dropped me off at Dulles airport, I immediately recognized this was a mistake. First, I was still in complete Black Bloc gear without anything except an ID and a

make decisions in ways that exclude women, etc. — come with us into our bands from the hierarchical world that raised us; let's make these bands social laboratories in which we learn how to break these patterns, in preparation for breaking that world.

Make Those Autonomous Zones Expandable!

Achieving supportive, non- hierarchical relations inside of your band is great, but it's not much use to the world unless it helps others do the same. Here we must address the role bands, even punk bands, play in the society of the spectacle.

Let us return to The Singer. Watching a band play, audience members tend to unconsciously identify themselves with the singer, the same way a spectator in a movie

theater identifies with the hero on the screen, or a reader with the protagonist of a novel. This explains why so many people willingly shell out their hard-earned money for recordings of hip hop artists bragging about how much they earn from record sales — the listener identifies with the MC rather than as the victim of his money-making scheme, at least while the album is playing. This displacement of agency is at the root of the powerlessness of today's average Joe: the power to be creative is projected onto the successful novelist, the power to play sports onto the basketball star, the power to make history onto the politician.

The question for the anarchist musician is how to enable rather than disable listeners. That's tough, because what we're dealing with in the case of the punk band is a specialized, perhaps technically

proficient, group creating what is essentially a spectacle, a "show?' Keeping these shows small-scale, so the performers and spectators can interact as individuals rather than only as people playing those roles, is one solution; creating performances that demand or provoke audience participation is another. Maintaining humility, and keeping your eyes on the prize of extending whatever powers you develop for yourself to everyone else, are essential. Ultimately our goal should be to make the punk community something like an extended open mic circle, in which everyone has a turn to receive attention for their creative efforts.

Finances

Capitalism plays into the division between artist and audience too, of course. A punk band trying to operate under capitalist conditions needs to have a clear analysis of the challenges they're up against, and which compromises they're willing to make, if they want to be anarchist in deed as well as word. That's why we punks have always tried to keep our record prices low and our door costs sliding-scale, and scorned the pursuit of mass popularity.

The aforementioned hip hop artists are not the only hip hop artists, of course; they're just the only ones who have time and other resources to focus on their art, since everyone else is too busy earning money to pay for food, housing, and — their records. We punks have developed an anticonsumerist, anti-rock-star ethic to ensure that a greater proportion of our numbers can engage in creative pursuits; but it's still expensive to buy, maintain, and transport conventional musical instruments, and that money has to come from somewhere.

Your band will need a collective fund to pay for this stuff. That fund will probably have to be started from a pool of your own private capital, and will hopefully come to sustain itself as you get established enough to break even. Try to resist the temptation to solve all your problems by making a lot of money off the band — remember, there's not all that much money in the punk scene, and the more of it you get, the less others have access to for their own projects and needs. You don't need to make a living off your band — you need to develop a lifestyle that enables you to play in it. Seek out

other ways to meet your needs — dumpstering food, sharing living quarters, having fun playing music or writing graffiti instead of going to the movies. You'll probably need to make some money in short bursts of wage labormedical studies, crop harvests, working and quitting, whatever — to pay for your needs and remain free to go on long tours.

It may seem crazy, voluntarily choosing poverty, perpetual uncertainty, exclusion from mainstream economic and social relations just to play music; in the bleak moments, it will feel like you've exiled yourself from the whole world for nothing. But you are investing in something that will pay off, too, something much more reliable than the material wealth of today's erratic market. You're building relationships, community, shared resources ("social capital") — the foundation for a good life no full benefits package could ensure.

Commitment

Commitment is the bedrock social capital is built on. When you give up all the false riches and reassurances of the capitalist nightmare, you'll

[Image not archived]

secret anarchist hideout were now completely sure I was mad; stumbling back into their house, which was currently engaged in a raging party featuring one of the locals rocking out the Smashing Pumpkins on acoustic guitar, I announced that the White Shark had returned! Determined to leave DC as soon as possible before the White Shark was either kidnapped or ran off yet again, I offered any of the plethora of traveling kids currently staying there a ride South if they so desired it. One dreadlocked hippie

agreed, and as she

jumped into the van, I suddenly realized that when I got back to my small Southern town, I had no place to stay...and hoped she might have an idea.

Whatever foul force had seized my car had cleaned out almost all of my personal possessions, but had in sloppy fashion left my 'Aesop Rock' tape in the cassette player. As we drove manically through the night, only the incessant mad poetry of hip-hop kept me vaguely sane. We rolled into my small Southern town, and I announced to the anarcho-hippie that not only did I have little funds, but that at four in the morning I could think of nowhere to spend the night...except the ruins of the old anarchist collective house mentioned at the

[Image not archived]

beginning of these tales. She agreed that it would be better to sleep outside in fresh air than in the van, so I drove down the dirty road to a house I hadn't seen in months. It looked like a wreck: the windows were smashed out, the ever-creeping kudzu had slowly taken over the much of the broken TVs and bikes and other strange junk that littered the front-yard, and the crazed house appeared to be barely standing, laying somewhere on the strange edge between reality and madness, between enchantment and accursedness. I parked, and walked up to its spray-painted walls: stabbed into the

front door was a knife, with a strange note beneath it. The note said, in a scrawled hand-writing that seemed familiar: Here is the ruin of our house, a place where we tried to live the Revolution that we all want. We have all left, so please come in and make your

home. The hippie was absolutely shocked, having never seen an abode, even of anarchists, so utterly magical and yet utterly ruined. "It's like an magical anarchist hill-billy shack in the middle of nowhere..." I smiled and nodded. However, the inside of the house was so littered with broken fridge doors, yellowing books, and broken glass that we decided to climb upon the roof and sleep on top of it. From the roof, I looked down upon the valleys of kudzu that stretched out before me, and as the birds began to sing to greet the rising dawn, I felt implacably at home. I held her hand, and we fell into it, like a fever, like a dream.

The Shark Goes Back To Its Native Waters

Within a few months of losing everything, all our possessions, our lovers, our homes, our sanity, and nearly the rest of our lives to prison, Ishmael and I sat at a corporate bookstore drinking the finest of coffee and eating ridiculously decadent chocolate cakes. An atmosphere of doom prevailed. We always knew we had hit rock-bottom when were at the corporate bookstore. Other people may drink forties on street corners, lay in their beds all night and cry, but we would always fall back upon the easiest of scams: stay up all day in the bookstore drinking bourgeois coffee, plotting the next step in our revolutionary schemes. Still, it was depressing. Yet, maybe it was the carrot cake, maybe it was the autobiography of Bill Ayers we were flipping through, maybe it was the double shot of espresso in my white chocolate mocha, but the conversation between Ishmael and I became exceedingly animated. So animated, in fact, that the strange, rotund black man with an elegant mustache who was sitting next to us turned around and said, "These people, these people, " flipping his wrist at the yuppies and students sipping their lattes all around us, "these people do not interest me. But you, you interest me." Within minutes we were engaged in a conversation with someone who spoke not in mere sentences, but in well-crafted paragraphs with clear theses and dialectical development. The conversation soon turned from the depression of myself and Ishmael, to the grand heights of Kierkegaard and Aristotle, and then returned to ground itself in an analysis of the political economy of global capital. The man, named Sherlock, was originally from Jamaica, but had been educated among the ivory towers at Oxford, and for some ungodly reason had moved to the second circle of hell we called home to teach high school. It was amazingly reassuring, for it would have been almost impossible to imagine backgrounds more removed, yet this man clearly echoed our sentiments — capitalism, civilization itself, is sick and we're all headed straight towards apocalypse, it is the responsibility of ordinary people with the barest thread of decency to fight back with all their might, we must never, never surrender. There is

hope, even in the lounges of soulless corporate bookstores, and there are allies in the most unlikely of places.

Inspired, the entire process began again. We picked out the largest, cheapest, most fucked up house we could find in town, and, through an act of sheer willpower, transformed it into an anarchist collective. While at first we were worried that we wouldn't be able to find enough anarchists to fill the house, soon there were more people living there than humanly possible — over twenty rocking people in every little nook and

corner, three of us (including myself) in the attic! The White Shark went mad, and my former home soon became the most rapacious and ruthless of thieves. Every night the White Shark would ride into the dark night, stomach empty, and return with all sorts of plunder. Anything that was not nailed to the ground was taken. Chairs, trashcans, cement, woods, nails, soil. We walked into the philosophy department at one of the local universities late at night, and, while no one was looking, grabbed a chalkboard right off the wall, fleeing down a fire escape into the ever-waiting maw of the White Shark. We would spend entire days prowling about the city, looking for strange items that our house needed, thinking of places to run scams, and then entire nights rolling about in the White Shark. The White Shark was a pirate ship, constantly moving from port to port, raiding the soft underbellies of suburbs for all they were worth. Within a few weeks, our collective house was well-stocked. We spent some time engaging in other adventures, starting bands, drinking and carousing, engaging in acts of personal drama and infighting. It soon became clear what this town and house needed more than anything else was not just survival against the capitalist machine — we needed to go on the offensive.

There we were, sitting in the living room of our collective, plotting the night away. There were, even in our most small and isolated of Southern towns, other anarchists, some quite formidable ones at that. The local kids had thought of the idea a number of years ago. We were going to have a Reclaim the Streets on the main shopping street of town, on the street where I myself had wasted my youth in drinking, begging for just another few dimes so I could bribe some local to get me a forty. The street that everyone hung out on, and cursed afterwards for offering "nothing to do." The street where everyone from the local businessmen to the cops knew us by name. It was a completely mad plan, but we have never denied being madmen and madwomen.

The White Shark began its nightly prowls yet again, searching the night for items that could be useful for a Reclaim the Streets. Paint, both for banners and faces, was stolen. Surgical strikes were conducted on party-favor stores, with noisemakers and costumes taken by force. Our friends working as employees at a warehouse of scrap cloth winked as we walked out without paying, helping us select the choicest scraps. Thousands of stickers and posters were printed by the good graces of the local university's lack of regard for printing quotas. Giant banners were constructed to redirect traffic, and huge poles of bamboo were cemented into plastic buckets to physically force the traffic. Other anarchists began spreading the news first by word of mouth, and then by wheat-pasting every square foot of the entire city with flyers proclaiming

the upcoming "Street Party." Whispers, plots, schemes, allies were gathered, and before I knew it the anarchist collective house had stopped drinking and started buzzing with activity.

Everybody throw your lighters up, Tell me y'all gonnafight or what? Everybody get your shit started...

It's y alls motherfuckingparty.[1]

In an act of musical intervention, the Coup came to rock out the night before the Reclaim the Streets. Anarchists converged from the mountains, from the ruined industrial cities further up north, from the swamps to the east and from the soulless suburbs and tiny rural towns. The forces

[Image not archived]

SEE

were surrounded, with the crowd yelling "Shame!" and "Let him go!" The cops, terrified with their backs against the wall, began reacting with brutality against the festive party-goers, swinging clubs and releasing pepper spray. The crowd stormed up to the cops, and chaos ensued. Before anyone knew what was happening, the local Indymedia reporter was thrown against a police car, screaming. It was completely mad. Local hoodlums who had spent years dodging the cops while trying to hustle a bit of green were now throwing down with the pigs, grabbed and kicking. Acts of both extreme heroism and cowardice were taking place — women kicked cops twice their size as they charged at them, young men kicked themselves free of cops' clutches, crowds yelled and terrified the police, police reacted by pepper-spraying innocent young children. In the chaos, a friend of mine ran up and grabbed the Indymedia video camera that was still running. As the madness engulfed the street, our little quiet town was filled with the closest thing it had seen to a riot in years. As the cops fled the scene with our sisters and brothers in the backs of their paddywagons, one member of the crowd took initiative and, black flag of anarchy held high, began marching the entire party straight to the prison. The cops, by attempting to stop the Reclaim the Streets, had caused the crowd to do exactly what they had most feared — the march to the prison had shut down downtown.

As the crowd rallied outside, the cops inside the prison panicked, and one by one our compatriots were released. Fifteen arrests, one felony. The Reclaim the Streets had been both far greater than our expectations and far worst than our nightmares. We had never wanted our brothers and sisters to go to prison, and the White Shark began to creep away, to retrieve from a downtown that the poles, the banner, the stereo, all the evidence. All the evidence must be destroyed. Yet for one moment, the impossible, the marvelous had broken loose. In the most unlikely of desolate Southern towns, for absolutely no better reason than "we could, " we, with no spokesperson, no message, and no leaders, had brought to life the biggest party ever seen. The media was utterly baffled. We had brought down the house, and with it the Police Chief and the feelings of despair that had choked these streets for our entire lives. It was a breath of fresh air — and it hurt.

***HAmI* Twiscontinental Killing Spree**
The problem with
I having sprawling
I adventures is that, when

they are complete, you are

I left with no option but to
x surpass vourself, to make even
J wilder plans involving even
; more impossibilities, even
¡ more undiscovered continents
K x in which to plant the black
flag. As we sat in our musty . attic, we laid down an atlas.

Earlier, a mysterious old women had approached me as I was repairing computers in the local infoshop, and offered a simple proposition: the Zapatistas needed computers, and all I had to do was to gather them and get them Chiapas. A simple plan, and as Ishmael and I sat discussing it, it became abundantly clear we had many other things to do as well — protest global financial institutions, eco-defense on the West Coast, meet friends at yet another Earth First! Rendezvous...so like the professional composers of adventures we were, we strung together harmonies of actions, triads of locations, rhythms of travels. Trainhopping across the northernmost wastes of Canada, hitchhiking up and down the West Coast...driving the White Shark up and down the East Coat, and then to the fucking Lacondon Jungle! Yes, we were going to criss-cross the entire fucking continent of North America, from Alaska to Chiapas and everywhere in between, with no stops, no holds barred, no gods and no masters. Such a journey could only deserve one name: The Transcontinental Killing Spree.

We offered seats to anyone who wanted to come along, although the ability to speak Spanish was preferred. Only one mysterious e-mail from a professional adventurer named Hibb on the West Coast answered us in the affirmative. The White Shark was getting weary. We had put on tens of thousands of miles on its already straining hold. Everything was breaking down, bit by bit. Radiators in Texas, fuel pumps, everything except the core of engine and transmission. Deep in my heart, I still felt that the White Shark was going to make it this time...though the White Shark's transmission was making a high-pitched whistle that could be its death-knell, we still had our own mission, and the White Shark had not a mere mortal engine of gears and oil, but an engine of pure destruction. I took it by the anarcho-mechanic for one last check-up. Oil changed, tires rotated, filters placed in, new gaskets. The White Shark was readied for its final and most glorious ride.

Our merry band had to drive across the entire country, dumpster-dive some computers, and then take the White Shark and drive the electronics to Chiapas. Nothing could be easier. There were problems, the first being not having any computers. Never

to let something as dreary as reason curb our enthusiasm, we began to pray to the ever-shifty patron spirits of thieves and hobos to deliver unto us computers. As soon as we began to seek the computers, they

incarnated themselves in answer to our prayers. A group of semi-professional activists were willing to donate some old computers they had been given by a non-profit group that trained home-free[2] folks to build computers. Of course, by the time we sorted this out, we were in eastern Canada and they were on the West Coast. Without fear, a brave fellowship of companions rose to the occasion to get there and bring them to Mexico. With little in the way of possessions, no money (as usual), and absolutely no grasp on the fundamentals of rational planning, we hopped trains across the coldest reaches of Canada, reaching the West Coast by surviving purely on one large pack of oats. Arriving on the West Coast, we promptly gave away our oversized bag of oats to an indigenous family that was hitch-hiking to Seattle to see the world. Not just traveling kids, but a traveling family.

We picked up the computers from the non-profit, and then realized to our dismay that we, without a car, had no way to transport them down the street, much less to Chiapas. Again, our lack of planning seemed to doom us! We couldn't carry them by hand to Chiapas, and the White Shark we were hoping to drive there was taking a brief respite in the woods of Maine, on the other side of the United States. Luckily, a group of anarcho-primitivists were passing across the West Coast on a tour to promote the destruction of civilization, and, although we reasoned that computers were surely included under the category of civilization, we asked for help anyways. After all, the computers were for guerrillas! Despite the irony of the situation, the anarcho-primitivist gang was more than willing to help the Zapatistas, and strapped the computers to the top of their van that was driving to Texas, taking them with them one step closer to Chiapas. In search of our long-lost White Shark, we got a ride across the country in yet another heroic automobile known only as the Duster, funded purely by an orgy of gas-thievery and, by last estimate, over a thousand dollars in scams, until our ragged crew — fueled by a bizarre combination of stale pizza dough and organic energy bars — returned to the fair woods of Maine. After nearly a month vacation, and against all odds, the White Shark revved up again, loaded with even more computers from a shady inside job at a major Washington, D.C. corporation, and began its slow journey to Texas, getting in two major breakdowns and one near wreck, almost flipping due to the amount of computers loading it. One of the computers was even bartered to a car mechanic in rural Georgia for a used axle!

The problem of the border presented itself as nearly insurmountable. After all, you're not supposed to truck a vanload of computer parts into a foreign country and not expect to have questions asked by the border guards. But within a few weeks, the primitivists dropped off the computers, a group of Quakers funneled them to a friendly church, who then, in collaboration with an autonomist sweatshop workers' union, maneuvered them across the border without a problem. Computers in tow, we drove to Chiapas triumphant. The truly remarkable feat was that we, who had no

resources besides our unemployment and mania, had, with the aid of the legend of the Zapatistas, helped create through mutual aid a network of friends that crossed an entire continent, a network of as diverse backgrounds and ideas as imaginable, a network ranging from young balaclava-clad anarcho-primitivists to middle-aged Mexican sweatshop wage slaves and elderly Christian pacifists: a network

of friends capable of doing the impossible for an armed indigenous rebellion.

The drive to Mexico City was, even by the high standards of the White Shark, a new record in non-stop driving. Our new friend from the West Coast created a magical talisman for the tiburnon bianco. Ishmael took it upon himself to merge his body and soul with the machinery of the White Shark. Coffee in one hand and wheel in the other, he drove without rest through deserts, through the megapolis of Mexico City, right through all possible physics of time and distance. It became hard to tell who was really driving, the White Shark or Ishmael, or if there was any difference between the two. Our anarcho-mechanic had regaled us with tales from his youth of being stopped on the Mexico byroads and having all his money stolen by bandits, and even our shoplifted *Let's Go Mexico* warned us of two guerrilla armies (the ERP and ERPI, although most likely defunct in my opinion) operating in southern Mexico. Not surprisingly, the only real bandits we encountered on our journey were the cops. Cops in Mexico are even more blatantly corrupt than those in the States: they will just pull you over, vaguely complain about the hassle they would have to face in writing a whole ticket out for whatever your fictional offense was, and suggest you just give them the dineros right there so they can "forget" about the matter. Bribes in hand, funded by medical experiments to which we had sold ourselves, we passed without incident through both shady encounters with the police (although once we used furniture to blockade ourselves in the union base where we were sleeping, due to fear of police reprisal!) and even military checkpoints. Dressed in our finest possible tourist clothes, we were always "going to see the ruins, " which just happened to be in the middle of Chiapas. To be honest, the fiercest threat the White Shark faced was the danger of the infamous Mexican speed-bump, the topez. While speed-bumps in the States seem to be mainly aimed at slowing a vehicle down, in Mexico the topez is designed to stop the vehicle by whatever means necessary. The White Shark vibrated as its undersides were torn and grimaced as its speed was suddenly stolen from it, but, resolve unshaken, plowed ever onwards towards whatever fate awaited us in the jungle.

Once in Chiapas, the White Shark broke all the rules of safe driving. It was finally among equals, for the Mexicans in the mountains had just as much a deathwish as the Shark did. Flying up and down mountains, through rain and mist, through darkest night and with barely any gas, the White Shark never rested. Zapatista children would peer from around corners at the strange internationals and their white steed, and would draw strange pictures in the dust that caked on the White Shark's windows. We found ourselves driving down roads with no names, to deliver strange aids to Zapatista villages which, in acts of cartographic imperialism, the government refused to put on the map, due to their refusing to acknowledge the mal gobierno. Once, while standing

outside at the gates of a Zapatista village to track the movements of military, I tried to explain to one of the Zapatistas (who was busily scrawling down military truck numbers on his hand as I wrote my notes down on a pad of paper) where we were from and how the tiburon bianco had transported us in. My shaky knowledge of Mexican geography, combined with his lack of knowledge of the geography of United States, led to me scrawling in the dirt a giant map of the Western Hemisphere and mapping out the adventures of the White Shark. As we swapped stories in a

strange pigeon mixture of Tzotzil, Spanish, and English of fighting cops and neoliberal globalization from the farm fields of Chiapas to the streets of the Capital, he smiled and told me that if the military stopped threatening his land and the mal gobierno was destroyed, he and his children would jump in the belly of the Shark and visit us in the States.

Words cannot express my awe of what the Zapatistas have done. While Marcos and the balaclavas are definitely sexy, the real strength of the Zapatistas lies in their autonomous and self-organized communities. Everything we anarchists in the States only talk about, the Zapatistas have actually been doing — shared land for community farming, free schools teaching revolutionary history in which the pupils help design the curriculum, hospitals based on natural remedies, preventive medicine, and everyday health, amazing food, coffee, and art co-operatives. And not a single fucking cop. Hell, the police and the tax collectors weren't even allowed in the village — yet I felt safer in Zapatista villages than I do on the streets of any city in the States. The warmth and kindness of the Zapatistas, despite their poverty and the continual threat of attack by the military, radiates and fills their villages with an atmosphere that can only be described as enchanted. Although I barely could speak their language, I felt strangely at home behind the giant black and red gates of the Zapatista villages. So different, yet so similar to what we are trying to do in the States. Giant murals of balaclavas mixed with the huge mustache of Zapata, the circle A' mixed with Mexican flags and indecipherable Mayan symbols, everywhere children, chickens, and scruffy dogs. It even smelled like some of the wilder collective houses we had back home, but on a scale that we could never have possibly imagined in our wildest dreams. If people ever tell me that anarchy can't work, I'll just tell them to get in a car and drive four days south, and see revolution with their own eyes.

As if emerging from a dream, it came to us that we had to leave Chiapas and return to our home in States. After all, despite the temptation to live the revolution with these mountain folks, we had to continue our own struggle amidst our own people. Besides, Ishmael had a court case coming up. The White Shark began its final ride home, and we looked on a map and saw what appeared to be large highway straight to Minatchitlan from Tuxtla, the capital of Chiapas. So off the White Shark went, bidding fond farewell to the free air of the Zapatistas, and down the highway. We should have expected trouble as we entered the highway, as a large toll or military blockade (somewhat hard to tell the difference in Mexico) had been set up, but we drove right through it without pause, leaving only the guard with only a confused

stare. We drove miles and miles, completely alone on the road, upon what appeared to be the finest road in Mexico. As the sun set behind the mountains, we found the situation to be strangely eerie...yet the road continued ever onwards. Or so we thought.

Out of nowhere, a giant lake appeared on the horizon, and the road went right into the lake! Throwing on the brakes, we realized that the Mexican government had been optimistic in placing this particular highway on the map. Not knowing what else to do, we turned around and drove back to Tuxtla, sorrowfully noting that we had wasted a whole day driving on a road to nowhere. As darkness set in, the poor White Shark starting having the automobile equivalent to the tremors before a heart attack. The overheating of the engine is a dread phenomena in all cars, in which, rumor has it, the engine can

be utterly destroyed, so we pulled off to the side of the road and let the White Shark simmer down. The White Shark simmered a bit, but when we starting driving again, the air conditioner mysteriously stopped functioning. Then, after a few more minutes, the engine started over-heating again and, to our increasing horror, the lights went off. We pulled off to the side of the road, and let the White Shark rest again. When we started the White Shark once more, it made it a few yards to a nearby gas station, and suddenly, in a truly surreal moment, the gauges all started moving backwards. The speed, the heat of the engine, everything starting going to zero before our very eyes. The engine refused to inject fuel, and, paralyzed with shock, we coasted into a gas station that was full of cops wielding giant machine guns. We quickly backed into a strange parking spot, and then opened the hood to see if we could deduce what was going on. The heat coming from the White Shark's insides was scalding. We opened the oil tank — it was fucking empty! We ran into the station and began desperately pouring oil into the White Shark, trying to revive her. It worked — we restarted the engine, and the White Shark's lights came miraculously back on. Yet, we drove it only a few yards from the gas station, and in utter exhaustion, the White Shark collapsed again, dead. Quaking in terror and avoiding looking the cops in the eye, we walked into the gas station and pleaded with them to let us stay the night. Confused, the clerks merely shrugged and smiled. We got the White Shark back into the gas station parking lot. Ishmael looked me in the eye, and said "You know, I normally try to stay hopeful with these things, but I bet fifty to one the White Shark is dead." I nodded in somber agreement. How were we going to get rid of the corpse? I didn't even have legal registration! Our options were limited, we were thousands of miles away from home (no, wait, we had no homes), and the only way to dispose of the White Shark was to drive it off a fucking cliff. In bleak despair, I told Ishmael that a captain always has to go down with the ship, as I fell asleep in the driver's seat.

In the morning, we woke up and had one final idea. We were going to call the hometown anarcho-mechanic. We went to the nearest payphone and called him, and described the symptoms. He mulled over it, and within seconds came up with a diagnosis for the White Shark. Over the length of a thousand miles, his wise words told me to open the hood and see if our engine belt was still there. Putting down the phone,

I walked over, followed his advice, and — behold, the anarcho-mechanic was right! It was just missing, it must have fallen off somewhere on the highway! Apparently, once the belt fell off, the engine couldn't work the alternator, so one by one everything inside the White Shark died as the battery drained. Leaping in joy, I heaped a million blessings upon our dearest anarcho-mechanic, and walked down the highway until we found, surrounded by vicious barking dogs, a tiny little automechanic shop. A man who resembled nothing more than a Mexican leprechaun emerged, and as we explained the problem to him as best we could, he smiled and drove us back to the beached White Shark in his truck. He jumped inside the metallic bowels of the White Shark, and after some messing around, attached what appeared to be giant rubber band correctly to the engine. We restarted the engine, drove it around for a test drive, and received a final wink as we handed him twenty dollars worth of pesos. The White Shark was back on the road — its crooked grill, positioned over a crooked bumper, smiling a wicked shark smile.

Back on the road, we did a maniacal drive straight back to the States, matching in furious intensity our earlier trip. Our funds slowly dissolved, and eventually I was left with barely enough blood money to make it back to my hometown; Ishmael had only a single dollar to his name. After recrossing the border without incident, I dropped Ishmael, Hibb, and our brave and intrepid translator (who had jumped into the White Shark at a moment's notice on the West Coast, and whose services had proved invaluable) at the Greyhound bus-station. We all hugged, and, looking each other straight in the eye, Ishmael and I promised each other that we would meet again for even further adventures. I felt like I was losing my family, and as we bid each other farewell, I felt strangely alone.

As I drove the now-empty White Shark on the final leg of its trip, the anniversary of September ll'[11] rolled around. The radio waves were jammed with our so-called President's hate-filled and patriotic speeches cursing our enemies and proclaiming our "freedom, " songs about attacking innocent countries, and flag-waving. The radio stations, ever ignorant, began playing "Born of the Fourth of July." These war-hungry madmen filled the airwaves with their calls for vengeance from their comfortable chairs in the White House, pasty bureaucrats whose children would never die in a war, plump God-fearing politicians who feel no guilt for raining hellfire onto families in the name of security and a quick buck. Their hypocrisy stank to the high heavens. At least the murderous Al-Qaeda had the courage to fly the plane into the World Trade Center themselves instead of pushing buttons from behind a screen. I struck back the only way I could, with an act of kindness towards a stranger. A grizzled hobo stood beside the highway in Alabama, thumb proudly stuck up in the air. So, tired and sick from caffeine, I picked up the man, who jumped in White Shark's belly. He gave me a cracked smile, and before long we were chatting up storms, telling story after story. It was like a Thousand and One American Nights, each one of us telling stories like our very lives depended on it — which they did, since these stories were the only thing keeping me awake as we headed inevitably north. The strange hobo, twice my age at

least, started telling stories of fishing, of growing up in the wilds of rural Louisiana, of his stint in the military. Slowly, it came out that we both hated the government with the intense passion that most people reserve for their lovers and family, and we loved our lovers and family with a love that most people reserve for God. The hobo had a child in Virginia he wanted to visit, and I had my own tribe in my small, Southern hometown that I missed as well. Finally, too exhausted to drive any more, I pulled off to a deserted rest station in Mississippi, and, as the crickets chirped away, the hobo took a bottle of whiskey out of his tattered rucksack, the White Shark's lights dimming as I turned the engine off. I took a sip to calm my tattered nerves. I began thinking of new adventures, new horizons, new chances to fight for everything I held precious in this world. Yes, the White Shark had to retire with the anarchomechanic, if only for a time. But she would ride again. As the traveler and myself sipped whiskey in the warm Southern night, we promised each other that we would hold onto our stories. We would never forget.

And Nocturnes

In the end, the power of capitalism does not lie in its ability to make us be still. Stillness, a certain measure of quiet and solitude, is needed. Some things can only be done in one place. Some communities are too big to fit in the back of van. Hell, sometimes all your band equipment won't even fit in your van! A van has limits. It is merely an enclosed square of steel, fueled by a vicious combination of modern technology and ancient fossils that will surely have no fate other than causing the utter destruction of life on this planet. Yes, automobiles are evil. But how can we look ourselves straight in the eye and call ourselves "revolutionary" unless there is no evil that we cannot subvert, no means we cannot turn towards our ultimate ends? How can we call ourselves free if we cannot carry the stillness we need inside of ourselves, if we cannot find it wherever we lay our heads and plant our feet? The answers to our woes are not movement or technology. It's not that freedom happens to you. No, freedom is something that happens because of you: Freedom is something you live, you act, you do. It's both as possible and impossible as getting that real fucking crazy plan — the one that no one would ever believe you capable of — in your head and doing it. In a twisted way, it is moving that even in America, a land of unending horizons paved with highways of gold and fueled by the blood of the world, a teetering architecture built to collapse beneath our wheels, a van can be a vessel of freedom. If even a lowly automobile can become the leaky raft of a castaway band of escaped wage-slaves, we must ask: where are other underground railroads, other avenues of escape, other possibilities of freedom, other vessels of adventures? Our civilization is an anachronism, or, as one of our favorite bands sings: a speeding car, and nobody's driving! Unless we seize the wheel...

...Which may be impossible. There is a good possibility that's true. Maybe nothing we can do could ever save this world, and we're all fucking doomed. But must we

only accept our imminent demise? Let us love our doom. With all faith in the future lost, anything becomes possible now. We can make love in the back of dingy car-vans, eat rotten vegetables from filthy hands, make mockery of their laws, steal beer from international bankers and give it to the homeless to offer them the warm nights our so-called civilization won't, throw tear gas back at cops — and when the canisters run out, throw donuts! — lie, cheat, steal, fuck, and do it all over again, but this time when they aren't expecting it! Hold each other's hands as we sweat from our darkest fears, kiss tenderly beneath the dying birch trees, cry flash-floods of tears that we've been holding back all these years, and drive until motherfucking dawn. When the sun rises, and the first rays fall upon the endless horizon, our futures are painted in colors that we never even dreamed of in the night, and the fate of the White Shark becomes apparent. The van is not to be confused with us, our smiles, our memories, our skins, our flesh, our bone, our sweat and our lives. The vessel is only the backdrop, a thread to hang stories together with. We are alive, and we're not going down with the ship. Not tonight.

[Image not archived]

This isn t actually what happened:

Everyone is counting on the band to start playing-waiting on this next step in the night's ritual begin, they stand around, gossiping about so-and-so's deteriorating relationship or simply shivering in an advanced stage of social phobia-but the band won't start. The drums are set up, there's a wind instrument somewhere, along with a few typically pretentious props (a giant papier-mache head, a potted plant), and it's high time for the set to get started, so everyone can get home and shower or check email and get enough sleep for tomorrow, but the musicians-are there really only two of them? aren't there supposed to be precisely three, four, or five'-are studiously ignoring these, creeping around the audience in ridiculous outfits, gibbering and mumbling, looking the audience members in the eyes one by one. Spectator by spectator, the room falls silent, opening a space where the performance can get started and, thus, eventually finished.

But they still won't go near the instruments. Finally one of them starts reciting some philosophical treatise-is this theater, then? that could be neat, some of those in attendance have seen avant garde theater before-but stops quickly. Now there are simply two people, one dressed as a sitcom jailbird and the other as a human puppet, staring at the audience, and the audience staring back. This goes on for minutes, minutes which seem to stretch to hours.

The tension becomes unbearable. When a pop punk band plays or an anarchist author reads, one can lose oneself in the show, even if only in the boredom of sitting through the same old shit; but here everyone is painfully conscious that they are standing in place, absurdly staring at two other people who are also standing and staring, and the effect is agonizing-something has to happen or else everyone here must be certifiably insane. Attention has been focused, a ground has been set, but there is no figure to fill it, no action. The world is a vacuum, an empty, meaningless void.

At length, partly out of boredom or desire for attention, and perhaps partly for the sake of psychic survival, a boy in the audience picks up a flier off the floor and rips it down the middle. That noise is enormous in the silence which has descended upon the room. He tears it again, and everyone is conscious of every contour in the sound of separating fibers. The performers do nothing, still staring straight ahead, almost drooling. Another spectator takes a piece of the flier and begins tearing, and then another does; now there is a form against that background of silence, a rustle and whisper of movement. The first boy begins to crumple his torn sheets; that crackling is like oil in a frying pan.

Someone further back in the room sings out a low note. Another answers. Maybe she has been in situations like this before and believes this to be the appropriate conduct, maybe she's been waiting for a chance to debut as a singer herself, perhaps she simply likes to sing; *but here, when she sings, a third voice, more hesitant, perhaps inexperienced in song, joins hers in a shaky harmony. And then others — soon the room is filled with a soft humming, and a tentative melody is being worked out, like the motions of joined hands upon a ouija board. More voices join in, and the-first ones become more confident-the song gathers strength, the harmony deepens, and now it is as if everyone were borne up upon a flying carpet of sound, the notes* in *others' throats reverberating in every skull.*

Finally, almost forgotten by the others, the band members come back to life. One of them picks up a clarinet and begins to play along, within that sound, within that space of possibility; and those few familiar notes sound like the sun rising over the garden of Eden, chillingly unfamiliar, wildly beautiful.

[Image not archived]

The, perforiner who would abdicate his role $_{1z}$and depose himself, destroying and activating the audience in the process, is analogous to the anarchist who strives to ignite a self-managing revolution. The artist who would cast off the entire history of art to make a moment with no inertia, no influence, is analogous to the mystic who would, by means , within this world, depart to experience other worlds.

> A song is descended from the music its composer has heard her whole life like a poem is from the language the poet has spoken: it is made up or terms, i.e. sounds that can be identified as music because they have appeared in others' compositions. The combinations work because of the history shared by the musicians and the listeners.
>
> To make an alien music, one must...
>
> But wait, perhaps that's not what Herds and Words are trying to do at all.
>
> _Inside Front:_ Let's start with your name, Herds and Words. Where does that come from?
>
> _John:_ Well, words — that's what we first found we had in common, playing with words. I would do that with my brother.

before — just say words, pass them back and forth, see what developed.

Robert: And herds — we met when we were both working as cashiers, and all the people coming in and out — herds.

_J:_ That's something in German — das Herden.

_IF:_ Is that a term that represents a particular concept?

Jr Just — herds. People.

_R:_ We were cashiers.

_IF:_ So let me ask — it seems to me, what's happened at the last two shows, that what you're trying to do is to make moments —

_R:_ Make moments? We're not gods, we're not special. The moments are already there.

J: Yeah...

_IF:_ OK, I understand — but I guess, in my case at least, to be really in those moments is another thing entirely. Often I feel like the history of the world, and my own history, is all one great obstacle to recognizing the possibilities of a moment and really

experiencing it. If I don't do something to jerk myself out of the chain of events and routine that's already in place, I'll just end up experiencing the same things, on autopilot, default setting. I think that's the secret of what's going on in a lot of situations — punk shows, dances, special events in every circle of society: people make these unreal moments happen just by bringing their expectations that something will happen, something magical... and

those expectations, that projected energy, is enough to make it take place.

_R:_ OK, yeah.

_IF:_ So is what you're doing about your experience, or the experience of the people at the show? Do you think about what you want to make people feel, or just about getting yourself to that place, just about what you're feeling?

_R:_ Well, we don't talk a lot about what we're going to do

ji — Like, just before we start, I'll say a sentence, and that sentence will be what we do —

_R:_ — Or I'll say that I'm going to tell a story, and then just start... telling.

_J:_ For me, I follow what I'm feeling, and I look for vibrations from other people, and... like at that show here in Olympia, the other night, I just had my eyes closed, and I was making my way through the people, and I found that guy, and we were speaking nonsense back and forth, just like:

[Image not archived]

And I had my eyes closed, which helpslike, I had my eyes closed, and I was totally there, but when I opened them for a second, he was looking right at me, speaking nonsense, and I wasn't quite there the same way, so I closed them.

[Image not archived]

that, I'm not conscious of that. When we play, for me — we start, and then we're done. I forget most what happens.

I: Yeah — all of it.

_R:_ John and I talk afterwards, and he might remember a part, and relate it to me, and I'll be like "Oh yeah! I forgot about that!"

_IF:_ Is that a good thing?

_R:_ It's an amazing thing. It's something outside of just our selfish selves.

_IF:_ I've always thought about that — you know, the worst moments of my life I can remember, crystal clear, but the best ones are all blurry, opaque. What's going on when you're living without memory? Does that mean you're totally present in the moment, or does it just mean you're in a trance state? Or does it mean —

I. Nothing.

_R:_ For me it's like, I don't want to say refuge, but it's a different place that feels totally natural, because it is of the moment. If someone else does join in, it's like a bonus, it's on top of that — because already I'm satisfied with playing, and doing it, and that's enough.

J. How could you expect something if you want something new? I try to stay away from intentions, to not want anything... except for just, strap it on, strap on my bass clarinet and just...

_R:_ It's not good or bad, it just is.

_IF:_ I have a question. Have you ever done something like this without it being a show, without fliers and stuff! Have you ever walked into a supermarket at eleven in the morning with your bass clarinet: "All right, this next hour is going to be one 1 won't remember!"

_R:_ I can say — not with a bass clarinet, er, for me... but, without instruments, we'll have moments where we're just sitting in the van and, I don't want to say freak out, but we just get into life and it's, it would be as if you were watching us perform.

_IF:_ Now is that a way of living, of experiencing life that you think can be extended past minutes into hours, into days?

_R:_ When someone sees us doing that on the street, they're not willing to accept it because of whatever social constrictions they have, so they're not open to... the nonsense. But if you see it in a forum where people go to watch something, they are more open to it, and it turns into a ball from there — and whatever they get from it, is theirs.

_IF:_ So do you feel like there's a difference between shows you play where people are open to what you're doing and respond, and ones where they don't? You can t plan for the unexpected, but you can think about the effects, about different situations. What's the difference, for example, between performing in Des Moines [at the convergence of the CrimethInc. flying circus tours, August 2001] for a bunch of ready-to-go crazy motherfuckers, and then in another place where people are less open?

Jr In Des Moines, we still didn't expect anything but anybody, but... going back to our beginning, when we first started playing, we just had music, and we'd play it, we had a set — we might have improvised

a little, but we didn't run around the audience. As we've gone on, we've lost our expectations of what we could do...

_IF:_ You've been trying to shake off expectations?

J: It just happened.

_R:_ It was just music, when we started.

_IF:_ You were "just a band"?

_R:_ No, you know I never believed in that word! But it started with us playing in the basement... it was always loose, there was always a level of improvisation, but in everything else — the words that we say, the actions that we do when we play, it's all like our lives becoming more a part of this — having it be less of a performance, and more of... the world.

I. Yeah, I can think of one time we played in North Carolina — Raleigh — we had this set, and we played it through, and then we lost each other at the end — and all of a sudden we just stared at each other, like this, for a long time. We were both waiting for one of us to come back into it, to get back into it so afterwards we could say "OK, we played that part"... but we just ended up staring at each other, and it just turned into us messing around, and we started laughing as hard as we could, and that turned into... It just grew into something like: we could laugh at ourselves when we're playing in front of people, I can say "oh, this sucks, we're outta here, we're not a band — what are you doing, why are you looking at us?" So that's how it's grown. We lost expectations of ourselves being musicians, and of people being audiences...

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_IF:_ That doesn't happen to every band, though — a lot of bands just try to write better songs, get a better record deal —

R: That stuff isn't, like...

_IF:_ I'm not surprised that stuff isn't where you're headed, but I'm always curious what the difference in evolutionary forces is that makes different people and different groups turn out the way they do.

_R:_ This is really elementary for us — it's about letting go. The freedom... which is what everybody wants...

_IF:_ That was something I was thinking about, with your band — now when it comes to the question of freedom, there's anarchist organizing, on the one hand, the whole history of what antiauthoritarianism has been and so on ... and actual bona fide chaos, on the other. Talking about letting go, talking about freedom — there's a difference between the freedom of actively letting go, of shaking off expectations so anything can happen, and the kind of freedom that is supposed to take place in a

vacuum: like if you walk into a room and just say "We're all free, we can do whatever we want, " people will just keep doing the same thing. I feel like freedom is something you have to... win —

J (soulfully): Yeah...

_IF:_ — by, say, going into that room and setting yourself on fire and throwing yourself through a plaster wall... and then if you shout "You're free, motherfuckers!" it's something totally different. Or maybe on the other hand, they'll just say "I'm from New York, you know, I've seen that a hundred times — I'm not free."

_R:_ 1 think what it's about is — you know,

you can walk into a room and say in a complacent voice "you're free, do whatever you want"... but I think it's a matter of building something after you've recognized that freedom, building a feeling or creating a crazy room or whatever

you consider building, however you define that. It's a matter of making something new after you destroy whatever confines are there.

_IF:_ I think you have to demonstrate what freedom is possible, demonstrate that freedom is possible, for it to be possible. If you're able to do something outlandish, people may say to themselves "I didn't expect that. I wonder what else is possible?" That's something I do consciously try to do, myself — sometimes — is to create situations in which I don't know what is going to happen. And for me, at least, creating those with other people — it's not better, necessarily, but it's different. It's different — like the person from New York in my skit a minute ago, he's seen crazy things done by "performance artists, " while everybody watches... and that experience, that's a problem, if you're trying to create situations without expectations, because people then have expectations about "crazy" things, too.

Ji Yeah, we play totally different to those people.

_R:_ OK, here's an example: Boston, Massachusetts. I don't remember the day, but we had fifteen minutes to play — you know, fifteen minutes, what's that? What's time when 1 don't know how long what we're doing lasts? I mean, one of our songs, one of our sets, it could be thirty

seconds, or it could be... But anyway, we're there, ready to play, I'm messing with the sampler, making some fuzzy noise — and everyone's in the back, drinking a soda or whatever, and all of a sudden I just start:

[Image not archived]

_R:_ On a side note, New York City was one of the best shows that we've played. I didn't know how it was going to go beforehand, either... but it was the first show that I can remember the audience, people there besides me and John, totally clapping and

... like, I was playing the drums, and my high hat came undone. I was still keeping time on the rim of the snare, and I looked at the person standing next to me, watching, and he was already nodding his head to the beat, so I was like "Clap! Clap! Just clap!" He started to clap, and then the next person, and then the next thing you know everyone's clapping. I just put down the drumsticks and jumped up and yelled "Yeah!"

You know, I totally forgot about that instant... right now to then is connected in the weird world, that we don't see.

_IF:_ So, talking about that world... going to that place that you can go there for an hour and you come back unable to remember anything, or you go there for — what seems like five days... Is that a sustainable place? Is that a place to try to be, more? Can you attach any kind of value to it, to going there?

J; If you start to think about it too much, it won't come...

_IF:_ Like the story of the goose and the golden eggs.

_R:_ I'm not even saying it's real, I'm not saying anything. Just because I'm talking about it doesn't mean it's a real thing. I mean, it could be — but I'm not going to say.-

_IF:_ Stuff that you've done yourselves, to surprise yourselves, to shake off your own expectations of what's going to happen — have you experienced that you try something like that, and it works, and then it stops working?

R: You know, level of expectation... some people might think: you have this crazy thing, this wild thing, this extreme thing, and the only way to defeat it is to keep going and making it crazier and wilder. But the way that we've been handling it... it isn't necessarily a reaction against that, but — creating a balance. Seattle we played to some people, and we were pretty wild, came out with masks on, yelling... and it

turned into a more fast-paced thing. And then the next night, to surprise ourselves, we started out the opposite way, with me telling a soft story in the dark, and then starting a smooth, slower tempo song. That's a balance that we... more than pushing ourselves to surprise ourselves, we're balancing.

J. I think the best, some of the best times I feel when we're playing is when I say a sentence, and I just let it go, to be... however absurd I want it to be —

_IF:_ "Let it go, " repeat it over and over again?

_J:_ No, like, let it go out into... nowhere. That's how I surprise myself. It's just a matter of acting, and letting the act just take over... take one step after the other. And of course — I have every right to stop, too. Well, not every right, but... I can do it.

_IF:_ Now, you're talking about things being different every night... I think the opposite of that is folk music, like certain kinds of punk rock now. When I was younger I was totally against tradition, of any kind, but now I've been listening to music with d-beats for half of my life — and that feels good, when another band plays a d-beat, and we all do our dances that affirm that we're alive, that we got through all this shit and we're celebrating with our traditions, traditions we made. I'm not sure I think that's a bad thing anymore. Can that coexist with trying to do something different every night, or with just letting something different happen every night?

_I:_ Yeah... that's how we play music. We throw the music in there that we've done...

_IF:_ The musical themes are the same, right?

_R:_ We do have parts that we habitually play. But at the same time, if you listen to some of our parts, it's not... you have to go back to the '60's, or the '40's, or... I guess I'm going to say it, to jazz music. I'm not going to say we're a jazz band, but — our music itself is not a brand new thing that's never been heard on the surface of the earth. It's not common in punk rock circles, but., .

_IF:_ Well, people playing music or singing together or doing rituals to get everybody out of their heads, that goes back to the beginning of time.

_R:_ Yeah, you're talking about these punk songs or these folk songs as universals... where you can go to Chicago and you can hear a punk band, you can go to New York and hear a punk band, and it makes you feel comfortable having that security, that home — it's like a net or something... but —

_IF:_ On tour, Mark and I would talk every day about what the difference was between that security when it's life-affirming and when it becomes an incarceration... we didn't come to any conclusions, though.

_R:_ I'm not saying we're not that — I'm about to say we are that. Because if you listen, what we play can get really primal, and that goes beyond, that's at the heart of everybody — banging on a drum, banging on a bucket, yelling, that's in the woods, that's cave man music. That's universal, we're playing that.

_IF:_ You have done a lot playing, though, a lot of playing musical instruments...

J; When you talk about roots... we met in Philadelphia, a lot of black musicians have come out of Philadelphia, and we've been around black culture a lot, and we do — we sound black, we have that in us. I've been increasingly interested in African percussion, and that is primal — you know, humanity came from Africa. We use clapping, we use all those forms... sometimes I think of — a thousand dead people, I'm possessed by them, and we're here to raise the dead.

_IF:_ A lot of white musicians have talked about what you're saying before, in the 1950's and 1960's, placing African traditions in opposition to Western civilization, and trying to desert Western civilization and learn instead from this other tradition...

_J:_ Yeah, and — I mean, before, when we started this, I was like "I'm sick of this white boy shit." You know? 1 guess I do feel like that's kind of a bad thing, to just say fuck you to all of punk history... but that, too, sprang out of the work of a lot of American black musicians that didn't get a lot of credit for what they did.

IE Yeah, that whole history is invisible behind — < :

Ji And that's been argued before, too — black people can be way more articulate about that than I can, but it's something that I feel, and when I say we sound "black, " I don't want to limit it and omit anything else that we could sound like or that we have hints of, but... I think it's very important that we came from Philadelphia, and that's how ... we are.

_IF:_ That's a controversial thing, though — when you talk about "sounding black, " is that something that you can do without having the actual life experience of being

a black American? Or is that something that can transcend race and ethnicity? How do you define... ?

J (emphatically, determinedly): I think I just have to say that — we sound black. We sound more than that, too, but...

_R:_ Well, I... wait, why do you feel that you have to say that?

J (serious): I can't explain it, dude, I don't know. We came from Philadelphia. We are from there.

(a minute later)

_R:_ I want to clarify something that John was saying — we don't sound like we're black like we are black, that we have that personal history, or we go through things that other people do... but there's another part of the history of music or American history that's ignored, pushed to the side. And we respect that, we have learned from that more than maybe from rock and roll or punk rock. He's not saying we're from that race — it's more like, instead of "jazz, " the term "black classical music." That's where that term comes in, the word "black" — it's not, we're not, I mean, race is a fiction, and that's exactly where we're coming from... but that word, in this interview, should be clarified.

_IF:_ OK, before, we were talking about departing from expectations — and then we were at the opposite end of the spectrum, tying into this long-standing historical tradition. You seem to be drawing a distinction between the tradition of expectations, and a more "primal" (?) tradition... maybe you're not doing this consciously, but that's what 1 got out of what you're saying, like there's a tradition of constricting expectations, and then a tradition that is — a more primal force, that you can be possessed by. Like you talked

about being possessed by a thousand generations of dead people...

_I:_ 1 feel like that's right, but that connection has totally been unconscious.

_IF:_ That's just one way to construct the whole thing. I wanted to talk about — a folk tradition of violating tradition, a movement of denying movements, a history of evading history — like the Dadaists, some of the more theater- oriented stuff that you do reminds me of what they were doing, and then... OK, there's jazz, and then there's free jazz —

R: Well, there's a million different kinds...

_IF:_ A friend of mine is an African- American historian studying the history of jazz in this country up through Sun Ra, and he wrote in his dissertation about free jazz that what the musicians were actually trying to do was to make a music that could escape the inertia of jazz, the ways that jazz had been colonized and occupied by Western, white capitalist forces, bought out and the musicians addicted to capitalists' drugs and so on... and like I was talking about before, when you spoke about balance, how a ritual that was a means of escaping expectation can give rise to new expectations... anyway, in that text he argues that the more precise way to put those words together is "jazz free, " that they were trying to make a jazz-free music, a music that escaped from everything that had been jazz. They would practice playing together

and hitting the notes that everyone expected least, the most fucked up notes, and doing the shit that nobody was ready for, that would make the white critics and other vultures uncomfortable, that would create a space where nobody knew what was going to happen.

J: I do listen to a lot of black classical music, but I don't have much of an academic background, I couldn't be a historian... I think 1 should get into it more, get more points of reference, just so I can grow. I think those guys, they felt natural doing that... and the way we have the music and the words coordinated, that's how we feel natural, you know. Like running across a room, and saying... nothing — it could be silence, and I could step, and just be frozen. And that feels natural, and at the same time comfortable, too. I don't want it to be some kind of war with criticism, somebody establishing himself as a critic... you know, when we

played in Seattle there was one guy, who was just sitting in his chair like this, he was a critic. And of course 1 ignored him, but he kind of got to me after we'd played and he was still there being this cynical guy. I don't want it be like that — not too much thinking about it, just being human. That's maybe why people do join in. That last show at the bookstore in Olympia, I saw this girl, she was leaning against the bookcase, and 1 walked up to her — we were singing that tune, I think, and I just started to go "ululululul, " to just move my head, and that vibrato... and then she, all of a sudden, starts making noise. And I kept on doing it... eventually I left, but — that felt totally natural.

_R:_ 1 forget — you said something that got me.

I. A war of critics?

Rt Yeah —

_IF:_ Are you saying that when there's a "critic" present, somebody who's just thinking about things intellectually —

_J:_ Well, I'm not usually aware of the crowd, as much, but I just don't want things to be...

_R:_ This isn't our product that we made, that's out there for people to weigh against everyone else — because it's not against everyone else...

_IF:_ That's a good line!

R:... it's a part of everything, you know? We're doing this with everybody. And — you asked us before — instead of for others or for ourselves, it's *with, * it's with them. And I think what we do — I don't want to say it's an example, but it's definitely with people, and if you've seen us play and you've been there, then you know that.

_IF:_ That sounds... a little more deliberate, a little more out of the closet than what you were saying before about not trying to have any expectations at all. It sounds like there is some sort of feeling about what would be good for your interactions with people to be.

J: Well, I was just saying... how we just like to feel natural, you know...

_R:_ What we actually do, and what I think of critics... are two different worlds. This is coming out right now, from me. When we play, those ideas are in my body, in my

head — but they're not-they don't affect what we do.

J. 1 just meant, like — the "natural" aspect, that's the no-plan.

IE. You're saying "doing what feels natural, " but in the story that I offered earlier, doing what feels natural can be a problem because it can be nothing but what's expected. To create a situation where I'm not doing what comes naturally, but doing something else, sometimes that can be really liberating. But maybe this is just semantics.

J; 1 think we're going, I think we're on the right track but we're using the wrong words. Because that's what I mean by "natural, " just — doing the weirdest things. I can't, 1 can't throw words on that.

_IF:_ So I'm — there's a part of me for which the best thing in the world is when nobody knows what's going to happen, and I'm in a place where everything is up in the air. I've tried to found my politics, my engagement with society — I mean the deliberate aspects of my engagement with it — on pushing for that, you know, instead of pushing for some anarchist ten-point platform, or more reformist demands like "better management of the workplace" or whatever. But I'm straddling these two worlds, there — the world where you don't want to put a name on anything, you don't want to try to repeat anything, or set any goals, at all — and then the other world, which is deliberate-

Ri I, this is something I've been thinking about, and I'm in the same place that you are, with weighing these options, like which way to' go.

_IF:_ I've been just trying to combine them, but there seems to be some kind of tension there.

_R:_ This is something that I've... in more than just playing music, in my life — when I'm thinking about something that I want, or something that's going to happen, instead of having an ideal, exact picture of the end, that goal, the act is the goal. And you completing that. You have the idea, you act, and just the act is enough, as the goal, instead of having this — finishing picture. And that's the medium that I'm working with right now. "

_IF:_ Perhaps it's like you were saying to me a minute ago, John — you don't want to put a name on something, or elevate it to an

end, or a desired thing, you don't want to be like "freedom from expectation is the goal, let's create a strategy to attain that goal"... because that freezes everything up. But at the same time, for me at least, it feels like if I don't do something to get myself there, I'm not going to be there.

Ji Yeah.

_IF:_ And I, personally, 1 enjoy being there with a lot of other people. It feels like the energy is multiplied by everybody else who's in there. The difference between two

people performing for a bunch of critics who are just sitting there, and a whole room of people all just surprising each other constantly...

_R:_ I think that just as much as people who see us are surprised, I'm surprised by people watching us.

E Yeah, no shit!

R: The truth... the truth.

_IF:_ Yeah, that's totally what I want...

_R:_ I mean, I'm surprised that this is happening, right now.

_IF:_ That's been the paradox and the challenge for me over the last few years — how to be a partisan of chaos, or whatever you choose to call it, without... freezedrying it.

_R;_ More than a matter of trying to create something, I guess it's... coming to an understanding...

_J:_ I guess maybe if you have a — I'm thinking "will, " but I don't know if I could define that will. Some openness...

_R:_ It goes with what I said a few minutes ago. Instead of trying to attain something that you already have defined, just beinglike a being. Just being a being and being.

Ji (struggles to remember a passage he thinks is from Sartre's St. Genet)... It's about the nature of somebody, and once they feel — OK, so this person has a new consciousness, they have a new life. And they have new commitments... 1 wish I could remember it. Once we feel that we have this new consciousness, that we're on this new path — "once one feels that he's entering the world from a new point of view, with new commitments, believes he's gone beyond what was before, he realizes that he has returned to his starting point."

[Image not archived]

_R:_ What he's talking about sounds like an evolution of circles, one after another —

h "To adopt a mental attitude is to place oneself in a prison without bars."

[whatever you believe imprisons you]

_IF:_ We were talking about words... a lot of the expressions we've been using sort of point to things rather than representing them, and it may be hard to transcribe this interview in a way that makes sense, with all those generalizations. But that abstractness can be a way to protect yourself, too, to resist the legislation of nouns.

_R:_ I don't disagree with words or labels, but you have to know that reality and life is here, and words are just on top of that — and we can play with them.

_IF:_ It seems to me, if you want to talk about freedom, our lives are made up out of these words...

_R:_ You have to make that distinction, I think, to feel comfortable with either.

You have to know that you're living here (gestures in one direction), that you're living this life, and these words are here (gestures in another direction) — and that's what they are, they're words.

_IF:_ Are you saying they refer to themselves rather than to life?

_R:_ I'm saying you have to know the difference. Wait-what did you say?

_IF:_ Is the whole world of language is a separate world from the world of experience?

_R:_ They're — different things, but they're obviously connected, because you know what I mean when I say... if 1 say "tree, " you know what I'm talking about, you can walk to that object and touch it. (pause) I hope that served... ha, I hope that what we said just now served —

_IF:_ — the purpose of pointing to the thing that it's about?... Hm... I think about ... you know, if our lives, the expectations in our lives, are made out of words — this (pointing at the tree next to us) is a tree, which you cut down and make into toilet paper, or else it's something you hug, and lock yourself to — you can't just decide not to speak anymore, if you've been raised on language, because those words will go on delineating and denoting inside your head.

But you can play in the language — "tree... tree, tree, tree" (singing)

R:... and then you have Herds and Words!

IF:... until you give it some other kind of meaning.

_J:_ "To adopt a mental attitude is to place oneself in a prison without bars. One seems able escape from it at any moment; and in point of fact, no walls or bars can prevent thinking from going as far as it likes. But actually, at the very moment this thinking believes it has gone beyond this chosen attitude, and that it is entering the world by a new path, and with a new point of view and its new commitments, it has become aware that it has returned to its starting point." And that's like — you know, where do we go from here, with surprising ourselves. Because we have full control, and then when we realize that we're in this new place, we're like — "oh shit, I'm in control... I'm back where I started."

_R:_ Is there anything left?

_IF:_ These are all just points of departure ... I guess the one thing we didn't talk about is how the skill level, the proficiency that you have as musicians, as performers, people who aren't afraid to do crazy stuff, how that intersects with creating these spaces of freedom — like, does somebody have to be an expert to create that space?

_R:_ Definitely not.

_1:_ He started playing drums...

R:... a year ago. Seriously. The drums I use

I got a year ago.

make a situation that is... out of control?

_R:_ It's not about how good you are.

h No!

_R:_ It's not about how good anyone is. We're there, and we do what we can do.

_L_ Yeah, we're not — professionals, at all.

_R:_ I don't have these limits of talent, or limits of — anything. I just play how I play. I'm not going to say it gets better, but it can change. I feel comfortable, and that's what matters.

_IF:_ All the other skills and proficiencies aside, it's the feeling comfortable that's the real resource. The fifteen-year-old kid that a lot of us have been, that's playing his first show and is just terrified — the chief resource that he or she is lacking is that comfort, that knowledge that whatever happens, it's OK.

_R:_ At the same time that whatever happens is OK, I still get that gut excited feeling sometimes, that I initially got when I first played my first show... back in the '90's, (laughter) Why I think that might happen is that — we keep saying this, but we do something new every night, or we throw a new element in, and I'm excited to see how it turns out, like when I was younger, playing a show, I wanted to see how that would turn out.

_IF:_ So you don't think, as far as the importance of what's going on, that there is a difference between when the fifteenyear-old plays his first show and he's terrified, and when...

situation, like I have this invisible person observing me and everything else... and that's usually negative for me.

_IF:_ For me... deliberately trying to create situations where everybody feels that comfort level, my experience is that it often takes somebody who feels that comfort level to bust through, and everyone can follow through the space, the hole that she leaves. But that goes back, again, to going to lengths to create these situations without expectations, that sometimes that's something you would have to plot like you would plot a murder.

_R:_ A reality heist.

_IF:_ But really, I think anyone can do it, can create a crazy situation or play an amazing show or whatever. A lot of it depends on the context, not the individual. I think having more experience, coupled with good momentum, just raises the probability that you'll succeed in doing it when you try in a given situation.

That's a good reason to go on tour, to get that experience busting out of different situations.

Robert wants everyone to know they can contact him for tape duplicating.

_*morethandrums@yahoo.com*
_www.angelfire.com/scifi/mnstrattacks

Word Herds
759 W. Bridwell Street
Glendora, CA 91741

_J:_ I started playing bass clarinet half a year

_R:_ It's relative... I mean, he's him.

ago.

_R:_ We played together before that using different instruments.

[Image not archived]

_IF:_ But are you more capable now than you were a year ago of using the drums to

_J:_ I don't... when I first played shows, I felt this detachment from my mind, or just — from my hands, that I had to be outside

myself, and watch myself. I hardly ever feel that feeling anymore.

Sometimes I do become conscious of the whole

[Image not archived]

Simply put. Tragedy is my favorite band, playing punk music right now. I'll admit that the sheer fact that they're still doing it, that they've been playing and recording and touring for as long as I've been active doing the same things, is an important part of it for me: seeing them play, still striking distorted chords and counting off on the drumsticks and believing in it, is an affirmation of our durability not only as a musical and cultural movement but also as individuals — we've endured starvation, humiliation, tear gas and terror, many of us even jail, prison, or mental hospitals, and still are able to sing. That's the theme of this issue, anyway — surviving to fight another % day, burning up in the wreckage and pushing on to build anew. The fact that their music has, if anything, only gotten better over time is itself a sort of vindication: perhaps we haven't yet succeeded in remaking the world entirely, but in the meantime if there is a way to live in this fucked up world and remain human, this is it.

[Image not archived]

I stopped by their not-so-native town of Portland, Oregon in Spring of 2002, and asked the three of them who were in town (bassist Billy was out on tour with other punks... see "The Punk Band As Anarchist Collective" for bassist jokes) some questions.The tapes wouldn't play in the stereo I was using then, but almost a year later I finally got them to work and transcribed this sometimes-contentious conversation.

Inside Front: All right, the first question I wanted to ask is... how you feel about the d.i.y. music press. I've done a lot of these interviews, and I often feel when I'm doing interviews or writing reviews that I'm using the band as a sort of screen onto which to project all the things that I, the journalist, want to get across. Do you feel like 'zinesters are a bunch of vultures, or... ?

(stony, uncomfortable silence)

Todd (finally): It's horseshit, (relieved laughter all around)

Yannick: (says something about the importance of d.i.y. media in the infrastructure of the d.i.y. community, which the tape recorder picks up as a muffled rumble of low frequencies)

Paul: No, I think it's inherent in any media that it's going to be biased in favor of whoever is conducting the interview or review, or whatever reference point is involved... so I don't think there's anything necessarily strange about that. I think maybe if you have perspectives from different reference points, it can offer some sort of balance to really understand what's being described.

[Image not archived]

Todd: It's always annoying when you do an interview with someone who wants to ask you questions just so they can state their opinion about the said question. But then I'm just kind of relieved because, you know, I don't have to talk as much. But I guess we end up doing so many interviews on tour that it's like... um, I don't

_I.F.:_ That's fine, it was a broad topic. Here's something I wanted to ask you: do you think of yourselves as artists or artisans, in terms of the music you make? Are you, like, working people creating a product, not a product in the sense of a commodity but a product as a part of a folk culture — or are you artists, creating unique selfexpressions?

Todd: It those are my two choices, I don't think I'd go with either one. I don't really consider myself an artist, or us as a band... to me, playing music is what we do, it's our reflection of what's around us. Actually, I was just reading this Henry Miller book where he was talking about writing, saying that writing is only necessary because our world is so far removed from true experience that you need writing as an attempt to be in touch with that... it made me kind of think of music in the same way, that music is the same thing. If we were living in a more sane world, maybe that world's own creations would sound more like music and music wouldn't be something that people have to make to try to save themselves or feel better about what's going on around them. But, given the way we live, that's how I see music, for us — that's what comes out, the product of our lives and what we do. And I think that music and the feelings that music releases in us make our lives more tolerable, make us feel a little bit more sane — and hopefully make other people feel that way, too.

Paul: Just to add on to that, I basically agree — when I go too long without playing music, I actually, physically and mentally, feel a tension build up that it seems I can only release with music. But — though I wouldn't say I think of myself as an artist

or our music as art — in this particular band, I think we tend to think of everything that comes out in the end as a whole, rather than writing some songs and fitting words to them or whatever. I think the primary reason behind that is what Todd said — it's a product of who we are and everything around us, so.it makes sense that everything comes together as some overall statement.

Todd: When it comes to doing tours and making actual artwork for records, that's something that we have to try to do, and organize ourselves to do, but the actual act of playing music isn't something we actually have to try to do or set out to do. We get in a room together, and music... comes out.

Inside Front: You all play in other bands, and this one seems to be the one that you take the most seriously as a chance to do things that would be called artistic by some people, in the sense that you (Paul) were talking about, being really conscious of how the final product fits together... maybe this is off base, but though obviously you don't consider yourselves artists in the bourgeois, uptight sense of the term — the elitist sense of the word — there's a sort of tension in the music you've made between

innovations and doing new stuff on the one hand, and being a part of this longstanding punk rock tradition on the other. So are you setting out deliberately to do innovative things, or... ? —

Todd: I think I can tell what you're asking, and my answer would be that — I don't think we ever try to do anything different, as far as "let's try to make hardcore music sound different than it sounded before" — not that we even did that, but...

I think that what happens is, and I think that what's beautiful about punk music, is that anyone can do it and you don't have to be specifically musically talented by some standards or whatever. What's most important is that when you're making the music, it's; real and it's coming from the combination of people that are making it. And if you're trying tn copy someone else or sound a certain way, even if your whole goal is to sound like nothing else, then you haw a preplanned thing that molds you — to me — molds you into sounding... 1 don't know.

Paul: Maybe that obstructs your ability to make music that is actually a product of the four people, rather than... because even for those four people to agree on it being a certain thing, you'd have to all have the same idea of what that is.

Yannick: We don't want to be innovative, but we definitely take from our influences and try to add something instead of just going through the motions of writing songs in the same style that wouldn't be interesting...

Todd: Well, my point is, if I write lyrics, I normally don't sit down and say "OK, now I'm going to write lyrics for this song" — the lyrics I end up writing, usually a thought comes into my head and I end up writing it down and then it develops into lyrics. So I can say those lyrics came from a true thought that came into my head, for whatever reason, based on my surroundings — therefore it tends to not be as much of a pre-planned thing. And the same with the music — when I think of a song, a lot of times it just pops into my head while I'm walking down rhe street, I go home and figure if out, maybe next time we practice 1 play it.

Maybe it's a variation of some song Pd just listened to that morning, that somebody else wrote...

Paul: But 1 think the key there is that the element that distinguishes between art and production is... passion, however it's derived, even if that be passion as an influence from some particular music you listened to, at least that passion is pushing whatever you make to come from within you — even if you are influenced by the outside world. Maybe that's the case, to some degree — part of it is that we're all music nerds, what we like is all over the place, and I think if you were really well-versed in music you could probably see that in our music. But I think . maybe the key there is what Yannick was referring to, that extra element that makes it something more than just going through the motions: even if we're influenced by other music, playing together has the feeling and the joy of, ., wanting to create something, rather than just recreate something.

Todd: I'd like to think that if anybody ever thought than anything we did was innovative or different or whatever it would be because we are four individual people who create something together, and therefore, I guess, technically.

it shouldn't be like anything else, with that combination of people.

inside Front So that's not a conscious thing, it's something that just comes our of the way you approach things. How do you decide which riffs, which ideas, go into this hand as opposed to some of the other bands you've done?

Paul: I mean, we don't limit ourselves, and we don't try to be avant garde either, but I'd say at this point we have, to some degree, some sort of style that we can stick to, to some degree. I mean, some things we try, and they're just too far out there...

Todd: I mean, nobody ever comes to practice with something totally out there... but sometimes, somebody will come to practice with something that's a little bit more melodic, or a lirrle bit less melodic, or whatever, and we try it, and sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't. Usually, if it comes naturally, if we play something and it feels like — it feels right, or it doesn't. We throw out tons of stuff.

Inside _Front:_ But you write pretty fast, compared to some bands I know.

Todd: Yeah, I guess we're used to playing with each other.

Inside Front: What are some of the more far out there influences or sources that you've ripped off, that people might not notice?

Todd: Me, I have no far out influences... as far out as 1 would go would be '77 punk, but... (here comes the wind-up a for a joke they must tell a lot) I pretty much listen to both kinds of music: punk and hardcore.

Paul: I'd say that's probably far out for people who listen to our music, in general. We're definitely very influenced by '77 punk and early '80's punk, and there are elements of musical styles that we sound nothing like that we take and use.

Inside Front: So the stuff you're drawing on is pretty much all in the punk tradition, is that what you're saying?

Todd: Pretty much. 1 mean, we could say that we stole ideas or riffs or feeling from New Model Army or something like that — that'd be about as far as we could go.

Yannick: I'm probably the one who listens to the most wide-ranging music-

Todd: He likes Pink Floyd, stuff like that (laughter). 1 mean, I can't say that it's influenced your songwriting at all-

Y_annick:_ That's what 1 mean, but I did realite that we have a straight up AC/DC riff.

Todd: If anything, I would say the music, we take riffs directly from is stuff that doesn't sound like us, but that is punk related.

Yannick: Sometimes you get an idea for a change or a transition from something...

Todd: I actually have a little book, and if I'm listening to something I'll hear the way a band goes from one part to the next part, and I'll just remember that, and write it down. And when I'm trying to figure out something, and I need that one part, then I remember it. It's kind of ridiculous to be like "that band is an influence, " because we

sound nothing like them. But 1 think that's what happens when you listen to music all the time... and while I can't say that my musical scope is really broad, I'm also obsessed with punk and hardcore music from all over the world, so... to me, that alone is a huge scope of music that — from the outside, I'm sure people would say that it all sounds the same, but the more you look into it the more it all sounds different, and the bands from each country have their own feel to the music, their own language.

Paul: I had a friend who was making fun of me the other day, he was in my car and he was like "You really don't listen to anything but punk music, do you?" And I was like, "Yeah, I listen to hardcore too." But — 1 thought about it, and I do listen to a few token non-hardcore bands, but I'd say the reason why I don't derive much influence from anywhere else and I'm not terribly interested in lots of other music is rhat — that connection, whatever that feel rhat comes from punk music that I can relate to, I just don't really find elsewhere. 1 mean, there's a few random other records of different styles that I like a little bit. bur it's all really token things that might work... in the right mood, or something like that, whereas punk music — it's broad enough that every mood you can think of, there's a song for.

Yannick; There's just so much, to keep you interested in it. There's no moment when I really tire :of punk. ,

Inside Ercinit: 1 guess I wonder — OK, punk is a folk music tradition, lyecause people play it, not an elite, and we've been playing punk rock for twenty five years. That's different from the kind of music; you hear on the radio, where it's supposed to be different every year, new and improved products and progress. J guess classical music was or is an example of that demand for innovation in music, too. At rhe same time, I wonder when the final possible combination of notes with a d-beat is played, what happens then — do we go back and start with the first one again, or... ?

Yannick: Yes. (laughter)

Todd: Well, like I said, I think it happens naturally — things evolve, and music changes naturally. If you read things from early hardcore

bands, or look at a band like the Bad Brains, like the early stuff they wrote, if you read what they were listening to — they weren't listening to music that sounded like what they sounded like. But somehow they made this music that was totally raw and fast and sounded almost like nothing else that had been made. Or Minor Threat, even — -if you read about Minor Threat, they were talking about listening to the Jam and Wire and stuff, and they were making this music that was totally different...

Paul: Well, they ripped off the Bad Brains.

Yannick: That brings up where we're heading, what's the future...

Inside Front; That's what I'm saying, yeah.

Yannick: Because we are only listening to pretty much what we're playing. Of course, we're adding something, which goes back to the last question, but it wasn't culled from various far-fetched things, just —

Todd: No, but they weren't pulling from weird things, they were pulling from rock music, which evolved into punk, which evolved into hardcore-

Yannick: Yeah, but there was a definite step there. There was a definite step from the Jam to Minor Threat.

Todd: Yeah, but somebody who dropped out of hardcore eight years ago would probably think that a lot of the bands now sound like they've taken a step, too.

Paul: I think that question's pretty unanswerable, the future's unresolved...

Yannick: I didn't mean we could see the future, but since we do listen to stuff that's so close to what we come up with I wonder how much... where we'll derive the creativity from, or if we'll just give it...

Todd: But — to me creativity isn't just finding some new weird chords, it's — you write your own words, and put your own ideas into it, and your own feeling. I mean, talking about folk music, I'm not that educated in folk music, but my assumption is that folk music, like acoustic folk music, probably hasn't evolved — people are probably playing the same open chords on acoustic guitars, and that doesn't mean that, for people who like that kind of music, that people aren't making new songs that are good to them.

Paul: Right, and the point there is that folk music doesn't serve the role so much of trying to create something new so much as to answer to the needs, or reflect a certain culture — that's why it's folk music. I think punk music can do that to a certain extent, endlessly, though it might peter out as far as how many people want to keep listening to the same d-beat songs over and over again. But maybe that d-beat genre is a good example — you

pretty much have to be a total nerd, into that style, to want to have every record by every band with "Charge" or "Dis" in its name. I mean, there's some really great stuff that's all like that, but it answers to a pretty limited audience. Punk as a whole, there's so many genres that you can keep doing that for a while. I guess ultimately the question is — is it to become something which is simply answering to itself, reflecting itself, or does it... does the culture evolve with the music, or vice versa? I guess that question asks whether our culture is evolving.

Inside Front: Right. Are we trying to be part of an evolutionary culture, or a cyclical culture?

Todd: I think it keeps changing. I don't think it has to get more technical, more out there, more experimental, more anything.

Yannick: As far as styles go, if rock and roll or early punk or whatever was superseded by something else, we can assume then that punk is eventually going to be superseded by or evolve into something else, or be a catalyst for it. Just like in the early '80's, something will change, and punk will be a relic, still alive in some sense, but we can't assume that it's just going to be an endless cycle.

Todd: No, what I'm saying is I don't see it as a cycle —

Yannick: Yeah, OK —

Todd: I don't think — I mean, I don't want to name a certain band, but if you just think of a certain band that's putting out records now, that you like, you can't

really say that they sound completely like another band from five or ten years ago. If they're good, they have their own thing that's a little bit different in some way.

Paul: But I think if you think about when those changes happened, they didn't just happen musically, they exploded because, in 1977, there were a lot of pissed off youth that had just come from a generation that was supposed to change the world, and when it didn't, there were a bunch of disillusioned people, and then punk rock exploded. And then you could say in the '80's, there were a bunch of, again, disillusioned, angry young — suburban kids, essentially, and that exploded into what early '80's hardcore was. Like, Black Flag wouldn't have been Black Flag if there hadn't been a bunch of fucking angry southern California fuckups. And that's why every kid in the early '80's listened to fucked up music and went around on a skateboard and was considered a vandal: in answer to what was going on at the time. I think you have to look at that in a larger perspective; what happens culturally is that eventually that becomes swallowed up, and that anger becomes quenched, and the problem is that it's like one of those little twisty balloons — you squeeze it one place, it's going to pop out

somewhere else. The question is — is that going to be within punk culture, or maybe punk culture, once it's squeezed, just becomes cyclical within itself. Who knows when another moment is going to come along when that anger or that particular thing can explode on a mass scale where there's thousands and thousands of people, or whether that will ever happen again.

Inside Front: I guess the way that 1 see it... Some bands are always bringing in new changes, new variations on beats or whatever, while other types of music spin off and become these cyclical folk culture genres, where people actually aim for being something like the other bands, and it does come out that way. I guess you're refusing to associate yourselves with either of those two options... ?

Yannick: I definitely think we're doing the cyclical thing, in that case, because we're not trying to reinvent something...

Todd: And 1 mean, that's just musically — punk, as a culture, has definitely evolved, and changes so much... the network, and the d.i.y. culture as it is, is so much different even than it was five years ago, let alone fifteen years ago.

Paul: One of the ways that's obvious is — when you see someone who dropped out ten years ago, they look at what's going on now and they think that it's nothing like the punk they were involved with. So often it's the case that it's evolved beyond what they related to so that they don't understand it anymore.

Todd: While we're used to that, because we live.in that culture — we don't see how it changes.

Inside Front: So, along the lines of what you [Paul] were saying, what's the relationship between anarcho-punk music, and that tradition, and anarchist, punk rock activism, squatting and all that? If you're interested in that kind of action, that activism, that whole community, is there an imperative to keep the music that it's been based around alive?

Paul: I think one really rests so hard on the other that I'd think that if someone was really involved in one, whichever one they wanted, they probably would stick with it. However — I'd say that for the most part, it's more of a soundtrack for a culture, in which case, sure, the music is important as long as... From a social perspective, as long as someone continues to get something good out of it, then it's important. From a musical standpoint, if anarchism or whatever, that lifestyle, continually pushes the music in some artistic sense, then sure, I'd say it's important — but I think that generally, it's more the other way around, that there are a lot of people who are just into the music, into the

Asund, and maybe they relate to the politics of anarcltkrn in a very loose way. "

InsideTront; How do you see yourselves, as far as what you're trying to do with your music? You were saying it's about selfexpression as a way just to try to survive...

Todd: Well. I think that would be the point. Like I said before, I don't think we're trying to do amthini;. We play music, and express ideas, and create something that we like and we want to share with other people. And in terms of vision, ideals, , 1 don't think' we have a larger goal outside of that.

Imide Front; So you make music in the d.i.y. community...

Todd: 1 think we just present something, and whatever people get from: ibis up to them.

Yannick: That's definitely what I would say, but 1 thought — a few months ago you were saying that you were going tor something, not forcing, but you were trying to convey a message —

Todd: Yeah, but we never got into that. 1 assumed that you and me were on opposite ends about that, I don't think we necessarily are, but...

Yannick: I've always... felt like, yeah, like you said.

I: JJ: But what you were saying then was that : music is entertainment, and chat's not how I feet about it.

; _Yannick:_ That's not what I was saying.

Todd: OK, Well, we probably didn't understand each other anyway, because we got cut off, I think f we ended before we even got into it. But I think, even from a lyrical stand point, if there are any

slogans in the lyrics it's because they sound good, they fit well, whatever, But it's nor to try to : force.things into people's heads : and make them think "oh, yeah, : this is bad, and this is good..."

Yannick: We disagree on so much stuff that it would be hard to come up with a coherent plan or agenda. ,

Paul: I think there is power of propaganda in music, if you want to use that, but I definitely don't think we're the type of band that has any particular message. I had this conversation with someone the other day, theywere asking iiT knew some ppp singer ' and I didn't know who they were, and they were like "oh, you must be kidding, you're pretending" : and I was like, wow, I guess I just forget that I live in such a bubble. She just didn't get the fact that I'm such a dropout I don't know what's going

on with Britney Spears and all this bullshit. So 1 think to some degree, the politics are inherent in our music when our music is so wrapped up in our

lifesty le. I think that there can be an effect based on that-it's not like we're changing the world, we don't have a political agenda we're trying to spread to the masses, but definitely within any media, music or print or whatever, there's power, to influence. Sometimes it's kind of frightening to think what that might be, but I just — the only level of conscious direction in that is knowing that we don't want our music to be just baseless, or our content to be just baseless. We would rather reflect the things that we do feel strongly about.

Todd: Yeah, I'm definitely not saying there's

: nothing there, I'm saying that what's there is not , so black and white — because for me what's there when we play music, the anger and frustration that I put into our music is real, and it comes from a million factors that have gone into my life, and that's nothing that I can completely explain in a song or a million songs. Realistically, people get into punk for so many different reasons that — I wouldn't expect people to get that as the point of the music... but I'm sure that there are people who came from, or arrived at, feelings and frustrations similar to my own. But — that's not the goal of playing music, to get someone else to think a certain thought or feel a certain feeling. Some people are just going to like the m usic because it's fast and loud or whatever. We have friends that might like it just because they like us as people, or there are people that might like the stuff we sing about, who'd like us lyrically, but musically it's riot their thing.

Insidefront: Do you think it prostitutes music to try to make it serve some propaganda end?

Todd: It depends on the way you do it...

Paul: It happens, sure. I think the power, if there's any power in what we do, it's that one person's reality, or one person's common thoughts, or

someone else's revelation, some

: things that might seem... 1 mean, : some of the ways in which we exist and have existed for a long time, at one point, were revelations

(to us, from the way someone else existed. That's the constant process of thought, that's what keeps me inspired, learning new things, is that constant process of having new revelations and

. ideas. Perhaps the reflection of

where we're at, at this particular : point, could serve to do that for someone else. Again, that's not

Todd; Sometimes much more than the actual : lyrics. But really, honestly, 1 play music to stay

sane, an d any thing that anyone else gets out of it is like a bonus, but it's an extra tiling to me. 1 do it for mostly personal, selfish reasons, to stay sane and attempt some kind of satisfaction, happiness.

Paul: To answer what you said, 1 think when bands prostitute themselves for a message they completely annihilate the power that I was just referring to. In doing that, you reach specific people: you reach the people who are looking for answers rather than ideas. To me, that's so much less powerful — those people aren't going to stop thinking like sheep just because they have different answers now. If there's anything I would ever want to promote to people, it's to think more deeply about things, come up with your own answers. To me that's just one of the fundamental principles of free thinking or whatever.

Yannick: Some of the great propaganda bands, like Conflict and CRASS, were obviously out to send out a message and try to change the world —

Todd: Oh yeah, those bands changed my life, for sure, but I don't think we're one of those bands.

Yannick: 1 know, I know, but he (the interviewer) was speaking generally, not just about our band. I think bands like that definitely... I mean, it (helped a whole social group that at the time was huge, hugely influenced... so the power of that propaganda can't be discarded.

Todd: I've said before in another interview that Conflict probably had — arguably had more influence than any other band, ever, just for the fact that probably thousands and thousands (of people were awakened to animal rights and became vegetarian through... bands like that.

? Paul: I would argue though that the power there was at least partly from the knowledge that those people were living what they what they were saying — minus — (name withheld out of common courtesy), that is! (laughter) " — ..

. _Yannick:_ I think it's safe to say that none of them were liting it! (laughter)

Todd: Actually my point in that other interview was actually the opposite — where people say "oh, they're hypocrites, " or "they don't live up to what they sing about, " and that undercuts everything. The propaganda of what you do comes out through your own individual lifestyle. What you : say; the ideas you promote, can be more of a fictitious thing. What you actually do with your own life..."'⊠⊠

Paul; You know, for me, 1 was influenced by knowing those CRASS records people had a collective, had their own thing going on. To me that was more inspiring than any of the words they were singing. I'm sure there are people who are more academic, so they read lyrics like information; and that information processes in their brains in some logical way, and they're like "oh, rhis is the answer, " but...

Inside Front; Next question: you deliberately keep your music in the d.i.y. sphere — and you seem to be moving more into that, rather than less, which is the opposite of the progression that usually takes place. Is that just because that's where you're most comfortable? Or is that something you consciously think about, the way you produce and distribute music and the way that fits into what's going on in the world?

Paul: Talking about moving in a more d.i.y. direction, or... ?

Inside Front: I understand what Todd's saying about making the actual music and lyrics as a response to personal experience, but there's the question of how you

introduce that music into the world, and you haven't sold yourselves as artists to some record label — that's a very deliberate choice. I guess that grows out of the context of the lives you've chosen to live, but it's still a deliberate choice.

Todd: I think a difference is — with a lot of bands, they get a little bigger, and then they attempt to get bigger, and they think about what they could do to get bigger... but I think with us it's gone the opposite way. Honestly, I don't think we ever cared how so-called popular we were in the scene, or how many records we sold, but at a certain point we had to think about that, because we were doing things... and I think it was kind of the reverse, how do we react to the fact that we can sell a lot of records, by those standards? What do we do about it? Because if we don't think about it, then someone else who doesn't give a shit is going to pop out of the water and try to get control.

Paul: I think the point in there is that we're influencing, in the practical sense, which I'd say is as important as in any ideological sense. It makes sense that we do it this way — everything else about our lives is about being dropouts, living in this bubble that we live in — to some degree, it's a lot nicer to have fewer people to deal with... though the people that we do deal with, I'm not disrespecting them in any way. Things aren't black and white, sometimes you have to make decisions which don't fit the d.i.y. template or whatever. But I think we've always been conscious of doing things in a way that was comfortable for us.

Todd: I think it all comes down to financial stuff. If we had the finances, I don't think we would even do... I mean, we'd go through fewer steps, fewer other people. We don't, so...

Inside Front: How about the way you do things inside of the band? I know that you are always trying to...

Todd: It's called disorganized organization. It's kind of like my Slingshot organizer over here — it's in about thirty pieces, it's scattered all over the place, but it works.

Inside Front: Well, I know a lot of bands have a serious division of labor problem, in which there's one person sort of telling everyone else what to do, or there's a tension over who's responsible for what.

Paul: I think the most fucked up thing about division of labor in general is when the hand that feeds is separated from the mouth. I think people get caught up in, like, a cooperative consensus mentality that means that everyone has to be brought down or up to the exact same level, and everyone has to be doing the exact same things. We've had frustrations with that to some degree, but I see this happen so often with people who are in this mindset — they want to start a group, and if someone's excelling and doing too well in one direction, that people start going "wait a minute, you're not listening to me." I think there has to be some balance, I think everyone has to be included so you feel like you're not totally distanced from the hand that's feeding you, so you at least feel like it's your hand to some degree — but there are certain things that make sense. Yannick does a lot of business stuff because, in some

senses, he's already been dealing with record stuff for years and years and years. When it comes to fixing a van, I'm the dude in the band that knows how to work on cars... I think within our band sometimes it's a matter of figuring out how to balance that so that everyone knows what's going on, and one person isn't doing too much of the stuff; but I think when one person does something particularly well, there's nothing wrong with that.

Todd: We haven't figured it out, by any means, it's something we're always talking about and trying to work on.

Yannick: We've gone through crises, back and forth...

Todd: Where someone's not pulling their weight, or someone's pulling too much...

Yannick:... and ended up butting heads for a while...

Paul: And I think that is the process of cooperation — there's never a template that you can put down. Though I think that's what a lot of these people want, that I was referring to before — they want the rules according to which you

cooperate. You have to put your thumbs up at the right moment, to say the right thing at the right time, everyone has to speak in the same tone of voice. That's not the way people work. People have different ways of speaking and interacting, that's the whole concept of dynamics between people. I think that's one of the problems we've had, is the dynamics between us are different, we're different. That's the hardest thing we've had to deal with, that...

Todd: We're four really stubborn people, really opinionated.

Inside Front: I think, like you're saying, that the organizational structure has to come from the people who are trying to work together, not people imposing a model of organization upon themselves. It's amazing to me that any bands, or groups of people who are really stubborn, are together at all, after a couple years of fighting.

Paul: But I think that any band that does do things on a cooperative basis, which means that there's not one person that's playing a bunch of puppets, which happens — I think that's a great model for the way real cooperation should work, in that it directly answers to the needs of the people immediately involved, whereas you see groups pop up all the time in left culture that are like "let's do a group to save this, " or whatever, and some of the times the inner functionings of those groups come to outweigh the focus on whatever it is they're actually trying to do. When the main focal point is where you're trying to get, and everyone agrees that that's what you're doing, then I think the other things tend to work themselves out — definitely with a lot of bumps in the road, but at least that's... the focal point. I think with a band, the whole point is you're playing music and you have to work things out — you're working things out because you want to play music, not because you're attempting to cooperate. The cooperation part is something that follows.

Inside Front: How about the responsibility, or the relationship, of the band to the larger punk rock community — do you feel like, aside from making music, you have responsibilities to the people you make the music for, or around, or with?

Todd: Not by choice.

Inside Front: Do you feel like you're public property in that sense?

Todd: Yes.

Inside Front: Is that good, or bad?

Todd: Bad.

Yannick: I mean, we do what we do, we play music for ourselves, and consequently we have to...

Todd: I just know, my personal life, this whole thing has pushed me into being more and more antisocial, more and more of a recluse. More and

more guarded, because of being in this small little circle, being in some kind of public eye, being defensive, another people being offensive — that whole thing's definitely changed my personality, 1 can't deny that. I don't feel a responsibility like : "it's my responsibility to do this, for the scene, " or whatever, but I also am, we all are kind of socially dysfunctional in our own ways, I'm not the most extroverted person, and a lot of times if someone approaches me I'm not like "oh, hey, great, how ya doin?" — that's not my personality. So someone who doesn't know me might not know how to take that, and when you're on tour, and people want to talk to you, you... 1 feel like I have to use extra energy to be more personable, because people don't know me, and don't know how I react and express myself, so... '

Yannick: Does that mean you have to do that?

i Todd:... that's like a responsibility.

Yannick: It's nor a responsibility for you to be nice to everyone. You just do it because that's your personality.

Todd: But no, I do because that's how the punk scene works, that's what's kind of special about our subculture, that if people like your music, that might not be enough for them to respect what you're doing. If they meet you and — 1 mean,

you know how it is, if people think that your band are shitty people, assholes, then people might not like your

music, just like that. I mean, if you care about that anymore..

Paul: I think there's only a certain degree to which you can care about that, but-I think the point is, we do what we do because it's what we want to do. But at a certain point, you have to recognize power, whether you wanted it or not. And it you're in a band — I mean, I don't care what band you are — when you're on stage, there's a power differential that has not been broken down, as much as we may try to say it is when we're playing on basement floors. The band can say things, it can influence people in a way that people on the other side of that differential , can't... especially if you're a band that starts to get a little

> more popular or whatever, that power exists and it definitely influences — to some degree, it ends up affecting how you act.

Yannick: But it's not a responsibility.

Paul: No, it's not a responsibility; hut it's — it's relevant to that question.

Todd: Ahhhh, it almost is a responsibility, though — with us being four people who do think about things and are trying to be conscious, if we put out a record that was completely substanceless, ‘ 1 would think that would be irresponsible. ini

Paul: That goes back to what I was saying before, about bands.

Todd: If we made six thousand pieces of plastic with cardboard around them, that had nothing to them, I would think that would be irresponsible.

(Yannick, indecipherable on the tape recorder, presents what appears to be a counterpoint; the others bring up a time when he seemed to take the opposite position; they work it out amongst themselves.)

InsideFront: OK, another tension I want to ask about between different themes in your band is between, on the one hand, seeking high recording quality, , not to mention using at least decent equipment, and on the other hand, being highly critical of technology: itself. How does that play out, how do you resolve the tension between being a high-tech-recording band and an anti-tech-idea band? hliiyKrssrif V

Paul: You mean, like, we play a show and say something about technology and somebody's like : “dude, your amp's on!”?

Todd: Like why aren't we just banging on rocks, Or singing a capella or something?

the amps but — you have a mastery of the technology: you're using, you're pushing for that. Some people who say “fuck technology” are like “yeah, I use whatever.”

Todd: One thing I will say is — when it comes to recording, we heavily favor analog recording, which is becoming more and more a dinosaur of sorts. At this point it's an extremely primitive technology, in the face of the high technologies that exist and are being created on a daily basis. That's our favored method of recording.

{hub If you're saying that technology is bad, and you're picking and choosing between certain kinds of technologies, implying that you're trying to promote a certain. , direction, that's like saying that missiles are bad and theti picking bePveen two particular types

, of missiles. The difference being that a missile is something that you can have a choice to deploy;

and I think that-we're entrenched in technology that we're unable to just shed off our shoulders. Sure, guitars and amps could easily qualify as that — 1 don't think that was ever the intent of our

I statement —

Todd: The thing is, unless we're living on the land, in some kind of sustenance lifestyle, basically human life has "evolved" to the point that we make different combinations of technologies, are surrounded by different combinations of technologies, and use those to do whatever we do with our lives. Using the broad definition of technology — 1 mean, everything you do is — we're always using things somebody else created or invented. Whatever you can make do with of what's there is... I mean, this is an old argument, but we never at any point said "fuck all technology, " that's pointless, it's like saying "fuck modern life, " like fuck everything. The point is just trying to increase awareness, for people not just to jump head first into every new thing that comes along, for people to remember that ten years ago there was no www-dot-whatever, and now we can't even imagine a world where you wouldn't look around and see that on every billboard, wrapper, label, every single thing — that's like science fiction, to remember that ten years ago there was no such thing, not even on a punk record, and now it's everywhere and we can't imagine life without it. As a band, I think that was our whole intention, to increase awareness and to continue to promote free thought.

Inside Front: To restate the question, in a better world, would there be no recordings? If that's the case, why are they necessary here? And if they are necessary, why are "better" recordings, more high- tech recordings, better?

Todd: Maybe that's kind of like the Henry Miller thing 1 was talking about. At the point we've come to, we're adapting to what is around us, to make . do the best we can. That's the point I was making before — maybe in a less confusing world, music wouldn't be such a separate thing, or wouldn't sound the way it does.

Yannick: Then this all leads to our differences over the internet and so on. Since the internet is now so entrenched and part of everything in the world, how do you sec that?

Todd; I mean, I don't think that high-tech recordings are great —

Paul: I think the difference is the perspective you're looking at it from. 1 don't think the : internet, from a technological viewpoint, is largely different from telephones. Telephones completely shaped arid altered not only our culture, but the way in which we think, the reality in which we

live. We now know that you can pick up this little thing and immediately talk to someone, while normally you would have to spend time traveling I to see them. So they not only altered the way i our minds think, they altered the dimension of : time itself. I think the point is, with the internet,

: it became another technology that did that — it

completely altered the way we think about our connection to the rest of the world: you can get on the internet and send a message instantly to someone in China. To me that completely abstracts the distance, and everything else. But all of that is a matter of intellectual thought or whatever — whereas, to me, there's the matter of the actual, physical effects of doing things that affect the way you think and the way you spend your life. Personally, there are certain technologies that I know affect my life in a way that I don't feel so good about. There are people that we give shit for riding around in a car more than necessary — 1 decide I should stop, and ride a bike. It's a decision that I make — I know riding in a car changes the way that I think about my life, as opposed to riding on a bicycle. To me the internet is just one of those things, where I occasionally use the internet to get information or do email or whatever — I don't see it like "I'm getting my hands dirty, " because the rest of my life is involved in these decisions. But to me, staring at a computer screen for too long alters the way that I think — I'd rather be staring at sunshine, or rain, or whatever — things that are more important to me. So to me, that makes it an important personal choice, along with the rest of the personal choices that I make.

Todd: I'm saying — I don't think we as human beings needed that invention, just like we didn't need most of the inventions. And that one in particular — I don't care to have it in my life, and so I'm stubborn.

Yannick: But the question, specifically — recording is a few steps further along the line, it's past the point of the invention of recording stuff instead of just keeping memories. Now it's so part of the way we live that we don't see it that way... of course it changed everything the same way that telephones did — but what I'm saying is that now the internet is fully entrenched in everything that we do. Whether you as a person uses it or not, it's there, and it's there to stay, or to be superceded by something else down the line —

Todd: I don't have the illusion that I'm making it change by not using it. But that doesn't mean that I want to use it just because it's there.

Paul: There were people who resisted recorded music, simply as a lifestyle choice. There were people who thought that taking a photograph was — stealing your soul, or something like that. There were people who — they knew what music meant, to be able to see it and feel it when it was actually played — and to be able to hear it played back on a phonograph, there were people that freaked out when they heard that.

Yannick: So much of our old argument with His Hero Is Gone was based on the righteousness or

whatever of refusing the internet, and technology as such, and I think it was kind of misplaced to try to push that. I think we spoke more as if we had a platform, rather than just personally. I agree with the attack, that you may not want the ways the internet changes the way you live...

Todd: Yeah, but I think it changes the way everybody lives. And I thought that before, but I never had a platform, I never told people "you should stop using the internet — everyone, you should resist."

Paul: I think that self-righteousness was more perceived than spoken.

Yannick: I mean, I was involved just as much in it in the discussions...

Todd: As a person, and as a lyricist, and whatever, I definitely encouraged resistance to technology and rejection of it, and I still do, as a person.

Yannick: Yeah, so do I. The point is, we tried to approach it as a platform, rather than just saying it was a personal thing from our perspective.

Paul: Maybe, but I think there's power in that. Whether it was spoken or perceived, I think there is power in saying "this is something that is happening right now" — because it's only at that moment that you can really say that. Even though we witnessed the introduction of the internet, it's so ingrained in our lives now that it's hard to remember that moment at which it broke. It's right at that moment when a new technology is increased that you can scream your lungs out about how it's affecting you and sound self-righteous or whatever. At some point that argument just becomes null.

Yannick: But we were screaming at a car that was far gone, that couldn't hear us.

Todd: But I also personally enjoyed the fact that it was such a controversial issue that I never thought would be controversial — at that point I enjoyed the fact that saying "fuck this stuff, reject this stuff' would piss people off.

Yannick: The thing is, I still agree with everything you said, but I think more from a personal viewpoint than — trying to talk people into it.

Paul: Yeah, I guess I can see that too, I think... Maybe I can use an analogy that I've made before to someone when I was trying to get them to understand my point of view about understanding these things, understanding technology but also, to broaden it, living in a world which is uncontrollable, which is a perspective that people think is cynical. The analogy is — if you suddenly

awoke in a room with no doors or windows, waist-deep in shit, the fact that you exist in that room amidst that shit — you're not being cynical or pessimistic to say that you exist in that and have no choice but to exist in that. To me, true — I hate to say optimism, because I think it has bad implications — but true living, that can possibly happen in an existence like that, has to come from a recognition of where you actually are. I think if there is any personal salvation, in our own hopes and desires or in anything in this world, it either comes from having that understanding or being so completely blinded that you can just walk around with a smile on your face and pretend that the world is a happy little flower or something. To me, that's the primary point of trying to bring about recognition of these things.

Todd: But going back to your question, to me recorded music is a documentation. In a lot of cases, it's the only proof that something existed. If I pick up some record from some kids in Brazil that somehow recorded a 7" back in 1983, of course I know that this record can never represent the lives these kids lived or what they did when they made this music, but it's the closest thing that I can get to it. Just like I recognize that, to relate it to technology, when I make a phone call, it's not the same as seeing

someone in person and having a conversation with them — but it's the closest thing I can get to it sometimes. For me, recording — it's not a substitute for life, it's a documentation of life.

Yannick: But that's assuming that music needs to be documented.

Paul: Yeah. The evolution of technology, if you follow that backwards, philosophically or anthropologically, you could find a point at which the need to capture moments began. If you follow that back, you come to that point which we call pre-history, which, the anthropologists are telling us now, that was the point when humans started doing something different. It seems to be at that moment that everything changed, and there became a need for history, there became a need to pass things down. To say, at any point over the last century, to say that it was fucked up to want or need to capture music to listen to later, I think was a null argument, in the same way that every time someone criticized something that came along that was building upon that same crutch that happened somewhere behind us in that evolution of technology, that was a null argument. Except that — each individual that made that argument was arguing from the point of view of their life having been altered. But all we're doing is continually building layers upon layers of fucked-upness, all — possibly, possibly — stemming from some point in time behind us when our lives became so fractured that we needed to be able to tie down moments, tie down seconds.

Todd: Possibly there's some kind of human conditioning — whether it's conditioned or instinctual — that makes us want to leave a mark in some sense... and most of the marks we leave, obviously, are horrendous and unforgivable, but

I think there's something to be said for wanting to leave a mark that maybe goes against the other things.

_Yannic_k: But how do you see us to be doing that... or what about not leaving marks...

Todd: Weil, that's what i me in. like, leaving a mark in a fai literal sen® than, destroying things.

Inside Float: It does seem to be characteristic of human beings in the West that we feel that when life happens, it's unreal, but when it's recorded, it's real.

Todi I don't even necessarily mean physical . : ; things — q.Tq

Paul: I don't even think it's necessarily Western. I don't want to start sounding like I'm talking primitivist bullshit or anything, but I would . take it a, lot farther than just Western. I think : there's a certain cultural perspective that, from the literature I've read at least.didn't exist in peoples that lived other ways, nomadic peoples for example. This is up until about thirty years ago that there were peoples living this way. They didn't need to make that mark, because they were happy with their existence from day to day. I don't put too much weight in what scientists have told me about these things, or people who have gone and studied them or whatever, but it's interesting to me — to think that humans existed for thousands and thousands of years making virtually no mark on the world... whereas everything that's happened ini the last ten

thousand years has made not just marks but scars. I think that's ah , astounding difference, ighligfd , *

(T. dd k.iveh

Paul: I think a lot of that stuff started to sound pretty philosophical and intellectual. I'm simply trying to say something that seems to explain something that is a part of me, something I can relate to. And I can't relate to intellectual or philosophical things that don't, in some way, : answer to that. " i 1 i i :

Inside Front; That don't connect to you, your experience, your feelings in some way, you mean.

Paul: Yeah, maybe it's just that I don't give a shit i about things that don't connect ed me, which is in some ways abnormal in the human psyche as we know it. But — I'm hot intending to say those things as some far-fetched intellectual theory, but simply that, when I talk about these things that we're i talking about, I like to at least try to think about where these origins might have come from and : how that might be relevant, y vifdbdvThTˆˆ

Insi_de Fro_nt: OK, so — being in a punk band, you're — well, things aren't always so easy, are they' i I know when 1 saw you in Sweden, the singers'

voices were all fucked up, and you (Paul) are always sick... when we were in Belgrade, my friend there told me when you were there you were so sick you were about to die, and a friend somewhere i

else told me the same thing about when you were there, and I know the same thing has happened to me on tour. Todd was talking about leaving a mark — I wanted to ask him about where you draw

the line between trying to make music to stay sane, and when it becomes something that — the whole process of doing it, getting along, being able to do this despite all the difficulties, emotional and physicalland whatever — where you draw the line between trying to make a mark, trying to stay sane, and then the mark it's making on you, so to speak. When the music creates more problems than it solves...

Ya_nnick:_ Yeah, but I don't know if it does.

We obviously get Something out of this, or we wouldn't do it

Inside Front: You wouldn't do it otherwise, if you didn't actually enjoy it.

Yannick; Yeah. In fact there's so much stuff on personal levels, musically, and certainly financially — there's no way I'd do something like this if it wasn't something that I thought was awesome.

Paul: Yeah, by normal people's standards I do nothing out of responsibility, besides the things I : do to survive. By those standards, I'm pretty much as far out ol the cycle as it gets. Meaning, when I wake up — if I don't have something that moves me to do that day, I'm depressed. Yeah, that's a result of living in the culture we live in. and having to do those things rather than just being happy with existence — but the point I'm getting at is that I don't do things unless they move me or mean a lot to me, and no matter how much I could think about what something should mean to me, if it ever lost its significance to me I wouldn't even think about it I don't have

enough time in my life to do all the things I'm obsessed with or passionate about. I don't have time to do things I don't want to do, to do shit for no reason.

Insi_de Fron_t: So that explains why you still do it. Bur you've played punk rock for a lot longer than a lot of people do — what do you think is the difference there.'

Yan_nick:_ As much as we tried to say we're not trying to do something new or innovative, I think it's changed for us. Even if we're not playing the Same music we were, but something similar, it : always changes, the circumstances, things just : change to be something new' every day. Tour, it's all always something new, even if it's not new : music it's new experiences. : i i

Paul: Interestingly enough, there's something that I get out: of — and I'm not talking about music or lyrics, here — there's something 1 get out of the

: actual experience or touring that I think benefits : my life in a way similar to how I said if lididn't

play music I'd explode. Because — my mind shifts from that waking up and needing something to j be passionate about to get me through the day, : to... being on tour, 1 think the constant motion changes rhe perception of time, and you lose sight

of whatever's at rhe end of the tunnel because you know that the next day's the same thing. Me, I get in a mode of thinking where I become much more peaceful. I'm just — being, wherever we are. I can spend hours doing nothing, just riding in a van, reading a book or looking out the window, and be totally happy, however slow or fast time is going by. That's something I can never achieve at home, because I think that — to live in the busyness of a city, the time frame of the city, jobs, these kind of things, 1 think for me after tour my life always kind of shifts back into that gridwork within a certain amount of time, no matter how dropped out I am from normal life. That's something I get out of touring that — maybe you could just get it out of traveling normally, but to me it's irreplaceable, who knows what I'd do without it.

Yannick: When we get back home — none of us really work that much, none of us really have responsibilities or are used to the time frame in the city. I think all the responsibilities that we have and that we do deal with are...

Paul: Granted, it's not the nine-to-five that we come home to, that's not what I'm saying — but even when you just live around the nine-to-five, there are some ways it makes its way into your life. Like if you need to go to a store to do something, you have to do it within certain hours. I usually go through a period when I come home from tour when I'm depressed, because I don't know what to do with myself, and don't know where I'm going. The fucked up thing that happens to me is that I feel like I have to be doing something or something's wrong. I have to be accomplishing something, or something's wrong. What that says Uto me is that I can't be happy just to be alive — and

I don't tight that when I'm in the city, because to me all that matters is being happy, and I think it's great to find things that I'm passionate about. But it's something I'm very conscious of, and ultimately I think that other goal of existence is . more important to me, I'd like to live in a place that was quiet enough that I could be

happy with whatever I was doing. Accomplishments, stuff to keep us busy, all that shit is ultimately meaningless. We live, then we die, and what matters is that we should be happy in between. What you accomplish or whatever is only a means of achieving that happiness.

Inside Front: So you do what you do because it's the thing you think you can do that can bring you the most happiness in the world, out of everything you could choose.

Paul: It's not the thing; it's a thing. , . •

Inside Front: Got it. s t — . '

Contact Tragedy at:

2336 N. Killingsworth Portland, OR 97217

[Image not archived]

Haggard, but satisfied by a tasty vegan stew, I waited for another show to begin. I was in a squat in Oslo, Norway, and going on about the 60th show in two months. Hanging out by the literature table, I caught a glimpse of the first band setting up and saw that their singer was writing out all his lyrics on giant posters and hanging them around the performance space — my attention was snagged enough that I inched forward to watch them play. I watched those four lads. Lack, play their hearts out that night — everyone in a swirl of movement. At one point the singer started break-dancing — what a gift to bring such a beautiful thing to the hardcore scene (later that evening I asked him where he learned to break-dance and he told me that when he was younger he had been a B-boy in Copenhagen — of course!). Their performance that night was something so refreshing and essential to the lifeblood of punk rock; it is through such rebirth that we are stripped down to what matters. Thomas and I talked of this in our interview below. What is critical, more than any sound or politic or thing, is the realization of possibility: that, in the face of impossible inertia and despair, the shake of a hip — a scream, a note — can indeed turn the world upside down and send you spinning.

I had the good fortune to travel with Lack the next couple of days and witness them play a couple more times in Sweden. Before we parted company Thomas, the singer, took the time to write down in my journal a lot of the lyrics they were working on for the upcoming LP (_Blues Moderne: Danois Explosifs_. reviewed elsewhere in this issue). It was a

great pleasure to receive the CD in the mail a year later and hear those lyrics realized and shaped with beautiful, painful, intense music. It's been quite a while since that record was released and Lack has been through a fair bit as a band and as people. It's exactly bands like Lack that keep posthumous issues of Inside Front coming, and we thank them. Below is an interview with Thomas conducted just recently from Copenhagen.

4s my words have grown more hateful, so has my love gone wilder and untamed/And if I slit any wrist let it be not that of my own, but of the me I am expected to be

Bruce: When Lack works, what makes it work?

Thomas: Musically it works when we manage to take a musical idea and built a structure for it that somehow expresses the essence of the idea; when we exhaust an idea for its useful potential in a way that "works" for us. Personally I think we are best when we create tension primarily through the use of chords and their internal relations, through melody, rather than through the use of rhythm and violence. Because with rhythm you can only go so far in terms of, say, extremity, but with chords and melody (which obviously involves rhythm, but not primarily) there is no limit to how far you can go in your creating expressions.

Furthermore, I think Lack works when lyrics and music complement each other and form a flow, when they support each other. When a certain lyrical point is emphasized or translated by the

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together, collectively letting go, collectively becoming expression, then I feel something I rarely do — momentum. When Lack creates that for me, then I think it works.

Bruce: Do conceive of yourselves as a particularly "Danish" or perhaps "Scandinavian" band?

Thomas: If Refused had not made their two last records, Lack would not have sounded as we did on _Blues Moderne_ LP or the _Sisyphus_ 7" — and the same goes for Breach and their It's Me God. Those bands meant a lot and they were both Swedish. In fact, the whole Swedish rock thing has had a rather big influence on us. But apart from that I don't feel like being a Scandinavian band, musically.

In other ways though, we have experienced what it means to be a Danish band — equipment is extremely expensive, van renting is economybreaking, rent is devastating, food prices are depressing, recording prices are absurd; the underground is underground and small.

When we wrote mails to people in order to book shows it sometimes felt like writing "Danish" sort of disqualified us from being interesting. In Europe there is hierarchy as well — the west over the east and the north. Just like Americans who 'intuitively' disbelieve that a European (or non-North American) band can offer anything valuable at all — besides being maybe "exotic." So we have experienced that being Danish meant something. But primarily in the beginning of our "international adventures."

In terms of culture and politics, then I think there can be found some elements of being Danish, since we deal with subjects that are particular and related to where we live. Not to say that they can't be translated or be relevant to people who live in other places since I think our songs are relatively easy to relate to, but they are created in our milieu. As an American reader you are not used to living in a genuine welfare state with all its goods and evils. A welfare state which is kind of socialist because of the high taxes and the access to free education with state support and health care, but which is still capitalist because it maintains the right of private property and extremely high prices on everything. There is a rather big labor movement, which used to achieve a lot in the past, but these days they seem so immobile, inactive, and monolithic that you almost suspect that they have cut a deal with their friends in the private and the

public sector. Very little is actually happening in the realm of the worker. It is as if the workers' unions are satisfied with the wage system and the whole 40 hours a week rhythm, because they are certainly not doing anything to change it. So people work much more than they have to actually. This makes it rather depressing, because most people are so entangled in the whole career/job thing that there is very little room for anything else.

Denmark is also a country with a very strict sense of what you can do and what you can't. Not only in terms of morality which is actually rather laid back (Denmark is a protestant, almost atheist country, which makes moral systems up for debate in most places), but rather in terms of envy and small-mindedness. It is a little hard to explain, but there is a kind of unarticulated social code which states that you are not supposed to be too much of something, too famous, to believe that you are better than others, that you are worth something. It is an cultural ethic of being humble and you see it everywhere, even in the punk community. A band plays'a lot of shows, they get known and suddenly people think they're rock stars, or idiots (I am not talking exclusively about my own band, because this is rather general). The problem with this kind of ethic is that it keeps people in their places, because everyone is so eager to make sure that everyone is not "doing-too-much." It is hard to explain, you have to experience it. But ultimately, this kind of ethic stands in the way for attempts at social change, because people are afraid to believe in themselves and what they actually want for themselves and the world they live in. It creates apathy.

> So perhaps, in some aspects we are a Scandinavian band.
>
> *It's /ike being buried alive when our masks become our faces/ it's like being buried alive when our idea Is become our tombstones/ Life is too short to die/ burn away to live again/ In the name of every fallen hero that ever so/d out: show me the next exit and I'll be the first to take it*

Bruce: What is the role of a collective of artists making music in the revolution?

Thomas: First, I don't think any of us believe in the revolution, but rather in revolutions. Mostly because revolutions happen all the time and revolution doesn't. But also because the revolution has an implicit totalitarian, fascist, tendency to it: you are either for the revolution or you are against it. The wildest revolutionaries in the revolution are either first against the wall or the ones pulling triggers "after" the revolution. But there are multiplicities of revolutions, they happen everywhere and all the time — micro and macro, bad ones, good ones.

Feminists can have revolution now, while Marxists have to wait.

To make a long story short, then, I think the role of the artist is to do what she does as good as she can. To create new feelings or to express old feelings in a new way, to give expression to something unexpressed, to create new worlds and people. I have left shows, movies, books, affected. Sometimes those effects have revolutionized my life and made me make decisions and act in ways I had not thought I ever would. I think

the role of the artist is to create affects, to create momentums and to affect us all to create momentums of our own and in our own lives. Ultimately, the artist's "role" is to show that in creation the negative and the positive collide, and once you create you are never "safe" — you must risk... just like in "real" life.

Bruce: What about the danger, in the context of the traditional hierarchical performance, of being "creative specialist" vis-i-vis a mostly "passive" audience? How has Lack worked to alter this? What sort of space does Lack seek to create at its shows?

Thomas: My biggest fear is that we contribute more negativity than positivity. Adorno & Horkheimer said that workers read Donald Duck to learn to live with humiliations, violence, and all the other bad things connected to being of working class. In the same way I fear that Lack can become a medium for accepting despair and hopelessness, because we emphasize these feelings so much in our music. I am a very pessimistic person and since I am the vocal person in the band, both lyrically as well as the one talking in between songs, I often present a very negative approach to the issues we present. And this, I fear, may just create more despair and hopelessness. But, maybe we take ourselves too seriously here... I don't know.

But to answer your question somehow: we try to create a friendly space first of all, because we want people to feel good during the event, a relaxed and open atmosphere to counter the tense and pained atmosphere of the music. It doesn't always work and sometimes we even end up playing hostile shows — but usually not on purpose. Simultaneously, we also try to make the space one of focus, energy, and excitement,

maybe even drama, basically a space for people to indulge in and get lost in. We try to create a passionate space, in order to show that we are as much at the mercy of our passions as we master them — not just the band, but also everyone at the event.

All these ambitions don't always manifest themselves, but sometimes they do. And that is when people react, act and respond, when they "break" the crowd silence and become participants. They may not seize an instrument, but they participate and through that they create a whole new event. When that happens the event becomes a participation-event, instead of a spectator/spectated-event. But this is all very idealized, because mostly we don't even master ourselves when we play, so to master transforming the entire event on our own is almost out of our hands. But we do pay attention to the whole cliche-ridden formula of "rock band rocking out on stage" and the fundamental boredom implicit in this spectacle that we have witnessed again and again.

More concrete initiatives: we have postered the lyrics on the wall behind the drums for everyone to see, thus making the vocalist as much an interpreter of the words as the audience; we have addressed people directly without microphone, which only works in small crowds, but creates a more intimate space; we have made fun of ourselves — "over-posing" — thus adding irony to the dead seriousness of the whole event. Small stuff...

Bruce: How would you define the tension between Lack as a live performance and Lack as a pre-recorded commodity, a CD to be bought and sold?

Thomas: We sound better on record. But, of course, there is much more vitality and immediacy in the live performance, much more intensity. But most important, it is unique, whatever happens only happens once — even if you tape it, in which case you only get a mediated, translated version of the event, it happens here, now! And we better pay attention because in a while it is gone, and that is it! Just like life. A recording is much more of an object. An object you may have a detailed and rich relation to, but an object nonetheless — a thing.

This does not mean that a thing can't affect, it can, and sometimes you can even create exactly the expression you want with a studio recording, because you can work on it until it's there — undisturbed by drunk idiots, sound problems (oh, the sound problems), breaking strings, lacking electricity or just the static electricity biting your lips as you approach the microphone.

> But then there is another danger: what is the "true" version of a song — I always tend to compare a recorded version with a live performance (or the other way round). I remember watching Snapcase destroy their own intensity and songs in a live performance, and
>
> [Image not archived]
>
> it really made me sad, because I had expected so much from them. If you can't live up to your own recording you endanger yourself — or conversely, if you rely on performance and volume, your recordings are going to lack. I often try to imagine a band that refuses to record — how would that work out?
>
> Bruce, you once told me that you watched a movie so good that had you known this and prepared yourself for it, it would have been the last movie you ever saw. I sometimes get that feeling with a live show: "tonight could have been the last time — I could have walked away from it and not looked back. Because it was so perfect." I never get that feeling with a record. Never.
>
> *When the most honest of emotions turns into a commodity, this can't be a surprise/ This can t be/ No/ But J never stopped demanding/ i am more thirsty than ever/ If this shall make my heart the loneliest: so be it*

Bruce: What role do pessimism and hope play in the struggle of everyday life, in attempting to * change the world we live in?

> _Thomas_: Hope is treacherous, but perhaps necessary. Treacherous because when it comes to radical politics it is often focused on non-existent things, say the Revolution or "someday someone is going to do something"

> or "someday this suffering will end" or the "what I am doing is very important" activist kind of thing. Hope can create illusions. But worst of all, hope can break you, because if you have

a deep-felt hope in something and it doesn't work or happen, your hope will die and then what have you left? You can either create more hope in something else or you can just give up and become a realist. Get a job in the bureaucracy. But hope is very important at the same time, because it is a drive, a motivational force. Hopeless people need desire, desperation, or pure despair in order to act, because you need something to make the machine function. If there is no hope at all, then what is the point to try at all?

Pessimism is the feeling of anticipating the worst or seeing in everything only confirmations of the notion that everything is fucked up. I have been a pessimist my entire life and I still fight it as hard as I can. I don't think it has any positive role to play in a struggle except draining energy and imposing the realist, defeatist attitude. But again, if things are fucked up then it is very easy to

become pessimistic. But it is important that you learn to leave that feeling behind or it may prevent you from acting because "it doesn't matter anyway, it's all fucked up, it's too late, it has always been too late, we are already dead."

Bruce: What might Lack's escape plan look like?

Thomas: I have no clue at all. The anarchist liberation of desire founded on a gift economy and mutual aid?

Bruce: Is punk rock still a legitimate medium?

Thomas: Yes. But only if it refuses to be fully signified and captured by repetition, boredom, commodity fetishism and capitalist machines. Punk rock is transformative, expansive, it follows a line of flight when it is most ambitious and daring and this gives it continuous potential to be an alternative. Refused was a line of flight for a while (until they became a fetish), because they dared to defy definitions and rules. Punk rock is legitimate to me, because of its relentlessness, because it doesn't care, it doesn't want to be understood and accepted, continuously becoming flight. The creativity of punk rock makes it a legitimate medium for me, not necessarily because of the punk rock aesthetic, which is often boring, but rather because of the explosive, intense blossoming all over the place. The fact that you can start a punk band, or any band basically, without any pre-established musical capabilities, start playing and do things without having to suck up to anyone, is still a valid justification for punk

in my book. The whole DIY network — that you can play music or whatever without having to surrender to mechanisms of "big business" is another valid justification as well.

Of course there is bullshit in punk, and lots of it. But these days, I prefer to look on the positive, creative aspects of the whole "movement" instead of focusing on bad, negative, useless aspects. It's like a dialogue based on association instead of discussion and "conflict": you create something, someone else is inspired by it and creates some-

thing else, which again inspires someone who suddenly inspires the first one back. A flow instead of dead ends. Punk rock's biggest asset is the emphasis on the possibility of the impossible and if nothing else, then this makes it valid for me, because that is exactly what we need these days: to experience that we CAN do things differently and the impossible does in fact happen. And very often indeed.

Bruce: What is the next step for Lack?

Thomas: I don't really know for sure. Music wise, we are definitely finished with the whole _Blues Moderne_ vibe. I don't think we can ever write a song like those again and we don't want to either. We are just so worn out by it by now. Not that we don't like it, we just desperately need to readjust our creative focus in order to do anything at all. So we have begun writing new stuff and it is definitely an interesting process, because we are working with different musical tools than what we are used to. It is very challenging and exciting. So far we have written some songs that we are actually pleased with.

I think we will record another full-length someday, and then we will probably do the tour thing — maybe try to avoid all the catastrophes this time. But when exactly is very open. We might have a secret record coming up.

We played with the thought of having a small book to compliment the next record, but we are extremely lazy so let's see if it happens. Personally, I want to emphasize the political content of our music in a different way than the usual "speaking between songs" thing, which doesn't always work that well. I think that all of our songs are basically political, but I want to emphasize this even more in the future.

Numbed by what you call your life/ Show me you 're a live.../ To my generation: / dare you to give me something more than this/Or have we given ini'

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An Introduction: The Denial of Death

The reader is encouraged to recall to mind Greg Bennick's (juggler, filmmaker, former singer of Trial) column in the last Inside Front on an Iron Maiden show he had just attended and his skillful, smooth transition to his then- recent reading of *The Denial of Death*, discussed below. The Iron Maiden anecdote made us laugh, and his eloquent discourse on death-driven anxiety sent us to the sofa, face down, to weep.[1]

Since his reading of *The Denial of Death*. Greg has taken these ideas and run quite a ways in the last three years. It was my intention with the following Interview to follow the trajectory of Becker's ideas first germinating in Greg's head to his auspicious meeting with Patrick. Shen, who went on with Greg to make their film *Flight from Death: The Quest for Immortality*, a documentary based around many of the ideas Becker discussed, to the completion of the triumvirate with the meeting of Professor Sheldon Solomon. It was with Prof. Solomon that the World Leaders Project was formed, in which Becker's ideas were given radically pragmatic shape and taken out into the world, literally to its leaders, to discuss and understand their consequences in our everyday lives.

I highly encourage anyone interested in the ideas to track down any of the books we discussed and especially to keep on the lookout for *Flight from Death*, Greg and Patrick's film (see the contact details at the end of the interview), The final edit is finally almost ready with Hollywood actor Gabriel Byrne (*End of Days*, *The Usual Suspects*) narrating. It's a beautifully conceived documentary, sharp, accessible and timely. I saw a rough cut at a showing of a slightly earlier edit (with a different narrator) in a lofty apartment in Manhattan last fall, with about forty-odd other : people crowding the room (there was a second showing later that night). The skillful presentation of Becker's ideas and examination of violence in our world intended for a widespread audience, without diluting their power, is an excellent example of what

[1] It is known, from inside sources, that Greg originally intended to write that Issues (#13) column on the sinister widespread rhyming of the words "fire' and "desire" in the last century's go at pop music. In this airing of our dirty laundry Greg was going to oust dur own house band. Catharsis, for yes, their unashamed rhyming of these wry words and mercilessly compare this action to any number of pop acts from the past. And in 2003 the recent top ten hit "Your Body is a Wonderland" rhymes, you guessed it, these same menacing words! Greg, perhaps sensing the already condemning Al Barren "No Stars!" review of Catharsis's Passion LP, later in the same issue, tactfully dropped the fire/desire controversy to favor of waxing hilarious on his love of metal.

can be done by artists driven to create, even in the obscenely constrained and costly world of American film.

Some Recommended Reading:

The Denial of Death by Ernest Becker (The Free Press, New York) Becker's masterpiece is largely accessible, readable, thought-provoking, and even quite entertaining in places. However, he covers some ground that muddles his brilliant ideas; for example, his re-working of Freud's psychoanalytical language and ideas has value, I'm sure, from the point of view of the psychological community, but hinders the overall effect. His long chapter on the Scandinavian philosopher Kierkegaard, though interesting in its own right, has the same consequence. Still, don't let either of these put you off from tracking down this book and engaging with some of the more important ideas of our time.

Art and Artist by Otto Rank (Agathon Press, New York) Rank's illuminating book on the motivations and psychology of the artist and the "creative urge." This book, first published in 1932 in the US from the ex-communicated disciple of Freud, was the foundation for much of *The Denial of Death*. In fact I believe that at one point Becker states that he is simply trying to make accessible with his book some of these much-neglected ideas of Rank. If you enjoy the sections on the role of the artist in *The Denial of Death* you would do well to follow up with *Art and Artist*. Pius my edition has the bonus of a forward by Anai's Nin!

Man's Search for Meaning by Viktor E. Frank! (Touchstone, New York, Etc.) The first half the book is made up of a narrative recounting his survival of a German concentration camp in World War II, in which his entire family perished save his sister. He originally wrote this part of the book just months after his release. It's an important account of how he managed to piece together some meaning amidst suffering and, even more chillingly, how the camp represented an intense pared down and focused study of industrial life. The second half of the book is the fleshing out of his ideas in the narrative in what he calls Logotherapy. Conceived 20 years later it is quite detailed and systematic in its approach. A good companion to *The Denial of Death*, especially for those looking for some more tangible answers to the problems raised in that book than Becker sought fit to present.

In the Wake of 9/11: The Psychology of Terror by Tom Pyszczynski, Sheldon Solomon, and Jeff Greenberg. This is an excellent recent book examining Becker's ideas in a modern context. All three of the authors (I believe) are interviewed in *Flight from Death*, especially in their scientific approach to Becker, and the validation of much of his ideas on death-anxiety through thorough social experiments.

I spoke with Greg by phone from his home in Seattle.

Sunrise reading, Trial tours, Filmmaking and Death Anxiety

What's so bad about the fear of death?

The terror of death. The terror of knowing that one day, from unforeseeable circumstances, you shall die. You shall perish from the Earth never to exist again. You inhabit a dying, decaying body — a machine processing matter — eating, digesting, shitting. Animals, bleeding, mating, suffering, dying. No — this is not the sum of your existence, you are a human! You are valuable, your life has meaning. You are in possession of a soul, of Reason. You can conceive not only of this world, but a cosmos — a new life, a better world. You, human being, are a duality, possessed of your withering dying body with a finite number of seconds left before decaying to dust, and of a unique ability to imagine the world outside of that body, to imagine eternity, transcendence. What are the consequences of this duality? What is born of the tension between this tragically temporal descending and eternal longing?

In the early 197O's a cultural anthropologist, Ernest Becker, attempted to tackle and understand this duality. In his monumental *Denial of Death* he examines the fear of death as the root cause of all of humankind's actions. However, Becker concluded this fear of our death is too much for most to bear on a daily basis, so we create *all* sorts of systems and means of drowning out the terror of reality. Becker understood this in terms of immortality-striving. Architecture, religion, ideologies, governments, works of art, social interactions, raising children, wars are all in some way manifestations of our need for permanence, our need to transcend the sad temporality of our existence. Becker even proposed the chaos of a menial job as the perfect "forgetting" of the unmanageable, true chaos of life[2]. This fear of death is so encompassing in every movement of our lives that often it seems it isn't even there. Becker wrote, "even if the average man lives in a kind of obliviousness of anxiety, it is because he has erected a massive wall of preparations to hide the problem of life and death. His anality [his denial of all that is bodily] may protect him, but all throughout history it is the "normal, average men" who, like locusts, have laid waste to the world in order to forget themselves."

Humankind, as far as we know, is unique in its realization of its inevitable death and likewise unique in its reach beyond it. Everyday life is characterized by our attempts to manage the wild chaos of the world with a series of small fictions known as "self." We create a structure of limits and fabricate an order of who we "are" onto which we can function; a denial that simultaneously allows us to live and denies us so much of what might be possible in our lives. Otto Rank, a disciple of Freud, who later broke ranks with his school and was a central inspiration for *The Denial of Death*, wrote, citing Rousseau, "every human being is equally unfree, that is, we create out of freedom, a prison." Immortality-striving or our immortality projects, whether writing a book or buying a house, are a defiance of our finite existences, they serve on a psychological level to soothe our sundered being. Though it would seem correct to ask first if these

[2] Editor's note: I can't restrain myself from pointing out that, if this is indeed Becker's primary explanation of why people work low-status manual labor jobs (I don't know for sure, as I haven't read him), he was suffering from an acute case of class-privilege-induced blindness.

immortality projects are positive or negative in nature, it is more critical to realize if we identify at all with what we are doing.

Understanding these basic concepts of our fear of life (its chaos) and fear of death (our end) creates a picture of the extremely fragile means humans use to navigate the world, for all around us are "competing" immorality projects on all levels, from the personal to the cultural. Anyone that differs to an extent from our own is a threat. If they worship a different god or they believe anarchism is intrinsically flawed and doomed to failure and you think it the salvation of mankind — one of you is wrong from a relative point of view. This is the crux of the matter, because this very conflict leads to violence: if I deride you, if I cannot convince you of my point of view, if I cannot in some way accommodate your view to mine, to render it harmless — then I must eliminate your point of view, lest my conception of self and my claim to the eternal be shattered. And so often our point of view is simply dictated from a position above and greedily received. Self-definition, which so many of us need in order to cope with life, is offered ready-made, with minimal effort on our part, from leaders — statesmen, priests, authorities on revolution, intellectuals. The lure of accepting these definitions, the surrender of believing oneself to be *presto* an American or a Marxist, with an incredible array of leaders and ideological frameworks and consumer goods to back it up — this denial of our own potential and denial of life, this pseudo-protection from the terrible reality of our existence — for this so many are prepared to do untold violence again and again.

Bruce: I want to start off by mentioning the story you told after the screening of your film in New York City of how *The Denial of Death* was put in your hands along with two other books, *Mans Search for Meaning...*

Greg: Yeah, that was by Victor Frankl and *Art and Artist* by Otto Rank...

B: Otto Rank, who Becker is so fond of...

G: Yeah, absolutely.

B: What I'm curious about is the process it took for you to finally read *The Denial of Death* and begin to make connections to other ideas in your life already present in the Hardcore Punk scene, the activist scene, and your own personal ideas, etc. How did all this match up with *The Denial of Death* and finally to the point where you are thinking: I need to make a film of this?

G: First and foremost, the film was originally the brainchild of Patrick Shen, who is from Los Angeles, which I'll tell the story of in a moment. But after reading *The Denial of Death* — and I quite clearly remember when I finished reading it — I was in the Trial van, on tour, packed in like a sardine in the back of the van somewhere near Reading, California, driving north to Seattle from San Francisco on the highway. I remember the Sun coming up and I had been reading by flashlight all night long — I read the last lines of the book as the Sun rose. It sounds quite poetic — the Sun has crested this hill, everyone is asleep in the van, I'm by myself reading — it's fantastic — it would have been perfect if I had been reading some Barbara. Cartland love novel — but poetic regardless, I remember it clearly. But after reading the book I remember

immediately starting to make connections to different areas of my life and to different things I was experiencing. One thing I was acutely aware of from the start

Becker through his writing and academic career constantly reminded readers not to turn him or his ideas into some sort of icon. He was always critical of himself in that regard and I took this to heart at the end of the book And I tried not to take everything he said that spoke truth to me and apply it to every aspect of my life. I definitely made some strong connections: the ways in which people strive in our particular society to achieve wealth and fortune and examining those things from the perspective that they were possibly — and I say possibly, not to say Becker was absolutely right — representative of that person's desire to achieve immortality, that would allow them to live on past their physical body. That suddenly rang true to me. And so looking at world leaders, for example, and the positions of people in power and the dynamics between them and people who don't have power — these things came into sharper focus as seen through the lens of: these are the means people are using to achieve symbolic immortality.

B: Did you make immediately the connection to being an artist, in the terms that Becker lays out in the book?

G: Absolutely, and not to kill the book for anybody but at the end of the Denial of Death, Becker wraps up the book by speaking about crafting ourselves, our lives, or an object as art, making our lives as art and offering that, so to speak, to the world at large, or to the "life force" as he says. ("The most that any one of us can seem to do is to fashion something — an object or ourselves — and drop it into the confusion, make an offering, so to speak, to the life force.") I connected immediately to that as an artist. For example, at the time we were touring on the Trial album, which had just been recorded and released, and I connected to the idea of creating something that was absolutely representative of my thoughts feelings, beliefs and ideals, along with those who were playing music with me as a collective and offering that to the life force. What did that mean to us? What was its significance and on how many different levels could I analyze that significance? One of the most profound ones was that playing in the band and playing shows and creating art was doing something for me on a psychological level and I had never thought of that before. And by psychological, I don't just mean, "Wow, that made me happy, " rather it was soothing me, quire literally to be thinking, "1 am contributing something that I feel has worth to this world. And in doing so that is making me feel good about my existence and my potential to be "remembered "That's such a superficial way to describe Becker — but something was going on.

B: I think Becker is interesting, too, in that he seems to waver a bit in his evaluation of the artist. For a while he says the ability to create is unmistakably valuable and "in this sense, objective creativity is the only answer that man has to the problem of life." But then he says essentially, well, you know, most people don't have any real talent for art and that's the problem. Too bad. Besides, the artist is trying to swallow the whole world, and I don't know if that is going to work. Becker seems to pull back ! and hesitate about creativity as a "solution.

G: I think Becker may have also realized that creativity doesn't necessarily mean that you create good things. Creativity leads you for example to do an interview which contributes to what hopefully will be an excellent magazine. But creativity can also mean "Wow, if we all have box cutters and we *will* get on the plane at the same time we might just be able to fly it into a building." I think Becker realized that striving for immortality isn't always necessarily a good thing. It leads to a lot of issues and problems, terror and violence in the world. It also leads to, dare I say, interesting hardcore records being made!

To finish the answer to the initial question. What the connection was to the film was: Here we have Patrick Shen in Los Angeles. Patrick read *The Denial of Death* completely unassociated with the punk and hardcore music scene. He was blown away by what he read and thought "I need to make a film of this" — he was a filmmaker in LA. He wanted to make a film looking at the negative effects of striving for immortality. Of how it impacts human violence, how it leads to wanting to one-up one another, to destroy one another, be the victor, the one who survives — amid the field of corpses lying around us, to be that one who stands strong. He was working on this film and heard about the World Leaders Project, which we can get into in a bit, that I was undertaking with a professor friend of mine in New York, and wanted to do an interview with me for his film and when he called me and we started talking, I realized: Wait a minute, you're doing a film about Becker? And when he heard about the World Leaders Project he said: Wait a minute, you're going to meet face to face with world leaders just to talk about Becker? And so we just instantly hit it off. We decided to help each other out, so that's how I got involved in the film, which was originally Patrick's film, which over the course of the last 18 months got to the point where we were co-producing it, cowriting and working on it in equal shares. It came together because we realized there is much more to Becker than realizing that "Hey, we want to be famous because we recognize that being immortal would be a neat idea." There is a dark underside to the work as well that we wanted to cover in the movie.

B: I don't know if it's going to become a standard question at the Q&A at the end of the film: "So this your immortality project, right?" When someone asks that, and some did at the New York screening as I recall, it presents us with this: Here is something we might consider a "positive" immortality project, not proclaiming to be "the truth", despite all disclaimers, be it your film or Becker's book we nonetheless react in such a way that we are saying to ourselves, well that's not the truth, I know better.

G: That's what's interesting, and again while I say what I'm about to say, I would like you and your readers to keep in mind what I just got done saying: don't apply Becker to every aspect of our lives, we would just go nuts — "Why am I buying the vegan chocolate candy bar, it must have something to do with immortality We could look at the person who ask the question: "Isn't this your immortality project?" with that cocky air, we could look at that person asking that question as living their own immortality project, because in doing so they say, "Well, I obviously know more that you and when all these other idiots are dead and gone, including you, I'll still be around

due to my acute sense of thinking and amazing intellect." We could look at this from a million different angles.

B: I find that such an interesting situation. Is that not how we interact in the world? Trying to achieve our immortality on some level through these petty exchanges throughout the day? Is there a real, valuable way we can communicate otherwise? I believe that there is, but how do we define that? That sharing, reciprocity?

G: I think people need to do this. One thing Becker seems to be saying is, that we're saying in our movie, is that this just isn't something that you get over, that we end, that we do away with. The 'this' being immortality striving and trying to be the one who last and lives longest. Becker's point was that the human animal lives in constant fear of death, at least on some subconscious level. Or rather the human animal is constantly aware of its own death. Keep in mind that we are always working against that or using that information to guide the course of our actions. Becker's suggestion is that these little warfares that go on throughout the day, from the little kid — he uses as an example the kid who says, "Mom, he got a bigger piece of candy than me" — to "You tried to kill my dad, Saddam Hussein, therefore you are next on my list, " *all* of these things can be traced back to death anxiety and that all of them are part and parcel of who we are as people. We are reacting based on the psychology of being a human being. These things are inescapable. I guess the point of Becker that we, as producers of the film *Flight from Death*, have tried to encapsulate in 90 minutes is that all these little pieces of warfare that go on throughout the day and *all* these huge wars that go on across the world are quite possibly inescapable, but an awareness of these things can help reduce the aggression and hopefully the pain that is associated with them. And again, that's somewhat up to the interpreter. Meaning that there are those who think that pain for a specific cause is quite a fantastic thing. I guess I am representing a majority who would suggest, as a general rule, that hurting or killing others is bad.

B: I believe that in our increasing awareness of these underlying motivations, the very first simple step of saying, "Hey, " *nudge nudge*, "there is this denial of death thing going on, " is so important before you make those larger connections. We're not all yet walking through our day thinking, "Hey, I exist in this duality of my creatureliness and my immortality-striving!"

G: One thing we wanted to do and one thing that we have argued throughout, and I'm not sure at which of the New York screenings this question was raised, the second one I think: "What good does this do in terms of the world at large? What good do these ideas actually have in changing the course of human behavior?" Our answer was, ultimately, just having these ideas on the table helps. Meaning that, granted, we are not going to get rid of the daily battles, we're not going to get rid of people beating the crap out of each other or treating each other unfairly. But realistically, having the thought on the table, just for discussions, out there for everyone to see. That quite possibly our actions are motivated by a subconscious, innate fear. That creates interesting conversation and I would argue absolutely allows for change of behaviors,

or at least less violent and destructive ones. Up until now, with *Flight from Death*, I don't think these ideas have been popularized nearly as much as they could have been. Ernest Becker was suppressed throughout his entire career because of his relationship to Thomas Szasz and those who worked with Becker were ostracized from the psychology community for associating with Becker.

B: Who is Thomas Szasz?

G: Thomas Szasz at Syracuse University — and as I understand it, readers would do well to research on their own and correct me here, he was against the medicalization of psychology. And I think that what happened was that Szasz was arguing against going toward a space where drugs were prescribed for everything. Which of course means less profits for psychologists. If psychologist can prescribe fancy medication they can drive fancier cars. And get rich. Szasz I think, was saying we need to be looking at psychological problems from a psychological perspective, not medical perspective. And a psychological perspective that looks at the human animal on a social level — almost veering into anthropology. I know that for *Flight from Death*, we interviewed one of Szasz's and Beckers friends, a psychotherapist from NY and he told pretty much the same story, that Becker and Szasz were ostracized and continue to be frowned upon by the psychology community. And I guess that the end result of that is, that Becker puts out this book. *The Denial of Death*, which is no piece of trash, it won the Pulitzer Prize and how many people have even heard of the book? We've encountered a handfill, 20 or 30, who have come to us over the last year and said, "Oh guys, you're making a movie about this? Its a great book, I read it in college." But we've talked to thousands of people.

Stomach Cramps, Faith, and James Bond

B: Becker pokes fun at himself at the beginning of the book, writing that all the great ideas already have books about them. How dare I throw another book in there, another weighty tome no one will read?

G: Exactly.

B: He's obviously hopefill that that won't be the end of it.

G: Of course it's honorable of him to say. I'm writing this book, but don't give it a second glance, it's nothing. I'm sure that Becker knew however that this was going to be a colossal piece of work and a discussion piece for generations to come. His own immortality project. And it doesn't take anything away from the people who encounter these ideas as new and are incredible advancements on ideas they maybe have heard before.

B: In terms of the everyday results of these fears, near the end of the book Becker cites a haunting story told by Otto Rank of this woman who comes in with stomach cramps, with no apparent medical cause, to Otto Rank's office. Rank questions her: She lives with her married sister in this cute alpine village, has no great love, great

passion, but has a "good" life. However she has a vague feeling that she is missing out on something. But things are good, you're happy, you spend the summer in country, Rank tells her. And then he suggests, Hey, let's not figure out what's causing those stomach cramps. Whatever revelation about those cramps we happen upon will probably make you more miserable. There is a certain amount of pain we must endure in order to live in this world. Maybe we shouldn't solve this one problem, maybe this is the price you are paying to go about your life in this tolerable manner? That reminded me of a thing Becker wrote earlier in the book, where he wonders how these workers survive in chaotic restaurants or hectic factories or travel agencies in tourist season. Then he say the answer is obvious. Th chaos resembles life, but the job is a manageable chaos. Rank I think was insisting on the same thing: your stomach cramps are a manageable pain — what we would uncover if we really stopped to consider the problem, the chaos of life or your undisclosed loss, might be too much.

The question that raises for me, especially in the context of our revolutionary' project, our desire for change, is how much do we ask of people? How many of these stomach cramps do we really wish to cure? What would we unleash?

G: Meaning what would we unleash if all these things were gone?

B: What are we asking of people when we are asking them to give up their stomach cramps? Becker notes that if you are going to remind people of an unmediated joy, you must also remind them of the terrible despair that can accompany that joy. It makes me question the refrain of "Hey, everyone, there's this great thing going over here! Quit your crappy day job — there is joy out there!" It's not that simple, but I wonder what happens then.

G It reminds me of what anyone in the course of my life has ever said to me when talking about ideas like Becker's or the example of "Hey, consider quitting your job and pursuing your passion." And that example is just an example, certainly not the key to your salvation. Using that idea, people rejoin with, "Well who's going to sweep the streets, wash the dishes, scrape the elephant cage?" What else do we create when we create this "heaven" on earth? Becker hints at it throughout the book, when he's talking about "whose heaven on earth?" One thing that's come up when making this film, is that were saying people can strive to create a better, more beautiful world by being aware of their own immortality project. Doesn't that simultaneously open the door for people to say, "Hey, you're right, let's all die for a cause and kill tons of people because what we're trying to do with our belief system is the right' thing to do and it's going to create a beautiful world and a passionate world, and I don't need to work anymore!"? Yeah, we potentially open up a huge can of worms, I don't think there is such a thing as a perfect, an ideal world, where were *all* living passionately and beautiful. And that is sort of ominous and upsetting. To be honest I don't there is any example of a life that is completely passionate and without sadness and a heavy heart at times, or without tragedy or terror or horror.

I think that's what keeps the human animal in balance and forward. I think it's almost healthy in a way. The ultimate question for me becomes, How do we take all

that, and instead of ending up on the floor, a quivering blob of protoplasm unable to function, or knife wielding maniac running through a shopping mall — how do we take that information and create an existence for ourselves that is nurturing, and that isn't destructive toward other people, and is fun and enjoyable and gives something beautiful to human existence? Again it's *all* a matter of interpretation.

B: There was some criticism at the Q&A that you were portraying religion in this terrible light in the film — that you just showed that all religions universally contribute to the denial of death and the seeking for immortality in this very fanatical, harmful, way, the repression of others. In the sense of everything having a positive and negative shadow, when you were making the film and examining religion and ideology, trying to understand this really negative affect that it has had, what was the positive shadow of religion? Becker seems to come to a lot of religious conclusions, despite the scientific rigor of his work. But connected to the film...

G: We had to be acutely aware of that the whole time. Neither Patrick or I connect strongly to any particular religion and in fact I have a strong critique of religion, on a personal level. But in making the film, we didn't necessarily want to define our film by our personal belief systems so much as we wanted to look at the larger picture. And the larger picture turned out to be: Let's look at religions critically, but let's not look at them critically exclusively. Let's look at them critically along with all other institutions that are similar, look at them all in the same light. Instead of saying, Religion is something to be really aware of because of it's contribution to violence, let's look at all these institutions that we engage in our culture and take a look at their contribution towards violence and their effect on human psychology on different levels. What do they all have to contribute? In doing that, we leveled the playing field. We made religion and capitalism and all the others that we covered, equal players in this world, in this social construction. And in terms of looking at religion in that regard, we were able to say, what religion does is it gives people a sense of self worth, of hope, faith in something greater than yourself, soothes that part of human beings that quite possibly fears that this abstract existence is really ridiculous and meaningless, which is almost too much for most people to bear. Religion soothes that part of the human psyche, but taken to another level, it causes people to react and do crazy things, to suppress other people. As Becker suggests in the book, and as we explore in the film, it causes people to want to beat the crap out of each other. Ultimately, and I'm drawing on the work of Sheldon Solomon, my partner in the World Leaders Project — if there's somebody of belief system A in a room and somebody of belief system B comes into a room, well, the two of them cant both be right. So who ultimately wins out? There has to be one that wins, because neither will except that they are both wrong. And that's the underside of religion. What we were doing in the film was saying, yeah, but that's also the underside of patriotism, of capitalism, of communism, of all of those things.

B: It seems that part of a possible solution to achieve a more desirable existence — and I don't know if there is a real solution — but Becker seems to conclude that

faith plays a large part of it, something higher than yourself. He goes on to describe Kierkegaard's "knight of faith". I wonder if we must view this faith, whether in god, an idea, or a "life force", in terms of subservience to that idea, ourselves as part of a greater whole? I feel like Becker was understanding that ideal of faith in terms of subservience. Is faith necessarily a subservient action?

G: Becker, over the term of his life and the book, seems to be pretty atheistic. Becker at the age of forty nine was diagnosed with stomach cancer, and he died relatively quickly. On his deathbed, he was interviewed by Sam Keene, who was at the time working for "Psychology Today" magazine, and Keene is actually interviewed in our film as well, we met with him California. To Sam Keene he says that he had returned to Judaism while he was dying. Patrick and I actually visited Becker's grave in Massachusetts and there is a Star of David on it and the words on were definitely indicative of a man who was born and who certainly died a Jew. I think that quite literally Becker might have gotten scared toward the end of his life. And said to himself, Wow, what if this academic approach I've taken is right, and all we have is this psychological construct of some type of future and that doesn't offer much solace. I imagine that he saw some good in subjecting oneself to a higher power and went for it — and if it soothes the dying man in the painful throes of cancer, then that is a great thing. But I don't think he necessarily said that we have to be subservient to it. I know that when Patrick and I were trying to draw a closing to our film, we looked at Einstein who said that science is going to drop you on the doorstep of religion at some point. And here's a guy who examined every micron of the universe. He still found more and more questions, and less and less concrete answers. I think that Becker, along those same lines, realized that there are no definite answers, in terms of what do with our faith, as long as we continually remember our humanness, our immediate worldly existence and don't just blindly step into that faith hoping that it's going to take over and answer all our questions for us. Becker was pretty aware that you can be soothed by something larger that is out there. But always remember that you are a human as well and there are very human issues going on here.

B. It seems what Becker wanted to make room for in the world, next to faith, is the idea that there is mystery in the world, whether that mystery is in Judaism or an idea of a living Earth.

G: When he says we create out of art or our lives an object and drop it into the confusion, make an offering of it to the life force, I don't think he's imagining the life force as-some little deity with a beard running around in the clouds. I've interpreted it as the collective existence of living things and the collective experience of being alive, its awesomeness. We craft this interview and throw it out there and see what it does. And if turns out that people read this interview and run out into the streets and kill each other, well, then we look at that and ask ourselves, "Why is this going on?" We might look at it throughout the lens of death anxiety and adapt our behaviors accordingly, to at least use that idea, that lens as a means of making the world a better place.

B: That quote from Becker that you just cited (offering our creation to life) reminds me so much of Nietzsche's dancing star line from *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*: I say unto you, one must still have chaos in oneself to give birth to a dancing star. I say unto you: you still have chaos in yourselves. "The idea that, essentially, there is something to give to the world.

G: That idea that you talked of earlier, that it might be born of a state of chaos — I think that one of the most beautiful things about my life, and not my life as different from anybody else's, but my life because it's all I really know, is how much is fucking hurts to be me sometimes, and simultaneously how blissful it feels to be me sometimes. How sometimes those things are as intertwined as two people making love. How close the gutwrenching pain and the absolute bliss are intertwined. That's part of the deal: Once you pop out into the world, that's what you get, that simultaneous pain/bliss. Joseph Campbell said that life is like an opera — imagining the power and passion of an opera — except that the opera hurts and we are in it, neck deep. That's what we get for being living people. In the last couple of years and the more I work on the film, I find it more and more potent to think of my life in those terms. When I was working on the lyrics for the Trial records, that just came up constantly, all the journal entries, the heartbreak, coinciding and clashing and working in absolute symbiosis with all the joy, happiness, and triumph.

B. That seems to connect to Becker's idea of Heroism. Becker understood much in these terms. In the introduction I really like something he seemingly just drops in — "The urge to heroism is natural and to admit it is honest; for everyone to admit it would release such pent up force as to be devastating to societies as they are now." That idea reminded me of Raoul Vaneigem writing in *The Revolution of Everyday Life* how much sympathy he had for this man driving home from work and at each light he is imagining himself some sort of hero or another, James Bond, etc. This is going on all around you, people yearning for a sense of heroism and meaning, even if in such bland terms as James Bond. I wonder if we are standing on the brink of people granting that to themselves.

G: I would hope so.

B: I think Becker is convincing in arguing that so-called primitive societies were successful in structuring themselves in such a way that people could feel satisfied in that urge toward heroism and meaning. And hopefully in our activist and punk and all the greater cultures are also developing ways of interacting that can give people voice and space for those yearnings.

G: Or even non-punk and non-activist subcultures. I think that ultimately striving for the heroic doesn't dictate Vaneigem's example of imagining that they are James Bond. You don't have to be James Bond and having sex with Halle Berry to be a hero.

B. I think he was much more sympathetic to the basic urge toward heroism, rather than encouraging the idea that people should be James Bond. I think he wants us all running through the streets, that sort of thing, drunk on life.

G: Absolutely. Realistically, at the expense of offending Vaneigem or anybody who's read him and got really excited about it — I did for one — a fulfilled life doesn't necessarily entail living every passion. I would be satisfied if everybody on the planet Lived a little more passionately. I would be satisfied if individuals would just get a little more in touch with the things they want to do, a little more in touch with the psychology of what makes them tick and behave the way they do. I think that would be a huge colossal improvement over the status quo. Even individual examples of that make me really excited. In terms of the punk-activist community, yeah, absolutely, the options are all there. What about in terms of other subcultures that are perhaps not as inundated with examples of passionate living and artistic expression? I would love to see people in those cultures say I can improve my life immensely by doing *this.* Whatever that thing might be. As Patrick and I were talking about who our audience is, we made the decision to get this into the hands of as many people as possible, because we, like you, saw that Becker was on to something. And while we shouldn't encase it in a solid gold ark, we feel people across the board could benefit from what he had to say and from reflecting on his ideas.

The World Leaders Project

B: The World Leaders Project (WLP), was that something that stemmed out from your reading of Becker? Or was that something that had been brewing and those ideas are what made it grow?

G: As someone who has looked upon the structure of politics as something a little bit weird, that hundreds of millions of people elect one little person to represent them — a little weird. I'm saying "just a little weird" so we don't have to go into what's the right system of politics, blah blah blah. A little strange. Just the idea that somebody else speaks for me, a little weird. When I started to read Becker I wondered, what is the death psychology of a leader? And what is the relationship to the follower? And what are they doing for each other? Not just the leader saying, "Followers you make me feel like a god." Rather, each of the followers saying, 'Wow, it feels really good to be a follower. There are so many other followers and I don't need to stick my neck out, that guy over there is doing it for me. Because I elected him." What's that relationship about? I was listening to a lecture given by a guy named Sheldon Solomon, who ended up being a terrific, amazing friend of mine. Sheldon made reference in his lecture — this was during the whole Bush/Gore vote scandal and mayhem — that maybe we should let Bush and Gore know that their striving to get the most votes was a good example of their striving for immortality. He intended it as a joke in his lecture. I went up to him afterwards and said, "How about we write to Bush and Gore and how about we write to every other leader on the planet and suggest that we would love to give them insight into the nature of leaders and the nature of followers." And using that insight, that insight of death anxiety, that people often enjoy being leaders and followers, and

how that might help diminish violence worldwide, being that the leaders are often the folks guiding policy over the majority. The World Leaders Project absolutely stemmed from reading Becker. From trying to apply something real-world. You know, and your readers know, we all know in the punk/hardcore music community that risk we run is just shouting, screaming, hitting guitars, and making sounds that fulfill the needs of the ears, eyes, and minds of those who expect those types of sounds, without making anything happen. By happen I mean, and no pun intended, cathartic change, some feeling, action or change, real change. Not just people jumping around — which of course could be real change for some folks — but I wanted to take the ideas of Becker and take them out of an academic arena and say okay, let's put him in the political arena and lets not just put him in the ideological political arena, let's go talk to some folks. And have those folks be world leaders and meet them face to face. And hit them with these ideas and share these ideas with them and not just from the perspective of, "we have all the answers, " but put them on the table and see what happens. Our meeting with the president of Guyana was unbelievable because he actually listened to us.

B: You and Sheldon had written him a letter — and Patrick...

G: Yeah, we wrote every leader in the world. Sheldon and I wrote the letter. And Sheldon, Patrick, and I wrote a document that described our ideas, that we sent out to *all* those who responded. Meeting with the president of Guyana was fantastic, because he listened. I think it would be naive to think that he would walk away from the meeting and went out and bought *Denial of Death* and went to fiightfromdeath.com and watched our trailer for the movie and pre-ordered the DVD. That would be ridiculous. All I wanted for that meeting was to go in and say, here are a couple of books, here are some thoughts to think about. Tell us a little bit about Guyana, what goes on down here? How's life down here? What is existence like here? To be totally honest, living in Seattle I have no idea. And Patrick, he was filming the whole time, but living in LA, he had no idea and Sheldon living in New York had no idea. Tell us about Guyana and how can we help each other to create a better place? A place where suffering isn't as widespread. Again we are not going to get rid of suffering, but there is a lot of suffering and violence that don't need to be there. So how can we diminish violence in our two cultures by looking at it through the lens of Beckers ideas? Tremendous, to have that conversation was just fantastic.

B: And what did he say initially? Was he stumbling or what?

G: No, no. He agreed with us, looking over the document, human beings being motivated toward violence because the fear of death was quite possibly part of the problem. He added that racial relations and economic issues were at the heart of much of their violence. We talked a bit about his. By the end of the meeting though, it wasn't a situation where he where he smiled through his teeth and said have a nice day, goodbye, but actually invited us back and said that he himself would set up a speaking engagement for us at the University of Guyana. So Sheldon and I are going to go back and lecture something this year. We re in the midst of working out which

dates, then we will get in touch with President Bharrat Jagdeo and make it happen again. It was awesome for me after preaching to the choir for years and years, to take the ideas in a very non-traditional way out into the world. And see what happens. Again, craft something and offer it to the world and see what comes of it.

B: That experience of taking yourself out of your familiar surroundings, what you saw there, then coming back to your home and Seattle and saying to yourself, what next? Has it made you push for more or see how things that were done before might not have been working so well?

G: Push for more, absolutely, I would say since summer of2002 I have been relentless in terms of wanting more and getting more. Getting more — I'm not talking about cars and diamond rings, I'm talking about seeing how far I can go in terms of creativity and developing ideas and talking them out of traditional, for me, realms and modes of thought. The World Leaders Project blew the doors wide open. I think just to have on the table those ideas, in the President of Guyana's hands, reminded me of all the times that after working on the Trial record for a year, recording the album and putting it out into the world — times where somebody would come up to me after a show and say, you know, my friend s brother is into your band and gave me your record and I never listened to hardcore and I don't really like the music but it made me think about this time in my life when... fill in the blank. Some experience in their life, whether their girlfriend was raped or their parents died in a car crash. Whatever made them happy or sad or terrified, that by some crazy method of that record getting to them, it changed their life. I thought to myself, it changed their life, and on some small level we have a great conversation. I thought to myself, with the WLP, okay, we hand these books to the president of Guyana, he goes on with his day and has 40 more meetings, let's say. He goes on with his year and has 40, 000 more meetings. Well, what happens at the next CARICOM meeting, where Caribbean leaders talk about economics? What if, what IF he rubs elbows with some other leader that triggers something in his brain about something that we talked about and introduced him to and those two guys get into a conversation. Or what if by whatever freak incidence, the G8 leaders are getting together and the president of Guyana happens to be there and rubs elbows with George Bush or one of the other global political heavyweights, and they share ideas based on this conversation. You know, what IF. And to be totally honest, to see this have happened again and again and again with Trial I thought to myself, what's the difference between the president of Guyana and a punk rock girl in North Carolina? What's the difference? There's no difference in that they are people, experiencing life. Maybe in individual ways, but also in the same sorts of ways: They want to understand the world. And they want to understand their lives and make them better and they are going to encounter other people and work together to make those things happen. I thought to myself, this is brilliant! Again, I'm not saying that I'm the brilliant one, you would have to put that in Becker's hands for getting all those notes down. The brilliant thing is, this could really work. The effect that we desired in terms of bringing about some change and the lessening of violence was that this

trickle down effect could happen on the scale of world leaders. You know what, if I am naive to think that, so be it. I was also naive to go out and waste my voice almost to the point of not ever being able to speak again in hopes that it would help people deal with rape or sexually transmitted diseases or the loss of a spouse through punk rock: and I saw that time and time again, a hundredfold. That's just one kind of channel, one ray of light opened to me, through the success of the WLP.

B: Your strategic plan with *Flight from Death:* is that something that is becoming intimately connected to the WLP?

G: Sheldon has just put out a brilliant book, *In the Wake of 9/11: The Psychology of Terror*. What we would like to do is tour, Patrick, Sheldon and myself — and I mean tour. Ultimately, I would like to tour from colleges to the palaces of presidents and prime ministers, Sheldon speaking about his book on terror and Patrick and I showing the film and integrating all of that; since Sheldon, Patrick and I have become this WLP triumvirate, we would like to share these ideas all at the same time. Granted, when we get our next meeting with a world leader, whoever that might be, were not going to be in a situation most likely where we can show a 90 minute film, have them read a 100-plus page book, and talk about it. But at least we'll have those kinds of ideas in mind.

B: Where does the film stand now in production? Is the final edit done?

G: Near done, Patrick is working on it as we speak and we have spent this week that we are interested in having narrate the film. [A Hollywood actor, Gabriel Byrne, was brought on board for this task in March.] We have a whole list of folks we are pursuing. We are utilizing a number of contacts we have made in the last year to get screenings and to find a distributor. Between Patrick and myself, we have managed to arrange a few more screenings. This year we'll be in Edmonton, Alberta, at a conference called Culture and the State, which is going to be in May of2003. We'll screen it in Seattle in March in conjunction with a lecture by Robert J. Lipton. We'll screen most likely in Houston as well. Also, in Michigan, there will be a weekend long series of events: Sheldon, then our film, then all of us talking collectively about Becker. We have gone that route in terms of trying to set up individual screenings, but also utilize the contacts we have made to set up distribution for, hopefully, national and international TV releases and movie theaters.

B: Is there going to be a DVD release?

G: Absolutely. We are going to finish this film. For frame of reference in case someone picks this zine or interview up in 2012, I'm talking about this film is done, March 1st 2003. When we secure *all* the money to do all the things we like in terms of packaging and extra things on the DVD, we'll do a release as soon as possible.

B: I'm really curious what else you have on the table? I can see how these things would dominate your life, but do you have any other projects?

G: Those are the main things I do. *Flight from Death* in the second half of 2002 took on an entirely new focus and dedication. In August, September, and October of

2002 Patrick and I were working so hard on that film I actually ended up in a doctor's office, I thought I was dying of a heart attack.

There was one stretch of 20 days where we slept between and hour and half and three hours a night to finish this thing. One day we worked quite literally 22 and half hours on our film. State of mania. Since we got the rough cut finished, since the NY and Seattle screenings, I was able to kick back a bit and focus on some other stuff. I am always of course doing juggling and entertaining stuff, which is my true passion in life, I love it. I'm going to be doing some speaking dates on my own at some colleges on the East Coast. That's stuff I love, too, talking to audiences. And it's actually quite fun doing it without a band, there aren't nearly as many things to worry about. But I'm also neck deep in trying to help the Western Shoshone Nation with whatever I can, helping to resolve their land dispute with the US government. A dispute that has been going on for about 150 years or so now. I just got back from a trip, an interesting trip when you look at the clash of cultures through the lens of Becker. Native Americans and Euro-Americans are a great example to look at when belief systems and ideology clash. I was very fortunate to be able to drive a van load of Shoshone elders to Rapid City, SD for a meeting between them and Lakota tribal officials to form alliances on various political issues. The first time, as I understand it, that Lakota and Shoshone officials have met since the Battle of Little Big Horn in 1876. An awesome experience heightened by being inundated with all this immortality thinking and belief system clashes. I got to ponder first hand, Wow, what's the effect of a dominant invader? What do people do in response to it? What questions can we ask in terms of fear of death and the systems they create to maintain a sense of lasting permanence? Fascinating. Throwing fire machetes and bean bags around, helping the Shoshone, movies, and talking to world leaders. That pretty much keeps me happy.

I know I want as much out of every second of my life as I can possibly get. Because one of the things that reading Becker has done to me is to make me acutely aware of the fact that yeah, I'm going to die. Just a matter of time before I'm worm food. The past year has just made me intense in terms of wanting more and more and more out of life. Limitless passion — all the stuff just gives me a sense of being alive that in my own life is unprecedented.

For more information on the world wide web:

www.flightfromdeath.com: watch the trailer, get production updates, find out where it's playing next!

www.wordsasweapons.com: Greg's site, where you can find out more about the Western Shoshone work he does, the World Leaders Project, and much more.

Or write to Greg Bennick c/o Inside Front.

5th Column

HUMOR: Burn Me in a Fire, You Are My True Desire

Greg Berwick

A few years ago, I was up in beautiful Vancouver, B.C., Canada to attend a punk rock show. I try to head up to Canada as often as possible because I think it to be the greatest country on the planet, based on the friendliness of the people, the wide variety of vegan eats available, and the lack of firearms. Of course, my superlative about the country is declared with no offense intended to Poland, which of course has Warsaw — also one of my favorite cities — where my old band Trial was once fed a meal fit for kings by the local punk/ hardcore kids. Or should I be saying a meal fit for punk/hardcore kids, served to us by kings? Why should the kings get all the good entrees? But already, I digress. I was in Vancouver (which I might have already mentioned is one of my favorite cities) and while hanging out with my friend Ivan outside the punk show, we overheard some young punk kids talking to one another and poking fun at each other. We didn't pay it any attention until one kid called his friend "gay." Now, Ivan and I assumed that the kid's first name wasn't in fact Gay, and we assumed also that the kid was using the term as a pejorative. We decided to approach him and confront him on what

he'd said. I have to say we would have felt pretty dumb starting to yell at the kid only to have his friend pull out a driver's license and prove to us that his name was in fact "Gay" Smith. You have no idea how many times people have called out to me during my shows, "Hey juggler... you suck, " only to be embarrassed later when they learn that my legal name actually *is* Hey Juggler You Suck. I had it changed just to avoid confusion. Anyway, thankfully for Ivan and me, it didn't go down like that. Ivan and I approached the young punk, and engaged him in conversation. Ivan took the lead and offered a brilliant example of how to deal with the situation. He identified what we'd heard, and asked the kid why he'd said it. Of course, the kid just shrugged his shoulders, laughed a sort of "Don't be a dork, old man" sort of laugh, and said, "I dunno... whatever." Ivan asked him why he'd used that particular word, and the kid again had little or no answer. Ivan then asked the kid, "What purpose does language serve?" At this point, the kid realized he wasn't getting out of the situation easily, and actually started to pay attention. He looked up at Ivan. Ivan asked, "Wouldn't you agree that the purpose of language is to convey meaning?" The kid agreed. Ivan

said, "Well, if the purpose of language is to convey meaning, what meaning are you conveying through the use of the word *g[a]y?" The kid had no answer, for to answer honestly and say that he was trying to

convey that his friend was a homosexual — and that the comment was intended to be an insult — would have made him look like a moron. Ivan and I suggested to the kid that using words uselessly, especially when they have the potential to insult or hurt others, is a waste of time and breath, and is evidence of ignorance. We offered that he could have insulted his friend far more creatively and intelligently, and then we left him to think for himself as to what those venomous barbs might be. Overall, it was a great experience that reaffirmed to me the importance of language. Language defines us as individuals and also defines our cultural constructions. It creates and conveys meaning at the same time. As we communicate and use language, we are developing a narrative that gives meaning, literally, to our lives. In this process, there is little need for useless talk.

One can extrapolate from this that the same importance rings true in lyrics, prose, and poetry. There are no extra words. There isn't room for them. As a writer, I strive to achieve potency, though it could very easily be argued that I fail miserably. As a reader, I find myself wanting that potency from the lyrics, stories, or poems I encounter. The idea of not wasting communication, or maybe more to the point, of making our communication as creative and as potent as is possible (and *beyond* what we think is possible!) is at the core of the human

experience. We have to connect with each other somehow, someway, *any* way, in this disconnected and superficial society... so why not make that connection as vital and intimately expressive as we can? When our speech and text truly convey the intent that we are trying to express in the words we've selected, then we truly have accomplished something significant.

Literature is full of examples demonstrating high achievement in terms of crafting writing to convey meaning. Take, for example, these words from Goethe, "He only earns his freedom and his life who takes them every day by storm." Or these lines of poetry from John Greenleaf Whittier, "For of all sad words of tongue or pen, the saddest are these, 'It might have been.'" It becomes easy to see how language can be used effectively when we have examples of brilliance. What is harder to determine is what happens when things go wrong in the use of language. The example I used before, of the young punk rocker insulting his friend, was a blatant example. Others are more insidious. You might ask confusedly, "But Greg, how can we isolate the problem of misuse of language? How can we prevent ourselves from diving headlong into the traps that ensnare aspiring writers and leave them wallowingin useless unintelligible babble?" I sympathize with your question, and can offer a concrete response. To avoid falling into these traps, we must follow simple rules of development that allow us to create a relationship with the words we craft. Following these rules will result in writing — both for prose and poetry as well as for lyrics — that is potent, interesting, and connected. The rules are as follows, and there are three of them. Rule #1: Always write in a voice

that is your own, and stop at nothing to drag the deepest truths from yourself and onto the page, no matter what you are trying to express. Rule #2: Utilize the limits and full expanse of your own creativity and ability to describe images, and pursue each word and line as if your very life depended on it. Finally, but most importantly, is Rule #3. Never, under any circumstances, even under threat of torture or death, rhyme the words "fire" and "desire."

These three rules apply to any type of writing. When we speak from a combination of the heart and mind, and when we do so without restricting ourselves by convention or by outside opinion, we unlock enormous potential to connect with a reader through our texts. The third rule applies mostly to lyrics, and as most people reading this article are at the very least music *fans, * I will assume that you recognize that this rule has relevancy. Rhyming

fire and desire on the part of a lyricist is, without a doubt, the worst possible crime against humanity. It is evidence of a deeply rooted psychosis. Those guilty, and the list includes Jimi Hendrix, The Eurythmics, Bananarama, Zegota, and Sir Mix-Alot among others, should be forced to undergo extensive psychological tests before their sanity and safety to the general public are declared. I will leave it up to you to explore and apply the first two rules, and will choose to spend my time here exploring Rule #3, the "Fire/Desire Rule" (as it is called in most collegiate texts), giving examples of what can go wrong it you defy this rule, and ultimately offering examples of other routes you can take in your writing.

One of the most common things that can happen when you join the ranks of the linguistically insane and ignore the Fire/ Desire Rule, is that your grammar will deteriorate dramatically and quickly, leaving you essentially unable to communicate. There is no medical cure for this, and your readers will be left stranded in a literary wasteland without nourishment or shelter from your ongoing assault on their minds. Take for example Bruce Springsteen.

Bruce, to his credit, started off as a writer struggling against profound disadvantages. Aside from being from Asbury Park, NJ (Try to name one other quality writer or lyricist from Asbury Park. Go ahead. Name one. Whatwasthat? Oh...Jon Bon Jovi got his start in Asbury Park? Really? Let's see here. You are trying to justify quality writing by using Jon Bon Jovi as an example? A man who wrote the lines: "I'm a cowboy / on a steel horse I ride / I'm wanted dead or alive"? I rest my case.)... as I was saying, aside from being from Asbury Park, Bruce Springsteen suffers from denim poisoning caused by wearing only one pair of jeans every single day since the release of the "Born in the USA" album in 1984. Regardless of the hardships Bruce has faced however, the fact cannot be denied that his grammar suffered tremendously as soon as he engaged the vicious mate of fire and desire. As evidence, I offer his song "I'm On Fire" in which he writes *"I'm on fire /1 got a bad desire / I'm on fire."* Got? Bruce 'got' a bad desire? Funny he should mention it, because I got one too. I got a desire to not buy any of his inane, fire and desire exploiting records at any price. Bruce's grammar difficulties get worse in his song "Fire." The denim seeping deeper into his brain, he

stops using nouns and verbs completely in the second part of his lyrical phrasing. He writes, *"You say you don't love me, girl you can't hide your desire / 'Cause when we kiss, Fire."* Aside from the fact that I ask why Bruce is kissing someone who says she's not interested in him, I wonder what happened to all the verbs? And why

the sudden capitalization? "When we kiss, Fire."? I have a better suggestion. How about, *"When I listen to Springsteen, Kill me."*

Another shocking example of the effects of using fire and desire is that the use of these words together will cause you to call your loved ones by nonsensical names. Your relationships will deteriorate faster than the fame of an "American Idol" finalist. The members of the rock band Kiss made a fortune by painting their faces to look like psychotic clowns and then playing songs filled with sexual innuendo. Talk about a genius marketing gimmick! Why didn't I think of it? Evil looking sexual space clowns. It has millions of dollars written all over it. A sure bet indeed. Regardless of their marketing brilliance (the effect of which was expressed quite clearly last year by bassist Gene Simmons who said in an interview "Kiss is not a rock and roll band. We are a rock and roll BRAND") the band lost their minds completely in the song "Heaven's On Fire." In the song, Paul Stanley (vocals/guitar) used a pet name for his lover that made the ultimate lovers Romeo and Juliet spin like dynamos in their literary graves. He wrote: *"Paint the sky with desire, angelfly /Heaven's on fire."* I have to say that I love my girlfriend with every cell in my body. I have covered ground with her that lovers worldwide wish they could experience. I cherish her and she cherishes me. We are beautifully whole together. At the same time, the thought of calling her "Angel Fly" has never once crossed my mind. I have thought to call her a hundred different pet names, many more ridiculous than the next. I actually *have* called her many of these things. But "Angel Fly"? What the hell is an angel fly? Why is it a term of endearment? And would you really want a space clown with a boner calling you "Angel Fly" as he chased you around painting the sky?

Now, you might be wondering, "Are these misuses of language dangerous? Might they lead to actual physical harm?" In fact, I am sad to report, the answer is yes. I suggest that these misuses can actually be life threatening. Breaking the Fire/ Desire Rule can result in you starting to carry extremely dangerous items as you walk around publicly. As proof I offer U2's song "Desire." When Bono is not running around the globe making peace and solving the world's problems, he is actually endangering the lives of others. In the song, he sings: *"Gonna go where the bright lights/ And the big city meet / With a red guitar... on fire /Desire."* Need I say more? I wouldn't even carry a burning match to where the bright lights and big city meet... and this idiot is carrying a flaming guitar? Someone could easily be burned or killed! Bono is a

> madman and he must be stopped before he strikes again. I suggest a pre-emptive strike.

1.

<quote> will arrange an international coalition, or the fragments of one. Bono must be disarmed and removed from power at any cost.

For some, use of fire and desire causes disorientation and lack of focus. Having, and being able to act, with freewill is a large component of being human. Without the ability to decide and act on a course of action, we lose the fullness of our ability to imagine and to create. For the group The Backstreet Boys, it is far too late in this regard, due to advanced fire/desire addiction. Life for them has become very sad indeed. The Backstreet Boys did the unthinkable: they used fire and desire in the same song, not once, but *twice.* May God have mercy on their souls. The result of this lyrical atrocity was the collective loss of the few cells of intellect they had to begin with. In the song, and resulting entirely from their overuse of the fire and desire combination, they make declarations and then contradict them immediately. They leave the reader and listener feeling dizzy and ill. I offer you their smash hit, "That Way": *"You are my fire/The one desire / Believe it when I say /1 want it that way / Jim I your fire / Your one desire?"* At first glance, all appears normal. But look deeper, my friends, look deeper. Here is where things get perplexing. After blatantly stating that "you" are in fact the "one" desire, they then offer themselves to be not only a second desire, but a fire as well! This is extremely intense, and very confusing. If "you" are not in fact the "one" desire, then does it stand to reason that there are in fact multiple desires as yet undiscovered? And if there are in fact multiples, might we then consider for a moment just where we are going to find fires to match up with these desires? The mind reels at the thought. Thankfully, now that The Backstreet Boys have no career (largely, I would suggest, the result of their lyrical indiscretion), they will have time to help us look.

Please be advised that coupling fire and desire will also affect your use of metaphor. Metaphor is, of course, one of the most potent tools in a writer's box of potent writing tools. Metaphor is a window that can be opened on the world. Now, wasn't that just clever? In describing and defining a metaphor, I actually *used* a metaphor! Delightful. Keep in mind, while you sit there, blissfully enchanted with my wordsmanship, that metaphors can have a dark and seedy underbelly as well, whatever that means. When used incorrectly, metaphor becomes the season of the finger of death. Metaphor can be a drowning sand clam. It can appear as a playful rodent,

Editors note when reading this column, imagine

> and then instantly turn, developing wings while being reborn as an alien toenail. I think you get my point. This problem can be avoided however. You can actually cheat fate. Simply avoid the union of fire and desire, and your metaphors will remain well defined and intact. Look what happened to the 80 s band The Cars. They slipped up only once, but the effect was immediate. To tell the truth, they didn't even get out of the verse before an attack of horrible metaphor cut them down. In the song "Let's Go, " the band sings: *"She's a frozen fire / She's my one desire."* A frozen fire?

> Is that anything like the U.S. military s term "friendly fire" where people shoot their own comrades? Given the course of The Cars later years in music, I might have suggested this to be a better alternative for the band.

Finally, and I am sharing this last point of warning with you because I care deeply about your personal well being, allowing fire and desire to become lyrically one, can help you give life to inanimate objects. It is true. While this may sound exciting — after all, who hasn't thought about what it would be like if scissors could talk — it does open up an entire world of problems. The band Silverchair found that using fire and desire together allowed their body parts to begin to think for themselves. This has profound and potentially horrific implications. In Annas Song, they sing: *"Open fire on my knees desires/ What I need from you."* Now, I am all for the exploration of desire and for encouraging others to explore their own desires. However, I would have a very hard time being convinced that my knees have desires, and an even harder time being convinced as Silverchair suggests, that those same knees then deserve to be fired upon for expressing their desires. If my knees actually do have desires, or if they acquire the ability to have them, then I believe wholeheartedly that they should be able to express them as they see fit, without the threat of violence. Anything less would be entirely oppressive. Kneeist, if you will.

I seem to have painted a dismal picture. Amid these shocking uses of fire and desire and their profound effects, we might ask in terms of language and its use: what other routes can we take? How can we avoid the monumental problems mentioned in this article? How can we avoid having to carry flaming guitars through areas of town with which we have limited familiarity? What are we to do to stop kneeism before it starts? How might we settle on the pet name "Sweet Potato" or "Honey Bun" rather than Angel Fly" for those we love? My suggestion is simple: follow the three rules, and pour your heart into all of your writing. Create every song lyric and every line of text as if it was an epitaph, applying

> the same importance to those words as you would apply to the last statement you make to the world. Now, given that I have to be on a plane in six hours to travel to Michigan, I hope that I have not created a self-fulfilling prophecy here. In case you didn't know, I hate flying. It doesn't make sense to me. There is no doubt in my mind that those who invented modern day flying listened to The Backstreet Boys. How else could they possibly have justified spending money on research to develop flying tubes of metal filled with hundreds of people? Only a fire/desire fan could have conceived of such madness.

Given our sound bite world, in which everyone seems to have an attention span of four seconds or less, we can either work to oppose that trend — actually creating vital communication by taking the time to conceive of and then actualize potency[1],

no matter what the cost — or, we can play to the lowest common denominator and not challenge ourselves, or our listener/readers, at all. The end result of the second option doesnt strike me as a communicative realm that I want to be a part of. I want a world in which we express ourselves effectively and efficiently, a world in which I can be assured that the ideas being expressed in the words I read and hear are as much an artistic creation as the music, painting, sculpture or other forms of art that might accompany them. Anything less just wouldn't set my heart on fire, or fulfill my burning... well... forget it.

Thanks for reading. I really appreciate it, and would love to hear from you too. Write me anytime: xjugglerx@yahoo.com.

MEMOIR:

Incendiary

The tale of Fucked Up

Chris Somerville

The bars on my window were thin shafts of black iron. They were mounted to the outside so we couldn't touch them. You see, anything we could touch we could use to hurt ourselves and naturally the entire room was designed with this in mind. There were no real corners anywhere. From the headboard of the bed to the bottom of the table legs, smooth, rounded edges.

During dinner, someone had told me there were cameras in our rooms. Even though they checked our pockets after every meal for cutlery stolen from the dining hall, even though we were denied access to electric razors and dental floss, even though we were at arms reach from a crew of attendants stationed day and night to open our doors

and check on us repeatedly, still they hid fucking cameras in our bedrooms. I scanned the room viciously and upon finding nothing, I thought about what it would mean if the cameras were really there.

I wondered if someone was watching me at that very moment and as I sat there on the windowsill, hugging my legs, resting my eyes against my bent knees because it was the only comforting thing I could do, I wondered what a stranger would think, I wondered what a stranger would feel when she looked at me. I turned away from this thought, faced my window, saw only thin shafts of black iron.

A knock on my door. "Chris! Hey Chris! ' I knew that raspy half-whisper, it was Marie. "Come on out man, we're gonna jam!" I opened the door and saw Ben and Marie smirking at me with mischievous glints in their eyes.

"What do you mean *jam?"* I asked, instantly infected by their mischief, "Jam with what?"

"With my guitar, " Marie gleefully retorted.

"Your *WHAT?!"* I had been away from my guitar for six days now and could already feel my fingers begin to atrophy. Naturally my mind was stagnating as well.

Playing music, even with the sub-basic understanding I had then, was a way for me to flush my volatile, caustic emotions through a medium. Destruction, even selfdestruction, is a form of creation.

Nothing was for keeps in those days. I didn't "write songs, " I just played. My guitar was my journal, my confidant, my cardboard box to bash with a baseball bat. It was my door to slam, my emotional release and without it I could not possibly be expected to behave in a rational, socially acceptable manner. Although I suppose that was decidedly a non-issue in this place.

"Come *ON!"* Marie tugged me by the sleeve down the hallway to the attendant's desk. She blew past the desk clerk, reached behind the counter and withdrew a black nylon gig bag that was obviously filled with guitar.

My jaw dropped. I stood motionless, transfixed on the object, eyes bulging. "I... I don't understand... how is this possible?"

[Image not archived]

"My mom brought it here for me. Now *LET'S GO!" We* ran back down the hallway, tromped halfway up the stairs to the

fulcrum point where the flight changed directions. There was one of those wide pentagonal steps, big enough for the three of us. We sat in a circle facing one another, beaming.

"Okay, are you ready?"

I couldn't speak. Slowly, Marie unzipped the gig bag, threw it open and there, in the middle of our circle, lay a yellow imitation fender telecaster. It was almost as ugly as my guitar at home and the mere sight of it filled me with fresh light. I was exalted.

"Alright you guys, " began Marie, suddenly very serious, "Tonight, we are a band.

"A band..." I whispered in disbelief.

"What should we call ourselves?" Ben mused.

Marie picked up the guitar. There was a pick wedged behind the nut and she pulled it free with a *plink!* She looked up at us from underneath thick, dark eyebrows and played the most dissonant tinny awful chord ever to bounce off those white walls.

BRANG!

"Live from Four Winds mental hospital, we are... *FUCKED UP!!" DA-NA-NA-NA-NA!*

"Yes!"

"Fucked Up! We're Fucked Up!" I shook myself spastically, startled by my own excitement. And just then something, perhaps the sound of a door closing, snapped me back. I looked down the stairs and remembered where I was.

"But, Marie, " I murmured, pointing in the direction my concern was now drifting, "Aren't they afraid you'll..."

"... hang myself with a GIT-ar string?"

"Yeah!" said Ben, "It'll be just like that Beck song!" But I could feel the night attendant's ears prick up. They didn't understand, I was serious.

"Don't worry about it, man, " Marie assured me in earnest, "As long as I don't take it into my room we'll be fine."

"Okay, " I said, gradually returning, "So if we're a band, we need to have songs."They both looked at me, grinning widely.

> "Let me see that guitar." Marie handed me the instrument, which I immediately tuned to *drop AX JUN-JUN-JUN-JUN! I* chugged swiftly up the neck and sighed deeply with relief. *At last...*

other and shrugged. "Oh COME ON! We're on Suicide Watch, there has to be *something we're* pissed off about!"

"Hhhmmmmm... what about the meds line!" A brilliant suggestion from Ben, we all agreed. You see, every day, twice a day, we had to wait single file, on a line that led to a split door that led to a dominating, stupid, insensitive fucking nurse who would give us medication, make us stand before her so she could watch us take it, then check under our tongues to make sure we had swallowed it.

Ben *hated* taking meds. He just hated what they did to him. Hated himself when he was on them. So he was really good at hiding his meds and everyone knew it. The nurse would thoroughly inspect his mouth with a flashlight, *and* make him empty his pockets, thereby forcing him to swallow those fucking pills every day, twice a day. "Fucking bitch..." he murmured to himself.

"Right!" I said, now driven and determined, "the meds line it is!" I burst into my favorite four-chord Riot Grrrl riff and Marie let out a mocking call met by Ben's bitter response: *DA-NA-NA! NA-DA-NA! NA-DA-NA! NANA-NA-NA!*

"Time to take yr medication now. " "FUCK YOU! YEAH! YEAH!" "Wannanother cuppa water?" "FUCK YOU! YEAH! YEAH!" "Now let's check under yr tongue." "FUCK YOU! YEAH! YEAH!" "C'mon now, swallow it!" "FUCK YOU! YEAH! YEAH!"

We collapsed all over each other, quaking with uproarious laughter. Ben almost fell down the stairs. We collected ourselves, reformed our circle and stared rabidly into one another's eyes. There was a ferocity inside all three of us, a wildness that could be given no voice within those walls. Medicated, silenced, walking single file, they tried starving it out of us. Strapped down, sedated, a breakdown alone in the Quiet Room, they tried beating it out of us. And when the scowls from our eyes, the bile from our mouths showed them that it just wouldn't die, they gave us "outlets, " "drama therapy." They told us to scream our guts out at the folding chairs, pretending they were our parents. And we scoffed at this hollow gesture, laughed out loud in their faces at how ludicrous it was. Cursed ourselves later for not doing as they asked, for not drawing on our rage, our most deeply seated *fucking hatred, * letting it pour out of us and into the place it truly belonged:* INTO THEM.

> [Image not archived]

> For yes, we hated our parents, and yes, we hated ourselves, but we hated them more. And we saw their mission to make us "safe"

for what it was: to strip us of autonomy, to cut us down to size, to protect us from ourselves. But that night as we sat in our circle on the stair, as we looked into each other's eyes, brimming with ferocity, the wildness they sought to starve, to beat, defile, desecrate, we could feel it pulse from every pore.

Reveling in our rebellion, tiny though it was, the threat of consequences had no power in our hearts. A separation contract (we would speak only in secret), banished to the Quiet Room (we would not speak at all). The tools of their control, in that moment, *decimated.* For the flame they had thought sensible to snuff was once again ignited, all because we stole away for just one moment, ran away just one click beyond surveillance, just one inch beyond arm's reach, to draw in one breath that was *ours, * sing one note they couldn't silence, draw a circle 'round ourselves for just one moment in Our World.

And for this we risked everything — punishment, imprisonment, the everlooming threat of an ever-longer stay within their walls and in their lines, waiting to be pacified. Another flashlight in my mouth, another pocket inside out, another confiscated butter knife, another night alone. We risked everything for *THIS:* To feel alive.

To feel alive.

HISTORY:

A Brief Introduction to the Lymes, Greek Pimk Rockers circa 400 B.C.
on loan from Crimepensee™

We're not in this alone and never were. The status quo and the circulation of power and domination both rely on our isolation, whether it is spatial, communicational, or historical — but we are everywhere, all of the time, out of the time.

The cynics of yore were the converse of today's cynics; rather than simply accepting their role as complicit complainers, they broke every rule and dictum in the then-nascent social contract. It was thus that they earned their name, for "cynic" comes from the ancient Greek for "dog" — their critics said ot them that they were shameless as dogs, and they agreed, cackling.

As of today, the cynics are the oldest badasses we know. Our forefather Anthistenes was born 25 centuries ago; he spit in the faces of Alexander the "Great" and Plato. Diogenes, his pupil, followed in

the 4$^{\text{th}}$ century BC. He lived in a wine cask, scavenged all his food, and wrote approvingly of cannibalism and incest. Exiled from his birthplace, presumably for defacing the local currency, he took "deface the coinage!" as his motto, implying that the standards of his day were corrupt and should be marked as such by being broken. He was followed by Crates, who renounced all his wealth to become a couch-surfing

cynic, and Hipparchia, a proto-feminist who refused the role of the Greek woman working the loom to focus on educating herself instead. '

It s said that once, on a sunny day, Diogenes showed up with a lit torch in one hand, claiming he needed it in his search for honest human beings, and a pilgrim's staff in the other, with which he said he would beat the debris who answered his queries. We carry on Diogenes's torch and staff, but this time with a different plan in mind...

The Cynics' Nine Point Program to Destroy Civilization

1. Contrary to peripat(h)etic philosophers, the cynics consider animals as their model, perfect in their freedom. They recognize themselves in the wandering dog, ferocious yet dignified. They only bite their friends — they are the only ones who deserve it. They defecate, eat, sleep, and masturbate in palace and garbage dump alike, or wherever else they feel the need to. They bite, piss, and shit over the subhumans who hide behind the masks of power — that is to say, impotence: for every chain of command works both ways.

2. Facing falsified life, the cynics falsify all contractual and conventional values. They find security in danger, wealth in absolute poverty, happiness in independence and autonomy, and wisdom in the derision of habit.

3. The cynics reject hope as an escape. Hope is the virtue of the slave. The cynics merge the means and the end: no antichamber of freedom is acceptable. No end can justify the sacrifice of the moment. Their lifestyle is liberation and liberating. They yield to the instant without compromising the totality.

4. The cynics are cosmopolitan: they belong to no city, to no home. Beggars, vagabonds, living from day to day, they belong to nature; they submit to it, only the better to master it.

5. The cynics have nothing to do with the obedient camel or the lion's negating roar.

For those who $f_{oun}y$ ^ Crimepensie report deliciously incomprehensible, we offer this appendix, one of our favourite selections of unintelligible intellectual blathering. Those who find this easy to understand may wish to consider careers in the competitive world of anarchoacademicism — and those who find that palatable should try their hand at understanding Guy Debord's infamous work, Society of the Spectacle*! Make sure to read this aloud in a funny accent, standing before a chalkboard if possible, gesturing dramatically...*

GIBBERISHISTORY: Jh^Si^uationists Come

I receive the luxurious album of Laurent Chollet; *The Insurrection Situatianist.* Again history of young people who, after this war, assimilated the surrealist revolt and who want to make incandescent all the cantons of the life, individual and daily, political, social — i.e., and that starts always thus since Dada, by saying shit to the literature, painting, and the usual forms of the language. Lettrisme will have its heroes, picturesque like Isidore Isou, pretentious like Maurice Bismuth (says Lemaitre), sympathetically unforeseeable like Gabriel Pommerand. They do not live all as tramps, but put into practice all this slogan: "Never work!"... graffiti on the walls of the Sorbonne with this other, quite as difficult to assert: "Enjoy without obstacle!"

Guy Debord becomes the thinking head, the federator of what is neither a federation nor international, of what will take the name of "International Situationist, " and, in the final analysis, it will only be found, after the autodissolution in 1971. "The Situ" made speak about them, and not only in May 1968. They counted painters now known, poets and agitators of high Right, writers like Debord itself, Raoul Vaneigem, they "essaime" in Italy, in Germany, in Holland, in England, and as far as Australia.

After the autodissolution, they are the drifts: brigandage in Baader, brigades red, terrorism, the delinquency, drug, after the "Proletarians of the all the countries, cherish you!" the profitable pornography industry. The company of the spectacle of Debord in book of pocket, just like the handbook of good manners of Vaneigem, remain excellent breviaries for a youth from now on revolted to good measure — but is, even revolted?

Like children, they dance and juggle with existing conditions — perpetually inventing new possibilities for life, making short work of habits and conventions, calling new styles and new forms of expression into existence.

6. The cynics shit on subcultural mechanical intellectualization and afferent sophism to leave room for acts and life. "It is of no use to know by heart the pentatonic scale if one's soul isn't tuned."

7. The cynics spit in the face of seriousness and pharisa'ism. A cynic, once taken prisoner by slave sellers, answered thus a buyer who asked his abilities: Managing men! Is anyone looking for a master? This somersault won him his freedom. The cynics' subversive methodology is irony, sarcasm, provocation, even insult. They play with the language to undermine and subvert. Their Maieutics is mediated by abortion[2].

8. The cynics push scandals to their paroxysm. They spit their freedom in the faces of others, to purify souls. They advocate zoophilia, incest, cannibalism, open and public sexual relations, and the refusal of any kind of burial, in order to demonstrate that taboos are social constructs.

9. The cynics reject all forms of power and domination (except over themselves). They see solipsism as the only truth and find excellence in virtue. They spit upon

gods and masters.They do not advocate any sub- or anti-culture, but instead a counterculture.

Spit down your throat by the Crimepensee™ special force for "elitizing the masses." For more information about the cynics, agoraphilian sex, the bibliography of this piece, or whatever, write to info@crimepensee.org, or try _www.crimepensee.org_

HOW TO:

Sybarites of the World...
Unite! Or, How to Give a Badass

Massage

by Adam B,, Licensed Massage Practitioner

Feeling worn out after a long, hard day of sticking it to "The Man ?

Does your body ache upon coming home from the shit job you force yourself to wake up for? —

Tired and sore after a night of walking; searching for something this world we've carved out for ourselves has to offer, searching for just one dignified face?

Massage exchanged amongst friends can be a great way to counter such maladies, among others. Here's how (really condensed and incomplete as fuck)...

[Image not archived]

Obviously, you can massage somebody anywhere, but if you want to get fancy, find something for them to lie on that is about

the height of your knuckles if you make a fist and hold your arm to your side. Have the person you're massaging get as naked as they're comfortable with, cover them with a sheet, expose the body part you're going to work on, and start rubbing!

For lubricant vegetable or almond oil works fine. If you're interested in scented oils, fuck the stuff you can get at over-priced horrible stores — make them yourself! *The Art of Aromatherapy* by Robert B.Tisserand seems

like a good resource to me. When applying oil, use the minimum amount necessary I

to allow your hands to flow over the body without pinching.

Here are descriptions of the three main Swedish massage strokes, and a bit about how to execute them:

**Effleurage* is the first and last stroke used on a body part in Swedish massage, as well as being used to transition between other techniques. It is a long, gliding stroke. The first couple passes serve to spread oil as well as introduce your touch. Pour a little

bit of oil into your hands, rub them together to warm it, and gently spread the oil on the skin, keeping your hands loose and melded to the contours of the body part. After a few light strokes gradually increase the pressure. Physiologically, this moves blood, lymph, and interstitial fluid (the fluid in spaces between cells), thus improving local circulation. To execute effleurage you can use open palms, knuckles, forearms, elbows, fingertips, or thumbs depending on the

desired pressure and result.

So say you're massaging the back of the leg — what you want to do is, starting at the foot, keep your arms *straight* from your shoulder to your wrists and use your legs to push your hands up the leg. Keep your legs in a lunging position and lean forward with your body to apply pressure (try to keep your back pretty straight as you do this). The pressure and strength of the stroke should be coming from

your legs and use of body weight — NOT your arms!

Always apply pressure towards the heart and gently glide back down the body part.

[Image not archived]

Pressure going away from the heart puts undue strain on the one-way valves in your veins which help move deoxygenated blood back to the heart.

A rad variation of effleurage is called a C-drain. Put your thumbs and fingers in a position so they form a C. Then alternately stroke up the body with each hand, always leaving one hand in contact while the other is lifted. This is an excellent technique to use on someone with poor circulation, as it moves fluid like a motherfucker.

I usually close a body part with nerve strokes. This is simply lightly brushing your fingertips over the skin.

*'Petrissage-, * or kneading, is the second stroke of a Swedish massage. Petrissage lifts tissue from underlying structures. The motions of it serve to "milk" the tissue of accumulated

[Image not archived]

waste products, increase local circulation, and assist venous return (oxygen-depleted blood going back to the heart).

Probably the easiest variation is twohanded kneading. It's performed by lifting, squeezing, and then releasing tissue. Your entire hand should be in contact with the tissue. The movement is lifting muscle tissue away form the underlying bone.

The variation I use most often is called bilateral petrissage. Say you're working on the back — stand facing the receiver from the side with your feet spread far enough apart to allow you to comfortably move your hips from side to side. Start on the far side of the back by the hips. Grasp tissue with one hand, and, using your thumb as a nearly immobile base, bring your fingers up towards the thumb while still grasping the tissue (be careful not to pinch). As you complete this motion, slide your other hand onto the same area and repeat (remember — lift the tissue!). Continue this all the way up the side of the back. When you get up towards the shoulders move your body so

you are facing the top of the receiver's head and do some work on the trapezius muscle (the muscle that is at the top of the back) and the neck. When you've finished with the trapezius and neck keep up the petrissage while moving so you are facing the other side of the receiver's body and continue down the other side of the back. On legs and arms work from thigh to ankle

and shoulder to wrist. As you apply the stroke sway your hips in the same direction that pressure is being applied.

Petrissage, and especially the bilateral variation, is probably the hardest massage stroke to master as well as being hard as fuck to describe with words only. When I'm doing it I just think "lift... lift... lift" in my head, as well as making sure my hips are moving along with the motions of my hands. The most important thing is to grasp and lift as much tissue as you can and working to maintain an even, soothing rhythm.

**Friction* is applied after you've sufficiently warmed up tissue with effleurage and petrissage. Make sure there is not too much lubricant remaining on the skin when you are ready to apply friction. The intention is for the receiver's skin to move over tissues underneath, rather than just sliding your thumbs, fingers, etc. over the skin. When applying friction always check in with

the person you are massaging. They should not at any point be in pain. Just as with effleurage, when performing friction to legs and arms always apply pressure towards the heart.

Friction is also similar to effleurage in that you can use open palms, knuckles, forearms, elbows, fingertips, and thumbs to execute it. The difference between the two strokes lies mainly in the amount of pressure applied and the speed of them. Basically, you can never go too slow with friction. Even keeping friction stationary works great in some areas. For example, if the receiver is lying on their back and your are working on the back of their neck, you can just curl your fingertips and let gravity apply the pressure. Whatever part of your body you use to apply friction, remember to be mindful of how you are moving. Make sure all the joints from your shoulder to fingertips are as straight as possible and that pressure is coming from your body weight combined with the movement of your legs and torso — not your arms or hands!

One of the most useful aspects of friction is its ability to break up adhesions. With lack of movement, or stress or trauma to an area, muscles fibers can stick together or tendons can stick to tissues they come in contact with. Deep friction can help separate such tissues and keep bodies moving smoothly.

[Image not archived]

Really, massage is the sort of thing you have to practice a lot to become good at, rather than reading a bunch of books, but hopefully this gives you some good ideas and information. Remember that the intention you give to your touch and the state of mind you are in is much more important than how many fancy techniques

you know. Just stay relaxed and in tune with what your receiver is feeling, remember to breathe (both massager and massagee!), maintain contact and a steady soothing rhythm and you'll do fine.

— An excellent book on massage/bodywork is *Job's Body* by Deane Juhan. It explores how the body's physiology is affected by bodywork. Even better, it describes in fascinating scientific detail why it makes no sense to discuss the "mind" and "body" as separate, distinct entities.

— If you have any questions about anything I've written, or desire more specific information, feel free to write to me.

Really, all you people should just write to me anyway, for anything, and I do mean anything, at all. If you happen to live somewhere near Tacoma and want me to show you some massage stuff in person, or just hang out or something, I'd be happy to.

— I'm working on a vastly expanded version of this article, and hopefully will be able to put together a whole zine about these matters. I'm going to try to get it done by the summer, but we'll see. If you'd be interested in having such a zine, get in touch.

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in one of these three ways, simply print your barcodes at home onto label paper available at most office supply or electronics stores and cut out your codes in preparation for re-coding. We encourage our customers to re-code brand name items with generic item codes. Through this process, the customer pays a more reasonable price for what is a quite similar product. It is best to make only slight adjustments such as these to avoid the notice of our competitors — the chain stores and the major brands they carry.

Checking out is simple. Many stores even offer self-scanning checkouts. This is of course the easiest way to scan your re-coded items undetected. In situations where this is not available, cashiers will assist you through their workplace boredom by only listening for a beep as they scan your item rather than noticing the product name which their register might display. Again, if recoding brand name products using their generic equivalents' UPC codes, it is likely that the registers product name displays will not appear all that different. In one test, both Kellogg's Frosted Flakes ($3.39 US) and Better Valu Sugar Frosted Flakes ($1.69 US) appear with the word Flakes in their name at the register. This helps the cashier to remain focused on the beep rather than the product name as they scan away your savings. Of course, this requires some flexibility on your part, but this is what allows you to save up to 40% on brand-name products every day.

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[Image not archived]

**BE FREE, AT NO FEE, **
smash TOURISM!

Atrophied letterbomb to the editor disguised as prologue to the Scene Reports[1]:

a travelogue supplied by little Marko Polo, age 15. overseas correspondent

Dear friends,

I'm stuck out here in Norway with my parents on this stupid vacation. God, it seems like I could go to the fucking moon with them, and it would still be like being home in New Medford. These people make everything petty and dumb, even fjords and Viking longboats. I know I should feel lucky to be out here — most of my friends back home will never get the chance to see this place, and that's just another level of how fucked up everything is — but this isn't even like *being here, * it's just more being with my family in the fake fucking world they live in.

They share this pathological spectatorship with the rest of their class, as far as I can tell — looking around at all the others here like them. Coming from a milieu where values of *owning* and *appearing* have replaced those *of feeling* and *acting, * these bourgeois vacationers seek diversion in the symbolic possession of parts of the world other than those they normally occupy — a possession they establish by the act of *looking, * "sightseeing." This is the true meaning of the all the photographing and videotaping: the pictures may not be important later on (except for those insufferable

'... or is it the other way 'round?

slideshows to which one imagines conquering Roman emperors would have subjected their courts, had they possessed the technology), they may not be taken with any artistic application or intentions, but they serve to establish the tourists as *collectors* — *they* collect images, just as others collect butterflies. This is the only way the unreconstructed bourgeois family knows to relate itself to foreign things[2]: the beautiful and the wild are quite scenic, but lack meaning until they are hunted, captured, pinned.

The hastily snapped images are preserved, as if in formaldehyde, and the family congratulates itself on knowing "all about" Norway, and/or Sweden, France, Italian architecture and cooking, the wildlife of the Pacific Ocean, the struggles of the first Polar explorers, the troubled childhood of Van Gogh ("and that, " intones the tour guide of the slideshow of photos taken from behind a rope under the direction of another tour guide, how's that for post-modernism, "is the very room he spent his first six years in!"). Even more importantly, the lenses never leave the eyes of the tourists in the course of their vacation, literally or figuratively. This mediation is also integral to the tourist experience.

The modern tourist arrives at his calling from a world of control mania, already an expert at protecting

himself to death. The bourgeois insist on being safe wherever they go — not just from actual danger, but from everything not already anticipated, comprehended, controlled. The travel guides and guidebooks, the painstakingly planned itineraries, the safe bubbles of tourist bus and museum and hotel, the armies of salesmen who cater to every fabricated need — all these combine to ensure that being in Oslo or Zimbabwe actually is the same as being in Oklahoma. And yet beneath everything, tourism is still a desperate bid to experience something *different, * something "exotic, " which is to say — something not quite as lifeless, meaningless, tedious and banal and insipid as daily life under the tyranny of the hair dryer and the cellular phone[3].

And so the worst tragedy is that tourism destroys the observed as it maintains the alienation of the observers. Just as in the course of their exploits explorers have cut wider and wider swaths through the natural environment (until all that remains of it in some places are fishtanks in museums), the tourist crushes beneath him exactly that which he seeks. The human being in the bourgeois man needs variety, danger, adventure, but the bourgeois in him channels these needs into surrogate enterprises and hedged bets: traveling to France, he still wants to speak English; rafting the

rapids, he still needs a release to sign and an "historic path" to follow (as all meaningful experience is held hostage in the past, or in the exotic lives of other peoples); landing on Mars, he would look around for a sign announcing the next guided tour. Wielding the power of the new angry god, Dollar, he is able to compel everyone he encounters to provide him with this safety net of chains. Wherever the tourist tramples, soon little remains but the manifestation of his own creative and cultural bankruptcy (visit Cancun, Mexico for proof). Whole cultures have been annihilated in his wake — tourism is, as the venerable master points out, the descendant not of ancient quests and pilgrimages but rather of colonial imperialism.

In the absence of the real thing, the tourist is left with simulation. Even the most wild and crazy travel handbooks ("Europe on twenty cents a day!"ˣ"Antarctica for hitchhikers!") are just museums of fossilized adventure by the time they go into circulation — as if there could ever be such a thing as a "guide to adventure, " when adventure is precisely that which happens off the map. The most the daring tourist can hope to find is the cooling trail left by the *real* adventurers before her, the ones who embarked without maps. The others have to make do with monuments and museums and theme parks, forever asking rhetorical questions ("I wonder what it was/would be like to... ?") without connecting their own lives to the possibilities they unconsciously raise. Perhaps they buy more guidebooks, seeking characteristically to purchase the solutions to their needs embodied as products — rather than shaking off the alienation and doing something to find them.

The common quality that unifies all tourists is *disconnection:* they are totally uninvolved in what they see, pursuing as they do the sight alone without all the entanglements and liabilities that come with real life. They can passively vote on their favorite place or painting, or, at most, develop some paternalistic, picturesque Hallmark sentiment that "exotic" environments or cultures should be "protected, "

but it never occurs to them that they *are interacting* with the worlds they would view with the same detachment one watches television — thus they are unable to take responsibility for the role they play in eradicating them, or for that matter, for their own spiritual malaise and restlessness. They could be at home — or even where they *Ate* — *giving* themselves to something, becoming involved in some part of life, acknowledging their own wishes for the world and believing in them, holding themselves answerable for the effects of their actions and in so doing making changes in the world deliberately for once; instead, they vacation in the never-never land of disconnection, extending their own alienation to the furthest corners of the globe. This alienation replicates itself there, driving them to ever more expensive ocean cruises and souvenirs in a listless addict's pursuit of stimulation — when all it would take to break the spell would be for them to commit themselves to some value or dream, one that would drag them into danger and heartbreak and ragged glory and all those other things one must experience to live an engaged, fulfilling life. They could do that without ever booking flights or packing suitcases. The fact that they are able to maintain their distance from life ten thousand miles from home as easily as they can in the midst of the inertia of their daily routines is a testament to the total and global triumph of universal self-estrangement. Capitalism, oppression, colonialism, though responsible for creating this state of affairs, are mere superficial problems beside it.Ultimately, tourism is not a leisure activity but a *way of living, * an expression of the vacuum at the heart of consumer society. What the executive does in the Louvre and the Himalayas and Jamaica is what he does in his own neighborhood when he drives past woodlands being cut to make way for new gas stations and condominiums. What it will take to snap him out of this trance — to make him relate himself to the others around him, and the transformations taking place constantly in the world — well, the fate of the planet relies on us discovering that, doesn't it.

l i- do so, we have to follow the leads in our own lives, locate the parts of ourselves that are not yet totally ' detached, the loves and longings -^ that still stir Within us. The truth is, I do long to travel — my heart still leaps at the thought of dropping everything and setting out free and empty-handed across this unfamiliar landscape, and I don't think this is simply the bourgeois spectator within me. Travel is fundamental to human liberty and romance: it was the original state of our species, and we still long for it. It is in traveling that we can shake off our old selves and hunt down others that have been waiting in alternate worlds — it is in travel that freedom is possible, for without new horizons we would simply repeat the well-practiced choices we have already made, in thrall to inertia if no other master.

So, with all the world standardized under cultural/corporate imperialism and technological/industrial capitalism, when we bear the seeds of these poisons within our own unwilling, colonized breasts, where is there left to go? How are we now to travel? The answer is: *in place.* The adventures of the future will be created, not by Westerners who destroy worlds in their desperate bid to escape the Western one, but by people who seize familiar parts of this planet and make them unfamiliar. Washington,

D.C. could become Paris, 1968 overnight, if a group were ready to make the right adjustments; a sense of one's own importance and capabilities can transform even a suburban bedroom into the setting of the greatest of real life epics. Really, this was always the case: one either regards the world passively, or approaches it as a participant — all things hinge on this, whether you are at home or at the bottom of the sea. In traveling in place, we can rediscover that art of *participation* which is essential for any adventuring... and with any luck, my children will never have to write an article like this about me.

Hey, send me some mail, it'd be cool to find it waiting for me when I get back — write to Spoiled Brats c/o CrimethInc. Trust Fund Army

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What happened in Quebec?

In short, a handful of autonomous, cooperating groups took to the streets and fought the pigs until practically the entire city was fighting with us in autonomous, cooperating groups of their own. This is an unprecedented event in the recent history of the anti-capitalist struggle in North America.

In this report, I'm going to concentrate on how and why this was possible. If you want to know specific details about the F.T.A.A., the summit, or the events that transpired before and during it, there are plenty of other sources that can give you that information. Here I m assuming you have already found access to that information, and also that you already know what you have at stake in resisting global "free trade"... and capitalism itself, for that matter.

The conditions that made this POSSIBLE

Quebec, the French-speaking region of an otherwise English-speaking nation, has a long-standing independence movement, and natives harbor some resentment against both their government and the cultural standardization imposed by the nearby United States. This proved to be really decisive in the events of the weekend, though few demonstrators saw in advance how important this would turn out to be.

The Canadian government, fearful of another demonstration like the one that took place in Seattle during the World Trade Organization meeting,

had a concrete wall with a chain-link fence atop it built entirely around the center of Quebec City, and closed off the space within it entirely to everyone not possessed of a resident's card. The wall was built at great expense to Canadian taxpayers, and trained riot police were sent in from other regions of Canada, armed with water cannons, new stun guns[1], tear gas, etc. All this infuriated the locals: not only were a group of foreign leaders invading their city to discuss matters of "free trade" (which, it's an open secret, is sought by the rich so they can become richer at everyone else's expense) in a working class region of Canada, but their own city was being taken away from them for this purpose, and they were being treated like illegal aliens in it.

In addition to local outrage, another important ingredient was the presence of a great number of protesters from a wide variety of backgrounds. Because thousands of the protesters in attendance were seen as coming from a center-left position (i.e. being

"mainstream," according to the old myth), and the media in attendance had not already stigmatized them as marginalized extremists, the police forces had a stake in being seen as restrained. The protests at the presidential inauguration last January took place in similar conditions. Then, as now, this made it possible for the small minority who were prepared from the outset to use confrontational tactics to do so without being immediately subdued by police violence and arrested and this time, thanks to local outrage and the fact that no one else was offering an approach that actually contested the source of everyone's frustration, these tactics were soon appropriated by practically everybody there, even locals who hadn't thought of themselves as "protesters" at all.

To my knowledge, this was the first major demonstration on this continent in which a large part of the organizing was done according to anarchist procedures, including a sympathy for what was referred to as "a diversity of tactics." For a thorough discussion of this subject, consult the CrimethInc. report from the demonstrations in Sao Paulo, 2000, which appeared in the previous issue of Inside Front as *The Violence/ Non-Violence Question: How (and Why) to Transcend It.* In Quebec, the "diversity of tactics" included property destruction, provocation

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and aggressive self-defense. The two French Canadian groups organizing for the protest, C.L.A.C. and C.A.S.A., that accepted this approach, took a lot of heat from the more traditional, cuddlier and cuter, more liberal and authoritarian organization, S.A.L.A.M.I., which, predictably, reserved the right to tell protesters exactly what to do and how to do it. We'll discuss in a couple paragraphs what the results of this kind of organization were for those who permitted themselves to be so controlled.

C.L.A.C. and C.A.S.A. took the

wise approach of separating the demonstration into different actions and areas according to level of risk: green for no danger of arrest, yellow for some danger of arrest for nonviolent civil disobedience action, and red for tactics of deliberate provocation (such as attacking the police fence). The green and yellow areas were charted on a map of Quebec, affinity groups at the spokescouncil meetings identified themselves as taking green or yellow approaches (no one spoke about red groups or actions, for obvious reasons, until the action was taking place), and this helped to reassure everyone involved that they knew exactly what risk they were incurring. As it turned out, most people were ready to go a lot farther than they'd expected once the possibilities of the situation were clear, and the police violated their own commitment to respecting the green zone, so the color-level categories were pretty much meaningless by the time the demonstration got going; but they served their purpose ahead of time by making everyone comfortable with setting their own level of involvement and risk.

Because the organizers declared in advance that they were ready for and supportive of "diversity of tactics," most everyone in attendance came prepared to accept this, too: first, those who came knew what to expect, and second, the fact that the organizers were comfortable with this helped others not to be

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uptight about it. It only happened a couple times at the spokescouncil meetings before and during the demonstration that some stubborn loyalist to leftwing authoritarian tradition brought up the issue of whether it was wise to "allow" people to use their own judgment about what tactics to apply; and both times, thanks to the fact that C.L.A.C. and C.A.S.A. had already established that they saw this as a non-issue, everyone was able to simply ignore the interruption and concentrate on practical matters.

Planning for earlier demonstrations has often been characterized by endless, pointless, symbolic debates about whether or not organizing committees should "give permission" to protesters to use direct action tactics like property destruction. This time, a lot of time and trouble was saved by acknowledging from the beginning that demonstrators were going to do whatever they believed was right, sanctioned or not by self-appointed authorities, and that the role of organizers should be simply to help coordinate cooperation between different groups. That the demonstration proceeded without any of the tens of thousands of demonstrators present doing anything really stupid to hurt the interests of the others there, despite the fact that there was no "official organization" issuing rules and mandates, is important — it simply proves that anarchy works. And if there are still some who believe that anything other than obedience to rules *(their* rules!) imposed by a centralized power constitutes "ineffective" demonstrating (let alone "violation of their rights"!!), this just shows that some have yet to understand that actual democracy means giving up your "right" to command others.

C.L.A.C. and C.A.S.A. deserve accolades for the hard work they did to make everything possible — they did speaking tours across the continent to raise awareness, helped U.S. citizens work out schemes to cross the Canadian border (a few even got married just to give wedding-invitation-clutching U.S. activists a legitimate reason for entry), arranged for food and housing for the tens of thousands of people converging upon their city. The housing was especially important: at many earlier protests, like the I.M.E/World Bank protest in Washington, D.C. a year ago, traveling activists who had no place to sleep were arrested before the action began for sleeping in their cars or on the street. One indispensable center of activity was the university campus, which hosted thousands of demonstrators in the gym (the sight of so many bodies stretched out across its vast floor in the half light was surreal and beautiful), and lots of important organizational meetings as well in other buildings. Hecate only knows

how those kids persuaded the university to receive all these travelers who had already been branded enemies : of the state before they arrived. Individuals from

C.I..A.C. and C.A.S.A. were also not afraid to embrace illegal tactics openly (as they did on Friday night at the spokescouncil meeting after the first day of action, when they supported the idea that the next day's actions should concentrate on attacking the fence) — a few of them landed in legal trouble for this, and they deserve our support for the risks they have taken.

Finally — the remaining crucial contribution of the C.L.A.C. and C.A.S.A. organizing was that the march and day of action they organized fell the day *before* the

march organized by the more "mainstream, " well- behaved S.A.L.A.M.I. Summer of 2000, at the protests around the Republican National Convention in Philadelphia, the day of direct action came after all the other events had ended — so the only activists left in the city were the ones already perceived by the police as "terrorists" (even if they were only armed with puppets!), and the mass arrests and police violence that followed came as no surprise. This time, holding the [first] day for direct action before the main event meant that the events of that day set the atmosphere for the next.

Black Bloc preparation and action: PROVOCATION, OR SELF-DEFENSE?

This was the most organized, best armed and equipped, and, as I've explained above, most broadly supported Black Bloc I have ever witnessed. Considering that many of those in its ranks were in a foreign country, some of them illegally and even with outstanding arrest warrants, I was amazed at how confrontational they had prepared to be: people had brought bolt cutters (for the hated fence) and similar tools, projectiles such as hockey pucks, slingshots and marbles, helmets and homemade body armor, larger shields, and similar equipment. It turned out to be the right decision.

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Friday's march began at the university, neither accompanied by nor — strangely enough — harassed by the police, who remained concentrated around the fence both Friday and Saturday (this was fortuitous, for it meant we could move around the rest of the city without serious fear of arrest — which has not been the case at many earlier demonstrations). The Black Bloc was dispersed among the Crowd, already disguised but not clearly identified as a group.

Shortly before the march arrived at the fence around central Quebec, those (few, as it turned out) who wished to remain in the green sector split off from it.

The others proceeded on, and as soon as they arrived at the broad square which bordered on the fence, the 'Bloc came together and moved immediately to attack the barrier. Within seconds, a wide section of it was torn down — something not thought possible by most of the protesters in attendance — and a few passed through it. The police quickly appeared in greater numbers from within, firing tear gas; the rest of the day and following night was given over to back-and- forth struggles between the police, who sought more to hold a line than to advance, and the confrontational activists who threw projectiles at them and were reinforced by the numbers of less confrontational activists.

A few might describe the Black Bloc tactics as deliberate provocation, and blame them for embroiling the others at the protest in more violent conflict than they were prepared for, but I would describe what happened differently. First of all, had the wall itself not been challenged, the protest would not have been given any attention by the police, the media, or the locals — furthermore, it would have been unclear what there *was* to do instead: the experience of wandering around all day holding signs in a designated protest zone, ignored by the rest of the world, would have been demoralizing to everyone. Some of those who did attempt pacifist actions such as lockdowns in other zones of downtown Quebec that day related that evening at the spokescouncil

that their actions had seemed pointless — the delegates to the summit were already inside the perimeter fence, and had they not been, they could have been delivered with helicopters even if all the roads had been blocked. This was the reasoning of a number of participants in the Black Bloc, too: since it was not possible to stop the summit by keeping the delegates out, they undertook instead to make the whole experience as inconvenient as possible for the heads of state and their lackeys. The next day, in fact, the summit had to be called off until Sunday, because there was so much tear gas in the air around downtown Quebec that it entered the duct system of the building in which the meetings were taking place. So as it turned out, the somewhat antiquated tactics of street fighting turned out to be the most effective for this situation.

But back to the provocation question: clearly the Black Bloc were not the only ones interested in attacking the wall — after the first day of action, at the spokescouncil meeting Friday night, when there were few if any participants present from the 'Bloc, it was decided, by people who had earlier seemed much more timid about doing this, that the next day's actions should concentrate on again attacking the wall. Thus the 'Bloc helped protesters to feel more confident about doing what they already wanted to do, by showing that it was possible. The chief functions the 'Bloc served, thus, proved to be not provocation, but rather *defense* and *demonstration. Defense, * because they formed the front lines that protected everyone else from the police. The police, if my experience is correct, had not just assembled tear gas, water cannons, concussion grenades, plastic bullets, and such devices for show — they intended to use them to break up whatever demonstration took place. They were prevented from doing so precisely because the Black Bloc was so organized and ready to fight: every one of hundreds of tear gas canisters shot at the crowds was immediately thrown back in their faces by an initially small number of courageous gas-masked 'Blocers, to such an extent that sometimes one could only tell

"The anarchists who threw snowballs at attacking riot police on Rene Levesque, who
FOUGHT THE BATTLES OF THE BARRICADES AROUND THE LATEST BERLIN WALL AND CHOKED BY THE
TENS OF THOUSANDS UPON THE TEAR GAS OF THE TOTALITARIAN REGIME, REFUSED TO CONFINE
THEIR REVOLT TO THE PRIVATE WORLD DESCRIBED BY PUNK ROCK LYRICS OR THE PUBLIC WORLD
DEFINED BY LEFTIST PROPAGANDA. THEY DEMANDED JURISDICTION OVER THEIR OWN HEARTS
AND HEADS, INSTANT GRATIFICATION AND PERMANENT REVOLUTION... LACKING THE BOURGEOIS
PROPRIETIES OF THEIR INSTRUCTORS AND LABOR LEADERS, THEY TURNED THEIR UPRISING INTO A
FESTIVAL OF SPONTANEITY, PLAY, AND SOLIDARITY." -GNOME

That is to say — revolutionaries make love and war.

where the police lines were by the cloud of poison surrounding them; the police feared to close in for arrests, because of the constant shower of rocks, glass bottles, broken concrete, and even molotov cocktails that the streetfighters maintained. I suggest that the other role of the 'Bloc was *demonstration, * because the tactics they used were available to everyone who recognized how effective they were. As I'll discuss in a couple paragraphs, the Black Bloc began as a couple hundred people, and ended up being thousands only a day and a half later.

Mainstream media always praise the pigs for their "restraint" at demonstrations like this, which seems to me to be sheer stupidity: the pigs are fucking *employees, * they do what they're told (especially in front of the cameras!), they don't deserve credit for anything they do — that's what is so disgusting about them. In a situation where everyone else present was taking responsibility for themselves, acknowledging their part in what goes on in this world and acting accordingly, the pigs were the only ones present who were still using the Nuremberg defense to do whatever their masters ordered, even when it meant shooting searing tear gas canisters at the heads of unarmed, non-violent middle-aged mothers (I know this because I witnessed my good friend, an unarmed, non-violent, middle-aged mother, get hit by one such deliberate police attack). If anyone should get credit for "restraint, " it's us — we always show good sportsmanship, we work willingly with vastly inferior technology (seriously, marbles versus plastic bullets?), we give everyone a David against Goliath show just to demonstrate how much more courageous and intelligent we are. I'm sure of the thousands of people at the demonstration, at least a couple hundred were gun owners — but we didn't ever defend ourselves with lethal weapons, even though they were attacking us with unprovoked violence that would have given anyone cause for armed self defense in a court of law. That's because we're nice people, responsible to each other and even merciful to our enemies, and they're lower than fucking worms. Watch the way they move their bodies in those Halloween costumes and you'll see the murderous machismo of power-addict slaves. Anyway, back to the subject.

Saturday was the "official" protest day for the more "mainstream" organizers, principally the Canadian unions (the "other government, " I've been calling them since that day), who demonstrated just how absurd it is to organize anti-authoritarian protests in authoritarian ways. They arranged a giant union march, departing from a place in Quebec City away from all the action and moving through the empty industrial areas, where there was no one to even see them marching, to a

dead end in a park where a small band was playing. The tens of thousands who participated in this march couldn't have felt more like they were wasting their time — even the mainstream newspapers reported that it was all the union marshals could do to keep the workers marching in line away from the real action, let alone chanting along with the monosyllables blaring from megaphones attached to the cars in which

their "leaders" rode, resting their precious feet. Anyone could see the difference between their approach to politics and ours by comparing the amount of freedom available to their marchers to the open relationships between autonomous demonstrators on our side of the city.

Meanwhile, we kept up our street war in central Quebec, strengthened by new numbers now surrounding and attacking the wall from all sides. Those who had thought they only wanted to hold signs now backed up masked kids tearing apart the sidewalk to make projectiles. Now, I've always been critical of violence, because ifs something that you can turn on but you can't turn off; even more than other tools, it tends to control and manipulate those who apply it. But this somehow didn't feel like violence: everyone who was involved, everyone who was participating, valued the various contributions of the others present, whether they were setting police on fire, providing medical attention to the injured, or simply watching from a distance — everyone felt united and safe with each other. The violence directed from all the human beings present at the only ones there who still refused to be human didn't contaminate us.

Pivotal Moment

Then, in the middle of Saturday afternoon, something happened that was of pivotal importance, which probably went unnoticed by almost everyone else there. During a lull in the streetfighting, a segment of the Black Bloc proceeded to a multinational bank and smashed all its windows in. At this point a large number of local street kids had congregated, not as protesters, but simply to watch the unfolding events; these locals were sympathetic to the foreigners fighting the police, simply because they were fighting the natural enemy of street kids everywhere, but they were still suspicious of the activists on the grounds that, like the delegates and the pigs, they were foreign invaders. Nothing the protesters had done until this moment raised their wrath — but, having no prior experience with the rationale of property destruction, the sight of a bunch of foreigners smashing up windows in their city enraged them. They followed the Bloc all the way around, uh, the block, picking up weapons and threatening them[2]. A couple 'Bloc members tried

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to reason with them — the language barrier proved insurmountable, as did the machismo barrier, and both of them got punched in the face.

These two kids are the ones most responsible for the success of the demonstration, though nobody knows it. They had the humility and focus to turn and simply walk away when this happened, which is fucking amazing, especially considering the reputation the Black Bloc itself has for machismo. If they had not done this, the whole weekend would have been ruined, and direct action activism would have been set back a decade — for the visiting activists would have ended up in a riot with the locals, and every possibility of something positive happening would have been lost.

Given some time to cool off, the locals sent a couple of their number to speak to kids from the'Bloc. It turned out they really wanted to fight the pigs together with these foreigners, and they respected what they [we] were doing, but needed an assurance that

these kids weren't just here to trash their city. This given, on the conditional terms which any anarchist has to speak in when "representing" a larger group, the episode was over and everyone could focus again on the real enemy.

I'm not opposed to property destruction, of course — if it were up to me, every corporate store, office, and factory would be burned to the ground by tomorrow morning — but it was critical that the 'Bloc kids recognize that, under these circumstances, it was an ineffective tactic, because the locals did not understand what it was intended to do. Had they insisted on sticking to 'Bloc dogma, catastrophe would have resulted. Instead, everyone returned to the front lines, and the action reached its heart-quickening climax.

Escalation

As the sun set over Quebec, the police slowly pushed forward to the north, until they were stopped in a standoff at the foot of a freeway overpass. At this point, practically everyone had their faces covered, for protection from the tear gas that filled the air; at the same time, people who had been timid before had lost their fear — from two days of watching police hit in the

head with bottles, of seeing supposedly impregnable walls torn down with ropes, of breathing tear gas until it no longer intimidated them. It was impossible to tell now who had been from the Black Bloc and who had just joined the struggle: formerly apolitical Quebec street youth manned the front lines, throwing back tear gas canisters and rocks as they had seen the activists doing, thrilling in the feeling of reclaiming their city from the powers of police and capital. They hid behind makeshift barricades, running up close to the police line to throw molotov cocktails into it, showing superhuman courage in the face of the riot troops that had had them terrified twenty four hours earlier. Behind these kids, over three thousand people of all ages and backgrounds stood on the freeway, beating out a deafening rhythm on every surface available in support of the street warriors. The street signs, which only two days before had told them where to go and how fast, became sounding boards for their frustration and their conviction that this conflict was worth fighting; the concrete, which had cut them off from the soil beneath their feet and reinforced the corporate propaganda on every street corner proclaiming that the only possible condition was capitalism, competition and cultural standardization and mind-numbing work — that very concrete was torn up to become hammers to play that music of revolt, or else be thrown, carried on the echoes of that percussion, into the faces of the insect-like riot pigs across the road. A piece of North America had been transformed into Palestine, a first world Intifada now raging such as only the most idealistic punks and radicals had dared dream of — and immediately comprehensible and worthwhile to all present.

Below the freeway, in the activist camp that had once been part of the green zone, free food was shared, hundreds danced joyously in circles; spirits were higher than they'd ever been for parades or holidays. People who had never been exposed to the do-it- yourself values of sharing and self-determination immediately apprehended what

was going on. It seemed the entirety of the old world was about to puncture and collapse.

Who among us has not spent hours, weeks, whole years of life that, at the end, left us nothing to show

but the physical fact that we survived, that we lived through them? This moment justified even those sad, squandered years — even those weary ones among us who had slogged through decades of tedium and absurdity were vindicated: we had finally arrived at this, the first threshold of childhood. The past behind us that had seemed so senseless, the future ahead unknowable and all the more menacing as we made out handcuffs on the belts of the police, all this was worth it, justified into eternity, so we could live this danger, this freedom, this feeling of breaking through the skin of the world.

There is another world, a secret one made up of all our unlived dreams and unacted impulses, all those parts of ourselves which find no point of entry into the one that is — it waits, simmering, ready to boil over at six billion different pressure points. When it did, that afternoon, we drank tear gas with gratitude and abandon, we were energized as people sometimes are when the power goes out or hurricanes come — neither plastic bullets nor water cannons could daunt us, for we were living as we had always known we should. The music we made together, beating out our own cadences on the sheet metal of the city, was the eruption of our individual longings into the material world; united in their singularities, they formed a symphony no composer could have authored. It surrounded us, deafening, greater than ourselves; when we closed our eyes, it sounded like singing, like a vast unearthly choir above us.

I would have liked for that song to have gone on forever, to have been our lives. Editing this, now almost two years later, my ears are still ring with those rhythms; perhaps they are just ringing, as ears do after great noises... or perhaps the beat goes on.

That day, for the hours we traded in the currencies of courage and conviction rather than cash and compliance, we were able to cast off all consideration of exchange in our *bodies, * and the space we moved through, as well as our minds: we saw capitalism incapacitated. Better we should see it decapitated!

The value of what happened

We didn't, it's true. We almost did, though, and anyone who tells you different wasn't there like we were there. For a world revolution to take place, there would have to be events going on in every city at once, twice as intense as those taking place in Quebec City around nightfall on April 21st. That probably won't happen for another decade or two. So — let's talk about what was valuable about what *did* happen.

Well, first of all, it got the ET.A.A. in the news — duh. Not that the corporate-controlled newspapers are ever going to tell the truth about it or "free trade, " for that matter, but at least those who read the newspapers have since had the concept in their vocabulary, and we, thus, a starting place from which to raise the questions we need to. Second, we got some great experience to employ in future demonstrations. Third,

we didn't suffer quite as crushing a tally of arrests as we have at some demonstrations, thanks to the defense on the part of the Black Bloc — this means we had less to recover from, fewer hassles to drain our energy and attention.

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All those obvious things out of the way — the important thing is that everyone there, the local non-activists especially, got a demonstration of what anarchy is, how it works, how individuals can work together in large enough numbers to overpower the forces of control marshaled against them. The "revolution" isn't some far-off single moment, anyway, it's not the crux of history Marx talked about — it's a process going on all the time, everywhere, wherever there is a struggle between hierarchical power and human freedom. In Quebec, I was part of the largest- scale manifestation of mass cooperation and struggle against control I've ever experienced; I've seen this before, hundreds of times, I've chosen a life of pursuing it, so this particular weekend may not have been as absolutely transforming for me as it was for those who hadn't recognized such a thing going on before — but it was still something amazing, which I will remember clearly until I go to my grave, even if I live through "the revolution" itself first.

In moments like this, living becomes something like music is for the musicians who improvise together: everyone contributes their own theme, but rather than a conflict, a cacophony, the different elements combine to form something much greater and more compelling than the sum of the individual parts. In this sense, the weekend in Quebec was important to me above all because it was a sort of pilgrimage, to a moment of anarchy as irreplaceable as all such moments are.

That's all for the memoirs — now it's time to get out there and create new adventures, touch off new

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confrontations with our oppressors. Until capital capitulates, yours — C.W.C. Rioters' Bloc

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See you on the streets!

genoa

0G8 *Protests, July* 2001

[Editor's Note; Tragically, this is only the first half, in unrefined draft form, of the more massive scene report my friend was going to submit to this issue. The second half was to cover this person's Bakuninesque flight through the Alps to escape the police crackdown following the demonstrations, including idyllic hiking scenes and a life-threatening thunder storm atop a mountain peak. But, shortly after the following text arrived, when I was clamoring, as we editors are wont to do, for the rest of it, I received an unnerving email from my friend with references to police investigations ("I'll write you back if I'm still free after this week — they've invaded the house, and...") — and then, nothing, no responses since, and I haven't been able to get any more information. Let's hope my friend is safe, somewhere, and has merely sworn off email

or something like that... As for you, dear reader, who may want to participate in the same level of resistance but not under any circumstances to risk being "disappeared, " fear not: the more of us take the step of action, the more difficult it will be for them to identify and apprehend each of us. I hope we can one day look back to the trying events in Genoa as a difficult coming-of-age for the new generation of anti-capitalists.]

"I've often wondered if the urge to destroy is really the desire to do away with a way of living that does not bring us joy" — Derrick Jensen

"...[T]heir protest will continue because it is a biological necessity. 'By nature, ' the young are in the forefront of those who live and fight for Eros against Death... Today the fight for life, the fight for Eros, is the political fight." — Herbert Marcuse

As the needle descends onto the circular vinyl, I'm resurrecting the memories that were once scored one and a half years ago in the streets of Genoa. The music I'm playing is the new Godspeed You Black Emperor! record, and as the effect of this record escalates, its sound waves remind me of the effects of tear gas, the sound of breaking glass, the sound of people, the image of death, life and fire, the feelings of danger. Accusations of a desire to be associated with the romance of insurgence and insurrection can be forwarded to my address, and after all, as they say, "Love can be found at the end of a gun."

The memory I am referring to occurred in the summer of 2001 in the Italian city of Genoa; where the autocrats of Western Civilization gathered to make yet more decisions on our behalf. This is my story of events — they may or may not be true, but I think it's important to settle rumors, discuss tactics, and ultimately see where we can go from here; and hopefully this account will be appropriate for this. (For another account from the affinity group I was part of please refer to the chapter "The Tracks of our Tears" by Jazz in the book _On Fire: The Battle of Genoa and the Anti-Capitalist Movement_.)

July 2001 — We catch the train from the UK to the French town of Nice and sleep in the street for the night. The following morning we're on a train heading towards the France/Italy border, anticipating the border guards' usual antagonism, but thankfully after a brief delay we arrive in Genoa. We dress accordingly, trying to blend in to as "backpackers" to avoid the eyes of the Law. We then manage to find our way to the Genoa Social Forum convergence centre (GSF — the GSF would by the end of the week win my "liberal enemy of the week award"). As the bus drives through the city I feel like Spartacus approaching the Roman Empire; I glance out the windows — I see fences being erected, police patrolling the streets in squads, helicopters, armored vehicles, and cars. It is all my nightmares of a police state that could only exist in the most pessimistic of science fiction novels actualizing themselves in my reality.

The GSF advise us to stay in a park about a 2km walk along the promenade; a park that has been designated a campsite for the duration of the summit. We set up our tents, wander, acquire some food, talk, and rest. I people-watch the others in the park-cum-campsite; a gathering sense of surrealism interests me in the locals that use the park to walk dogs, lounge in the shade and sun and play tennis.

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That evening a meeting is called to organize camp security (not from ourselves, but from the Italian pigs). We discuss why we need to be prepared — especially after the Stockholm police tactic of storming the places where people slept; a gate rota is sorted out, iron bars collected to secure the gate, and an alarm decided upon in case of a raid. (Although there were small groups of people that said that the State could not possibly raid us!)

We meet several English-speaking anarchists, and begin to work out how to achieve our intentions in Genoa. Stories and lives are shared on the beach as we begin to formulate our plans. We form an affinity group of eight of us, all ready to be black-clad.

[Image not archived]

The most exciting part prior to the weekend of action was the meeting up and networking around the city, where we had to find quaint streets so as not to be stopped by cops (we just didn't want to be unnecessarily harassed), and then met other anarchists to get our tactics understood so we were all fully aware of the affinity groups' intentions. I met many people, probably some of whom I'll never meet again, but just the feeling of a connection because of our desire was an unquestionable moment. We eventually had some idea of how the day of action on Friday was going to be constructed. Some groups would attack symbols of capital such as banks and the rich, some would deliberately attack cops to draw away and concentrate their forces, and others would attempt to pull down fences and attack the "Red Zone" (a la Quebec City actions). We decided ourselves to head towards the Red Zone. That evening, when many people had gathered for social functions, in the cover of darkness and Mediterranean storms we did our best to gather wooden posts, ropes, iron bars, body armor and anything else to "complete our mission." To this day I will always remember the rain storm. The rain was heavy and loud enough for us to carry out everything that we wanted to, but the heat of the local climate created the kind of rain that you could only want more of, how it seemed to find its way into every part of your body, how it dropped into my eyes from my hair. The following day was a relaxed affair of chatting, cooking food, scouting maps and sun bathing. In the evening was the first mass demonstration, against the EU laws on asylum seekers and border controls. It was the first time we would get to estimate how many people were gathered here. We found our way into the menagerie of green, black and red flags and began our tour of Genoa. The mass of people must have been into six figures, and the anarchist bloc was a massive turn out, around 6–8, 000 participants — and part of me was wondering whether this was everyone. The demo ended without conflict; it was really a wander in the streets.

The next morning I awoke to start making makeshift body armor that would fit beneath my clothes, I used a cut up sleeping mat and drainage pipes, and many meters of duct tape. All being well, it wasn't my intention to have to use it — I was relying on predicting the situations, and the speed at which I can run — it was more precautionary than anything else. I think in the future, skate and BMX pads are a

better solution for this kind of body armor; I did have a bike helmet, and many people had invested in motorcycle helmets. Each affinity group had one person go to a "camp meeting, " and then it dawned on me. I looked around. The majority of people that were staying in the camp site were indeed a portion of the Black Bloc, and to this day this was one of the best coincidences I've ever been in. Our intention as a camp was to join in the COBAS demo (a European group of revolutionary Marxists), and then go and do our separate things from there. After some delay we left the camp en masse. We were amazed that this many people dressed in black did not get one ounce of police attention, and we were deceiving the Law. As we descended into the town, calls of "No Justice No Peace — Fuck the Police, " "No Borders No Nations — Fuck Deportation" rang from the streets. Once in the town center we realized that there was very little continuity anywhere, no organized marches that we could join, there was just a mass of people, and the only conclusion was that there was already a riot in full flow. This was damaging to our plans, but there was nothing we could do — and perhaps people had already started attacking the cops? In order for our affinity group not to separate we used a word that we would call out if we all needed to come together, think of something uncommon, for example we used the word "Moose." The section of the Black Bloc that I was in got split up at this point; once we regained our bearings we decided to try and make our way towards the Red Zone. With us we had a marching Black Bloc band, and many affinity groups. The sun was hot and unrelenting, I was drinking water faster than I could find some fresh, and on a day like this all shops were shut. So what are the alternatives? Looting. We came across a supermarket, and the next thing we know we are trying to pull off the door shutters, and eventually they came off, and we had the whole shop to our delights. I ran in and got as many cartons of fruit juice as possible, and bags of crisps and light snack-type foods. The sprinkler system triggered itself, and visibility was reduced, as I was running out

I tripped and

smacked my right foot on an abandoned cash register. (The pain slowly released itself for the duration

of the *f* dav). Once ' refreshed r our affinity group had a re — think and we decided to de-black ourselves and find a quicker route to the Red Zone.

We found ourselves in a park square, where summer bands were playing, people drinking

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Italian

wine, and children were playing. We sat and calmed ourselves in the peace that became a much needed breather; it was almost like being in a fairy tale with Orpheus. I decided to try and find recent news and wandered the street; I met another affinity group, they said "the prison is being trashed, and a fragment of the Black Bloc will be here soon." So with that news we all got back into our other identity. It was not a moment too soon. I looked to my left and there was a barrage of riot cops, and without hesitation they tear gassed the whole area. At this point it was too late to put on my

gas-mask, but I could neither retreat to find clean air as in front of me were children as young as 5 screaming, crying and panicking. I did my best to get them behind us and clear the area of tear gas canisters. The gas was overwhelming; once the children were safe I ran in a "safe" direction, at this point I couldn't breathe, see or think — all I could make out was the shape of one of the members of our affinity group. Luckily he was twice the size of me — he picked me up after I called his name and he flushed the gas from my face, eyes, throat. We were safe for the time being, and all of us were fucking furious at the level of disregard shown by the cops for the children that were in the area; in my own mind I declared myself in a state of war.

We decided to head into the city center and join anything going on there. Genoa is a hilly city, so we could see across the horizon and see tear gas and black smoke billowing into the sky above, and hear the continuous firing of "anti-riot weapons" by the Italian State. We eventually found ourselves next to a train station where the road was a dual carriageway with what looked like thousands upon thousands of people. We headed gingerly amongst the crowd as we were expecting hostility because of our dress code, but there was no conflict. I knew a British friend of mine would be in Genoa, but I had no idea where he would be, and as I was walking in the road I heard someone call my name, it was my friend. I was wearing a mask, sunglasses and baseball cap and he still recognized me, and we somehow managed to meet each other at this moment in the space-time matrix! I got chatting to him and he took us closer to the "front line." We equipped ourselves and I put on my gas mask, saying to myself it's now or never. One of the most significant moments, for me, was seeing how many people were suffering the effects of tear

gas but not knowing what to do — some were ignoring it, some washing water straight into their eyes, and others using lemon-juice solution! I saw a middleaged man in a bad way, his eyes massively swollen and looking in pain. I approached him to assist him in his situation. I was anticipating daggers, but he was very warm and welcoming of my assistance, considering I was dressed the way I was and had a full face gas-mask on. We connected. He thanked me in his best English, and when I waved goodbye, he raised his fist and smiled.

Down at the front line many people were dodging the "mortar bomb"-style tear gas grenades. I've never seen anything like them. When they landed they deposited very dense gas, but didn't get hot and were easy to handle. The cops obviously witnessed how easy it was for us to throw them back. So instead of launching them at a 45 degree angle, they decided to fire them at head height. If you were hit by one of these the effects could be life-threatening. We gathered as much ammo as possible from crumbling walls and pavements, and began disposing of them towards the cops. Things were at a stalemate, no one moving back or forward. We assisted each other in dodging the large tear gas canisters, and we began to hold the cops at bay. We looked around to see if there was anything that we could build barricades out of, but there was nothing. I went back into the crowd and met members of the affinity group, and refreshed myself on chocolate and water. The heat of the day was extremely unforgiving. We went back

as a group and momentum had built up on our side: we were pushing the cops back at such a rate that we were able to pick up the stones that we had previously thrown. A supermarket trolley was adapted to transport stones. Things were going well and at a very quick rate of speed. I felt no angst, no remorse, no sadness — I was so focused on the job at hand of watching the air for missiles, trying to breathe in the gas mask, and monitoring cop movements that the whole event was a series of explosive events. The foot that I damaged was the bane of my day, so I had to go and rest. I sat on a doorstep on the side of the street, and waited to regain my energy. It wasn't a moment too soon. I was jogging back to the front line when my ears were subjected to the noise of mechanical screaming; there was an armored vehicle driving straight forward into the crowd of people. People ran. I ran. I looked across the road and saw

cops running with it hitting and pummeling anyone, and in the other lane a water-cannon was doing its best to shoot down people who were running away from the scene. I turned around and saw the nozzle of a water-cannon pointing at me — I tried dodging it, running in a zig-zag, but it was too late, the next thing I knew I was been blown across the road like a tumbleweed into a crowd of people. I got up and managed to get back into running. A woman fell flat on her face in front of me, I helped her to her feet and I saw her face of terror and absolute fright. There was so much tear gas in the air you couldn't even work out what direction was the best to go in. I lost the affinity group and was on my own. I darted up a narrow street doing my best to get out of tear gas- and water-laden clothes whilst still getting my breath back. A group of people who I thank to this day gave me water and carried my rucksack whilst I gathered my mind, body and energy. They were so accommodating and helped me go through all the back streets to where we were camping.

All I could do now was to wait for my friends to get back. In my waiting I heard plentiful rumors, some depressing, and one rumor became truth. The state murder of Carlo Giuliani. It haunted me, and still haunts today. I later found out that the street battle we were in was very near the scene of Carlo's death. Eventually my friends arrived back as smaller groups or individually. Then, like a sudden storm, another rumor. We heard that the GSF had held a press-conference for the Italian Media, and that they were.reported of saying something along the lines of "...The violence today can be solely blamed on the anarchists, the violent majority of which can be found" in the campsite where we are staying. This knocked us all into a temporary state of shock, almost waiting for the first blow to the head by a cop's truncheon. We decided that we should sleep somewhere else that night. In darkness we packed our tents, got ready, and decided how to escape to the GSF car-park where we would sleep in the open with many other people. We dissolved ourselves into an "Official GSF Lawyer Accompanied Group" (the only way you could get this "protection" was to be a member of the GSF!).

The next morning I awake with a sore foot — I probably couldn't run if my life depended upon it — and in circumstances such as these, that wasn't the best thing that could have happened. So we decide to see how the day pans out, and what we can do. We sit at the side of the road and watch the Saturday march go by, but we never did

see the end of it, there were that many people! Then we see along the promenade the movements of the riot cops. People begin to move back from where they came. Above us, a helicopter drops tear gas onto anyone. The police offensive is massive, and we have to "retreat." We have no idea what we are going to do, and my friend suggests we head out of Genoa as "scared tourists" on the train somewhere. (We had no intention of leaving this early, but after reading a newspaper report that refers directly to the city we are from back in the UK as a source of troublemakers, we decide that we'd best not have a conflict with The Law.) After walking for many hours we arrive at a small Italian beach town, and the waves beckon our visits. I hadn't washed in over a week; the water was so refreshing, just to swim amongst the crashing waves was a stark contrast to the whole week's worth of events.

We are now on a train heading out of Italy to the Mediterranean coast of France, and are exhausted. I feel good, but my mind has been overworked. Still, deep down between the superficial pain and angst I know that this whole experience has given me that feeling that the risks we took somehow were worthwhile; we fought for our lives, and our desires defended.

I later hear about the cop-raid on the school where many people were staying after the Saturday night march. It was in a British newspaper that I picked up in Nice that reported that a few of the individuals that were beaten were members of the affinity group, and subsequently close friends. Tears shed, and shock lets itself be known around my body. I'm thinking "...that could have been me... but they are my friends!" I managed to get in touch with them, and met them only two weeks later at the Earth First! Summer gathering; thankfully, they weren't injured as heavily as I first thought. The other day I managed to watch the Indy Media video called _Genoa — Red Zone_. I'll

[Image not archived]

always remember what one of the victims of that raid said: "I thought I would never hear the sound of my own bones breaking inside my own skin..."

One and a half years on I read the UK Direct Action bulletin "Schnews" (www.schnews.org.uk) and see the following: "It's clear that not only those who materially took part in the devastation should be prosecuted, but also those who facilitated the acts or gave strength to their purpose. These people should be prosecuted even if they didn't conduct any material act." — Italian judge, Elena D'Alosio.

Is it me, or was this exactly the kind of future George Orwell predicted in 1984? The very idea of "thought police" is now a very real concept that is being used to justify state repression. House raids, arrests, charges, state and police repression are happening under the aegis of Berlusconi Big State Business Crew. The hardest part for me is working out exactly where can we go from here. The pathology of civilization seems unrelenting, and there seems no escape even to work out how it's possible to live. Will the cracks in the Empire finally break all the way open? Will we see a downturn of some description in our lifetime? All I know right now is this machine can't carry

on unchecked, and for the sake of life's necessity we have to dismantle it. Like they say, "Revolutions always happen, don't they?"

Cited texts and further reading:

A_gainst His-Story. Against Leviathan_ — Fredy Perlman _Eros and Civilization_ — Herbert Marcuse

A Language Older than Words — Derrick Jensen _Empire_ — Michael Hardt, Antonio Negri

On Fire: The Battle of Genoa and the Anti-Capitalist Movement — Various

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travels: July i-August 5, 2002

A travelogue of someone who set out to discover the beauty of the world and the sincerity of the people.

AU addresses of the places and names marked with an asterisk are listed in the appendix.

Argentina Ardei

May Argentina burn!

A slogan and a demand appearing, among many other places, on a lot of house walls throughout the country, especially in the larger cities near Buenos Aires and, of course, in Buenos Aires itself. Fuera Duhalde, chau Duhalde, FMI arde, etc. The country is in a state of awakening.

First, some words concerning the basic situation in the south of South America: hunger, unemployment, death, fighting. In short, the economy of the nation has been totally ruined by the demands of commercial money-lenders, as represented by the rapacious International Monetary Fund. During the period of his time in office, the former president Menem pushed through plans to sell many Argentinean institutions to private owners, in obedience to their pressure. In late 2001, rebellion and revolts began to occur more and more in

response to the economy and the policies of the government; these culminated in the well-known events of the 19th and the 20th of December 2001, when in some areas of Argentina, many people were killed. (Two dates similarly known in Europe are the 20th and the 21st July 2001, the days of the killing of Carlo Giuliani and the assault and the massacre at the DIAZ-school during the protests in Genova, Italy, against the G-8 summit).

Demonstrations, lootings, street fights in some cities, blockades, militant fights against the Riot-Policia and other special units of the government, and a tremendous rise of awareness among the people, as well as their attempts to organize themselves: all of this is a result of the calamities. Mr. Duhalde, the current president, is the fifth president within the last eight months; during this period, 38 people lost their lives because they fought in the streets against these conditions. (The last three presidents before Duhalde had to replace each other within 10 days).

Meanwhile, all these problems spread to Uruguay, one of Argentina's neighboring countries, and showed similar effects: hunger, unemployment, and streetfights in Mon-

tevideo — this was some of the news I heard during my last five days in Buenos Aires before I returned to Europe.

My trip started in Madrid, my stop-over on the way to Buenos Aires from Austria: I spent a joyful day there accompanied by a friend who showed me, among other things, the book and record store*(l) of the "Sin Dios" people.

The seriousness of this trip was emphasized by the news of the killings of two Piqueteros, Maxi and Dario, which had happened during a street blockade only a few days before my journey. I really had no idea what was waiting for me in this country.

Moreover, I had no idea where I would sleep in Buenos Aires — but through friends, I got some addresses of people living in Argentina who welcomed us (my travel companion and me) like old friends. The candor and the warmth of the people in South America deeply touched me. Suddenly, the edge was taken off many things because of the simple but very important certainty that I *always* would have a roof over my head and people near me who could help me if there were any problems. A heavy load had been lifted from me.

At the same time, it gave me a really bad feeling to realize once more how privileged I am as an EU- citizen. This can be seen in so many areas that it makes me feel sick. The mere fact that I was there, in that place, already proved it; just like the fact that everything was so "cheap" for me: food, public transport...

The safe-guarding of the capital is immediately apparent, not only during demonstrations but also in other areas: the large banks, for instance, are not merely protected by wood boards, as they were for instance in Genova. No! The windows are covered on both sides by heavy metal sheets that protect the glass from breaking, and which, moreover, cannot be used to set the building on fire. This "protection" was noticeable in most places during my stay there, depending on the intensity of the protests. But here too, traces of the fighting could be seen — the sheets bore graffiti or dents and deformations from the

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sticks of demonstrators. All these were signs of deep rage against the government, police and FMI (=IMF = International Monetary Fund).

In general, there is a lot of graffiti and painting on the walls. It's common to see demands for Duhalde's death, or the death of the FMI or of other politicians; sometimes, however, these "only" announce various demonstrations, or assemblies (Asambleas). All of these wonderfully-decorated walls reminded me of Euskadi, the Basque region of Spain where the walls are also covered with information, critique, and anger.

On the day after my arrival, July 3rd, there was a demonstration, the first one I was able to participate in. The reason for it was police repression. The deaths mentioned above of the activists Maximiliano Kosteki (23) and Dario Santillan (21) turned out to have been murders, most likely planned and carried out in cold blood. Memories of the military dictatorship in this country in the late 1970s and early 1980s came back to many Argentineans. After some considerations, the daily newspapers printed the photographs which had been taken. They showed that Dario had tried to help Maxi,

who was lying shot on the ground. Dario himself was shot dead in cold blood over the severely wounded Maxi. The openness with which this took place was scary. Some of the uniformed killers looked directly into the camera and could easily be recognized on the photos. These actions reminded me of the assault on the DIAZ school in Genova, which was also carried out with a cruel openness that suggested a background support by the Italian government.

These killings took place as a reaction to the blockade of a very important bridge, a major entrance to the center of Buenos Aires. The people who blockade the streets are known as Piqueter@s. (This use of the @ is seen in critical Spanish; it is an attempt to address the sexism built into the language.

Piqueteras — feminine — and Piqueteros — masculine — are combined into one word, in which the a and the o become @. This way of spelling may be compared to the English word "wimmin.") Blockades are a very common and important form of action in Argentina, and efforts are made to link the various activities in a network.

This demonstration went from the train station Avellaneda, the square where the executions took place, via the above-mentioned bridge into the centre to the Plaza de Mayo, the best-known square in Buenos Aires. The demonstration lasted for about four hours in chilly rain; similar to Italy, and in contrast to Germoney and Austria, marches are not surrounded by police escorts at all times. There were only two accompanying police — and special units posted along the route of the demonstration, one by the bridge (military police and riot police, some with sharp weapons!) and one for guarding Casa Rosada, the building of the government of Argentina. At the checkpoint by the bridge, some demonstrators were allegedly wounded.

The Casa Rosada is completely sealed off during the demonstrations by very strong iron-bar, about 2.30 m high, behind which there are many riot cops armed for the street fights and for defending the Casa.

It was striking for me, coming from the climate of Austria and Germany (which is rather cold and dispassionate as far as human relations are

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concerned), how differently the people in South America act. About 70, 000 people participated in this demonstration, which took place in continuous rain. Although there was no street fighting, things were pretty lively: people danced and sang their death-wishes for the government, the FMI, and the police with some very militant words. They were accompanied by numerous drummers who beat time tirelessly and kept the hearts of the demonstrators beating hard. When these people dance, their whole bodies move; they jump with their arms almost flying free of the chest, in a movement that continues into the fingertips. Two or three people start with this beautiful form of protest, and all the people around let themselves get caught in this dance which shakes the ground — and, all of a sudden, there are hundreds moving, and a tremendous strength coming from the mass.

Very often such protests against the government and the FMI are combined with a nationalism that reminds me of the nationalism of the Basque liberation movement.

Many people in Argentina come with flags to the demos; this is seen as a criticism of the government and the police units who are not considered to represent Argentina — an idea I found strange, just as I did the singing of the Argentinean anthem after the demonstration. First all this criticism, and then no thoughts on how things really could change and get better — after all the difficulties from the capitalist programs, after military dictatorship, after the government selling the public industries to private owners, after police and military repression, murder, and after millions of indigenous peoples have been dispossessed by imperialism...

The anarchists here too will have to face a lot of enlightenment.

During the next days in Buenos Aires I was able to contact two Asambleas: one of them meets in the northern part of Buenos Aires every Thursday, and the other one every Wednesday closer to the centre in the squatted (occupied?) house Tierra del Sur*(2): Asamblea Parque Lezama Sur*(3). The information for the first Asamblea was given to me by a journalist who originally came from New York. She has lived in Argentina for 10 months and has created a web page in English calles Argentina Now*(4), which reports on what is going on there.

"El Pueblo en las calles construye su **PROPIA HISTORIA" OJ, *THE NEW DISCOVERY OF THE WHEEL***

The *Asambleas* were started as an answer to the situation in the country, a response to the repression, the murders. Many people simply got together in public places, parks, or churches to discuss what could be done to improve the situation, and which activities could be used for resistance against the government.

There are about 200 Asambleas in the metropolitan area of Buenos Aires, which are now in permanent contact with each other. Rotating delegates are sent to the "head meetings" — the "Interbarriales" (barrio = district). These delegates may be authorized to make decisions for their Asamblea. It is moving to see how this autonomous administration works.

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The Asambleas show a wonderful strength and sow a great amount of solidarity into the hearts of the people. What makes these Asambleas a wonderful weapon is the fact that people from very different levels participate, from the two-year-old toddler to the 70-year-old grandmother. *All* of them take part in the Asamblea, able to share their ideas, problems, and wishes without any hierarchies — at least, that's what I saw.

Many of these ideas are really beautiful, and these ideas need space to be developed. Therefore, these people made plans as to where they could make a cultural centre. And as the buildings of the "Banco Mayo" stood empty because of bankruptcy, the idea was near at hand to squat them.

This happened two weeks after my arrival in the district Barracas. The people there told me that this was not the only building of this bank-group which had been squatted. It indeed is a strange feeling to spend some time in a squatted bank, to sleep there, to watch children playing and being creative, simply to make living space out of this deadly building. What a change has happened there!

What is next? What comes after the squatted villages in the Basque country? What after these banks?

What after the factories? Streets, woods, embassies, offices, trees, hearts... How many people meet in these places for the first time, where there is a feeling of community? Which friendships start here, which projects? Which dreams are dreamt here which people will later realize together?

At a concert addressing the death of Carlo Giuliani (20.07.2001), a friend of mine spoke thus: *"Not until every police(wo)man has a relative who also protests in the streets, will these uniformed people cease to fire their weapons"*

All of a sudden, it seemed to me that this could take place in a different way, even without force. Take the cultural centre of this Asamblea Lezama del Sur, the squatted bank: because of the many activities organized for children, it might happen that the son or daughter of a policeman found his/her way into the bank, into this self-governed building, and made friends inside it. How could such a policeman think of evicting his own child from such a daycare centre?

The police came three times, as far as I recall, and asked what was going on there. But after some people explained that this was now a social centre, they went away without giving them any trouble. In my talks with the squatters, the people of the Asamblea, it turned out that the police acted in such a discreet way because it seemed unwise to clear a squat like this one when the political situation was so vague and the solidarity of the people with each other so overwhelming. This is so important: solidarity within the Asamblea. The police would not just have to fight against a few marginalized squatters, but against a huge mass of people — mothers, fathers, children, grandmothers, grandfathers, etc.

As for solidarity: Directly after the squatting, a man working across the street in the office of a leading Argentinean telephone company offered to supply them with electricity. The nearby grocer immediately offered them a discount when he learned they were buying food for the Asamblea.

The friend in Buenos Aires who introduced us to life in the metropolis told me such wonderful stories about those now infamous days of December 2001.

The people had had their fill with all the events — the crash of the economy, the widespread hunger. It thus happened that a few began to stand in the streets, each armed with nothing but a cooking pot ("cacerola" in Spanish) and a tool to beat on it. They did not really know why they did it, but it seemed to be a way of protesting, and they found themselves laying claim to the streets, giving voice to feelings shared by so many others...

The sound of the banging cooking pots echoed through the Streets, and others heard it and were touched. They laid down their work, took a cooking pot with a spoon as an instrument of protest, left their flats and joined the people in the streets. All of a sudden, there were thousands of people running, shouting, and banging through the streets. The destination seemed to be clear to all of them: the Plaza de .Mayo with

the Casa Rosada at one end. Soon, even the president had to leave the "Casa" by helicopter.

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I don't know if it is possible to make a comparison with Spain in 1936, and I shall never know it, but I think that everything that is happening in Argentina is something very special (let's help

make it something usual!) in the present situation of the "New World Order": All these revolutionary movements, all the struggles from the Piqueter@s' street-blockades to the self-organizations in the Asambleas, from the power of the Cacerol@s to the mass demonstrations, graffiti, lootings — all these activities can lead to more, and the future is as always uncertain and exciting. Perhaps it is not necessary to compare the conditions in Argentina with any other situation in the world or its history; it is important in its own right.

West to Mendoza *"I *hope you win..."**

We left Buenos Aires to travel by bus across the whole latitude of the country, from the Rio Plata to the foot of the Andes. I was happy to see a wonderful sunrise, the snow-covered mountains dipped in pink before me and the rising sun behind me. I experienced this after a night ride on the "Colectivo" (bus), the usual way of traveling in Argentina since almost all the trains have been stopped due to lack of money.

Once again, we stayed with people we had gotten to know through friends, and again we were received with the wonderful candor I experienced there so often. This time we were accommodated by the artists of the "Argonautas, " a theatre group in Mendoza. Once again, the presence of children fascinated me. In Argentina, children occupy a totally different place in the social fabric than the one I am used to. The children there hardly ever experience a feeling of being excluded, and they are allowed to participate in many activities; whereas, in Central Europe, it's my experience that children always are "sent to bed, " and thus, against their will, excluded from social life. The "Argonautas" people told me that there was a squatted cultural centre in Mendoza, although unfortunately I didn't manage to visit it; however, I was told that the emphasis there was also put on work with children.

"I hope you win, " the man behind the counter said when I told him why I just had spent three and a half hours before the Internet PC, and in what kind of work (anti-capitalist) I am involved. "I hope WE win, " I answered, and he knew exactly what I meant.

This little encounter reveals the spirit that thrives throughout the country, a spirit often called solidarity. For me, it was like finding a well of water shortly before dying of thirst. The chance to tell so many different people what I do and what my work is about, and to be congratulated for doing it by a man entering my life as a "normal" worker in some place or other, gave me a lot of energy, especially for my life in my usual surroundings in Europe. And the idea of joining with so-called normal people in our struggles, or at least letting them in the know, is something very beautiful; if we anarchists all began to tell everyone we encounter what we are working at, at least

in rough outlines, it could be very effective. In order for our efforts to endanger the ruling system, even the so-called normal people have to discuss change, not just the "left elite."

The way of protest by the Piqueter@s

Once, I was at such a street blockade: first, tires are laid down across the street and set on fire. Then all kinds of things are put on the street in order to

erect a stable blockade which is then protected by people. Depending on the situation, of course, there are different ways of proceeding. It is interesting and inspiring to see the militant appearance of the people marching towards such blockades; they are masked and armed with iron rods.

During the last months, there was even a movie made in Argentina: *Piqueteras.* In this film, various Piqueter@s' activities are shown and Piqueteras(i) are interviewed. The militant behavior of the blockaders can be seen here, too, as well as the procedure of the police and the special units against the blockaders; these reports come from rather rural areas: Cutralco (province Neuquen), Mosconi (province Salta) and Plaza Huincult (province Neuquen) — Piqueter@s fighting the riot police who attack with tear gas, water cannons, rubber bullets as well as some live ammunition, and are answered with slingshots and stones. The determined proceeding of these protesters is immensely inspiring for the fights in other parts of the world.

This is a viciously abbreviated version of a much longer report by ReCistencia. To read it in its entirety, contact wc_prelude@everymail.net

Appendix:

1. *La Idea-Difusion Libertaria, Cl* Sta. Barbara, 7 28004 Madrid (sindios@nodo50.org)

2. *"Tierra del Sur" Centro Social, * Olavarria 1293, Buenos Aires (tierradelsur@latinmail.com)

3. *Asamblea + Casa okupa-Parque Lezama Sur, * Suarez 1244, Barracas, Buenos Aires

4. *Argentina Now* `http://argentinanow.tripod.com.ar`

More contacts:

5. *Biblioteca y Archivo Histdrico Social, "Alberto Ghiraldo"* Paraguay 2212, 2000 Rosario, Argentina (ghirald@hotmail.com)

6. *Federacion Obrera Regional Argentina-F.O.R.A., * Coronel Salvadores 1200 LaBoca, Buenos Aires 7. *Federacion Libertaria Argentina-F.L.A., * Brasil 155, Buenos Aires

and always very hot: _`http://argentina.indymedia.org` `http://uruguay.indymedia.org` `http://www.indymedia.org`_

(Hey, North American/European punk kid — this is for you, if you'd like a little more perspective on why it's important that you show up at actions against the World Bank/I.M.E, W.T.O., F.T.A.A., and so on.)

The imposition of corporate globalization requires the initiation of structural reforms. These measures, promoted by the World Band and the IMF, are the conditions for the inclusion of Latin American countries in the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas. With these reforms, capitalists propose to diminish or annihilate all the people's achievements over the past decades. Latin America is being confronted with

demands for labor "flexibility, " privatization of public enterprises, acquiescence to cultural imperialism, suppression of environmental regulations, and other concessions which enable the exploitation of land, life, and labor by multinational corporations and their networks.

In this way, Latin America is being shaped into a massive market where the lords of capital are the only beneficiaries. However, strong resistances have emerged around the continent: MST and MTST in Brasil, EZLN in Mexico, MAS in Bolivia, "los Piqueteros" in Argentina, indigenous communities in Ecuador, a whole network of social struggles that have been shaped in the last couple of decades. These groups are fighting against neoliberal reforms, and most of them are organizing collective economies and alternative ways of life which defy the order imposed by capitalism. In Colombia, the multinationals' CEOs are not only facing the diverse action of social movements, but also the guerrillas, who are seen by some as the armed wing of the resistance. Although the guerrillas' political propaganda is not a great worry for the establishment, its military force is a dangerous threat that must be defeated by the promoters of corporate globalization.

But in this conflict between the forces of oppression and resistance, we are faced with a new blow from the right wing with the election of the current Colombian president, Alvaro Uribe Velez. After massive propaganda promoting order and authority, Uribe obtained his victory in the first round, and declared "State of Seizure" August 7, 2002. To the uprising of the people — the rebellion of men and women who do not want to see their lives reduced to merchandise, people that refuse to be subjugated to economic variables, who recognize that this new phase of capitalism is leading to absolute misery — the president answers with military measures that have been incorporated into our everyday lives. The State's fight is not only against guerrillas, but against all those social movements who continue to offer opposition. Declaring every antagonist force "terrorist" and thus illegal, the government attempts to silence the screams of the multitude for freedom and equality.

Some of the military measures being implemented in the current State of Seizure include searches without warrants, detention of people on suspicion alone, "rehabilitation zones, " interception of communications, and the creation of a whole network of informants who get paid for notifying the police of "irregular situations" and possible

"terrorists." The National Strike was harshly repressed by the police last September; similarly, a Youth March was forbidden and surrounded by military forces, the "Permanent Assembly for Peace" (a Non-Governmental Organization) was raided October 25, the "cleaning" of some neighborhoods in the city of Medellin was used as an excuse to arrest various community leaders, and the National University was closed a week before Colin Powell's visit. In the same manner, right wing paramilitary activity has increased considerably in the past year. Last September, some farmers were killed, and there exists an ongoing persecution of teachers and leftist militants, including the detention of the president of the Trade Union "USO" with charges of rebellion and the recent disappearance of one student at the Industrial University of Santander.

The State of Seizure smoothes the full initiation of Plan Colombia. This plan was developed secretly by the US and Colombian governments, and has an estimated cost of US $7.6 billion, of which US $3.5 billion must

proceed from international aid. This Plan hides behind the war against drugs in order to commit dangerous and random fumigations, escalate the internal war, and violate human rights. The US argues they are fighting solely against narcotraffic, but the reality is that Plan Colombia does not attack the great drug lords responsible for the narcotics market, but assaults almost exclusively the farmers who cultivate and transport the leaves. These farmers are situated in the lowest stage in the whole drug chain, and receive insignificant profits from the drug traffic. The farmers are now the perfect attack targets, not only for their resistance, but also to smooth the way for the new agroindustrial plans of the capitalists. This is why we are experiencing the erection of new military bases with US personnel, the purchase of helicopters and weapons from warmongering multinationals, and the constant menace of an international invasion that would only benefit the national and international oligarchy. US intervention in Colombia is not presented in its spectacular display of military power as in Iraq, but as a war of "low intensity, " aided by the paramilitaries and the fascist president who controls public opinion through nationalistic propaganda.

This last issue can be confirmed by the example of an upcoming referendum that is being presented by the President as the direct legislation of the people. People are being asked to vote to combat political corruption, but the referendum includes neoliberal structural reforms, such as tax and labor policies. With this referendum, the President is asking Colombian citizens to vote their own death: with this vote, people will make legitimate the fascist policies of the current government. However, strong opposition is rising from a united left, that is presenting an abstention campaign as the only solution against the referendum.

Anarchists in Colombia

Although the anarchist movement is fairly small compared to other left movements in Colombia, people continue to organize collectives and coordinate networks in order to gain ground in the struggle against capitalism and towards the formation of a free society. After some years of forums and demonstrations against FTAA and WB meetings, anarchists are mostly interested in working directly with the people. This

is why some collectives are doing direct contact in neighborhoods, universities, and schools, among other possible spaces. There is an ongoing link between anarchists and independent media centers, as well as a steady participation of activists in national demonstrations and theoretical work.

There is a great need for people to realize that the whole nationalistic discourse is just a weapon used by the State to maintain its order; anarchists are trying to address this issue by involving themselves in antimilitary causes, antipatriotism, and abstention campaigns against the referendum.

The majority of known guerrillas in Colombia have a Marxist-Leninist background which clashes with anarchist ideas. However, there are libertarian militants who prefer to work with a minimum base of agreements in order to unite forces against capitalism. In this way some libertarians have joined their ranks.

Hardcore and the Colombian situation

The recent contact with other South American scenes, and the current conditions in our country, have caused a revaluation of hardcore's role as a countercultural manifestation. Many bands continue in the whole "street and unity" NYHC thing, but several bands and labels are now denouncing the economic and political circumstances, and some are taking direct action.

Shows are now far more diverse, and you can attend gigs in different neighborhoods. There are also benefit shows, and some are done in universities or public spaces. Some kids are starting projects with displaced people, and others are forming countercultural collectives.

One clear example is the CrimethInc. Colombian Cell, "Crimental." They recently released 1000 copies of "Heraldo" (Harbinger) and organized a couple of shows with expositions and videos about Seattle, the FTAA in Colombia, and the MTST in Brasil.

Last year, along'with various punks, we organized the first Colombian anarcho-punk congress. We prepared presentations and discussions about "Plan Colombia, " the FTAA, straightedge, DIY, antimilitarism, counterculture, feminism, and vegetarianism. It was a four-day gathering where meals were collectively prepared, where we were able to share opinions and learn among other hardcore/punk kids about the situation in our country and the different activities against capitalism emanating from hardcore. We finally made some future plans of organizing the Colombian anarcho-punk federation.

Right now some kids are concentrating on putting on shows to collect money for anarchist collectives and to exercise propaganda against the above-mentioned referendum. In a general sense, there seems to be an increasing relation between hardcore and the diverse Colombian social movements.

Montag *(.xmontag5x@yahoo.com, * _www.banderasnegras.8m.com_)

(behind (S^nemp ^ines

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SEARCH OF THE BARON

by CrimethInc. Private I Marlowe

Some of them went on to form Zygote, their drummer now plays in Muckspreader, and their singer lives in isolation on the Isle of Skye, as a blacksmith forging medieval weapons — no joke!

-Inside Front 11, Amebix retrospective

By hook and by crook I had found myself in Edinburgh, Scotland, of all places. While the details of that journey are too twisted to tell here, one day while idly checking my email at the local library I remembered I had heard a rumor (from *Inside Front, * too!) that the Baron, the lead singer of the infamous Amebix, had moved to the Isle of Skye off Scotland. I suddenly realized that I was only a few hours' journey from the Baron himself! Action had to be taken. I surfed the Internet for hours, reading old Amebix interviews, and finally came upon the Baron's human name: Rob Miller. The first clue! Then, searching Google for "Isle of Skye, " "Rob Miller, " and "Sword, " I found the name of the current location of the Baron, the aptly named "Castlekeep Forge"... specializing in hand-made swords, without modern technology! Suddenly, I realized it was my divine (although the Amebix would have preferred* infernal *to* divine) *mission to retrieve a blade from the Baron.*

Getting to Skye was easier said than done. I frantically emailed Rob Miller, attempting not to sound like the deranged and psychotic Amebix fan that I am, but instead a friendly sword aficionado who only, on the side, happened to be mildly interested if this particular Rob Miller was indeed The Rob Miller, aka The Baron, of the Amebix. His response proved my research correct: "Ay, that's me."

Earlier, I had spent some time trying to track down the mysterious Degsy or "Deek, " the singer of Oi Polloi. When I had first got to Edinburgh, most of my impressions of this town had come from brilliant Oi Polloi songs such as "Bash the Fash." To be honest, I was a bit disappointed that I was not fighting fascists on the streets with Oi Polloi. Although apparently every member of the rather small Edinburgh punk scene with the barest inkling of musical talent had been in Oi Polloi at one time or another, currently his whereabouts were mysterious. There was a rumor he was either living with one of his side-project bands "Fucktheirsystem" (whose first record has the brilliant title "Fuck their Fucking System"!) in Finland, doubtless riding motorcycles with Umlaut with the Lapland Popular Front, or studying Gaelic, the ancient traditional language of Scotland, on the Isle of Skye. Imagine, maybe Degsy from Oi Polloi was hanging out with the Baron. Maybe on that remote island they were plotting to create the greatest crust-punk record of all time.

Now there was the problem of getting to Skye. While apparently Skye was something of a tourist destination during the summer, it was nonetheless a remote island that absolutely no one visited during the dead of winter. Having just got to Scotland, I had only the vaguest clue how to get to the Isle of Skye via public transportation. I didn't even know if any roads went there, and I had lost my atlas! While miserably contemplating this situation in the local anti-capitalist coffee shop (to be exact, a coffee shop that, while owned by a capitalist rat, had a staff who displayed remarkable liberties with their coffee and food that would make any CrimethInc. agent proud!),

one of the employees revealed that he was actually from Skye! When I asked him how Skye was, he would respond with odes to its mountains and strange remarks about fairies. Mountains and fairies! He also gave me the web page and schedule of the

ferry that took one from Mallaig, the closest town to Skye one could reach via land, and was off. There was apparently some type of bridge and a bus one could also take there, but why take the bus if one can cross via ferry!

At the last minute I had my doubts. It seemed much more sane to go sometime in spring when the buses were operating and things on Skye were open. There were also rumors of a blizzard coming from the South. But one friend I had told about the trip got even more excited than myself, so, not wanting to be left out, I went along with her. The ride up to Mallaig was beautiful, and as we got further and further outside Edinburgh the land became wilder

us and Skye. Suddenly, our collective hobo instincts took over: Let's hitchhike by boat!

Mallaig is a fishing town, and right next to the empty ferry dock was a fishing dock. It was approaching evening and most fishermen were coming home. Storm clouds were clearly rolling in. Not being exactly sure how to hitchhike by boat (I mean, do you just stick out your thumb on a pier?) we decided to talk to a group of fishermen who were getting off their boat.

"Hey, do you know of anyone going to Skye?"

"Ay, at this time I don't think anyone is going. The weathers been shite all day and getting worse. You'll have to wait

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till Monday. Well, crazy Ewan might take ya..."

However, no one saw Ewan around. Immediately, despair set in. No one could even hear us scream for a ride on the pier, since most of the fishermen were inside their boats. Luckily, a stout and magnificently mustached man suddenly appeared out of nowhere,

and wilder, the mountains larger and larger, and my expectations higher and higher.

The train tracks literally ended in Mallaig, a small, sleepy little fishing town. I had somehow left my schedule at home, but remembered the ferry only came twice a day, once in the morning and once before the evening around 5 o'clock. Looking at my watch, I had only a few minutes left. We jumped off the train and ran for the dock, only to be greeted with a wide expanse of ocean where the ferry should have been. Clearly, something had gone awry. I ran to the office of the Calmac Ferry Company, and asked them where the ferry was.

"The ferry doesn't run on weekends."

Definitely an ill omen to begin a journey.

"When does the next one run?"

"Monday morning."

Not good at all. The last thing I wanted was to spend my weekend in small town in the freezing cold of northern Scotland, where I didn't know a soul, especially when I could be tracking down the elusive Baron. Still, five miles of churning ocean lay between

merrily trotting towards a little

boat. We immediately stopped him and inquired if he was Ewan.

"Ay, I'm Ewan."

We were saved! While Ewan wasn't planning on going back to Skye today, he seemed impressed with our determination and perhaps more impressed with our willingness to give him a bit of hard cash in return for the favor. Finally, after long deliberation, he agreed to take us on. He told us to wait at the bottom of a creaky and rusty ladder than descended more or less straight into the ocean. We climbed down, and then a little tugboat pulled up, the *Old Grimsley.* We threw our backpacks straight over the water — praying they wouldn't fall short — and jumped into the boat. Ewan waved us aboard and the boat took off erratically.

Nothing had prepared me for this trip. Ewan was no ordinary man, but a St. Francis amongst fishermen, surrounded by a bevy of animals. He went through great pains to post a sign up in Skye looking for his pet cat Wee Jimmy, who he carried pictures of in his pocket. His good mate Sammy the Seagull would fly manic circles around his boat and perch himself on the helm, and swoop dangerously close to your

head — and Sammy followed the boat the entire trip! Lastly, he admitted he was not only a Jehovah's Witness but a former alcoholic. It was going to be one hell of a ride.

As soon as we got out of sight of land, he offered us some coffee. We agreed, with very cold rain pelting down on us. I quickly threw my waterproof jacket over my backpack to defend its contents from the storm, but it was too little too late and I was getting soaked to the bone. As he was busy preparing the coffee on a decrepit stove he had in his cockpit, and while we were occupied barely avoiding an increasingly hungry and irritated Sammy the Seagull, he started not paying any attention to actually driving the boat. As the boat became increasingly erratic in its behavior,

more a village than a town), everything was closed. No one in sight. Finally, an old man walking a very skinny dog came down the road, and we asked him if anything was open and warm. He seemed more than a bit shocked we had come to Skye in the middle of the winter. He pointed us down to the Armadale Hotel where we could get warmed up and get a place to stay the night. However, the Armadale hotel was just as mysterious as the rest of Skye. As we walked in there was absolutely no one there! Skye was a ghost town! So we walked inside the hotel to warm up in the lobby. Suddenly, a strange voice said from out of nowhere, "Hey, come over here and play some pool." I peeked around the corner, and the next room over was a bar filled with several drunken Scots.

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large waves started coming over the boat, soaking me. Things got even more hectic when Ewan started trying to serve us coffee, as the boat shook so much as soon as he got close enough to hand us the coffee, the boat would rock, causing the coffee to spill out and burn our hands. Finally, I managed to get the coffee in my hand and shovel it down my throat just as I noticed I was

starting to get

seasick. Ewan began revealing his deep dark secrets, confessing of his deep hatred of alcohol, his enduring love of his cat, and the fact that he had lived in his boat for a few years. We swapped stories about living in various strange forms of transportation. Ewan also bemoaned his inability to get a proper wife, being a poor fisherman, and I told him how my life in the back of a van presented insurmountable problems for romance. I still wondered how much he really drank, as our drunken boat barely escaped capsizing a number of times. Grey mist descended upon the boat. A mobile phone my friend had lent me for "emergencies" was now completely destroyed by salty brine. Yes, the home of the Baron destroys all technology.

We approached the distant Isle of Skye, and, as if timed perfectly by the crust-punk gods, a giant rainbow crossed from the mainland to the Isle. The Baron must have had some hand in it. Ewan waved us off as we climbed yet another rusty and treacherous ladder towards shore, into the mysterious village of Armadale. Being frozen and wet, we decided to attempt to get into the nearest warm place — but the entire town was closed! All the tourist shops, all the restaurants (well, all two restaurants — Armadale was

"You wanna dram?"

I had no idea what a dram was, to be honest. I figured out, being at a bar, it had something to do with alcohol, so I refused. However, this was taken as violating Skyian social taboos, so when they asked yet again I hesitantly agreed. As I lifted the strange clear liquid to my mouth, my taste buds were greeted by one of the harshest alcohols I had ever tasked — even more harsh than some of strange homebrews and moonshine I had tasted in my reckless youth in North Carolina. The locals smiled at my reaction and immediately offered another. The bar at the Armadale Hotel was a truly fascinating and stunningly egalitarian bar. There was apparently no 'bartender' per se, but every one of the locals seemed to take turns serving each other endless amounts of "drams." As we waited around, the bar soon became *the* place in town to hang out. One strange old man after another would maneuver inside and sit down, chatting in a strange mix of Gaelic and Scots that was mostly indecipherable to me. One of the most interesting characters was an ancient old man with a cane, who was obsessed with whistling John Denver's "Country Road, take me home, to the place I was born..." I befriended him by knowing the words by heart. Also, a large amount of the Armadale winter

residents were students at the Gaelic college, and they all knew Degsy from Oi I'olloi, who was studying Gaelic in Skye! Unfortunately, no one there actually knew

where the Deek was that weekend. Also, my triend was getting quite drunk on the drams, and when it was revealed in the course of conversation that we were hot dating, an entire bar of male-smallisland-trapped sexual frustration came simmering to the surface. One large man started hitting on her, mixing his romantic aspirations with various insults at her for being "a terrorist, " since she was of Indian descent. Luckily, the rest of the bar residents were against blatant racism and war, and soon the bar became involved in a heated argument — and

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my friend easily defeated her single conservative opponent verbally.

I stayed out of it, just trying to figure out where we were sleeping, and managed to phone up an older man named Jim Fraser who would let us stay at his place. I was also very hungry, and being well-versed in the art of starving to death in America, had brought a large amount of stale — and now wet — bagels with me. When I hid in a corner and starting munching down on my bagels, a large man came up and angrily told me to put my bagels away. I soon figured out he was the owner of the hotel, and he was upset that I had violated the sanctity of his kitchen by bringing in stale bagels. I decided it was time to hit the road and find Fraser's crash pad. As I walked into the bar I heard a scream.

The large and drunken pro-war bastard had jumped on my friend! Normally, I somehow manage to cover my deep-seated insanity with a thin veneer of rationality, but a history of having my female friends victims of violence combined with my Southern heritage caused me to flip out. Using some of my knowledge of ju-jitsu, I quickly slid my arm around the larger and more physically imposing fat man's neck, and within a second had choked him. He fell down to his knees, and the rest of the

bar stood by, aghast at my act of violence. The fat man scampered off to the bathroom to hide, and I realized that despite my good intentions I had just done something completely socially unacceptable and should exit the bar immediately. The rest of the bar began quickly apologizing for the fat man's behavior, and I just smiled: "I think it's time to go." We had just gotten kicked out of the only warm place we knew of in Armadale. Later, when we got to Fraser's place, a kindly old man with no small obsession with Scotch and beautiful Goethe quotes, he gave us a warm bed for a bribe. That night my friend berated me about what she viewed as all-too-typical male violence, and I apologized for my quick temper and

even quicker reactiontime. Honestly, I wasn't sure how I should have dealt with that situation — I mean, anarchists shouldn't just choke people who are hitting on their friends too hard — but what do you do when your friends are confronted with physical violence? I went to bed feeling sick.

The next morning I realized we were going to have a problem. First, it had started snowing. Second, we knew that the Baron had his forge somewhere between Broadford and some other place named Elgol, but that was at least fifteen miles away and no buses were running Sunday. Lastly, no one was driving around, leaving us few hitchhiking

options — and due to my act of violence, the only warm place in Armadale had kicked us out. Clearly, it

was an emergency. I found a public phone on the dock where Ewan had dropped us off, and called my friends at the anti-capitalist coffee shop in Edinburgh. Within a few other calls, I found the phone number of a chef who was a friend of my friend from Skye at the coffee-shop. She said we could stay at her place and she was going to pick us up after she got off work. We wandered aimlessly in the snow and rain through various strange castles and deserted gardens (Skye is simply full of at least two castles and innumerable beautiful vistas, but during winter the tourist attractions are all shut down and the locals, like locals everywhere, pay them no attention) until we finally gave up on our friend-of-a-friend and just starting trying to hitch out of Armadale. The first person who drove by picked us up, a kindly old fellow. I asked him if he knew the Baron, and he replied that not only did he know the Baron, but he would go out for drinks with him on occasion and that he was "a fine man." However, he was only dimly aware of the Baron's murky past, knowing only that a long time ago the Baron had indeed been in "some rock band." We were getting closer. Just as he went up the one road going from Armsdale to Broadford, our friend appeared out as if out of nowhere. We switched cars in the middle of the road — and soon we were off. I tried hurriedly to explain to this good Samaritan about

my plans to visit the lead singer of my favorite rock band and have him forge me a sword. She seemed mildly amused and, for fun, drove me down the road where his forge was. As it was getting dark, I only had the luck to glimpse the sign "Castlekeep: Medieval Swords and Celtic Jewelry" before we had to turn around and drive back. I was so close I could almost smell the Baron — a smell mixed of motorcycle oil and blood.

One thing every visitor to the Isle should know is that hitchhiking is a long and honored social tradition in Skye. We suspect this is because if you're driving in Skye during winter (as the tourists invade in summer — so be warned — this may only be seasonal!) and someone is hitchhiking, you probably know them. If you don't know them, they probably know your parents. As we were leaving the Cuillens, the breathtaking mountains on which the Baron makes in his home, a giant shadowy figure loomed out into the distance with a huge thumb pointed squarely in the air. We pulled over to pick him up, and after five minutes of conversation in thick Skyish he revealed that he indeed was the good friend of the father of our driver, and had known her as a wee baby!

Back at the house of our host, we cooked a large meal of eggs and spaghetti to feed her and her fellow housemates, and luckily I had brought a secret weapon in my front-pocket all the way from Edinburgh — a fiver's worth of weed. Yes, I realize the potential political and moral compromises of giving out weed as a way to help earn favors from complete strangers. Yes, I am a horrible example to future generations. However, when in Skye, do as the Skyians do — and in Skye weed is hard to get, since few enterprising drug dealers make the journey this far from civilization. Personally,

I felt like I was Marco Polo exchanging noodles for fine spice. The weed was gladly accepted, and soon myself, my friend, and a bevy of sundry women working temp jobs in Skye were off to a pub to celebrate. The snow was falling a bit harder and the roads were icing, and after walking for ages a hotel, on some small island off of the coast of Skye, appeared from the mist.

Inside the hotel it was a different world. Like most of Skye, this hotel skirted the fine line between a capitalist enterprise and an anti-capitalist potluck. Sandwiches and beers were passed around with little regard as to whether anyone was paying. We were also, I might add, the only people in the pub. The waitress sat down and regaled us with tales of her adventures in the States and her great love of country music. She, a woman from a semi-rural island, had somehow traveled almost everywhere I, a semiprofessional hobo, had over the last year. She even brought out her prized country boots from Nashville and placed them, without any regard for hygiene, on the kitchen table. A maid named Rock-around-the- clock Kate came in. A thoroughly ancient woman, at least eighty years old, she lived up to her nickname. She drank whisky dram after whisky dram, plotting her next journey to Amsterdam, and then began singing "Rock, Rock, Rock, around the clock..." It was going to be one of those nights, yet again.

The next morning I woke up with a severe headache. Stumbling down the stairs, I looked out the window... only to see a huge deluge of snow before me. The blizzard had struck. In fact, the blizzard had not just struck, but was *striking.* I was snowbound, in a

remote house full of people I barely knew, and my only friend, while being very polite about the mad premise of this trip, was doubting my logistical abilities. Soon, the entire house of girls was hovering around the television, and much to my horror and their delight, the newsperson announced that more or less everything was closed. I silently screamed — now I would never seen the Baron. Gripped by terror, I ran out of the house into a good foot or two of snow, and up the hill. The roads were definitely all snowed in. In mindless fury, I hiked a few miles till I got to a major road that, while icy, seemed drivable. No cars in sight.

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I shambled back *The Baron Himself!* to our snowbound house and then completed the

next part of my plan... I called the Baron. A voice answered, and it was not the Baron, but a man known only to me as Garth. He said that the Baron would usually be dropping his kids off for school at this point in the morning! However, given the huge snowstorm, school was cancelled — and he was going to be in the forge! If the Baron could brave this storm, so could I! When I told my friend this, she started to doubt my sanity openly. She noted that the last ferry back to the mainline left at five, and, as it was about noon, I would have no time to get back to the mainland if I hitchhiked out to see the Baron. While it was a good point, I have never let good points stop me before. I felt horribly guilty when I realized that we had to take separate paths, and

she had to hitchhike by herself back to Armadale to catch the ferry — and hang out at the bar where I had strangled someone just a few nights ago! I wondered what the locals were going to do. Still, sometimes you either have to get on the road or go home with your tail between your legs. That means you have no choice but to hit the road.

So, there I was, with a giant backpack, a bag full of wet and now icy bagels, and a thumb. Since the road was covered with ice, no one was going to pick me up any time soon. I began walking. After about an hour and a half, I made it to the edge of a road that was dangerously icy, but not completely covered in snow. As the snow started pelting me harder, in the

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distance I heard the familiar sounds of... a car. Lo and behold, what was clearly an SUV pulled beside me. A pleasant-looking fellow, who was either an aging yuppie or a degenerate aristocrat, with an English accent (quite different than the variety of Scots/Gselic accents everyone else so far had!) told me to hop on in. Soon, my savior and his wife, also an elegant English woman, were driving me straight to Broadford. I impressed them with my tales of being a lost American on Skye and my deep love of its natural beauty (all the time carefully disguising our clearly differing positions within the class struggle), and they chatted about photography, the coming war on Iraq, and Skye. Like any good bourgeois couple, they were not going to let a good foot or two of snow, nor icy roads, stop them from shopping, so they dropped me off in Broadford at the local grocery store. I began walking towards Elgol, and again put my thumb out. After a good half an hour of walking, an SUV again came roaring from behind me! My yuppie saviors had arrived yet again, and they pulled over! I must have made a good impression.

I told them about the Baron (not the singer-for-a- crust-punk-band part of his life, but the swordsmith part). They were immediately fascinated, having lived on this island for years and never heard of him. They were looking for a gift for some American cousins, and what better than hand-forged jewels! Now that I had enchanted my hosts, they speedily made it across death-defying mountain roads and suicidal sheep by means of their all-terrain vehicle. The mountains were getting higher, the snow was falling quicker, the sheep were multiplying, and the world was getting wilder. In these subtle changes, I detected the presence of the Baron. In the distance, I could spot the strange stone building on the mountainside that was Castlekeep, the forge of the Baron himself. We pulled over a precarious walled-in driveway, and, after clambering through the gate, I entered the Hall of the Baron himself.

Inside, it was a giant medieval hall, the kind that one would imagine Vikings drinking in after ruthlessly plundering a monastery and skewering its monks. Crossed swords hung over the rooms, and other medieval chain-mail and helmets hung about. I peered in, and then a long and haggard, yet strangely familiar face appeared from the darkness. The Baron.

The Baron looked a bit surprised that visitors had actually came in the middle of a blizzard. I don't know what I looked like, but I was definitely frozen and wild-eyed. He looked at me quizzically and asked

me if I "would like a cup of tea." In complete shock, and recovering from the cold, I agreed and sat down at nearest table. The Baron disappeared behind the door, and appeared carrying a large pot of tea with a multitude of cups and piles of sugar on a giant steel platter.

From inside, a stout man with a long beard, who resembled a Nordic warrior (or Gimli) strode in, and announced himself as "Garth." Garth immediately seized the yuppie couple who had just wandered in into his land of precious jewels.

First thing about the Baron is he looks like a man who has lived through hell and came back alive. He's got an incredibly tall, terrifyingly skinny frame and wears thin, black glasses. His hair is shaggy and wild, but the entire time I was with him he kept most of his mane beneath a small woolen cap. His smile is a bit craggy, and his manner very gentle. I have found through years of experience that people who have lived lives that are truly unimaginable, who have eaten shit and pissed their own blood, are not psychotic in their social relations, but instead incredibly soft-spoken, as if to make up for the rest of their existence. At first, I had no idea what to say. I didn't want to appear to be a crazed punk rock fan who had traveled halfway around the world to see him. I wasn't sure how seriously he took his life in punk rock now that he was a swordsmith, and if he had any idea that people had had their lives changed by his old band's music of despair. Did he know that we had sung "Arise" from the deepest, darkest pits of a Philadelphia jail, when we had little hope of being released? Did he know that while hopping trains in the bleakest colds of northern Canada, to keep our spirits warm we sang each other "The Darkest Hour" as we fell asleep, perhaps never to wake again? Could he understand that we had listened to "Chain Reaction" over and over again while driving through the mountains of Mexico to aid masked guerrillas? Could he imagine that we had stowed away in luxurious hotels, humming "Drink and Be Merry" all night, hoping for a free breakfast in the morning? Would he approve of us putting the Amebix on a mix tape with Lynyrd Skynyrd, since we did leave off "Sweet Home Alabama"? Could he possibly understand that as we had starved, stolen, fought cops, and drunk tear gas, *his band was the fucking soundtrack?* I had no idea what to say.

I decided to blow my cover as a Amebix-crazed anarchist punk. After all, I didn't have a single piercing and my circle-A tattoo was covered by my

clothing, so for all the Baron knew I wasn't even an Amebix fan, just a deranged sword-fan. The Baron knew me only as some weirdo who had sent him a few e-mails, and had on the side asked if he was the singer of Amebix.

"To be honest, Rob, I don't know much about swords. I definitely want a blade of some type, and I really don't even want it for myself as much I want it for some of my friends in the States who are having hard times right now. I didn't come to get the sword from you because you're the best swordsmith. I want you to forge a blade

for myself and my friends because you were the singer for the Amebix and that music means a lot to us."

I didn't say we wanted the dagger to kill cops. Felt it might be impolite.

With the mention of the Amebix, the Baron's ravenlike eyes lit up with a spark.

"Ahhh... yes, the Amebix. I always felt we broke up just as were on the verge of doing something great."

Well, I had broached the question. It was like going out with someone you had a crush on for years and then finally asking him or her if they liked you. *One thing I've always wondered about is if punk rock is relevant, ten years after your band — who lived out of dumpsters, starving, freezing, stealing, and playing some of the most heart-rending music ever made — breaks up, you have children, and start forging swords for a living. Does is still fucking matter anymore? Was it fucking worth it?*

The Baron's eyes were still alight. "Yes, yes, we were really about to do something great. We ran out of chords to play though. You know, it's all just A and E."

I had conjectured so myself. "You know, when we were playing, we weren't really all that good. It was like, hit the big string, now hit that string." With an almost apologetic attitude towards Amebix's musical prowess, he continued, "Well, the music just sort of happened, you know, from what we were living..." Yes, the music still mattered to the Baron. More importantly, he still saw some value in what he had done. It was in his eyes.

I started telling him about myself, about how people still listened to Amebix in the States, and how his music kept us alive during dark times. He nodded... but how did he get from Amebix to Skye?

"Yes, we all went our separate ways. You know, Spider's still the same as he was back then... living in squats, playing in bands. I didn't really know what to do with myself after the band broke up. I hadn't really thought about it that much, so I got on my motorcycle and wandered off across Europe. I did that for a while, and then got in an horrible accident, and I fucked my arm up so that I couldn't even ride my motorcycle. I didn't know what to do after that, but I had some folks in Skye so I went to live with them."

So the motorcycles stories were true. I also started telling him about my life, about how much anarchism meant to me, about how once I had spent all my time just listening to music about not bowing down to any gods or masters, and now I had spent the last few years living it. How his music helped me understand

the annihilation that is before us, that is with us, to come to terms with it and then fight to overcome it. W'e were reminiscing about our old friends, our lives, our adventures. In the meantime, the cups of tea seemed to last longer and longer, and the yuppies also sat down with their cup of tea. Having done their role in bringing me here, I thanked them profusely and continued telling stories of anarchy with the Baron. The yuppies, definitely realizing that their friendly hitchhiker had a secret identity as a raving mad anarchist, and this friendly swordsmith secretly had an identity of a rock star, decided not to reject this strange meeting of worlds but merely continue upon

their own, and after their cup of tea, returned to inspecting the jewelry without a bat of their eyes.

Of course, this still left unanswered the question of how one transforms one's life, how one metamorphoses from being the Baron to Rob Miller the Swordsmith. I mean, it's not exactly what most people would call a normal career path; your high school career counselor couldn't give you any advice on it.

"I worked a whole lots of crappy jobs, you know, mostly in bars and hotels. One day I wanted a sword. So I asked my friends where to get one. And then, no one knew where to get a sword at... because no one actually made them anymore. So, I decided I might as well make them, as I was interested in swords.

But there was no one to teach me, so I kept working these jobs in hotels, and by night I taught myself how to make swords. I just got the books and read them, and got the equipment slowly, and starting making swords. For years I just would sell them by the side of road with a sign. Never made much money out of it, to be honest. Then one day my Garth here told me about this house he wanted to get, and set up his shop in, and he asked me to join him. So, I did."

Yes, it's true. The Baron taught himself how to forge swords, all by his fucking self. Do-it-yourself swordforging! Not only that, but his passion for forging blades was like a fire that must have been kindled out of the ashes of Amebix, because he's damn good at it. World-class. The only swordsmith in Scotland, he makes his blades without modern technology, using ancient and rekindled techniques. His eyes lit up with same intensity when he talked about swords as they did when he was reminiscing about the Amebix or his motorcycle.

The Baron does not make mock swords, he makes real swords. Fully forged blades that no one can match. These swords are huge, giant steel affairs capable of killing men in a single blow. I know it sounds like I'm kidding — I'm not. It's just amazing. He taught himself an entire art, and it's almost proof that if you really struggle, if you have nothing left at all, if even your motorcycle's gone and you can only study overdue library books by candlelight in a squat on a remote island, you can learn to do anything. The Baron is living proof. He can do anything with a sword, a knife, a dagger... anything. Just ask him.

Soon, I realized my time was up... I had only an hour and a half till the ferry left for Armadale, and if I didn't get there in time I would be stranded on Skye in the snow, with nowhere really to stay. I mean, by this time I had sort of burnt out my welcome in the few places that had let me in with my mania. As I mentioned to the Baron that I had to go, he smiled and offered me a peanut-butter cookie. Another

mysterious woman appeared out of nowhere, and a pile of peanut-butter cookies manifested themselves. That cookie was the only thing I had to eat all day. Now that the yuppies had left, the hall of Castlekeep transformed from shop into a feast hall, a merry snow-bound island of humanity in the middle of a blizzard. I gobbled the cookie down and in thanks gave him the only thing I had as a gift for him. It was a copy, albeit nearly destroyed by the waves of Ewan's completely mad trip across to Skye

from Mallaig, of *fighting for Our Lives* that, like the Baron himself, looked like it had been through hell and back. I gave it to him, and he looked through it with a smile, promising to read it. He seemed a bit worried for me, although he noted with humor the facts that I was clearly losing my sanity and my friend was waiting for me at a bar where I had choked a man two nights before. After a quick tour of the Baron's forge, which looked like a truly mad collection of weird metal scraps and half-created blades, we shook hands, and I walked back into the snow, thumb in air.

It's damn refreshing to meet someone like the Baron. He gives me hope. After all these years, all these opportunities for cynicism, opportunities for selling out to capitalist values, for drinking himself to death, for just giving up the fight, he's still there, still staying true. Sure, he's not vegan or a political activist. However, life's not about lifestyle choices, record collections, political victories, or any of that. It's about staying true to what you love, living a life you can love. Even when the entire world looks at you and says you're completely off your fucking rocker, even when they try to prove it to you by making you work horrible jobs, starving you if you quit those horrible jobs, trying to make you believe in anything but yourself, giving you a million options of consumption, narcosis, and — most of all — submission... even after all of the shit you have to live through every day just to survive, you can still stand there, alive and defiant. Staying true to your feelings, to your life story, to your past, your friends, the mountains, and yourself — that's staying true in a more powerful sense than anything I've ever heard on any second rate punk record. It would have been deeply disappointing if the Baron had really given up on it all, had given up on his music and his words, if he had thought it was all just youthful indiscretion or a complete waste of time, if he had become just another cynical swordsmith. He didn't. You could tell by the look in his eyes. He still loved the Amebix, motorcycles, and all of it, the starvation, the freezing, the anarchy — it was all worth it. And now he was doing something that was on some level just as crazy as being in the Amebix: forging swords on a remote island, surrounded by friends and giant snow-covered mountains. Yes, it's a small business, but the Baron isn't making swords to make money. He's making swords because he fucking loves to make swords. Remember, he taught himself to make swords for no other reason than he wanted to, than he could. The Baron is staying true.

Yes, there's hope. Yes, it's all worth it, every last moment. As for where we all will eventually end up, well, one can never know. As for the Baron, we can only aspire to such a fate.

I never directly asked him if his swords could kill cops. However, I did tell him that we might need them to be very sharp, and that we wanted to really use them, and that we were anarchists. The Baron

smiled, and he answered all my questions, including some I never asked him.

And now the road goes on forever... and the sun will always shine... one day we'll be together... when we cross the final line... if I turn to you... when all is said and done, will you meet me on the other side, seven million miles beyond the sun.

— The Amebix

The US/Mexico Border from both sides

by Gloria Cubana

I felt underdressed as soon as I saw Flaco. I was suddenly very out of place in my casual clothing as he strode out of the house in a cowboy shirt and tight jeans accented by a wide leather belt with a large buckle. I listened as he persuaded his father to let him wear his cowboy boots, and they hopped around in the dust of the yard as they traded shoes.

We rode to the *jaripeo* in the back of the pickup, bouncing out of Crespo (pop. 2000) on the main road. Carolina, Miguel, and Blanca all wore *charro* outfits, too, and my sister and I hunkered down in the bed of the truck and listened to them talking animatedly. On our way through Celaya, we passed some boys hitchhiking by the side of the road who turned out to be cousins, and they all jumped in the back of the truck, too, perching on the sides as we barreled down the road toward La Luz, TX.

La Luz, TX, is about 4 hours northwest of Mexico City, in Guanajuato state. Not, that is to say, in Texas. The humble town of La Luz became a boom town when many of its male inhabitants left for the United States in search of better employment opportunities, and mailed money home for their families and to build houses there. Because of the way Mexican immigrants rely on a network of already-immigrated relatives and friends when they begin their new lives in the US, they tend to stay in the already established communities that have grown up there. Most of the residents of La Luz had ended up in Texas, so they'd renamed the town. We joked that Crespo, which is at an earlier stage in that economic upswing — it's still a town under construction, many of the houses being expanded and remodeled with money from the US, while La Luz has settled down more — should be called Crespo, NC.

A *jaripeo* is a bull-riding contest, and the parking lot outside the *plaza de toros* was filled with hundreds of vehicles, many of them American ones probably belonging to Mexicans working in the US who had come home for the holidays. I didn't spot any Texan plates (the name may be more whimsical than factual at this point), but I did pause to feel sorry for the man from this dry place, hot even in late December, who ended up living in Minnesota.

The inside of the plaza was even more crowded than the parking lot. It was packed to a degree that would certainly violate the most generous of American fire codes. There was a dirt floor down below beside the

ring where people stood to watch the bull riding, and a spread of concrete bleachers up above for the faint at heart. I ended up sitting on one of the concrete terraces next to a man who told me that he had lived in Raleigh, NC — about 60 miles from my home — for two years. When I asked him if he had enjoyed living in the US, he said, "Well, my life there was working, and my life here is living." Talking with this *ranchero*

[Image not archived]

from a rural Mexican community who had lived for two years in a foreign country made me think about how limited the American perception of the Latin American

immigrant experience can be. Since immigrants to the US frequently have little formal education and. are from poor families, we tend to think of them as having little experience or understanding of the world, when they have often seen more of the world than the average American.

We associate a person's socioeconomic status with a particular level of travel, and the immigrant confounds those assumptions. It does not occur to us that immigrants have crossed thousands of miles of distance to work in the United States; that they may have lived in several American cities, from Los Angeles, CA to Yadkinville, NC; that they may follow seasonal agricultural work or construction jobs all around the country. This very un-American disjunction between class and travel is strange to us, as travel for most of us is a leisure activity, something done as a vacation from work, not to find it in the first place. My sister found herself struggling to reconcile these two approaches to travel when she and Flaco's older brother, Jose, decided to travel together. She was convinced that Jose, who has lived in the United States for 13 years, would be transformed if he had the opportunity to travel the way she is used to — the way she had found her own lite transformed. Is it just from the vantage point of bourgeois privilege that we can believe that staying in a hotel in a foreign country might be a life-changing experience? Or was my sister right to think that Jose had missed out on some vital element that is deeply a part of her kind of traveling? Is our tourist-style travel a diet version of the cultural immersion that immigrants experience? And to what degree are Mexican immigrants, who tend to remain within established and tightly knit immigrant communities, actually immersed?

While the immigrant communities themselves are *n* embedded in the larger culture, and inevitably interact with its cultural and social currents, the individual members of the communities frequently remain isolated to varying degrees.

Jose lived in Los Angeles for 8 years and learned barely any English. It was only after coming to North Carolina,

which lacks (although increasingly less so) that well-established, intricate network of resources and employment for Hispanics, that he began to learn the language. In addition, the focus of many of these immigrants on work to the exclusion of all other things — as I heard from my neighbor at the *jaripeo* — limits their ability to explore the culture that they have entered. It's much more important to earn money to send back to the place that you consider your home than it is to try to make a home of what is basically, well, a very extended stay in a foreign hotel. So my sister may be on to something when she insists that Jose's world would open up if he got to see more of the world, because it's not the "more" she's focusing on, it's the seeing.

Jose, on the other hand, was frightened by the idea of a trip of that sort, which my sister and I found incomprehensible. This man had crossed the US- Mexican border illegally several times, crawling dehydrated through stretches of desert and nearly freezing at night, moving with the pressures of poverty behind him and of the INS patrols all around him. How could he be afraid to do the comparatively undemanding (and completely legal) wandering that we were used to? Part of it seemed to come from

a sense of guilt, from a feeling that, however much he might want to do it, that sort of travel was something that rich people did, and that his was not the sort of life in which that sort of travel belonged. He was only tangled in that internal struggle because of encountering my sister's and my privileged expectations about what the world might offer *our* sort of life. Traveling, for him, meant being irresponsible to his family and to himself. Also, he was intimidated by the idea of traveling in Latin America (which we found surprising, having assumed he'd be more comfortable there). He was anxious about finding himself out of place in a part of the world where he presumably should feel relatively at

home. But the part of his fear that fascinated my sister arid me, and the part we found most startling, was that he felt the same kind of anxiety that people feel when contemplating their first major travel experience, in spite of his frequent border crossings and long residence in a foreign country.

In was in discussing our incredulity that my sister and I discovered that we had both independently imagined going down to Mexico and hiring a *coyote'* to take us across the border. It sounds ridiculous to admit this. As lose was considering, with some trepidation, embarking on the kind of trip that for him was a shirking of major responsibilities to his family and to his own sense of self, my sister and I were contemplating making adjustments to our own style of travel, wondering if it would be possible to buy ourselves an illegal border crossing, like a more dramatic safari. Were we just fantasizing about being Extreme Tourists, about taking our travels one crazy step farther than most people dared — and if the *coyote* abandoned us in the desert[1], that would be the ultimate travel adventure, right? I'd rather think it came from somewhere sincere, not from an overdeveloped sense of backpacker one-upmanship, and I don't think I'm just deluding myself in believing that. It came from a real desire to understand what it must be like for someone to make that dangerous trip, even knowing that we could never hope to actually replicate the experience of someone crossing into the US illegally. Even if a *coyote* could be persuaded to take us across, the dangers would be mostly absent. We would have none of the driving motivations, and if the border patrols were to pick us up, we'd be sternly and thoroughly questioned, and perhaps fined, but our passports would probably protect us from any greater punishment. We would not feel the pressure to make the journey wearing high heels, or with far too little protection from the sun, so as not to look too suspiciously prepared to cross.

Still, we could certainly be accused, if not of any actual crime, of exoticizing illegal immigration, of reimagining the desperation and bravery of those who make the dangerous crossing as a sort of dashing adventurousness. In some sense, though, that silly desire was a variation on our standard approach to travel, a way to bridge cultural gaps, a way to expose ourselves to an entirely different life experience. The closest we had so far been able to get to immigration, and to its effects on the social landscape of Mexico, was on buses crossing the Mexican countryside, listening to itinerant musicians in the aisles playing Los Tigres del Norte songs about immigration to the US, amazed that there is an entire subgenre of songs dedicated to the phenomenon. With

a *coyote* at our sides, as long as he remained there and didn't fade into the desert with vague instructions to head toward a distant highway, we might be able to get a bit closer: not all the way, of course, in the same way that people who follow pilgrim trails as a travel experience cannot hope to replicate all the fervor and spiritual intensity of a pilgrimage, but closer.

We both realize, however, that this is one gap all our earnest wishing will not close.

Ifs easy to dismiss our style of travel as a mere dabbling in culture, a poor substitute for the real cultural immersion that an immigrant faces, but that's not necessarily a useful way to look at it. It's true that often, since they live abroad for so long, even though they intend one day to return, Mexican immigrants to the United States don't feel quite at home again in Mexico. They find themselves caught between the assumptions of the two cultures, and never manage to reconcile them. In the best of circumstances, where they still feel strong ties to Mexico, and plan to live there in the future, they remain unable to make a living in the place that they consider their home, estranged from their own culture by economic circumstances. Mexican women have told us that many women go with their husbands when they cross the border to look for employment, but then never come back, even when their husbands do, since the strictures on gender tend to be less intense in the US. (The prevalence of domestic violence in rural Mexico feeds into this dynamic.) Our museum-heavy jaunts through foreign places rarely expose us to that kind of cultural dissonance. But it was our kind of traveling, the bourgeois, boring kind, that led us to La Luz, TX, where a quick game of count-the-gringos in the crowd came up with us and one other man next to the bullpen.

Both my sister and I had our worlds broken apart and glued back together in a larger and more wondrous form when we did our first bits of middle class tourism. It became a world in which the man sitting next to me in a crowded *plaza de toros* might also have been a neighbor in a world a couple thousand miles away. It became a world in which the economic conditions of a small town in rural Mexico can be both a trigger for and a reflection of social and cultural changes in my own country. It became a world in which I and a man from that Mexican village could have different ways of traveling, and share them with each other. It's unlikely that I'll ever be forced to look for jobs in another country because the only ones available to me in my own can't provide enough money to live on, and Jose will never feel like two years of his life would be well- spent being a dilettante abroad. Nevertheless, ifs not enough to say that our ways of moving through the world complement each other, or even that either way is valid: ifs important for me to be aware of the cultural dynamics that foster that difference. It will be as good for me to understand the kind of privilege I enjoy as it may be for Jose, who flew to Brazil last week, to feel free to lie on the beach in a foreign country, instead of propping up its economy with his labor. This shouldn't mean that I have to renounce all the advantages given to me by this privilege, though, so if anyone knows a good *coyote...*[2]

**africa, india, **

Pakistan

supplied by Volvo, CrimethInc. Travel Agency

I'm the first one to admit that adventure can be found right around the corner. However, if you're somewhat fortunate, and can manage to save up some money for an airline ticket, I recommend you go beyond your known horizon, because there is a world to discover. Travels in far off countries can prove to be nasty, brutish and short, but also mind-bending and truly exhilarating. I've picked my brain for some stories that I hope could serve as an inspiration...

1. HITCHHIKING ACROSS THE SAHARA DESERT "You can't go there, there are no roads..." — My local travel agency

Through Occupied Territory

I boarded a bus in the town of Laayoune, where I'd spent a night, and was just as happy to see some familiar faces on the bus as I was to leave this dusty godforsaken town-turned-military-outpost behind. Laayoune is the heart of the Moroccan annexation of what was formerly known, and is still recognized by the U.N., as Western Sahara.

When Spain evacuated the phosphate-rich region of Western Sahara, which they called Spanish Sahara, in 1975, partly because of harassment from the Polisario, a rebel group fighting for national liberation, both Morocco and Mauritania raised claims to the sparsely populated desert territory. Mauritania dropped its claim in 1979, after the Polisario had crippled their economy for several years, in exchange for Morocco renouncing any historical right to, and dropping plans to absorb, Mauritania. In November 1975, King Hassan II orchestrated the infamous Green March: about 350, 000 Moroccans, mostly civilians, marched into the territory to stake out their "historical" right. In the late sixties it had become clear that the native inhabitants, the Sarahavis, wanted independence. The Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia al-Hamra and Rio de Oro (Polisario) embarked on a long guerrilla war against the new Moroccan overlords. Polisario scored occasional successes against their far superior enemy but as they lost Libyan and Algerian backing and the Moroccans erected a 1600km-long sand wall to hamper their movement, it become clear that they were losing the battle. The U.N. brokered a ceasefire in 1991, under the understanding that a referendum would be held to settle the issue one and for all. The ceasefire has largely been holding up but the referendum keeps getting postponed and has yet to materialize. The referendum has been postponed due to bitter disagreement of who would be eligible to vote. The Polisario, rightfully, wants only those registered as citizens before the Green March allowed participating, but Morocco naturally wants to include many of the region's new inhabitants. A lot of these inhabitants have been enticed to move into the area with the help of tax-relief and prospects of employment. Morocco has also strengthened its hold on the territory since the ceasefire, by investing in infrastructure and expanding the city of Laayoune.

A lot of these improvements have to do with the fact that they need it to support their mining and military activities as well as to accommodate new settlers. Recently the U.N. made clear that they support a "frame-work agreement" with a limited autonomy ; for Western Sahara within the state of Morocco. This proposition is not only a concession to Morocco and a slap in the face to the 165, 000 Saharavis living in refugee camps in Southern Algeria. To add insult to injury the camps are also having their food supply slowly cut off, most probably to make them more prone to swallow any deal. However, the Polisario is not accepting the agreement — but the chance that they will get the territory, which according to a ruling of the International Court in Haag 1975 belongs to them, looks small at the moment.

Seated on the bus with big smiles plastered over their faces were two other travelers I bonded with in the Moroccan capital of Rabat while we were all trying our best to acquire the visa for Mauritania. This tedious process ended up involving fake airline tickets, exchanging currency on the black market, and a bit of legwork, but finally we had it within our grasp and passport covers.

Local custom dictates that you offer food you devour while traveling to the surrounding passengers, and in exchange for a banana passed back an aisle in the bus I struck up a brief friendship with a man on his way to visit relatives. At a brief stop the man, and his traveling company, treated me to the traditional tea ceremony, involving three progressively stronger and sweeter cups of tea, while I was trying to sit crosslegged on a carpet on the floor. Most of the other people in the room were sitting by the tables on the chairs provided, and I figured that my newfound friends who preferred the carpets on the floor were Sarahavis, so I brought up the subject of Polisario and was hastily quietened down under the pretext that the "walls have ears" and "the only free debate takes place on the internet."

We arrived in Dakhla a couple days before the next convoy was due to leave for Mauritania, and tried to find a suitable ride. After registering with the army, which leads the bi-weekly convoy to the Mauritanian border, we managed to secure a ride with two French guys in their cars. They had done the trip a couple of times before, every time bringing cars with them which they sold once they got them through the desert and arrived in the capital of Mauritania, Nouakchott. At first they were reluctant to bring us along, due to the extra weight — but on the other hand, we would be more people around to help with the digging and pushing once the cars got stuck. The convoy consisted of Mauritanian traders in overpacked jeeps, some other travelers in beat up vehicles, nicely robed men with turbans in shiny BMWs, and an English guy on motorcycle.

In the Hands of the Reaper

The convoy left Dakhla in the afternoon, and as the car I was riding in overtook all other vehicles at a neck-breaking speed it slowly dawned on me that my benefactor at the wheel, Richard, was more than a little crazy. We later dubbed him Minus and his more rational counterpart Olivie, Plus, because Minus sometimes drove the car into

pieces before reaching the destination, quite purposefully, and lost all his money on the trip. This time he didn't have

[Image not archived]

Our guide Khalita, and part of our little convoy across the Sahara

any to start with either so Plus had put down the money for both cars and hired him on as a driver for one of them. This seemed like the worst possible set-up so naturally I asked Plus why he would chose Minus over any other sane person to do the job — to which he replied something to the effect that "it makes it more interesting." While most other people eased along trying to minimize the impact of the road, which gradually deteriorated, we were way up ahead flying past camels and the odd sand dune. Minus's English wasn't top notch, but he was eager to learn; so while we were pressed to our seats, flying over "roads" one wouldn't be able to bike on, he popped a tape into the stereo. We were shooting like projectile through the desert into the unknown adventure, and "Bombtrack" by Rage Against the Machine came blasting out of the stereo, which made me feel so intensely alive that I got goose bumps and screamed at the top of my lungs. Minus, the driver, on the other hand, let go of the steering wheel and fished out a handwritten note with the lyrics and started following along and make out the words, asking questions about some of them and generally not keeping his eyes at the road at all, which pushed another couple of ounces of adrenalin into my bloodstream. This became a common occurrence...

At nightfall, we arrived at the end of the road, literally, where the last Moroccan army post is, and camped there. In the morning we were waved off into the desert, which in that area is filled with landmines. We crossed our fingers, cranked up the stereo, and stuck to visible tracks and the odd pieces of dirt road here and there. The traders and their jeeps defected from the herd well before the first Mauritanian border post, in order to avoid taxes and scrutinizing eyes. We in our trusty, dusty old Mercedes hit the border first and were greeted by camouflaged soldiers, who crawled out from a dilapidated shelter.

I ponder their situation being posted out here, fully exposed to the merciless sun, landmines, heat, the constant blowing of sand. When we were filling in our personal data in a big ledger I noticed that one young soldier's shirt, sticking up from under his uniform, sported a collar embroidered "Tupac." He might be dead, but he is still everywhere in Africa — although few people seemed to know that he was a musician, let alone dead.

We tried to get airborne on a sand ledge, which was blocking our path, and stopped further down to see how they others were making it over. The English guy on the dirt bike got some air, but his front wheel sank deep when he landed — he ate shit and got his bike over him as a dessert. We ran back to aid him — and while lying motionless in the sand, his face white as a sheet, he gave us his diagnosis: the femur broken in two places. This was corroborated later. We pooled our skills and tranquillizers, and

managed to put the leg in a splint. He was then put in the back of the fastest jeep, and sent ahead with a soldier to speed up the process at the different checkpoints. Considering that he'd nearly fainted from excruciating pains when he was lifted with utmost care, nobody envied his position in the back of that jeep, bouncing for hours through desert before they reached a hospital — if there was one. We later heard through the grapevine that by some incredible luck he was taken in and operated on by a hospital attached to a foreign mining company — he survived.

After a number of irritating and seemingly unnecessary checkpoints, we finally arrived in the first town in Mauritania, Noadhibou. The fun doesn't stop here though, because after all, you are in Mauritania, and there is no road or reliable tracks that lead through the desert to the capital, Nouakchott.

The End of the World as We Know It

Mauritania gained independence and started to build their capital, Nouakchott, in 1960. This Islamic republic, ruled by former nomads or their descendants, has since been ripe with military coups and racial tension. In the late 1960's, 83% of the population was still nomads, but desertification and persistent droughts have only spared the 10% that is still officially nomadic. Today, the country is a complete desert and only 1% of its area is fertile enough to sustain crops. This infertility of the landscape might be a plausible explanation for the female beauty standard of the Bidan caste of the Moors, which is to be plum and fat. Supposedly, some of them even feed their daughters a special diet of milk and peanuts so that they will grow up to be desirably colossal. Some members from a differing and lower caste, like the Haratin Moors, are probably happy if they get fed at all — because they might be slaves. In 1980 Mauritania declared slavery illegal, as the last country in the world, and it's estimated that there were an about 100, 000 Haratin slaves within the country's borders at the time. To declare it illegal doesn't equal the eradication of the practice, and a lot of slaves didn't really have any options. Therefore it might not be all hearsay when some sources report that people are occasionally still bought and sold in the Adrar area, northeast of Nouakchott.

After checking in at a primitive hotel, our French drivers sought out a reliable guide, and we scraped together a raggedy lot of people and cars to share the cost. A guide is a must-have unless you desire to turn into toast somewhere in the desert after getting lost or breaking down, something that happens all the time. His name was Khalifa, he looked like a character out of a fairytale, and he was well versed in navigating the stretch from being an old guide for the camel caravans that used to cross the vast plains before some of the trafficking was taken over by trucks. He didn't speak anything besides the local dialect of Arabic, Hassaniya, but communicated with

signs as he was riding shotgun and leading the way with his hands. At tricky passages he walked in front of our small caravan and checked after strands of firm sand. With my limited knowledge of Arabic I later managed to find out that he had 37 camels out there somewhere (he pointed to the horizon), Which made him a very wealthy man in this neck of the woods. Our little caravan consisted of the Frenchmen and their two

cars, two Germans in a minivan, and three Spaniards with one car each. After stocking up on water and food — mostly that French type of bread that goes rock hard in fifteen minutes — we left town in the afternoon. We managed to squeeze through the military checkpoint without parting with any of our money, and, after picking up a hitchhiking local couple, we were off.

Desert with Mirages

I had imagined the Sahara desert to be one picturesque sand dune after another, but it was actually a very varied landscape with everything from enormous plains made up of sand or little rocks to what looked like a savannah. The common denominator, though, was the constant maelstrom of sand that traveled with the winds over the infertile surface. A thin film of sand covers and permeates everything; after a while we had more sand in our eyes, food, cameras, sleeping bags, and cars than you can find in any urban playground sandpit. The first day passed in a joyful bliss and even the digging and pushing of the vehicles that got stuck was a novel experience. When the daylight disappeared we camped in the shelter of a croissant-shaped sand dune. The local people slept on the ground wrapped in their roomy attire and I got down into my sleeping bag. The weather during the day wasn't unbearably hot, thanks to the breeze from the nearby ocean, but at night it got pretty cold. I woke up almost covered in sand that settled on me during the night, had some sandy bread with sandy water, and we were off again. We continued to traverse the landscape; most of the other cars kept getting stuck, due to poor drivers'

[Image not archived]

A MINE WARNING SIGN SOMEWHERE ON THE BORDER BETWEEN *M0R0CC0/WeST* SAHARA

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One of the zillion times we had to bail the car out

skills or weak engines, while our cars were doing circles around them. We also chased the odd camel at the horizon and did some roof-top surfing to pass the time. It was an amazing feeling to hang on to the sunroof while Minus was trying to set new speeding records on the vast sand plains. We took a little detour, although we had no way of telling, to drop our hitchhikers off at a Bedouin camp in the middle of nowhere. A beat up Landrover in their camp was the demarcation between this century and the last one and as we entered one of the tents, a sight greeted me that to this day I have tattooed in my retina. In the middle of the tent, cross-legged on a big carpet, sat an old man with a huge white beard and turban in front of an enormous and very old looking holy Koran. He also had his eyes generously encircled with blue eyeliner, which would have produced laughter in any other situation, except for this one: being face to face with an infamous Tuareg. The Tuaregs are historically known for being fierce warriors and skilled traders or raiders, though robbery was considered an honorable occupation. However, they were more or less forced to abolish their old lifestyle when

the French put an end to nomadic movement and abolished slavery. Most of them turned to herding and had to leave the desert in search for greener pastures; but some of them still follow their traditional nomadic lifestyle. They are easily recognizable, due to their fair skin and indigo-blue robes or shawls wrapped around their heads to protect them from the elements. We were offered diluted camels' milk prepared by the women, and before we left we reciprocated their hospitality by exchanging some of our bread for ancient arrowheads, remnants from early human habitations that came to an end when the desert started spreading about 10, 000 years ago.

Under a Sheltering Sky

We had expected to arrive the same night, but some of the cars started to give trouble — and the very same cars, more than often the Spanish driven ones, repeatedly got stuck. As the day progressed, joyous acclamations turned into curses, loose objects into car parts, and bushes at the horizon into houses with attached swimming pools. The guide Khalifa got

more and more opportunities to kneel towards Mecca and brew tea in his little teapot. We on the other hand were digging, cursing, and pushing the cars, which returned the favor by wasting our drinking water with their coolers. Minus wrecked the whole steering apparatus in our car by hitting some big rocks in a restless stupor, which disabled us to the extent that we could only turn left. We were literally driving in circles before the problem got fixed with some rope and a chain. The good mood was gone and so was our food. We seriously, and deliriously, thought about leaving the two most faltering, haltering Spanish cars behind, with or without their drivers. The night was getting closer and we had to change our plans and head for a little fishing community by the ocean. We towed the two Spanish cars and arrived halfstarved in the little village before nighttail, where we took a well deserved bath in the ocean and went hunting for food. The only available meal around the huts was some meat-based dish so I retracted into the car with some canned vegetables and some bread that I managed to acquire. The next day I was happy to leave because the little village had an eerie feeling to it and the villagers were doing their best to exploit our precarious conditions to extract as much money as possible from us. We had to leave the two cars behind because towing wasn't an option anymore, due to deeper sand and the extra stress on the leading vehicle. Several times during the day we had to cross over some real dunes; at first glance this looked impossible, but we pulled through. In the afternoon we reached the last stretch before the capital, which you drive on the beach at low tide. We reached some amazing speeds on the hard-packed sand, while dodging jackals and stranded boats. At one point I remember that the three Spanish men, packed into their last car, overtook us and I egged on Minus to retain the pole position. He replied that he paced himself because "behind one of these corners there are rocks which you can't see on beforehand" with that priceless French accent, while he stepped on it and brought the trophy home. Minutes later we turned a corner at full speed only to be met by huge rocks all over the beach, and I screamed as we were launched off a big one. I swear that we got fully

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A BUTCHER AT THE SMUGGLER'S BAZAAR IN PESHAWAR

airborne before we crashed with a thunderous noise right off the shoreline, water splashing everywhere. While I did a check of all my limbs, the others in our caravan turned up and were flabbergasted. Miraculously, we could continue driving as soon as we backed out of the water. We arrived in the capital, Nouakchott, where the roads to the rest of sub-Sahara start, at nightfall. I took some time regaining my strength and sanity before I continued my adventure, with my traveling partners, on public transportation — but that is another story...

traveling in the desert)

The Nomad or *The Vagabond, * Isabelle Eberhardt (Amazing writing from this female vagabond who traveled the area disguised as a man)

... and anything on the conflict in Western Sahara.

2. A *brief Scene Report — Peshawar*

"Power springs from the barrel of a gun." -George W. Bush

[Image not archived]

Recommended reading:

The Sheltering Sky, Paul Bowles

(A beautiful novel concerning love, hardship, and

Local Merchandise in Peshawar

"Ladies and gentlemen, Inshallah (God willing), we shall soon be landing in Lahore, " announces the authoritative voice loud enough for me to wake up and ponder my destiny, now apparently in the hands of God. Slumped in a seat onboard a plane belonging to Pakistan International Airways, which has the dubious task of flying very used equipment around the world's most hostile aviation environment, I find I'm kind of nervous, being not only an infidel but also an atheist. Seemingly safe on the ground, I greet this magnificent country while exiting the terminal as the warm weather embraces me to a backdrop of the commotion you'll find in any travelers' hub in this part of the world. Pakistan has had a rich and sometimes turbulent history that would be just as hard to condense as it would be boring to read. The teeming

population of Pakistan is as diverse as it is large. Its population of about 130 million is made up of several different ethnicities, and the while the country is officially Muslim, with both the Sunni and Shiite strand represented, there are people of most religions thrown into the stew. The pot is not only melting but occasionally also exploding as well, in outbursts of sectarian, political and social violence. Even if this is what makes headlines around the world, the country has so much more to offer — and the mind-bending landscape with its deeply hospitable people is bound to leave some long lasting impressions, as it did upon me. Here are some of them...

Politics on the Border to Theatre

On my first day in the country I traveled to the border between Pakistan and its neighbor India, some twenty minutes west of Lahore. I went to witness the daily ceremony surrounding the closing of the only open land crossing between the two enemies. India and Pakistan are arch-rivals and try to outdo each other in everything from cricket to a nuclear arms race, and the spectacle at the border was no exception. After paying the 4-cent entrance fee we hurried over to what looked like a construction site, which I realized would serve as a grandstand. The Indians already had one, which was now filled to the brim, while we on the Pakistani side had to stand on the ground. We lined up beside the road that led through the border gates, with women and men on separate sides. I barely had time to study the soldiers, displaying their best, although worn out, uniforms before the ceremony began. Suddenly the soldiers from both countries started screaming while they performed a well synchronized ritual which eventually led to them hauling the flag. One by one they stormed forward towards the iron gate with a stride reminding me of Charlie Chaplin's impersonation of Hitler. The arms were pendulating all the way around the shoulders and the legs were lifted so high that their noses seemed to be in danger. But it wasn't the nose that was at stake, but

the country's honor, so every move was made with both grave seriousness and precision, all while the audience applauded their respective side and its maneuvers. I had to bite my tongue in order not to burst out laughing while every soldier marched forward and performed his patriotic duty. Every soldier slammed his feet down really hard, which looked painful, in order to create a noise that he complemented with shouts and loud theatrical sniffs, directed at the infidels on the other side. The Indian soldiers at the other side did likewise and they even had a big sign directed towards Pakistan saying "India — The largest democracy in the world." A not so subtle jab at Pakistan who has had more dictators than elections lately. After the flag was hauled the men of both sides gathered by the gate and the festive atmosphere was gone, replaced by a shouting match. Although this took place at a time when the relations between the countries were better than they'd been for a long time, I got a little bit worried. Luckily it didn't turn into a new shot in Sarajevo but merely died down as the men reunited with the women and children. A lot of families went out along the fence to a stone that marks the actual border and snapped some photos for the family album.

Lahore

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The Old City of Lahore, which consists of a maze of narrow roads and alleys, is surrounded by a moat and filled with bazaars and people — a lot of transactions take place here, some of questionable nature. Defying warnings by exploring it alone, I was pretty wary at first; but after the first day I found nothing but a friendly reception and scenes out of the Arabian Nights, although with small polluting cars and plastic merchandise added. Shaking hands seemed to be a prevalent custom among men and during my stay in Pakistan I probably shook more hands than an American presidential candidate. One day while drifting in the endless bazaar somebody suddenly pressed

my hand and when I directed my eyes to the man in front of me a chill went through my spine.

[Image not archived]

In front of me was a man with a knife through his throat and another one through his wrist whose still attached hand held a wad of money. Judging by his smile, and the fact that he was smiling, I assumed a closer inspection would cost some money so I quickly moved along. The knife through the throat was most probably a fake, but the one through the wrist looked darn real — but I didn't want to learn and at the same time encourage people to self-mutilation in order to eke out a living.

Holiday in Other People's Misery

After a couple months of traveling in nearby countries, I returned to Pakistan to lick my wounds in a comfortable setting, and I found myself back in Lahore due to my connections in the city. It was late spring and the mercury was going through the roof. I started to get some travel fatigue; the enchanting bazaars and street life in Lahore lost some of its luster in the heat. After being fortunate enough to recover and catch my breath for a while in the crossfire of two air conditioners, I set out to experience a truly mythical place, Peshawar. I boarded the train in the evening, found my designated bench, hidden under a

thick layer of dust, and added my sweaty body. When the train sped into the darkness, gusts of air from the window saved me from the assault of the heat outside, where temperatures were hovering around the 45 degree Celsius mark (115 Fahrenheit) on a daily basis. I came to think of how lucky I was in comparison to the majority of the people in Pakistan, of whom about 80 died as a direct result of the heat during the week I spent in Lahore. As the Pakistani writer Moshin Hamid declares in his critically acclaimed novel, Moth Smoke:

[Image not archived]

"There are two social classes in Pakistan, " Professor Superb said to his unsuspecting audience, gripping the podium with both hands as he spoke. "The first group, large and sweaty, contains those referred to as the masses. The second group is much smaller, but its members exercise vastly greater control over their immediate environment and are collectively termed the elite. The distinction between members of these two groups is made on the basis of control of an important resource: air conditioning. You see, the elite have managed to re-create for themselves the living standards of, say, Sweden, without leaving the dusty plains of the subcontinent."

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reality is much worse, though, with more than 35% of the population living in poverty, a relative concept defined by an inability to meet the most basic needs for food, clothing, and shelter in any weather. Despite the indescribable hardship and suffering, many people could still afford a smile or a hospitable gesture. Many times I got invited to share a cup of tea in the street over some small talk — and, in contrast to a lot of other countries, there was never a catch involved. The poverty remains a great tragedy, though, and I'm not sure what infuriates and saddens me the most —

the fact that it exists, or the knowledge that the majority of people in the industrial world is not hard at work obliterating it. This was a sidetrack — but if I return to my story, I wake up as the train is coming to a halt in the city of Peshawar.

A *Mercurial Place*

The city of Peshawar, which was founded over 2, 000 years ago, has had almost as many names as rulers. The proximity of the famous and strategically important Khyber Pass, a vantage point for would- be invaders of the subcontinent and a vital route for traders, made the area a melting pot for different conquerors and civilizations. The footprints of the Mongol invaders, the Chinese pilgrims, and the Tajik traders are still visible. Today Peshawar is embedded in the unruly North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) of Pakistan, bordering the Khyber Pass Tribal Agency, one of the seven autonomous tribal areas in the region. The tribal areas were never fully conquered and subjected to outside rule by Alexander, the Moguls, the Sikhs, or the British back in the day, and neither are they today by Pakistan. They are populated by a number of tribes of Pashtu ethnic origin, none of which is known for a pacific nature — hence, it's one of the world's most lawless places. However, The Pashtus must abide by the Pashtunwali, their moral code, and the decisions of its application by the jirga, a council of elders, or they typically get their house burnt down and face expulsion from the tribe. The code, together with a fondness for arms, has made the area ripe with prolonged blood feuds

over *zar, zan* or *zamin* - gold, women, or land. A declining quantity of drugs is still grown and refined in the area, although nowadays it works mostly as a conduit for the stunning volumes coming in from Afghanistan. It seemed like an interesting place, but when the tribal vendettas and clashes between smugglers fail to keep the inhabitants busy enough, the entrepreneurial spirit easily turns their legendary hospitality into kidnapping — so I decided it wasn t really worth the trouble to holiday too much in the area.

The Afghan Connection

Given the proximity to Afghanistan, it's not surprising to learn that the countries are intertwined in more ways than ethnicity (Pashtus have always lived throughout the area, regardless of national borders). When Afghanistan was occupied by the U.S.S.R., it become home to a senseless war. The Afghan guerrilla force, the Mujaheddin, who courageously fought the Soviet aggressors, received money and weapons from a number of countries, among them U.S.A. The goods were funneled through Pakistan's secret service (I.S.I.) and changed hands in the area around Peshawar, where a lot of the military training also took place. The US committed some four to five billion dollars between 1980 and 1992 in aid to the Mujaheddin. However, the C.LA.-I.S.I. arms pipeline favored the more radical groups, which naturally radicalized others, who were to liberate a country that so far been pretty moderate. Among other things, the U.S. provided the Mujaheddin with some 900 Stinger anti-aircraft missiles in 1986–87. After 1992 the C.I.A. launched a clandestine but unsuccessful buy-back operation to try to retrieve those Stingers not utilized. It's not hard to imagine the harm these easily-

operated missiles could do at a civilian airport somewhere in the world — and they were floating around a largely failed state. After the U.S.S.R. withdrew in 1989, leaving more than 1.5 million dead and millions of landmines behind, Afghanistan plunged into a civil war in which several

different warlords mercilessly fought each other while terrorizing the civilian population.

Later, and partly as a reaction, the Taliban movement originated in the many *madrassas* scattered around Peshawar, Quetta, and other Pakistani towns along the Afghan border. A *madrassa* is an Islamic theological school, hence the name of the movement though *talib* means student of Islam, and they offered the only opportunity for Afghan refuges and poor Pakistanis to receive a semblance of an education. The leading Talibans were all veteran Muhajeddin warriors who were dismayed by the moral corruption among their peers. They saw themselves as cleansers and purifiers of a society gone wrong, and the Islamic way that had been compromised by excess and greed. They recruited young students, mostly Afghan refugees and Pashtus, in the *madrassas, * who were disillusioned with the formerly idealized Mujaheddin commanders who now pillaged their country. These were literally children of the war: growing up in refugee camps in Pakistan they hardly knew their own country or history. The young rootless boys seemingly without a future studied little but the Koran and Islamic law as interpreted by barely literate Mullahs, religious teachers. Most of them had never fought before — but, like all Pashtus, they knew how to handle a weapon, and the prospect of returning to their homeland and implementing a just society based on the teachings of the prophet Mohammed filled them with a sense of direction. The specific background of these young men and their seclusion from women while growing up in the *madrassas, * together with their Pashtu tribal traditions, have a lot more to do with the draconic policies of the Talibans, especially the ones targeting women, than with Islamic fundamentalism alone.

When I walked around Peshawar the shadow of Afghanistan was evident in every corner, mostly symbolized by women in blue head-to-toe *burqas* and Afghans begging. I was less of a novelty here

as a foreigner here, since several hundred foreign. N.G.O.s (Non-Governmental Organizations) working to address the misery in Afghanistan and' the natural " result, refugees, have their headquarters in the city. About six million Afghans have been forced to llee their country as a result of more than twenty years of war and the last couple of years of drought, and they now reside under horrible conditions in refugee camps in Pakistan and Iran. Peshawar is surrounding by dilapidated camps like Jallozai, where 80, 000 people are sheltered under primitive tarps, generally trying to survive under the most desperate conditions. This must be one of the greatest humanitarian catastrophes at the planet today. I was in Peshawar six months before September 11 and Pakistan was still supporting the Taliban. The reason was probably the large Pashtu presence in the military and the fact that Pakistan dearly wanted stability in the region, so that they could start trade overland with the Central Asian

Republics. Stability was also the keyword that provided the Talibans with backing from the powerful trading mafia whose smuggling and transporting activities were obstructed by the presence by the many small and unpredictable warlords. After twenty years of war a majority of the population also welcomed the Talibans, who had disarmament programs and generally promised security and peace. When their breach with traditional Afghan values like tolerance, their ethnocentrism, and later their failing discipline became apparent, their stocks plummeted. Soon they had a very limited support, of maybe 15% of the population. In exchange for supporting the Talibans, Pakistan got more refugees, extremism, and contraband.

Smugglers' Bazaar

It isn't only people that are spilling over the border on donkeys and overcrowded trucks and putting a

Another Dogon village

[Image not archived]

dent in the already stressed Pakistani budget, but also goods of all kinds. Through an arrangement Afghanistan is allowed to import goods tax-free through Pakistan. Due to the lack purchasing power in Afghanistan, most goods do a u-turn in the desert and are smuggled back into Pakistan. I took the chaotic local bus out of the city and jumped off at the end of the road, which continues, into the Khyber Agency Tribal Area. Here lies Karkhani Bazaar, or Smugglers' Bazaar, which is a more colloquial and appropriate name. As my guidebook to the region proclaimed, and I confirmed with my own eyes, it wasn't a matter of some windswept tents where men in turbans sold dusty antiques, but Hong Kong in miniature. Small stores housed alongside weird concrete buildings were jam-packed with TVs, computers, soaps, household appliances, clothes, and everything else imaginable, and beyond. Among the small vendors selling toiletries and other products for more intimate use, I found my favorite article. It was a small tube of "breast enlargement cream" which promised growing breasts after generous application in the region. At the end of the market, where the tribal area starts, there was a gate guarded by the tribal police and huge signs forbidding foreigners to enter. On the other side of the border the commerce continues and the goods are largely made up of arms and drugs. I talked to other travelers at my hostel that managed to sneak around the gate in the company of local friends sharing their devotion for drugs, and they testified about the mass quantities of hash and heroin that are put up for sale. The drugs come sewed up in sheepskin sacks, and big blocks are openly sold for ridiculously low prices. With a pale complexion and without local knowledge and company you might be mistaken for a D.E.A. (the American Drug Enforcement Agency) agent, which needlessly puts you in grave danger. Ifs estimated that the value of the trade with smuggled goods, without accounting for arms and drugs, is about 2 billion dollars — and this is said to be the spine of the Pakistani black

market sector, which is estimated to be about 55% of Pakistan's G.N.P. (Gross National Product, the annual sum of all goods and services within a country).

Happiness is a Warm Gun

Along with some other raggedy drifters, I also took a trip to the town of Darra Adam Khel, arranged and lead by the old and authoritative owner of the hostel where we stayed. We kept a low profile in the back of the truck through the checkpoints and villages, while our guide for the day did the talking and lined his pockets with our money. Finally we came to a halt on what felt like another planet, one where Charlton Heston surely would go apeshit. Darra Adam Khel is an unkempt town, situated in the tribal region of the Afridis, hence beyond Pakistani law and somewhat closed to foreigners. We disembarked in an alley, like so many others in the town, which was bustling with activity. The alley was lined with small shops where men were busy doing what they, and their forefathers, have done for a century: namely, making guns. Despite primitive tools, the Darra gunsmiths, estimated to number 3000, are capable of making a working copy of any known firearm. A Darra gunsmith can duplicate a rifle he's never seen before, making the first template in less than ten days; each additional copy then takes between two to three days to finish. We were taken around the little shops by the best guide money can buy, the local tribal police officer. The craftsmen who were sanding, drilling and carving either acknowledged us with a smile or by proudly showing off their finished products. A wide array of weapons is manufactured in the town: Kalashnikovs, M16s, most varieties of handguns, shotguns, hand grenades, rocket launchers and even anti-aircraft guns. It was a surreal experience walking through the little alleys, meeting fierce-looking men with arms casually slung over their shoulders, all to an accompaniment of constant firing, emanating

from everywhere a gunsmiths happened to be trying out finished products. While we were drinking the customary cup of tea, a small arsenal was circulated at the table, and we negotiated the prices for trying the different weapons. We went around a house and shot Kalashnikov at a nearby cliff, as well as pistol at a pile of bricks, while little kids ran around to collect the shells. The area has grown into one of the largest unofficial arms markets in the world. It might be worth mentioning that the majority of suffering due to weaponry originates in official markets, despite the sometimes glossy packaging (as described by John Pilger in *The Hidden Agenda).* A copied Kalashnikov started off at about 80 dollars and handguns about half of that. We were also showed a 22-calibre gun disguised in a pen, engraved with the name of the town, which was selling for 8 dollars. It's estimated that between 400 and 700 guns are finished in Darra Adam Khel every day. A lot of them used to cross the border into Afghanistan before the Afghan warlords found other benefactors willing to fuel the fire. Nowadays most of the arms end up within the borders of Pakistan, especially in the tribal areas, but they are readily found throughout the society.

From Peshawar I traveled north in search of greener pastures and a more mild climate, which was to be found where the three great mountain ranges meet. There among the Himalayas, the Hindukush, and Indus mountains I found my Shangri-La.

Recommended reading:

~~Moth Smoke~~, Moshin Hamid *(An interestingly written novel about the decadent life of the upper class in Lahore)*

Taliban — Islam, _Oil and the New Great Game in_ Central Asia, Ahmed Rashid *(A good introduction to Taliban, the struggle over the oil in the region and its geopolitical implications)*

Danziger's Travel, Nick Danziger *(An account of an exciting journey through the region during the Afghan war with the U.S.S.R., with Nick paying little regard for borders, visas, or money)*

3. *The Funeral Show*

Hold Your Pants

I'm relieving my bladder as I'm watching the sun setting over a mesmerizing landscape from my position behind the last train carriage. I figured it was safe to get off the train after watching some other passengers crowding around a nearby well in order to wash themselves before evening prayer. Meanwhile others were eating dinner provided by the many crafty locals that sprung out of the nearby village with a veritable restaurant on top of their head. It was yet another unexplainable stop in the middle of nowhere on the only railway route open for passengers in that end of West Africa. It's something very mythical to be looking out from a train window and be graced with the picturesque image of the vast African savannahs while having the repetitive beat of the sills to soothe your ears. I can't really find the words to describe it but I think Hemingway got it right somewhere, even though I wouldn't know, because I haven't read a word he's written. Lost in thoughts, now as then, I buttoned my fly when suddenly the train whistle cut through the serenity and the train started moving as rapidly as unexpectedly. It accelerated faster than ever before,

> with me running frantically behind, trying to catch up with the last carriage. I managed to swing myself up at the last door, with the aid of friendly hands and that vertical handle, like I was the star in a bad western movie. We pulled up some other runners but a majority who foresaw their defeat threw up their hands in a desperate gesture and screamed. I was extremely relieved to be onboard and not left in the middle of nowhere without even a sweater, let alone the rest of my luggage. The next train wasn't scheduled to pass until after a couple of days, assuming it didn't derail. The train driver didn't seem to bat an eyelid, and we continued to gain speed with every meter along a trajectory that took us further into the impending darkness and the country of Mali.

Bamako

It took the capital in the fifth poorest country in the world for me to swallow my pride and take refuge under the cross. I checked into a primitive hostel run by a convent and some stern catholic nuns in order to escape from the chaos. It's plausible to think that the capital in a country like this would be a sleepy affair but nothing could be

further from the truth. When I first arrived at night I teamed up with some other travelers at the train station while trying to find some kind of accommodation. We walked into the dark night on streets that were lined with literally thousands of people sound asleep on the pavement. I couldn't possibly have felt smaller and more vulnerable walking those streets with only a little switchblade knife as possible defense if someone would try to take more than my wallet. At last we found the hostel before bad luck found us, and when we woke up the next morning the city didn't look quite the same — it was bustling with activity that would put any anthill to shame. Thousands of busses, mopeds, and cars chased the impending accident on roads of differing quality. I think that the majority of the roads were gravel as opposed to tarmac. Every available inch of the pavement was covered with people and vendors hawking their products. I didn't find God in the hostel, just some other travelers, among them some female volunteers on a break from their stationing in Mauritania. We were heading towards the same area, the Dogon country, and decided to go together as well as sharing the cost of a guide to the area.

Dogon Country

The Dogon people of Mali are famous for their art, distinctive adobe architecture, colorful masked dances, and ceremonies. Their culture is based upon animistic religious beliefs and is being preserved through a tightly knit social structure with intensely cooperative group behavior. The Dogon have made their home along the remarkable Bandigara escarpment, a 200-kilometer cliff face which runs like a wall across the desert. Their picturesque villages scatter the foot of the cliff, which is at places perforated with little caves that served as protection from marauding groups and slave raiders for hundreds of years. On the rocky rubble below and in the sandy plains and fields stretching out from there, the Dogon, who are skilled agriculturalists, raise millet, onions, sorghum, and other crops, despite the inhospitable environment. Communal labor, collective action, and group responsibility

[Image not archived]

are characteristics of Dogon village life. They are very hospitable, something which may be a factor undermining their culture and cohesion. The contemporary visitors don't take or buy slaves, but culturally important art objects, as well as risking distorting the traditional village life. On the other hand, the little trickle of tourists have also become an important resource in ensuring the survival of the Dogon and their culture by providing them with an income when other sources dry up. Hence we decided to go with a guide that came highly recommended, to minimize our impact and make the encounter somewhat mutually beneficial to both parties. Working as a guide has become a lucrative business, attracting a lot of people without the necessary knowledge, discretion, or ethnicity. After wading through offers including impostors we finally met our man, David, in the village of Sanga. We left for our trek the next day and our guide David negotiated our passage through homes and villages, by paying fees and distributing the *kola* nuts as required, on top of explaining every cultural trait under the sun as we went along. The kola nut is a purple-colored nut frequently used as a gift

to and among the Dogons, who chew on them. They're supposed to give you a mild intoxication but I came halfway through the chestnut sized devil before the extremely bitter taste threw me off so I can't tell you what it's like.

who ship them over there. It was an enchanting and surreal musical carpet to the events that took place. In front of us the men were gathered and most of them were armed with ancient looking rifles. They took turns doing a little dance around the corpse of the dead cow before firing into the air to ward off the evil spirits. They on the other hand seemed to be in good spirits and it was a festive atmosphere, no doubt fueled by the reunion with their kin in the village and home-made millet beer. Most young men were sporting more modern clothes and were more cosmetically adorned, with some small traditional clothing item. This is probably due to the structural male migration that is common in Africa, and other societies marked by economic dualism, where young men leave for the cities in order to find a job and make money. I don't struggle with romantic notions of cultural purity, but it was truly weird to see a young man ceremonially dancing with a rifle while being dressed in a traditional garb complemented with modern sneakers and sunglasses. I did however struggle with my grip on reality, partly because of the heat and my sickness, but mostly because of the incredible scenes that were played out in front of my eyes. It never felt like a dream, though, since the dreams I had at the time were all really horrible stories induced by my preferred brand of malaria prophylactic. After a while the ceremony was crowned by a group of men dancing while wearing the incredible masks that the Dogon people are famous throughout the world for sporting on special occasions. The masks, which are kept in a sacred cave for most of the year, are colorful and very elongated. The longest ones extended for several meters over the wearers' heads. The group of men bearing the masks, as well as some other amazing clothes and bijouterie, were performing dances in which they were letting the long mask sway back and forward in front of the enthusiastic audience. I felt privileged to be immersed in such a scene and celebration and it was truly a Kodak moment, if there ever been one, but we weren't allowed to take pictures. After the ceremonies were over the whole village seemed to be fermenting with joy, as was the millet beer in everybody's stomachs. This brew taste a little bit like German wheat beer, but my already weak legs prevented me from joining in and putting the Munich October fest to shame. Although fatigued, I was happy as a clam when I walked back to my mattress on the roof to write the next chapter in my history book, largely dealing with the continued illness which later forced me to cut my trip short and return home.

Recommended reading:

_Dogon — Africa's People of the Cliffs, _ Walter Beek and Stephanie Hollyman *(Large book with nice pictures and informative texts)*

[Image not archived]

of that bygone day, so the video will actually appear to have been shot back then. Lets waste no time here, gentle reader, considering what social

> tendencies are expressed by retro chic and what role they play in the "society of the spectacle" Dennis has read so much about. The point is — well, we're here to smash capitalism by having a good time, aren't we? That's what the video is about, anyway.

There will be subtitles in the finished version — the police lamenting that the kids are having that fun "outside the structures of commodity relations" and must therefore be stopped. I joke that the chief pig should instruct his henchmen "If you can't arrest them, at least put them on MTV!" and Dennis likes the idea — maybe they'll use it. I resist encouragement to get powdered up and appear in the video myself, clinging to the antiquated notion that when none of us are on television, it will cease to exist. Dennis, for his part, politely declines to wear my KROSSA USA! (that's Swedish for "smash the U.S.A.") shirt, since the bandmates are all dressed in matching uniforms (my shirt *is* black, though, just like the one he's wearing), and emphasizes the "fun" aspects of the video; he doesn't want to undermine these by specifically mentioning the police shootings in Gothenburg, showing people actually fighting the pigs, or otherwise stepping over the line.

The director assembles the band and their friends before the cameras, and in the moments prior to shooting, Dennis warms up a little, prancing like a Swedish Mick Jagger — it's something he does well, though its still ambiguous whether he has learned the pop language of his enemies in order to subvert their hegemony over culture production, or just been colonized, bodily, by their standards of hipness, their fashion "consciousness, " their images of youth and style. The director yells the Swedish equivalent of "action! " and everyone is dancing about, trying hard to look like they're having the "good time" Dennis spoke of.

At this moment, looking on, I profoundly miss the environment of a good basement punk show, where this good time is real and not representation. If nothing else, if it does no more to liberate the masses, at least there one aspect of the equation is decidedly real and unambiguous. Here, watching my comrades acting out that "good time outside the commodity system" to make an advertisement for a commodity, its difficult to tell where — or if — the pose ends and reality begins. And I can't stop wondering — when do we eat? Is there a buffet anywhere in this building?

Admittedly, its early (it turns out work starts at 8 a.m. in the rock-n-roll world, too... coincidence?), and the film crew can only add to the overdeveloped self-consciousness of Swedish middle class youth, but I expected to see a little more enthusiasm. The d.i.y, punks of D.S. 13 seem to be struggling as hard to enjoy the one-liner irony of their participation as everyone else is to enjoy posing for the cameras sincerely. I can't shake the feeling that no one here, not the d.i.y. punks nor the pop radicals nor their various hangers-on, harbors any real conviction that Things Can Change, that this or anything will jerk the capitalist world out of orbit. "We are up for sale, everything that we know is up for sale" keens Dennis' voice over the stereo, and it sounds, here, like a statement of fact, not the bitter, furious challenge it should be.

At least as people wake up, I start to see some smiles. Many lakes later, the joker from D.S. 13 begins throwing cushions off the couch, and everyone loosens up a bit I'm quite worn out myself: I slept only one hour the night before, having spent the first part of the evening engaged in my own brand of archet ypically useless activity, composing a stinging rejoinder to a hostile review in an obscure and self-referential anarchist periodical, and the latter part somewhat more sensibly making love and conversation with my new crush and let s not portray me in an unnecessarily flattering light — meal ticket. But a less weary, less cynical observer could almost imagine that these young people are engaged in something idealistic and exciting, playing with the social forms of expression (music videos, left wing politics, youth culture) offered them rather than letting themselves be played with by them... as the kids on the *other side* of the television screen will inevitably be. Too bad that in this spectator society, anyone who stops watching for a minute and does something ends up becoming a spectacle for everyone else to watch — at least, that is, if you do it in front of the cameras. But *everyone* is glued to those screens, so if your good ideas aren't on them, no one will ever find out about them — right?

Lunch finally comes, and a Stockholm punk with amazingly long dreadlocks who has nonetheless been dutifully shaking his booty in the crowd shots comes up to compliment me on my own d.i.y. bands latest recording (so you see: we are all involved in some kind of commodity production). Thankfully, the conversation soon passes on to the merits of various squats in Milan, and then to his two friends who are facing prison terms, one from the demonstrations in Gothenburg, the other from streetfighting with Stockholm fascists. At least something's going on out there. Dennis comes back over and speaks to me about books he plans to write — I hope he does.

Now let's stop beating around the bush — are the (I.)N.C. the long-awaited heirs of Guy Debord and Che Guevara come to rescue us all from our neoliberal oppressors, or not? Does it do any good to make fucking music videos for the revolution, or d.i.y. punk records for that matter? What am I getting at here?

> One thing is certain — the snide criticism groups like the 'Noise Conspiracy receive from our side of the d.i.y.-or-don't-d.i.y. debate doesn't help them to focus any more on getting things done. Alienated by the self-righteousness of their former comrades, they have less and less reason to take the idea of revolution seriously — and surely it becomes correspondingly easier for them to let it become a publicity gimmick, even when they started out believing in it. No wonder Dennis has started to talk nonsense, like "if nothing else, I think it's good at least to help people have a good time — that makes sense when you're playing for striking miners, but comfortable middle class rock fans? They need provoking, not positive reinforcement. And yet, who better to provide that challenge than bands like Dennis's, especially since we d.i.y. punks are busy elsewhere?

> As I stated above, I take my friends who proclaim themselves revolutionaries at their word that they mean it, whether their actions are intelligible to me or not. Even if in the most secret chambers of their

hearts they do want nothing but fame and fortune, I still know from seeing those things destroy other friends that I wouldn't be doing them any favors to leave them to that pursuit. So the question is what it would take for their lunatic scheme of undermining the "society of the spectacle" by creating a spectacle to work; since they seem committed to trying this path, it won't do them or anyone else any good for me just to criticize and feel superior. I have to do my part to figure out what, if anything, they could do in this medium to actually challenge the system we all hate. Sitting upstairs in the empty cosmeticians' room, I wrack my blank brain, as I have been for months and years, for what the missing piece could be that I or anyone could provide to make what my friends are doing as effective, as dangerous as they say they want it to be.

As it stands, the police, who will look so cute and retro in the video, *are* outside this and every building, surrounding us, and we're all in here, trying to have a good time or at least look like we are, trying not to look out the windows, out of fear or anger or frustrated longing for the world they hold against us. We all find ways to survive inside with our consciences intact, some of us sooner, others later and only by reinventing ourselves as professional revolutionaries" who nonetheless need to eat somehow. It takes courage to discard fear and pride alike, to remember all the dreams that dont come any more true for being listened to or sung about on records. That courage comes in short supply when we congratulate ourselves too much for the little things we do to feel we are still fighting, whether they be MTV videos or d.i.y. magazines. We need to be a little more desperate to risk what we need to risk to see that Things *Can* Change. Perhaps despair is our only hope.

Discussion Questions for Advanced Readers:

1.

<quote> *Why does the writer go to such lengths to portray himself in as ironic a light as he does the band? Does he actually succeed in doing this? To what extent does this approach — and these discussion questions themselves — function as a defensive measure to stave off criticism?*

2.

<quote> *In the third paragraph, does the author's contrast of the women at the video shoot to the woman he is sleeping with imply that a woman who wears make-up or shaves is less feminist than one who does not? Even if it doesn't, is it acceptable for a male author to make implications of any kind as to whether a given woman is a feminist or not? For that matter — what are the implications of using a term ("Rubenesque") derived from a male painter's portrayals of women's bodies to describe a feminist? And where does he get off writing about their sex life for a widely circulated magazine?*

3.

<quote> *Is it any coincidence that the piece does exactly what it counsels against (snidely criticizing the tactics of mass media bands from a d.i.y. standpoint), and does not do what it specifically demands (presenting practical solutions to the problem of how to make their approach effective)? Is any amount of irony enough to excuse this inconsistency? Or is this piece perhaps intended to work on an entirely different level than the one it appears to?*

[Image not archived]

Walked On Off.

> *Premise Preface:* will and moe stage a hitchhiking race.
>
> *starting line:* the A-l, rijssen, the netherlands. *finish:* front door of demon box, Stockholm (actually sundbyberg), Sweden.

distance: 1000+ km.
EXPECTED *time to complete:* 2 days.
rations: 1/2 loaf bread + spreads.

> prayers, singing, and talking to oneself: allowed. *money:* banished.
>
> moe wins paper-rock-scissors to go first, and he's off in 20 minutes while i collect stares under the bridge, it takes me 4 rides to get to an on-ramp in osnabruck, germany, where i coax a miraculous ride all the way north to kiel.

**»*>o

so here i am in kiel, germany, a port city in the north, screwed, rain, alone, the equivalent of 10 bucks, i had caught a ride all the way there from the holland/ german border with a sweet young german girl who loved elvis. with her, and those eyes, i had decided not to take the prescribed route (a little farther east) to a different ferry port, definitely the better route, she took me out of her way straight into the ferry station, i didn't even have to ask her. kiel, contrary to my initial ideas, would show only one way out: a ferry, my choices were denmark, finland, norway, and Sweden, it happened that none of the ferries were going anywhere near where i needed to go, except one — and it was leaving soon to goteborg, Sweden (intimidating even to look at the mere name!), NOT where i needed or wanted to go. but shit, it was to somewhere in SWEDEN, and that's a start!

at the info/ticket counter, i found out that it was at least 75 dollars just to walk on, and 14 hours long — completely and utterly bourgeois, and to make matters worse, it was full (i was told untruthfully by the sweet blonde Swedish clerk; i found out it in fact WASN'T full!), so i began asking folks in the car line if i could ride on with them in their cars, as a side note, i was just then getting over my shyness about approaching folks and straight up asking them for a ride (and i'm constantly reminded how much

it really sucks that i only speak english). soon I learned that i was even more screwed than i originally thought, getting on the ferry required a pass through kontrol (border customs, etc.), and all the tickets for the cars had the number of people on them, so i couldn't just ride on with someone, or could i? none of the cars were even nice to me, and none of the truckers were helping out (one even dared to tell me "i don't speak english" — IN ENGLISH!!), but it turned out that one of the last cars i was going to ask as the ferry was loading agreed to let me in and try to make it through, and it figures he was listening to bad metal: "oh you like hardcore... well CHECK THIS OUT!'[1] #%°E&(())°E#"!&#°Ea&%V terrible, but i didn't

care — he was down with trying to sneak me on. down with the cause! "

he had a car that was fairly empty of stuff to cover me up, so we had to wing it. as we got to the kontrol. we saw that there was nobody actually searching the cars, so i decided that i would just lay low in the backseat and be a stupid american. adrenaline, hopelessness, fear. vows, as we passed by, the driver stopped so that the angle between me and the clerk was minimal (a sketchy, haphazard tactic, if you ask me), and somehow we made it through, afterwards, he told me yeah, i just looked her straight in the eyes the whole time, intimidating like, and she obeyed my every command." (!!!) now, if i wasn't so relieved and grateful to the universe, i would have busted out laughing at this freak, and further, there was something eerie about him and the woman in the front seat; i got this strange feeling that they were on the way back from some sort of bank robbery or a mafia "sleeping with the fishes" operation, and they were just keeping their cool, "i'm in the belly, " I thought.

> so, amidst the still-sketchy-walkie-talkie-wielding kontrol officers, i set foot on the heavy metal of the 12 story (thats right) fucking floating skyscraper, god damn this shit was HUGE.

the Stena Lines ferry had everything a small city has, basically, plus a casino and minus bike punks, i soon found out that everyone on the ferry had a cabin, and that i was probably the only one without one, among the 1500 or so passengers, so, i had to come up with a plan of what to do between the times when the cafe closed at 3 a.m. and reopened at 7 a.m. i know it's only 4 hours, but it's not easy when you have sketchy bags, sleep deprivation hallucinations, and you LOOK and FEEL like (and are) a stowaway, i was freaking out because i knew that if i was discovered, i would have to pay a butt-load of money in tickets and fines at least, and — worst of all — I would have to face the fact that my evasiontank had failed, i had lost, gulping defeat.

while people were still walking about with their snazzy luggage, i did so as well with my "oh, he's a traveling punk" bags (i shake my head at this), searching for a hiding place for the night, i found no such place, and after a while i realized that nobody else had their bags out, so, employing my main guerrilla strategy (blending in), i found a neutral couch and put up my flag, i sat there, and then sat there some more, i walked around and sat there, two hours had passed and we hadn't even started moving yet!

this was when i knew it was going to be the longest night of my life, in fact it's probably still going on, somewhere, i thought about the night last fall that i spent shivering in an alcove outside of a building under construction in san Sebastian, northern Spain, those hours passed like crotch-rockets on the autobahn compared to this time, and this time i had kontrol to be invisible to.

i was halfway between the video game pavilion and the 80 s cafe, with music from both in the respective ears, my longest night premonitions confirmed, i wondered if there existed a disease yet called "crossmusication of the brain" or if i was going to be the first diagnosis and fatality, at one point i had super mario in my left and "take... these broken wings..." in ^{m}y right, they actually came in sync about every 45

and went, without turning around to spot my bulging eyes between the 5^{th} and 6^{th} step, there was one every now and then, but i really couldnt tell (i had no timepiece, a pivotal contributor to my apparent madness), some looked around, and some unlocked the door to the car deck, where i was glad i didn t go. i dozed in increments of 5–15 minutes, but i was always somewhere between an REM comatose and a clockwork-orange-style forced awakeness. they never found me, and the angels rang at 7 a.m.: (soft music)... (blah, blah in Swedish and german)... ladies and gentlemen, it's 7 am, the cafe and breakfast bar are now open..." i figured there were angels, but i didn't think they would speak through the Stena Lines PA.

i emerged, cracked my bones back into place, and they echoed through the stairwell, it took me a full 3 minutes to re-boot my memory and locomotion systems and for my heartbeat to return to normal, lifting my head, i felt like i had earned something, something that I'd known i would earn some day, but didn't know what, i smiled and became a person who had slept under the stairs on a ferry to Sweden, i had come that much closer to really knowing myself and my capabilities, i had shed old skin, and above all, i now know where to never, ever hide again.

walking was fun. walking up the stairs was even more fun. i found my couch just where i had left it, and i celebrated with a cup of coffee. 30 minutes later i had it: freedom, i just walked on off. i win!, i screamed, but all the other passengers who paid couldn't hear me, didn't know me, didn't know what i was feeling! i think i actually floated off the ramp! i guess all they cared about was drinking the cases upon cases of freaking beer they were toting around on their luggage dollies all the way from germany.

i passed through another kontrol and a drug-sniffing dog (where a sign told me i was supposed to have my boarding pass ready for someone — and this gave me one last heartattack before i realized it was nothing), and into the arms of the fresh Swedish morning air. no more boats, no more running, i win.

EPILOGUE: i take the final few hundred kilometers by 25 dollar bus, and make it to the Box 4 hours before moe, who took a train for the last leg (we both sold out, i know), i still win.

but i haven't yet gotten my cup of coffee.

[Editor's Notes: For the uninitiated, an "Evasiontank" is presumably a Think Tank (see Inside Front #13, among other sources, for thorough discussion) applied specifically to the project of getting away with stuff. Also — I cant help but add this observation from experience, which will probably only heighten readers' enjoyment of Will's tale of tribulation, but may well make him shake his head and sigh: I ve ridden at least one ferry on that route before, and there were a few people — our band, for example — who had opted not to pay the extra expense for a room, and just slept, bandanas over our eyes, on the floor in the main hall while those folks with key rings Will feared so much walked about. Perhaps there were no roomless passengers on Will's ferry besides him, but unless something has drastically changed on that ferry line, I think he could have just hung out wherever and he would have been fine! Probably the stress and exhaustion, and the difficulties of being in a brand new situation with no context, heightened his paranoia

to dangerous levels — I've certainly experienced the same thing. Your friends find you hiding out under the stairwell, shaking and sweating, after a night's direct action gone awry, and can't persuade you no matter how hard they try that it's safe to come out and hang out with everyone else. Maybe one day all us scampunks will lose it and move in under the stairwells for good. Let's hope the revolution comes and the ferries are all free before then!]

rolling out of bed, jumped off the train, slowly, deerin-headlights-like, walking in the opposite direction. No gods from the sky, just me, incredibly, walking away somehow, amid flashlights blaring everywhere against the radio static. They never found that hobo, though I did enjoy waiting in the high weeds behind the nearby Piggly Wiggly for the next five hours, awaiting dawn, not more that 100 yards from the scene of the crime: two shooting stars assuaged my

nervousness, and I swore to myself I'd get on the first bus out of town. 18 hours ago, fugitive heat, fear and excitement. Now, a cooling memory, and yet another travel story.

More to come. Florida bound, D

Today was beautiful. Sometimes, my head says "live, dont document." Today, I'm willing to take up the pen, feeling good and relaxed, ending this little trip with a ride on the hound, no photo finish this time. *"Patience makes the hobo strong"*

It takes a while to relearn patience after being in the City for so long — all subways and epic walks through the canyons of culture and architecture. I'm on different time here, road time, hobo time in the American south, the humidity hitting its stride the deeper I go.

I'm looking forward to the farm, if for a few days of sticky contemplation. The world ends here: at the heart. The sunset is righteous in Savannah today, its pale blue and silver lined clouds; last night was even more magnificent — Carolina ablaze, all

oranges dashed with pink. I took a few snapshots from the Piggyback, but the train gods snatched them away this morning, along with my Bolivian pasamontafias: all in exchange for free passage, no hobo humiliation, no overnight stay in the Williamsburg Co. jail, no premature end to my teaching career. A batch of snapshots and that beloved knit cap, even trade I guess for my freedom; summer is coming, I suppose TH have to get a new look.

Savannah! Deep with history, fat tourists, fat harbor, fat heart of the American south — love it until I die. I woke up this morning in Kingstree, South Carolina, seat of Williamsburg Co, one of the poorest regions in the state, so says David of the Marcus dept, store: a jew and fine conversationalist, his family fled Brooklyn in the late forties; Kingstree had one of the few synagogues in the area, though they had to go 80 miles to Charleston to get a kosher butcher. Kingstree population 3000 or so, drops a little every year.

I woke up in that sleepy town this morning to the rough static of the police radios: "okay, the train is stopped, we'll find him." Fuck. Yep, that's me, guilty as sin, all bundled up in a sleeping bag, uniformed cop and rail employee less than fifteen feet away. "You go ^{U}P> I B go down" the cop says, my freedom passing before my eyes, dead center of Main street, Kingstree, got its name three hundred years ago — not far away, the masts of the British King's ships were cut from the mighty forests.

The railroad man nods to the cop and looks dead at my car, cramped up beneath the giant wheels of the trailer truck, hoping for a 'deus ex machina' style reprieve, and the guy chuckles "yep, gonna find us a hobo" seemingly to me not five feet away. He passed my car and I grabbed my bag, and casually, like I was

[Image not archived]

I was thinking of you so much last night, when the kids of the town took over an alley in the midst of a boring art festival. We paraded through with a giant festive vagina, then set up a generator and P.A. in the alley between a bakery and a record store... the walls got covered with graffiti in a few minutes, and the ground strewn with flowers; an altar was erected to Sampa Mayka, goddess of garbage and alley-dwellers, and before long the music started — and the dancing. And yes, there was the usual stand-offish selfconsciousness... but there was also rampant silliness, discarded pride, even glimpses of absolute abandon. As it got dark and the moon came out, rumors kept spreading (as always) that the cops were just about to shut it down — making it the perfect time for pounding drums and a fire show. So we burned up the parking lot with dancing and the cops stayed away and it was one of those beautiful circles where you look at the faces around you and know that you are all right there, for those moments, in the same place and on the same plane, and that space is free.

It went on that way. Just a few things I think you would have appreciated (I did): The kid crowdsurfing *in a fucking alley!* The kids from up the street totally rocking out on Nirvana covers and nothing but — and two thirds of the crowd wailing along into the mic with them — one of the mics was just out in the crowd, nowhere near the band. Finally, Nervous Chris wildly making out, in the midst of the dancing crowd,

with some girl who just grabbed him. He stopped kissing long enough to ask "Whafs your name?" — then dove right back into it. Then and there I knew this was liberated territory.

Oh que vida, que pena... Keeping afloat on a raft of coffee and hope. Yours with love, H —

[Image not archived]

Special Continental Scene Report and Retrospective

It felt as if we'd /eft the bad o/d days for good — just a few minutes before a rainbow appeared to us a// in the middle

of the night, to confirm that we had entered fairyland by sheer triumph of camaraderie, someone said to Mark: "you know, we don't actually have proof that this isn't going on everywhere in the world right now", and / felt so good I cou/d even be Heve it might be!

HOW TO GO ON TOUR

WITHOUT A PUNK BAND

In spring of 2002, we announced that that summer various CrimethInc.' cells wouHi toriTi du-it yourself flying oiui.w, , , nd ir.iwl the country perforin mg)n :) variety of settings* with an emphasis on appearing m ofi, ". outside the usual aiuidfoi circuit these tour, would make radical perspectives i bible again in the wasteland of paranoia that remained tn the wake of the let twist attacks of September, 2001, they would state skills and stories among Ungtime >" , ists and '. ivilhins alike: they would oiler a chance for a

in w generation <, j potential revolutionaries

IO ' run away will, tiu circus, ' and)n the

rabble rousing and more connected to the nneriiation.il web of resistance Culture. We sent out a call for other's to form circuses of their own and go on similar tours, and ^rgarttzed (well, perhaps that's a sifting wind for it 1 3 ton vergence of all the ton ring groups to take place at the climax of the summer, in Des Moines, Iowa- the center of notlung ever-happens America

[Image not archived]

CrimethInc. Folklore/FolkwarTour Class of 2000 Advice to Upcoming Circus Tours Of 2002 *courtesy of Bare/yAnonymous*

This is a brief introduction to some of the experience my friends and I have had undertaking projects like the ones that will occur this summer, and a short summary of my current ideas about what could be possible this time.

First, one vision of what these traveling circuses might do: my experience on previous such tours, both with bands and performance groups, is that whenever we spent one night in a town, by the time we left we were just barely getting to know all the exciting things going on there that we wouldn't get the chance to explore; on the other hand, when we spent a few days in a town, we often ended up feeling paralyzed and left out, since we didn't know what to do with ourselves

in an alien environment when we weren't focused on performing. Solution: spend two or three days in each town, with different activities planned for each day.

The first day could be the traditional performance/punk show event, since those are always good chances to keep in contact with your community and meet newer people who are just getting involved; the second day could be a day to connect with the creative/activist community, to trade workshops and share skills and resources (circuses should bring some useful knowledge to share, but also can learn more and more to share as they travel from town to town if locals are willing to teach); and the final day could be set aside for doing something in a public space: staging guerrilla theater in Wal-Mart, setting up a strange interactive tool in the park to start conversations with strangers, wheatpasting Main Street in Romulus, Alabama with the kids you taught the recipe the night before.

The three-day approach requires three times as much from the organizers, of course, than the one-night show, so be sure, if you want to try this, that the people organizing the individual events are ready to go the distance. They will know far better than you can what is possible and valuable in their community, so work closely with them in advance to figure out what they should set up and you should prepare for. Also make sure in advance that everything is clear about how food and lodging wifi be arranged: and if you do think others may join you in the course of your trip (offering a chance to "run away with the circus" is an excellent social service, as long as it doesn't cripple the circus or the escapees' communities...), make sure to provide for this possibility.[1]

[Image not archived]

*'think about what the skills you have to share are — -especially the unusual ones, ones no one watdd think of sharing! — s^*

to help others pick them up. At the least it couldn't hurt, especially if you're going off the beaten track, to bang the raw materials necessary to show interested young people how to do their first screenprinting, or something like that. That could be a whole day's exciting and worthwhile activity right there Also, bring your own curiosity, since you'll have constant chances to learn.

Be as prepared as possible to provide for your own needs: if you are traveling in an automobile, for

example, make sure someone knows at least something about car repair. Try to form a team of individuals whose strengths and abilities complement each other* e.g, one who is good at organizing shows and keeping up with foem arid likes to drive, one who enjoys public speaking and has some expertise in diplomacy one who perhaps is shy about public performances but can do amazing practical work with her hands and

keeps her head in emergencies. At the same rime — try to rotate responsibilities as frequently as possible! .

CrimethInc. North American Insurrection Tour Class of 2001 Advice

Circus Tours of 2002 *by Secret Agent Bart/eby*

What is happening with the CrimethInc. Tour this summer is an exercise in imagination, and like any worthwhile adventure will be difficult. Perhaps a few rumors have circulated around the shortlived CrimethInc. North American Insurrection Tour last summer... what happened, what worked, what failed, and what went up in fucking flames. Flames are — after all — what we want.

You are not a rock band on tour

In a band you are traveling with a few people you know, who all have preset roles drummer, " "singed "lead guitarist" — who all do a certain thing together, like "play a show." You do this on a regular basis, usually at a "club" or "house." You do this once a day, sometimes twice, and survive by taking a piece of the proceeds at the door or selling "merchandise."

, None of this applies anymore.

Zes. ^ ^ ^ DeS'^er: Despitepossib/e ^^ Apiece isn't a horribly incomplete rant-the rest of Ms ft Pas been c/ever/y hidden in the gray

[Image not archived]

You are going to be traveling with a completely unknown number of people, without any funds, and you will all have no idea what you're doing.This can be utterly fucking exhilarating, but it can also lead down the path to apathy (a path littered by beer cans, I might add!) and inability to actually do anything. In the beginning of your tour, not knowing what you are capable of is an advantage for example, a member of your merry troupe formerly known primarily as someone with foot rot and great shoplifting skills can let their inner Shakespeare out. However, someone you also thought was a gentle, kind, and caring individual could also let release his inner Mussolini. Things like this will happen.

That's is why it is important to have a plan, although in all likelihood you will light it on fire and throw the ashes out the van window within a few days of beginning your tour It may not prevent personality problems, but it will at least give both Mussolini and Shakespeare a common goal. A plan sets the tone and timbre of the whole fucking trip, so you should do everything within your power to make it at least an uplifting plan, and a good one. Write a manifesto. An important part of Cnmethlnc. is inspiration — if you can't inspire yourselves, how do you think you re going to inspire others? Without any plan the tour will devolve into wandering and drinking in short order. Even if the entire group read *Evasion* and realizes the lack of revolutionary potential in drinking, the tour will just devolve into wandering and shoplifting instead, making a mockery your pretensions of doing something extraordinary.

You know you want to do something historic, but you will have no idea what that will be — at all. The most effective approach is

Start the shaking process. Put a bunch of kids in a room together and shout "You're free! Free to do whatever you want! The world is yours, you godlike motherfuckers!!" and they'll probably just talk about who's dating who and when the Tragedy show will be; set yourself on fire, do a wild dervish dance, sing a mad hymn to love and war and then shout the same thing, and the results might be different.

Connect your activities to whatever is going on in the rest of the world be a news source about the arrestees from the last demonstration or current events in occupied Palestine, spread information about what the I.M.E actually is (and how that connects to what happened in Argentina), be sure to present interested people with possibilities of what they can do next.

And connect your activities to your own life — this is really important! Dr aw *on* whatever unique experiences or stories you have — those are your greatest resource, and the one that you can be certton no one else can provide if you don't. What you do has to be challenging and exciting and involving for you, first of all it it is going to be for others, so make sure you're doing the things you most need and fear to do.

Try to make sure whatever you do cant easily be placed and classified. DO NOT add more fuel to the fire of popular stereotypes (the myth that Cnmethlnc. is essentially the religion of traveler kids especially has to be smashed — this isn't about glorifying a certain lifestyle, but subverting all of them, right?). If you wear Carhartt and hop trains, fair enough, there are decent enough reasons to do both those things, but challenge people, surprise them, don't let them brush you off as a recruiter from another social clique maybe you Should consider doing something other than blowing fire, lb this end, it would be good to involve people from as far-flung and varying backgrounds as possible. A bunch of punks will probably tend towards starting a d -beat band (or at least a puppet show about drunken pirates), however much they want to do other things; a punk, a folk-artist sculptor, a macrobiotic chef and an addiction/abuse counselor, on the other hand, might have a hard time doing anything together but unique projects. Try not to limit your ideas to what you have in common, but instead approach everything in a way that brings Out the differences and even contradictions within your group. Ihe more ingredients, die more tensions, the sweeter tlie pie.

> to look at your resources and think what the current situation needs, and then try to fucking do it. From our experiences last summer if you're at a gathering of wild eco-warriors in the woods who all know what "CrimethInc." and "Anarchy" are, but are spending far too much time infighting, maybe a comic musical about a love affair between a "green" and a "red" anarchist would work. If you're in a town where people are complaining that "nothing ever happens, " go wheat-pasting with the locals under the cover of night, and make sure to leave the recipe and copies of the posters. If you're stuck with a bunch of pretentious white artists in New York City who recently opened a show space in a working-class Latino neighborhood, have the common decency to fire-bomb their show and drive them out of

town. Don't underestimate your abilities: if a fire-bomb is called for by circumstances, then fucking do it!

On the Highway to Heaven or Hell

Put as much time as humanly possible into the places you visit — and be on time. Being on time to a show is utterly impossible when dealing with the logistics of maneuvering train-hoppers, hitch-hikers, vans that break down, shows that last too long, people who get caught shoplifting or arrested throwing tear-gas canisters at police, and so on. It is our job to do the impossible.

To add to earlier recommendations of three-day stays, I would recommend putting at least a whole day between each show as the "traveling day" (regardless of physical distance, which has little to do with traveling time), and having the day before each show devoted to scheming the next show and nothing else. Practically, bring along someone on the tour who knows something about repairing cars, a triple A membership (someone should have it, doesn t have to be person who owns vehicle), and a spare tire. If you have some sightseeing or relaxing to do, devote a whole day to it. Also, if people are feeling exhausted, make sure to have a day of relaxing. At the same time, beware of starting to relax and then forgetting that you're on a world-wrecking tour that is fighting for the survival of life itself. And — if people are too slow, leave them behind. They wanted adventure, right?

Never forget survival: it takes time. Last summer, we crossed the country with nary a cent, thanks to continual dumpsterdiving, shoplifting, the Home Depot scam, donations, and the kindness of strangers. Shoplifting will play an ambivalent role as a double-faced dark god in your weeks on the road. You will have no money and be hungry, and like some strange deity shoplifting can provide for many of your material needs in return for your faith and continual participation in its foul rituals. Like any god, though, worshipping shoplifting leads straight to slavery — in a van it becomes just too easy to just drive around new places and shoplift continually, assuming you have the white privilege and the clean clothes to do so. In our last experience, as the tour progressed and we became increasingly bedraggled, shoplifting became (to borrow the words of the Unabomber) "a surrogate activity, " one that simulated creative activity and excitement under the pretense of survival while taking up way too much time. Shoplift only when necessary, and try to make money by having benefit shows beforehand, selling books and records, putting out donation jars, robbing banks. Learn how to siphon gas.

Finding Spectators — and Destroying Them

> As said before, people who call themselves anarchists and live in a thriving scene are some of the last people that need a CrimethInc. tour. Anarchist outreach is not about reinforcing

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John Q. Anarchist's belief that what he is doing or believes in is just swell and dandy. We could be more useful reaching those people who are discontented with their lives and the world, and fanning the embers of that discontent into flames. Driving people over the edge straight into the abyss, past the point of ever returning to the "normal routine, ": that's fucking important. Those people are everywhere — with the possible exceptions of punkhouses and infoshops. They're on street corners at midnight

Positive energy: most of all, you 11 need to do this with people you love and believe in and trade inspiration with constantly. It will be that energy _that_ sustains you oil your adventures, as well as everyone you come into contact with. Most of the really intense moments and months of performance and intervention that I know about came out of love affairs of one sort or another. At the, same time, make sure your love affair isn't too fragile, or you might find yourself in the ashes of your project half way through. !

Thplottiticy. fuck, this is important. Being cool-headed, ready to talk but conflicts inside and outside your group, not practicing that childish and counter-productive escalation of aggression some people do when arguments break out., without this, you'll be hard-pressed to have a good time or Survive challenges. Practice being smart, nice.open to others'perspectives, goal-oriented rather than vindictive and petty. Think hard about whether you're ready to do what it takes to get along with others in all circumstances before you Undertake something like this — that is perhaps the most important question. Make sure everyone in your group is thinking about this, not just one babysitter.

Rubysitters? 1 hat brings us to... responsibility! If you tell people you'll arrive at 5 p.m., be there, at all costs, or else you are doing your part to destroy the d.i.y. community and prove that all these crazy dreams will not work after all. Seriously! A larger project like this depends on the blind trust of a wide number of people; betray that trust, and it'll be twice as hard for people to do something like it next time. Sure, sure, theres always some excuse, but there's always a way to make things work, too. In the day. world, everything you do you do by virtue of others generosity and goodwill Be constantly' aware of their needs and feelings. Wash, the dishes you use at their houses, clean up your mess, thank them for every favor, be understanding when things go wrong. •

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selling drugs, they're trapped in boring high-schools, they're drinking coffee before going to work.

Many small cities and towns across the U.S. are developing wild and wooly anarchists of the most unlikely stripes. These are the people that I want to do shows for

— not the latest anarchohipster from Portland, but the kid doing a literature distro from the basement of the church in Appalachia where they hold shows for traveling bands that rarely come. That church deserves to host some guerilla warfare disguised as guerilla theatre! Realize too that some people will be openly hostile to "CrimethInc." — most likely not the police, but other anarchists who fear that "CrimethInc." is on a mission to contest their self-identification as the only true and correct anarchists. Just give them Harbinger #4 and encourage them to read "Infighting the Good Fight"; tell them that the first step to becoming a member of the CrimethInc. Ex-Workers' Collective is to reject the CrimethInc Ex-Workers' Collective.

Some of the best shows of last summer were spontaneous shows done at coffee-houses and public parks, where people

> who had never heard of "anarchy, " much less "CrimethInc., " were exposed to them and enjoyed themselves with us. If there is some important event going on that requires you to ditch your show — for example, a black man accused of trying to kill a cop in self-defense is going to trial and needs support — always feel free to drop the CrimethInc. act and just help out. From cleaning the dishes at the place you were staying to providing the shock troops for some demonstration, almost every community needs a few productive anarchists to do some task or another. Whatever it fucking takes!

Days of Performances, Nights of Soap Opera

> All sorts of vagabonds, runaways, and others will join on the tour as it continues. Soon you may have multiple cars, be doing shows with people you didn't know, and be more excited yet more exhausted than you ever thought possible. First, greet all with open arms, but be very careful with letting your adventuresome band spiral out of control and lose track of its purpose — revolution! For example, if room in the van becomes scarce, make sure that you don't overload it with people. Obvious points like that are often overlooked. I would personally discourage anyone from joining an ongoing tour unless the current tour feels very comfortable with the person; instead, try to persuade people to form their own tours, if possible.
>
> Try to have large group check-ins, but avoid them devolving into semi-formal meetings. Instead, try to keep the group small enough that you can work out everything face to face as friends, without a ludicrous official facilitator. Any more than about ten people will probably lead to self-destruction, in my opinion. If people desire to join the tour midway, you should discuss with everyone already

involved whether they want to travel with this person. Of course, you probably won't find out the true colors of the person till much later in the trip, so it needs to be clear that the whole tour is dynamic and ever-changing, and it may be necessary for people to leave the tour. Don't let problems fester, don't skirt around issues of sexism, racism, boredism, alcoholism, laundry, lack of productivity, and so on. If problems do fester and spiral out of control, always remember that sometimes you have to tear all the maggots out of rotting flesh so it can regenerate.

Your relationships will stretch to the boundaries and probably break. If you have a group of people in a small space going on wild adventures, people in short notice will start mating in all imaginable combinations. Soon, the trip may resemble a syndicated soap opera. Leaders will emerge, with pecking orders, and those on the bottom of the pecking-order will attempt to exterminate each other. These things can be prevented with balanced distribution of authority, and a firm commitment from everyone in the trip not to let their hormones rule their human faculties to such an extent

that the tour is destroyed. Most problems shouldn't wait for the next group meeting. Waiting for the next "Group Meeting" is like waiting for "The Revolution." Instead, at the moment a problem begins, all those involved should talk to each other about it face- to-face. If it's best for people to separate, it should just be done. There's room enough in this world for a million tours, CrimethInc. or otherwise.

CrimethInc.: The Legend

The strangest part of a CrimethInc. tour is that people will continually ask you "Who wrote the book?" or "What's the next book?" and, most frequently, "I don't believe that quote on the back of the Evasion book!" It's frustrating, but simply be honest while maintaining the mysterious nature of crimethinking: "I don't know who wrote the book, but it sure as hell wasn't me — and goddamnit, I didn't write that fucking quote either!" There's no need to give the full names, addresses, and phone numbers of every person ever involved in a CrimethInc. project, or at the other extreme add extraneously to the CrimethInc. mythology (hopefully the tours will do that merely by existing!). As independent autonomous cells are producing CrimethInc. propaganda and actions, no one actually does know exactly who did what and who is planning fortheir next project.Tell them about your life, how you got involved with revolution, what your next projects are. Then ask them about their lives, what they love and hate about CrimethInc., and what their next projects are. Be very open — anyone can use the CrimethInc. logo for anything, and anyone can distribute CrimethInc. literature for whatever purpose they have without any need to contact the CrimethInc. Central High Command Committee for Decentralization or e-mail Paul E Maul. CrimethInc. isn't a logo, it's a challenge, a mood, a moment.

If you need it, use it. If not, don't. Quite simple, really.

that took generations to work out and shouldn't be denied to new hearts.

'For fuck's sake, you herd of idiots, *don't needlessly alienate.* A banner that says "Work is for Bored People" might be exhilarating for a crowd of rebellious teenagers, but to a gathering of older people it might appear that you're flaunting the privileges

they don't have. Another example — if you're performing at a macho hardcore show, unless there's no alternative, try to find a way to tap into whatever radical tendencies are present (you know, "we mosh because we love to be intimate with other boys, because it makes us fed alive — the same way I felt (hat night I., , "), rather than just telling everyone they're a bunch of dumb sheep. The latter tactic is only useful in emergencies, when a line has to be drawn immediately so the people in the middle will see just how important it is that they distance themselves from the ones you are picking as opponents. We had to do that ' with Earth Crisis, maybe we have to do it with the Socialist Workers'Party, too, but there's no fucking reason to make everyone our enemies. Show the people you interact with that anarchism is about mutual support and respect for differences and all that jazz. (OK, ha, can you tell now that the : first sentence of this paragraph was intended to be ironic?) :

Above all good luck. You'll learn on your own skin what you need to, if you're ready to go through the fire See you at the conclusion of all this in Iowa — Imagine all the stories well have to share with each other there!

After the Tour

The tours are happening for multiple reasons, and everyone is going for their own. What is important is that these tours be used to build something even greater for the future. The tours should help strengthen bonds within our own communities, and build alliances with new ones. We don't need just another list of contacts for booking shows, an anarchist version of *Book Your Own Fucking Life.* We need fellow revolutionaries, lovers, fighters, dreamers, and friends. These friendships that are being built should allow us to do even greater projects nationally and even internationally. Our tour last year went out with the express purpose of helping decentralize Harbinger distribution (a plan that was cancelled post-tour, tool), but in the process we made many allies, nearly died in a desert, inspired people to make their own CrimethInc. flyers, websites, and so on... we also threw donuts at the cops, barely escaped an orgy, met astounding people, met people we wish we never laid eyes on, were brutally assaulted at a coffee-shop, put on musicals despite our inability to sing in key, hated each other, loved each other, and in the end went our separate ways unto even greater things. Some of the people on the last tour now live in a collective house, work together on a garden, have started writing poems and books together, and beyond. We'll destroy the whole world together!

We are the modern day refugees of Louis and Clark, who, turning our backs on their quest to map out the wilderness for exploitation, now turn the wreckage of American civilization into a new wilderness. Let's remember what we see, the strange tribes we encounter, our adventures, our knowledge. In the end, through our travels, we shall collectively know the United States in all its majesty and all its madness as well, if not better, than the government itself does. It is always useful to know one's enemy. With love in our hearts, AK-47s in our hands, and a new world being born beneath our very noses... aim beyond the stars, Agent Bartleby

****

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Part l:TheTour

So what did we do? How did it go? I can only speak for the circus I toured with, but we had an amazing month. It started out just two of us, myself and my friend Mark, an inventor and yoga student with whom I have been having adventures since we met as boy scouts nearly two decades ago, by the end of the tour, we were eight, including a spoken word artist, a Poi expert organizing for protests against the International Monetary Fund, a freestyling M.C. of amazing capabilities, and two specialists in the "anarchist ice cream" scam. We began with a 200 pound d.i.y. drum machine, among other instruments and props; by the tour's end, standard drumsets seemed foreign. We finished assembling and testing our 38-foot-diameter inflatable circus tent only hours before our first show, for 200 4-H campers in rural West Virginia; we also performed at a wedding for many hundreds of guests, for four people behind

an art gallery, and for mixed audiences of bearded anarchists, amiable parents, and restless children in assorted public parks, theaters, infoshops, and basements. We learned how to shut off the gas at fast food franchises, and made a 'zine with the instructions, and various other texts we'd composed during the tour, to give away. We taught the radical history of puppetry with puppet shows, we screamed out manifestos and recited original-composition children's stories to ancient folk songs. We held round table discussions to introduce anarchist ideas to teenagers — and their families. We got heckled by punk rock clowns with clown paint tattooed on their faces, who thought we weren't circusish (or drunk?) enough.

Other circuses had more mixed results. One disappeared, one had to cancel practically its whole tour, another group arrived in Des Moines having driven all the way from the West coast with no licensed drivers in a quickly dying automobile. The Northeastern circus arrived with more than twenty members, many of them newly joined, and mentioned that many others had passed in

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From our first show in West Virginia, the totality of the CircusTour was just a myth-but it was a myth we spread. Every night we would remind the audience, not to mention ourselves, that in six locations across the United States, six circuses were performing, skillsharing, or at least stuck by the side of the road swearing. It was something to think about now and then; but none of that seemed real until our convoy came to a weary halt in the parking lot of the campsite, a state park in Indianola, Iowa.

The group I was traveling with included contributors to several written projects published under the CrimethInc. moniker. We assumed, but more accurately feared, that we knew of the majority of active CrimethInc. affiliates.

So when we hopped out of our cars at camp and were greeted as welcome strangers by a member of the NE circus group, she may not have known that it made my entire day. As more and more circuses arrived, our fears dissolved. No group was less gorgeous, inspiring and excited than the next. We began to figure out that each group

had arrived with the same fears as us. As the week spun on we were amazed at the differences in the groups, each one a strange planet with its own culture, concerns, aesthetics, tactics.

Since I returned home, the myth of all 1 experienced has been more important than ever. I am back in a familiar place, now feeling there is a thread behind my dreams and activities that is present in one hundred more places than I imagined. I have a feeling that every minute I spend cooking up ideas (or dumpstered veggies) is multiplied. Now I have to do my best to keep up with the brilliance of a new universe — not play small or shy so as not to scare one away.

> I have harbored a version of that myth, even cared for it as my own. But during our circus travels this summer I saw it publicly shamed and exiled.
>
> Our circus elected to avoid large cities in favor of smaller cities and towns. We also tried staying in towns one or two extra days to share what we had and to learn what we could. What we learned is a list too long to recount of the most breathtaking nobodies in the world. Families with children, sharing direct action tactics and spreading information on community building that will let them quit their jobs and feel like their children are cared for. Young kids running would- otherwise-be-disposable punk houses, with long-term plans to fix roofs and stop developers. Rural West-Virginians who taught us rookies a lesson or two in anarchy and pet care.
>
> Backwards indeed! I realized that Power has a vested interest in everyone believing everyone else to be hopelessly stupid, isn't it obvious, for instance, that Power could have chosen any number of presidential puppets, puppets that middle class intellectuals would think well (enough) of, handsome and intelligent-seeming puppets?
>
> J *A* : ®ut n∘, ‘n an abso,ute*Y brilliant moment of inspiration
>
> Power stopped short. They choose George Bush-that I t ‘ l I lovab, eP^oo^ “toeriterta,n the small minority who, through
>
> . ^ flSk-^ S ’ misinformation, elected him. Then they sit back and watch

[1] Jfc±^W^^^B>_____Jj the lest become crippled with despair because a “majority”

(as implied by the media, and the sheer fact that he is president) of their fellow citizens must drink him up like the milkshake he is.

“Obviously)’ smacks the regular at the coffee shop, “this is a nation of imbeciles!”

^ear to b^X^nm^ unrepresented by and simultaneously fearful of a majority, actually a minority, who only

PP . ^presented. Its easy to catch that myth because it is broadcast so thickly by the media that an antenna in your liver could K |UP 9 ‘T bV ^ WaV,,, , fS eaSy * keep beCaUSe » hel,s »u*that latte and another blase pohtica analyst

[God, I used the accent-e button twice in one sentence!] [y]

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But out here, in America itself, we saw this myth to be one more facade, a false front disguised as a castle wall When rulers gates, when we really do it instead of muttering amongst ourselves about it, our fellow-serfs will be at our sides.

and out of their group in the course of the tour. The Southeastern circus started out their pretour organizing as a group of ten, and arrived in Des Moines as a twosome able to do the work of twenty.

It was definitely in our favor that our particular circus group was built on the bedrock of my friendship with Mark and our experience doing such things together. It took the pressure off the others who joined us, and established a positive, energized atmosphere that colored everything we did or encountered. Our best shows were definitely the ones in the less-traveled regions; in cities like Chicago, people are so jaded that it's hard to get them to take booking a show seriously even for a well-established touring group, but just a few hours away in Springfield, locals roll out the red- and-black carpet for anybody that comes through.

As I mentioned, we finished building our famous circus tent, having no idea if it would work or not, less than twenty-four hours before our first show — and then started wondering what we'd do at the show. We wrote most of our skits in the next few days, struggling to compose lines on the way to the following shows. This improvisation and intense ongoing development gave our early performances an immediacy that could create real magic ("OK, this is a poem I wrote and memorized one hour ago — ") and a disorganization that could totally sabotage that (imagine me stopping in the middle of that poem, mind blank, just when everyone's pulse was beginning to quicken, and finally being forced to search for my notebook). It was indeed a lot of fun to spend every day's drive helping each other to memorize our lines, but I imagine that if we hadn't already been tried- and-tested working companions the extra stress

of this would have been one more straw on the proverbial camel's back. I wish wed done more general preparation in advance, and then done the improvising around details and additions as we went. At the end of the tour, when we were finally really good at everything we were doing, I regretted we hadn't started out that good and improved from there... but, you know, I'm a perfectionist. The southeastern group prepared a great deal in advance, and did little improvising, while the northeastern group did little else.

Was it all a success? Over forty cities hosted radical events of some kind over a period of less than a month, whether that meant a hundred people dancing naked together or six kids talking about what the alternatives to college might be. Everyone ended up with a lot more skills and experience to be applied next time, and the sheer

If the tour our circus undertook drove anything home for me, it is how important it is for us anarchists to be visible in every community we pass through, how important it is for us to travel and trade information and inspiration openly with everyone we can. Punk rock shows and touring bands were crucial for radicalizing the demographic

I come from, and although not everyone can or should be a punk or a traveler, we should never underestimate the strategy dissidents have used for centuries: roving bands of entertainers and organizers crisscross the land, planting seeds and conveying information from one entrenched resistance group to another — in person, the way human beings have always interacted best. Yes, for the last time, the majority of us at any given point should be located in a community we know and belong to, so we can have the stability and

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crew of rural folk mill around tables of free food set out on the gravel road, confused proto-skinheads sit in a field debating patriotism with teenage whiz-kid anarchists, and a solitary maniac can be heard playing scorched-earth electric blues from the barn. We run four hundred feet of extension cords all the way up the hill to inflate our giant d.i.y. circus tent, and one of our hosts four-wheels our equipment up in a big country truck. After the show, Norma, the matriarch responsible for this venue, known by young people in the area for sometimes appearing at shows in her dominatrix ensemble, drives it back up to help us get our stuff.

"I knew y'all would want to be on this hilltop. My daughter said you'd want the barn, but I knew it, that you'd choose the hill. This hilltop here, this is a special place. You know, 1 get those corporations coming to me every week, telling me they want to buy all these trees off me — and I say, you listen: every single tree here, every blade of grass is a living thing, and you're not touching a one of them! They're not used to that, you know, I'm probably the only fifty-one year old black woman they met who owns hundreds of acres of land, and they think I'm going to turn it over easy, but — well, I'll tell you what. I don't want you to think I'm crazy,

fact that this happened hopefully gave hope to others that their own grandiose schemes might also be possible. And — if future tours are easier and better thanks to the experience we gained, then every problem, every misadventure suffered this past summer, will have been worthwhile.

commitment to build support networks and longterm projects — but some of us should be out there in the world, too, building geographical links as well as local ones, making possibilities visible where they weren't before.

Part ll:The

Convergence

If the tours had ups and downs, the convergence at the end was something else entirely. None of us have really tried to capture it in writing or words since; we all seem to agree that the joy of the experience went beyond anything mere words could capture.

We gathered at a campsite a couple dozen miles from Des Moines, and alternated activities for ourselves there with activities in downtown Des Moines. Staying out in

nature, most of us sleeping outside, helped us feel connected to the earth and focused on ourselves and each other; after a few

but I have a thing for dirt. Dirt — you know, huge trees grow from this stuff, isn't that a miracle! That's not something to sell to anybody, no way. We come up here on this hill, we have dinner on this hill, watch the sunset, drink up here — I have sex on this hill, I come up here and get naked, and look at the stars! I say — you haven't lived until you've felt the wind in your crotch under the stars! Well now — y'all are anarchists, I hear. Tell me, what's anarchy about?"

Days later, in Springfield, Illinois, we set up the tent in the parking lot next to a community space just opened by our new friends here. Most of the people who come to the show and the skillshare the next day are significantly older than us — many of them are part of an unjobbing" group that meets here to trade skills for cutting back expenses and escaping from the employee/consumer cycle. This is really inspiring to see, to be reminded that were not the only generation engaged in the Struggle for liberation — still, were a little anxious about how our more militant masks- and-moiotoys rhetoric will go over.

But just as it happened when we performed for a mix of teenage punks, college radicals, facially tattooed anarchists, nicely dressed parents with young children, days there, we were in tune enough with the land and climate that the changing weather seemed to express our own moods back to us.

Unlike just about every other conference or convergence I've been to (and, frequently, been

disappointed by), a majority of the people there had arrived after weeks of traveling with projects of their own-and even those who hadn't been on tour had usually had some crazy adventures trying to get out to convergence, whether they were riding their bikes across the country or hitchhiking. This meant that the spectatorship, and attendant dichotomy between organizers and onlookers, that mars too many gatherings, was absent from the beginning: everyone there had something to share, and knew it.

This created an atmosphere of total participation. Everything worked because everyone was down to contribute their share of both practical and creative input: fuck the books of theory, this was anarchy in action! The fact that there was no formal organizing, and thus no set distinction between organizers and organizees, made it easy

and local journalists in Athens, Ohio, and they all seemed equally entertained by our antiauthoritarian theater and rhetoric — just as it reputedly happened when Stef and Ben performed their puppet tutorial on molotov-making in a Louisville public park, and the mothers present sent their children away while continuing to watch avidly themselves — these women and men turn out to be thrilled to hear about how anarchists fought the pigs back in Quebec City, to learn direct action techniques they can apply locally, to cheer poetry celebrating full-scale insurrection. Its almost unnerving. We were wrong, Mark confides to me in the truck afterwards, to fall for the propaganda in the papers and on television about our fellow US. Citizens: people

everywhere in this country are fed up with business as usual, desperate for adventure and intrigue in their own lives, suspicious at the very least of the powers that be — if not already eager to work towards their demise. All that's lacking are approachable, supportive local faces of revolt, and the secret army will start to come out of hiding — we just have to show our confidence in what we're doing, our certainty that it is normal and neighborly to want the utter destruction of capitalism and capitulationism, and everyone can drop their masks.

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met at noon in a circle, to discuss what we would all like to do, and how things were going; people volunteered to be in groups that handled the acquisition of food and cooking, which went surprisingly smoothly (if always a little behind schedule, as is customary everywhere outside the corporate pale) — and there was always enough to eat, somehow. When it came to performances and workshops, almost everyone had something to offer, and we could have gone on forever listening to and learning from each other. The supportive atmosphere this created made it easy for people

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or beating out rhythms, and one by one we felt the atmosphere change: magic appeared in the air, it was suddenly like we were living a dream. People began singing or screaming, spinning and spitting fire, spontaneously yelling out poetry that was lost in the noise now bigger than all of us, like that noise some of us had heard in Quebec when thousands tore down the street signs to make percussion instruments. At some moments, we were all singing together, and it was intoxicating to hear in our ears the feeling of tribal unity already thrilling our hearts. Soon, dancers began taking off their clothes, until a number of women and men were dancing naked, which felt absolutely natural and unaffected. At this moment, I looked over and saw, at the edge of the circle, two men from the nearby neighborhood, standing and watching, beers balanced on their paunches as if they were at a football game. Looking back at my fellow dancers, 1 marveled that we had created a space so safe that boys and girls who had been terrorized all their lives by the culture of insecurity and fear could dance and sing naked and free without fearing each other's gaze — or the gaze

who I think would never have come forward in another environment to do so; it also made it much easier to be a creative or vocal person, because you didn't have to fear that you were hogging the spotlight.

The head count at the daily circles hovered over thirty and under one hundred. I think altogether, counting all the people who were part of the group at some point between the beginning and the end, that probably a little over one hundred and fifty people came in and out of the community

staying at the campsite. This meant that by the end of the event, even though some of us (like me, for example, believe it or not!) had arrived knowing almost no one, we'd all gotten to know many or most of our companions. It was a perfect environment for getting to know others quickly: there was a lot to do together that really opened people up, and a common understanding that we were there to build friendships and community. Incidentally — I've been in many "radical" environments in which people were supposed to feel validated and secure enough to be open to receiving serious constructive criticism, but this was the only one in which the love in the air was palpable enough for me to feel that such a thing could really work.

What did all this mean forThe Struggle?Traditional uptight class war anarchists might not think that

us of how beautiful life can be and pushes us to push for that at the same time as it helps us purge the bitterness of unsatisfying survival from our weary systems. I know witnessing this kind of energy for the first time left a deep impression many of the locals who were there, some of whom did in fact quit their jobs and transform their lives immediately thereafter.The connections we made with each other, the skills and ideas and inspiration and hope and faith we exchanged, will make us infinitely more dangerous to the capitalist beast. In those hours when we entered Des Moines with all our fearless, unfetterable energy, dancing in the middle of intersections and starting serious political conversations with strangers, I could almost imagine that all it would take to change the world would be for us to start together in this one city, expanding our numbers every day as we

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of outsiders with no context for what we were doing, and no commitment to respect. That safety was a show of our strength together — that we could not only make magical spaces, but also knew we were secure in them together, come what (or who) may.

Driving up en mass to Des Moines from the campsite Friday evening, our convoy of cars stopped at a corporate supermarket to use homemade coupons to pick up vast quantities of vegan ice cream, which we gave away on the streets downtown a few minutes later. As we were waiting in the parking lot for everyone to get ready to go, dancing to the music on someone's car stereo and enjoying Joe's freestyling ("here we are in the place to be, forty one anarchists and me"), the manager came out to tell us that he "appreciated our business" (ha!) but we "had to get moving." Joe answered him smoothly in freestyled rhymes — something the guy was totally unprepared to deal with! He retreated into the supermarket, and the lot was ours.

That night we descended upon downtown Des Moines in several small groups — some

a few days like this could make a difference one way or the other, but I see it so very differently. Tasting the world we want to live in, living it, is an antidote for all the misery and powerlessness of the world we're trying to escape: this taste gives us something to fight for and stay alive for, it reminds

reveled publicly in our love of life and each other, and push slowly across the country, transforming every intersection, every interaction, every city as we went.

*Hey Y'all, *

Let's have another circus tour! If we do, I promise I'll have my lines memorized better — and I'm already working on a teleprompter for 2004! Also, I'll remember not to run out of gas. And Fluffy, please remember not to leave my gas cap on the top of the truck. And you — motherfucker in the BMW — remember to swerve two thin inches to the right so my gas cap doesn't smash into a hundred bits right before my teary eyes.

I'll remember to shave my butt, too, so I'll feel more comfortable about shucking down. And I'll do some NordicTrack or something beforehand, so my little heart can keep up with my Big Heart when the NE circus performs. Yo NE, y'all are gonna do that thing again right?! For real though, NE told me they'd do it again but they'll be using body doubles for all the nudie scenes — so maybe I'll just bring my strap-on butt.

And can we get a committee together? We seriously need a better name than "The Convergence" — something with a "Z" in it, I say. One day it will get so large that it'll break free of the "DIY community" and spread to the "I'll-go-DI-for- someone-else-to-get-some-money-so-you-will-come-DI-for- me community." I know it's still a few years out, but we might want to talk about charging $150 at the gate so newcomers can have the awesome experience of being as broke as those mythic pioneers of old were when they arrived.

When circus tour finally eats itself enough times to be fat and safe, we can sell the event, and its new Z-Name, to Fluffy. By that time he'll be rich off the six dollars he invested in the market instead of buying me a new gas cap. Fluffy and I will stand in the skybox looking out over our minions. I'll say, "Fluffy, things are getting a little out of hand out there." Then, in a desperately nostalgic move, we'll hire security guards to kick everyone's asses. Fucking kids!

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search of a working outlet. Suddenly, unexpectedly, all the groups converged, and a spontaneous Reclaim the Streets broke out in the middle of the bar district! A rhythm, reminiscent of the one from the preceding night, was struck up on the mailbox and found-object percussion on hand, wild dancing began, and soon a woman, towering on stilts, was blowing fire in the middle of the street. Locals on their way to the bars stopped, amazed, and some began to dance with us; a man tried to seize the U.S. flag that some of us were happily trampling, but was

backed down by cool-headed kids while the other locals, surprisingly, looked on in disapproval of his macho stupidity — even in this post-September 11 world, they didn't mind us stomping on the flag, as long as we were smiling!

Stepping back, gasping for breath from the dance, I realized that our numbers had magically doubled. We had pulled off one of the most successful Reclaim the Streets actions I've witnessed, by sheer accident! \

Saturday late at night, just before I went out to sleep, I was saying goodnight to my friends in the barn, when I noticed a young man bedding down with them who was wearing a cow costume for warmth in that chilly night. Double-taking, I realized it was the local guy in the Dr. Who shirt who had run into us in downtown Des Moines the night before, having no former exposure to punk or anarchism, and joined us in the street party! Then I recognized him as one of the individuals who had participated in that days discussions. It turned out he had called off working for the weekend and come to camp out with us, avidly learning all he could and joining in our activities! Walking to my sleeping bag, I wondered if others like him — or perhaps: how many! — were among our numbers, in other corners of the campsite; and wondered why we'd all waited so long to make a space like this where people could

[Image not archived]

Hey, let's not have another circus tour! Let's cultivate the connections we made. Let's spread the myth in the twinkling of our eyes and the poetry of ripped off zines. Let's allow the impossible magnitude of our experience to force us to be better storytellers. Let's remember what is possible in our lives, so we'll have that to think about during moments when nothing seems possible.

Most of us left Des Moines saying "let's do this again." I said it too, and goddamnit, I meant it. But for me "doing this again" is not necessarily about converging in Iowa, traveling "circuses, "puppet theaters, or even midnight rainbows. This was about swallowing deep and committing to the shakiest- sounding idea I had heard of in a long while (hard to imagine from this perspective). Doing it again will be the same.

*So let's not make a magic potion out of all this, a set of instructions that we swallow again hoping to get just as big. Rather, let's think of new plans that are as beautiful, *

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join us and experience for themselves what we meant when we said freedom!

During Joe's freestyling workshop on the grass downtown on Sunday, the local homeless men who had walked up to see what we were doing felt comfortable enough to treat us to some of their rhymes.

Returning to the campsite from the workshops downtown, I saw ten, then fifteen great fireballs explode into the air at once, as Stef and Jane led their firebreathing workshop.

Sunday night, after the formal performances were over, when people were shooting off firecrackers and dancing and singing together and spirits were so high it felt as if we'd left the bad old days for good — just a few minutes before a rainbow appeared to us all in the middle of the night, to confirm that we had entered fairyland by sheer triumph of camaraderie — someone said to Mark: "you know, we don't actually have

proof that this isn't going on everywhere in the world right now"... and I felt so good I Could even believe it might be!

At the final circle, on Monday before we went downtown to liberate a block for One more afternoon, we spontaneously began sharing poetry, songs, confessions with each other,

celebrating each other and the time we'd shared. It was a space in which all of us felt safe enough to be vulnerable and passionate and naked before each other, and the beautiful things that came out were breathtaking. It felt as if we could go on forever, reveling in that trust and freedom, like we should just put down roots in that space and plant gardens in that field and live there together as one clan, all in love.

; ***Editor's Introduction ;***

DOWN WITH REVIEWS!

After the show in Sarajevo, we split up into little groups to stay in the small apartments of different locals. Rob, Stef, and I went with the tall, older guy to his place, high up in an apartment complex overlooking the river. From that height, we could gaze down upon the snowy rooftops of many different centuries of beautiful architecture — and upon some of the wreckage and ruins left from the war, still waiting to be cleared away these years later.

As usual, I was mute, Stef was withdrawn, and Rob was self-absorbed, so we didn't make particularly good company for our host. He was a few years older than me, sociable but serious, with lines already carved into his face; he'd spent his life here, and since the early 1980 s he'd followed the invention and extrapolation of punk rock at varying distances, depending on the political climate. We were the foreigners coming through from far away, so he was hoping we'd have stories to tell, new bands to play him, perspectives to trade on older bands — but after three months of non-stop tour, and with another tough two months ahead, we just wanted to be left alone.

At the show I'd received a deep gash in my forehead which had only just stopped bleeding — many if not most of the kids in attendance had grown up in refugee camps in the middle of Europe's worst ethnic conflict in decades, so it wasn't strange they'd express their frustration in extremely violent dancing. I'd been making my way into the middle of the crowd as I sang, to try to break up some of the aggressive energy, when someone's fist accidentally struck me. I still remember standing there pointing to the blood streaming off my face, screaming *"look at this! look! is this what you want?"* — and the kids staring back at me, as if to say they were sorry, but

> it was beyond their control. Now I was in the bathroom, cleaning the last crusts of blood off my brow and checking to see how the new safety pin tattoo on my chest was healing, and Stef was putting out our sleeping bags on the couch. Our host, therefore, was trying to engage Rob in conversation.
>
> He was going through his records, trying to figure out what Rob was interested in — "you like Casper Brotzmann Massaker? Einsturzende Neubauten?" — but Rob was at least a decade younger and didn't know any of these bands. "Throbbing Gristle?" Finally, it became too uncomfortable for me to listen to them misunderstanding each other, and I stuck my head out of the bathroom to nod encouragingly at this last one. "Aha, yes, I have Psychic TV too — " he began, but with my voice thrashed all I could do was nod

my head, so pretty soon I gave up again in vexation and retreated to the bathroom to brush and floss my teeth[1].

He gave Rob a try once more, with some newer bands: "How about Korn? Do you like Korn?" At this, Rob made a face: "No, I don't really like them." *Korn?* I could read in his expression, you *like Korn? Everyone knows they suck!*

I was done in the bathroom, and tried to make my way past them to lurk inconspicuously by the window; but our host, finally weary of trying to squeeze water from the stone that Rob was, followed me to it. "This direction, " he explained to me, a- we looked out, "was the front, the fighting, just a few hundred meters away."

I followed his gesture out into the night. "This meant that I had electricity, here, when the rest of the city did not. I had radio equipment, so I could pick up the international radio shows, and that was when I heard this new music coming out of England and the U.S., bands like Korn, Tool. I was interested. I would tape their songs from the radio and sit here and listen to them as the shooting was going on down there."

I could only nod, still, and so he wished me a good sleep and went to bed. For Rob, Korn was a terrible MTV rock band marketed to adolescent boys to cash in on their gawky angst and antagonism. For our host, their music had been his only connection to sanity in a nation gone crazy with violence and hatred; their songs had been a secret world he had discovered and retreated to in order to survive when everyone around him was killing or dying.

A half-decade ago, in the introduction to the reviews in Inside Front #11, 1 speculated that one could compose a song that, like Ice-9 in Kurt Vonnegut's *Cat's Cradle, * would transfigure everyone who heard it, touching off a chain reaction that would spread around the world: a total revolution. At the time, I was engrossed in the struggle to write such a song; my own life had been utterly transformed by a handful of songs, and outdoing them — making songs which might utterly transform the cosmos itself — was my consuming obsession. A year or so after composing that introduction, I read a piece in an issue of Al Burian's* Burn Collector *in which he confessed that there had*

been a time when he had believed the same thing was possible. Punk rock songs had so affected him that he figured all it would take for everyone to be changed as he had been

(a world of Al Burians... a terrifying thought, really) would be for these songs to be played everywhere — that was why good music was banned from the radio, why the media only broadcast pap and drivel (it was, after all, the 1980's). Accordingly, he set out to play punk rock, to spread it around the world.

Later, after years of band practice, tours, incandescent instants punctuating grueling, disappointing months, Al was sitting in a car, stuck a in traffic jam, listening to corporate radio out of sheer boredom — when one of those old songs came on. He'd long since lost the brash illusions of his youth, but it had been a slow, imperceptible process — now, suddenly, his one-time dream was coming true, but as the most horrible of disappointments. He looked around at the fed up, glassy-eyed people in neighboring cars — it was entirely possible that they were listening to the same station he was, and nothing was happening, nothing at all.

What does that mean, then? Is punk rock powerless to change the world? Have we wasted all those guitar strings and cracked cymbals and eardrums on a pipe dream? Obviously not. What Al and I missed at first was the question of context — we first heard those songs in the drama of gritty basements, as secret weapons we shared with our friends against a world upon which we declared war: small wonder, in such a setting, that those simple, artless songs had the power to forge destinies. Severed from the d.i.y. ecosystem that makes them vital, removed from their natural environment, placed in the zoos of corporation commerce and spectacle, of course they lose their wild beauty, of course they refuse to reproduce. That doesn't mean they weren't ever powerful to begin with — on the contrary, it suggests that that context, d.i.y., dirty basements, and drama, has the potential to make almost miyftotg powerful.

So yes, I'm still engrossed in the struggle to write those songs, world revolution through punk rock is still one of my consuming passions. But more than ever I'm aware that we have to fight on two fronts: we have to arrange words and notes and hone structure, sure; at the same time we have to create situations in which "three chords and the truth" can actually matter, can be the beautiful, powerful things they should be. Rocking music and rocking the boat have to go hand in hand, or neither can have the teeth or heart both need.

Where does this leave music journalism, then? If Korn can be life-saving in Yugoslavia and CRASS can be mere kitsch on 1–95, if the value of the music depends completely on the context it occurs in, how

1. ***See? Umlaut lyrics can have a positive influence.***

I 6 REVIEWS

is a 'zinester or scenester to offer any useful perspective at all? Shouldn't we just make 'zines about creating context, then? That is what most of Inside Front has become, anyway — so why have reviews at ail? Well, I don't know. Some of the

records reviewed here, especially some of the ones I think are fucking great, you may not have heard of before. So here you go, a few reviews, just in case — maybe we won't lead you astray.

And as for you, Music Listener, how should you pick a good record? This is what I've been building up to — it's not just up to the records. If you want to be moved by music, if you want it to matter, then you have to create the context for that in your own life. Live like fire, risk everything for what you love, and records that others dismiss as trite or tired will bring tears to your eyes. Give those world-transforming songs burning worlds within you to resonate with, make liberated spaces in which both people and songs can have power and meaning. Not that you have to move to a war-torn nation or suffer a life of hardship and fear to accomplish this — it should be enough to pursue your dreams and support others in pursuing theirs, and run into the inevitable few nightmares along the way — but the guy who hosted us in Sarajevo who listened to Korn, or for that matter the fourteen-year- old watching his friends play in their first Dis-band and thinking it the best noise the world has ever heard, they are the ones who really know good music, not the critics.

Reviewer Code:

-@ Gloria Cubana, queen of the world

-b Your humble editor

-b-side Bruce Burnside

-xb Straight Edge as Fuck Ben!

-s Stef

-JUG Juggler Greg Bennick

song with stuff like, "This here's a sawng about settin in the woods with y'alls buddies round a campfire and watchin' th' ashes go up in the a-yer." After they were done, all of their girlfriends sat down on the floor in front of where Burmese set up, in front of the stage. Burmese played for about 10 seconds before Mike (the little one) stomped all over the women like he hadn't seen them.

He ended up tangled up among them and their suddenly very angry boyfriends. Mike then started doing his usual raging against the audience, getting closer and closer with his bass each time. Finally, one of the Virginians grabbed him and punched his face so hard that his glasses came off and he went sprawling and all his pedals came unplugged.

He plugged them back in and charged the audience, and this time he was thrown into the drum set so hard that the drums fell over. A long buzzing sound followed, and Burmese lurched into another song, hampered by the fact that the hippie metal guys were trying to fight them as they played their show. The set ended 15 minutes after it started, with the lights on and scrawny Mike standing there, his fist raised, challenging someone else to punch him in the face, surrounded by pedals, strings, drum equipment, and the sound of the amplifiers turned up too loud.

Zegota, Washington DC (farewell show during the National Conference on Organized Resistance, 2002)

I stood outside the show space while Ashley napped in the car, nursing a hangover; but the moment Jon arrived, we promptly took off for a walk around the nearby Mall. We walked in the night shadows of the Capital lights and spoke of the things to come. He was excited and nervous to be at the end of an era; though the band would continue, everything was about to change as they forged off to destinies not yet known. Being present for Zegota's last North American

show for several years to come, preceding their move to Sweden, was a meaningful experience for many of us, as the band had become mingled with our lives over the past four years. In that January of last year after a day at the National Conference on Organized Resistance in Washington D.C. the basement of a church hall downtown was packed with conference goers and people who had come from all over to attend the show. There were many bands that played that night, Kill the Man Who Questions and Redencion 9–11 stand out in my mind, but it was Zegota's night, and it was a pleasure to see how far the. band had come on the eve of their departure. The lads showed off everything they had learned together, especially since Ard's addition a year and a half previous, holding nothing back. Will opened the set quietly on kora, an African harp, and slowly Jon and Birch, the sometimes brass player for Zegota, followed in on saxophones, intertwining slow and easy, and soon Ard found his way in on the bass. In the midst of all this Jon and Will switched to guitar and drum kit, building and finally bringing the improvisation to a crescendo, a wall of sound and music — the tension built up in the room connecting [1] each person to the next — a brief moment of silence and then total release, launching into the driving "Lesser of Man." Zegota at its best is articulate passionate release and they maintained that electricity and sincerity through the entire set. After "Lesser of Man" they played their two newest compositions, "Thrones for the Worthy, Graves for the Rest" and "15." Ard spoke on the importance of chasing your passions. And before "15" Moe delivered a eulogy to a friend who had taken her life and the importance of being surrounded by friends and allies, as we were then, all brought together by this music and this time. As the finale to the set Jon began by speaking about life during wartime and resistance on all levels. The band played Crosby, Stills, Nash, and Young's "Ohio, " still so pertinent to our times, which they had slowly made their own over the years. During a quiet part of

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show reviews

Face Down In Shit, San

> FRANCISCO: Copied right out of an email from my friend Jason, their guitarist.
>
> *Hey Brian, this is a show 'review'from San Francisco! The offending 'Virginia tree- metaller' is me, And the 'girlfriends'are actually Iman and some*

other girl who met us up in Portland (from the tour that was two years ago with the LP). I found it really funny, it's from the SF Guardian.

"Burmese with Face Down In Shit"

Face Down in Shit played some kind of Virginian pro-tree metal, prefacing each

[Image not archived]

: the song, before the chorus comes back in : Moe and Jon started whispering away from the mikes in unison: "Tin soldiers and Bush

is coming"almost inaudibly, and slowly the whole room joined in the chant until our whispers had become a shout and the song came crashing to a finish, everyone and everything in a state of movement. In that last moment of feedback, Jon, on the ground, plucked carefully, the first few forlorn unfinished notes of the composition of a dead composer, and everyone followed him back in, Birch included, to build and break again over the room... The hall was left in an echoing silence comforting everyone in a state of smiling and tears. The band had meant to run "Eternal Flame" over the PA as the outro music, but in the chaos and emotion, it didn't happen; the subtle tribute to Sweden played unheard. It was poignant to be gathered there that night, in that transitioning moment, as if we had all gone down to the train station to wave off our friends who were going on a journey that would change everything. And on the platform we had kissed and laughed and wept and had known that no matter where any one of us went we would all carry this goodbye close, as it pushed us forward.

Appendix: A *talk with Zegota in three parts*

On Dutch Bass Players

important about musk; music as emotional expression. But also that Ard shared our idea of music as a tool and a revolutionary meins of communication. I knew that he would be down with our lifestyle activism, which is a pretty big deal if you're going to be in a band. To be down with dumpster diving, and going extra lengths. And so being sure of those few things, overpowered our uncertainty about is technical skill or the fact that he wasn't really a bass player or that he had no experience touring. His political and emotional wavelength was the highest priority. We had good bass players before, but they turned out to be on different wavelengths, and it was ultimately destructive. We were all shaped by that. This time so far it's turned out well although sometimes I want to murder Ard and he wants to murder me.

8. Ard, what did Zegota offer you before you came, when you were still sitting at home on your farm in Holland? You're looking at the "Movement" record in your hands... What did this chance offer you in your life?

Ard: At that time I felt as if I needed something new, something refreshing, something that could absorb me totally, not a small change for a few hours a day, or on the weekend. I wanted something to take me to a place I had never been too. Take me to worlds 1 would not have access to by myself. It wasn't so much that I couldn't change

lacked where I was. Maybe it isn't necessary to have done things the way I did. But at the time it was the absolute best decision I could have ever made. Partly it was simply the excitement of not knowing what was coming. I knew the change would provide the qualities of which I was seeking, but not what form. I knew Jon a little, and the record and the writings, they meant a lot to me. I decided that they would be the people that would have the impact I was seeking.

On the making of the "Namaste" LP

9. Where did Zegota take this project with the "Namaste" LP? What new directions have you all forged out, where did you go that the first full length ["Movement in the Music"] didn't?

_JG:_ We had a different approach to it with "Namaste" — whereas, at least for me, when we recorded before I was way too focused on getting everything exactly right: chord changes, playing all the strings, making sure that every rhythm was right, everything on time. This time our emphasis is much more emotional — just trying to create a space, open ourselves up and bash out what ever comes to our heads. And trying to work on that level where we boil down all this technical considerations into what is important, which is the emotion of the music — and trying to capture that instead of being the best that we technically can.

were on the road, the ways we changed, the ways we found to keep things fresh and new.

_B:_ What I like about it is that way it reflects the organic process of touring — especially being on tour for five months. Ideas develop, songs, especially when you're allowing space for improvisations like you did.

_1G:_ To keep it vital you have to, otherwise it just becomes an opaque routine without emotion and without feeling. I don't think any of us are about to become robots.

On the Punk Band as Collective

_M;_ I think first we try to give each other personal space to move around in and also to trust one another's judgments and intentions, even when they might not seem the most rational thing at the time. To have trust and faith with one another. Whereas so-called authority figures like bosses and politicians — these people who make all the decisions I don't know and surely don't trust. They make irrational decisions, and fuck, I don't trust them at all. I don't have faith in these people who have created this image based society that we live in — look what they've done to the world. Whereas Jon can be making a decision that seems irrational to me, but if his heart is in it I support it,

because I trust him enough. I give him the benefit of the doubt, to make the decisions that need to be made and run with them.

_1G:_ It basically boils down to a respect we have for each other. I think that's what Moe is getting at too. I respect these people to, number one, trust them with my emotional safety and emotional health and that feeds my ability to be able to express myself with them. This is essential in a musical group where the goal is to express. People who don't live hard and with fire and passion might not understand and be able to work in this manner. The fact that we all know what it's like to have to fight with the whole world just to give your desires a bit of honor and respect means we can be there for each other when the world comes crashing in and deal with it.

[Image not archived]

_B;_ This is why I consider Zegota not only a valuable but a dangerous band. The common societal consensus is that living with fire and passion is going to ultimately be self-defeating — the example made of rock stars constantly reinforces this "truth, "

that you can only burn so long before you devour everything around you. While Zegota is saying, Let's make it sustainable for the four of us, for all of us — creating a space where that can be a reality.

_A:_ I think that living with passion is easily maligned by society because anger (towards others or oneself) is so often portrayed as the flaw of intense feeling. We don't deny anger's truth but try and incorporate it into the greater spectrum of passion and give it a healthy space to live it and not totally self destructive. To admit to it and not cast it in some dark corner.

_IG:_ But also we reserve the right to selfdestruct and to be unafraid to hate if that's what you need to go through.

_B:_ So it's okay to scrape the floor and be in the muck, if you need to be there — and hopefully when you look up someone will be there for you —

JG:When you're ready to come back.

Zegota production update: as of May 2003 gathering storms in Sweden (shows? recordings? soon?). To get in touch with the band, write: Zegota/ 1104 Buckingham Rd./ Greensboro, NC/ 27408/ USA

multimedia

reviews

Creation Is Crucifixion "Child

As *Audience"* CD *and book:* Here we have an intersection of technical math-metal, digital-technology hacking, and cultural warfare — fascinating, and definitely not something you encounter regularly in any one of those three contexts. The foundation for this opus is a hacking project, in which the programmers hacked into a Nintendo Gameboy and taught it a subversive, home-made game in place of the one it was designed for; the CD includes "development software" so the user can carry out this hacking

herself, which — practicing Luddite that I am — I have not yet been able to open. The basic idea here is to infiltrate the daily environment constructed by adults which children take for granted, and crack the facade to show that other worlds are possible.

The audio portion of the CD includes a spoken word piece over a noise track, laying out the case for their child-liberation program(ming), alternating with, as I said, technical math-metal — growling vocals, unbelievable technical proficiency in the playing, excessively complex compositions. When I saw them, singer Nathan was screaming his vocals while programming the noise track on his laptop, creating a strange spectacle that didn't exactly create an emotional connection between the band and the audience but certainly left an impression. Afterwards, I told him their songs sounded to me like the music I imagined martians would make if they decided to form a hardcore band with only a copy of HeartattaCk, 2600 magazine, and a few death metal mix tapes to work from; I'm not sure if he took that as a compliment, but I intended it as one! The book, which includes complete text in German, French, and Dutch as well as English, gives the necessary schematics and instructions for the Gameboy hacking, as well as a lengthy discussion of the colonization of childhood by Capital and how to undermine it — oh, and lyrics and that stuff. At the bottom of it all, it's unclear to me whether the Carbon Defense League (another of the groups involved in this release, and essentially an alternate incarnation of Creation Is Crucifixion) is actually opposed to silicon technology, or just seeks to contest the monopoly over its social application held by the powers that be; but I like that ambiguity, I think it gives them strength to accomplish things on various fronts at once, rather than limiting themselves to a single platform and method. I believe we need subversive groups who can't be pinned down, who can be recognized not for their rigid ideological stances but for the fact that wherever they go, they stir up shit and leave everyone confronting new questions. This project gets full marks for that — and also for providing the resources to enable anyone else who is interested to join in.

Before this review is concluded, let me point out something very wise that these folks are doing here, which others involved in the d.i.y. "record industry" should take note of: they are mass-producing resources for committing crime, and distributing them as entertainment products. This is brilliant, because it expands and dilutes the pool of potential suspects should the powers that be try to crack down on this particular hack. If thousands of music fans have this CD, and there is evidence that some people have been applying the technology on it, the State will have no idea where to start to track them down. If this same technology were available in a more limited context, it would be easier for those fuckers to keep up with who has access to it. Next time you mass-produce a CD

: yourself, put a generic bomb threat on it, or a program to be broadcast over pirate radio, or Something else along those lines! -b

A: *wwwJttictivist.com isyour best bet to track this down, or other projects by these folks.* forgotten classics

Concrete "Nunc Scio Tenebris

Lux" CD: I'm not sure how old this one

> is since I can't read Italian, but I thought it'd be important to let y'all know about it because this CD has been really important to me over the past eighteen months or so. If "registrato, missato, masterizzato" translates to "recorded, mixed, mastered" then this was made in 1998, but like I said, I don't know Italian. We played at a squat somewhere in Italy one night and as we were winding down and getting ready for sleep, this album was playing on the stereo. It immediately caught my ear, so I asked our host who it

was. He told me it Was Concrete, a band from Rome, and then adhered to what seems to be an Italian custom by insisting thaW keep the tape; 1 listened to it the next six months until it would barely play any longer. Luckily, Gavin at Stickfigure had the CD in his distro so I got him to send me one. I know absolutely nothing about this band beyond these songs — I have no idea what their politics are, what other music they have made or if they're even still together. The CD starts strong with

a double-kick fill that brings in a chunky metal hardcore riff. The vocals are insane — I think they're great, someone else might find them highly annoying. I think the singing sounds like a punk version of Perry Farrell (from Jane's Addiction) on crack. It's pretty monotone — the one note being out of key most of the time, throaty and obnoxious. The lyrics which are in Italian, fit the vocal style well, or perhaps vice versa, as there are a lot of rolled "r"s and held out vowels mid-scream. These five songs are long and

complex, clocking in at just under forty minutes. Some of the songs move from total chaos to nearly inaudible ambiance to tribalsounding drums built around the toms in a matter of minutes without ever sounding abrupt or unnatural. There's even a section in the middle of the CD that is structured much like a Godspeed, You Black Emperor! song although, chronologically, I doubt it was influenced much by them. The part comes out of chaos and starts with a simple, slow bass progression that slowly adds guitar, piano, violin, cello and contrabass. It is devastating and triumphant. I like this band very much. If anyone out there has anything else they have recorded and wants to dub me a copy in trade for something, get in touch through I.E please, -s

SOA Records, via Oderisi da Gubbio 67/69, 00146 Rome, Italy

Kriticka Situace "" CD: if i did a top ten list of bands you never heard of but should have, Kriticka Situace would be at #3 for sure. They would follow Pistols At Dusk (from Seattle) at #2, and Negate (from Belgium) at #1. Kriticka Situace was around in the late 80's and the very early 90's in the Czech Republic. No wonder you haven't heard of them. You were probably five when they put out this CD. Just kidding there, champ. So, to help enlighten you to the brooding rock and roll that was Kriticka Situace, I will start by telling you that they play this energized fast punk which doesn't fall into convention, and in fact rises constantly above it through poetic lyrics. Any

band who uses the following words all on the same CD is a keeper: “subterranean”, “insects”, “myrmidons”, “searchlights”, and “graves”. (By the way, I had no clue either: www.dictionary.com defines “myrmidons” as “a faithful follower who carries out orders without question”... thus proving once again, that aside from being endowed with a sense of history unparalleled in the US, and aside from all being bi and tri lingual, Europeans could mentally out-box Americans any day of the week with only a third of their brain cells intact. Americans are just a bunch of goddamn myrmidons). So, this CD: lots of bass breaks leading into fast guitar driven punk rock with lyrics about violence and oppression. But don’t get me wrong, these aren’t armchair warriors singing about how bad violence is and how we must all end oppression, or some similar empty garbage. What separates this CD from so many others is the perspective brought to the issues. When Kriticka Situace sings “You’re proud of your truth / that sweet sensation of the victor, you want to live through it again and again / with flames in your eyes and your clenched fist / you throw yourself blindly into the night hunt” they are striking at the core of what makes myrmidons myrmidonic: the need to feel greater through following a leader into conflagration, even and especially through the loss of the individual’s sense of self. Given the insanity going on now in Iraq, this song takes on new meaning. The band

[Image not archived]

takes another angle on war and violence with their song Majority, in which they sing “We admire movies with military themes /

*Editor’s Top Ten in Punk, * 2001 *to mid*-2003

1. Flying Circus Convergence in Des Moines, August 2002
2. Tragedy, everything they do
3. Zegota, everything too
4. Cathode “A Machine That Never Falters” CD
5. The Spectacle 10”
6. David Sandstrom “Om Det lore Hander Nat Innan Imorgon Sa Kommer Jag”CD 7. Analena, Burn Hollywood Burn, Newborn, the Spectacle, Cathode, Face Down in Shit, Majority Rule, USA IS A MONSTER live — soul, baby, soul.
8. Sicarii, Jeniger, Blacken the Skies, Shank, Cementario Show, Diallo, Kontrovers live — punk tucking rock!
9. books/’zines: Beating I leans of the World Unite, Half Wild

10. Honorable mentions: Retorica "1" Communique" CD (very ambitious and original), Darkest 1 lour live (they really rock — and I mean "rock"!)

We listen to music with brutal lyrics / Our eyes widen, thrilled with violent fights / and we don't care who they dig the graves for". The sense throughout is of an awareness not only of violence, but more importantly, of the power dynamics and hierarchies that keep violence in place, and which in fact, use violence and unrest and dis-ease as tool to maintain status quos. Make sense? One thing you should know about this band is that they sing entirely in Czech with the lyrics translated into English. This is always a preferred method in my opinion because the art inherent in the delivery of the words can be more intense when presented in the original language. I am sure the Czech word for "myrmidons" is much easier to say in Czech when sung at 150 beats a minute. Then again, Czech is one of the most difficult to pronounce languages in the world as far as I can tell. I am pretty sure that sometime in history, the world decided to strip Czechoslovakia of all their vowels, but you might want to check my facts just to make sure. Modern

day cities like Brno and Plzen used to have a much higher vowel proportion, or V.P., before this ruling went into effect. So, the point is, that "myrmidons" might in fact not be simpler to say in Czech, which would just make me more impressed with this band. These guys get bonus points for using the words of Czech poet Frana Sramek as the lyrics to a full song. The words were written in 1914, and I am not sure how well the poem translates, but I like the bringing together of the two worlds of words and passions. Overall: fast punk without stereotypical sound or style meeting head to head with passionate spoken style screaming combined with basic production (but a good mix) and lyrics of which sincerity is not a question. You might have to look really hard to find this disc... and I wish you a successful quest. -JUG

Day After, c/o Mira Paty, Horska 20, 352 01 As, Czech Republic

music reviews

190 5 "VOICE": The intro had me on totally the wrong track for this: feedback, discord, and a snare drum roll overloaded to sound somewhere between a bomb explosion and one of those great shitty live recordings of early'80s punk bands. But it ends suddenly, and were suddenly in a sort of pop punk territory with soft singing vocals. As the record progresses, a rougher edge comes in and out again, with some hoarse-throated screaming and more punk intensity (on the eleventh track, they even

The Juggler's Top Ten Records To *Own In Order To Laugh Uncaringly in the Face of the Apocalypse*

10. _At the Gates — Slaughter of the Soul — LP_
9. _In Flames — Clayman LP_
8. _Catharsis — Samsara LP_
7. Ne_gate — dem_o
6. _Iron Maiden — Live After Death — 2xLP_
5. _Pistols At Dusk — dem_o
4. _Trial — Are These_ Our Li_ves? LP_
3. _MariHion — Clutching At Straws — LP_
2. _Rush — Counterparts — LP_
1. _The Proletariat — Indifference — LP_

hazard pairing a blast beat with melodic vocals, an interesting experiment that I'm afraid doesn't work out well). At that point I'm already a little confused, but there are some strange moments yet to come: at one point, both vocalists scream "I don't want to look at the stars with you until you can look at strangers with me!!!" and the band goes into a crazy noise part (think Refused at the high point of their song "Shape of Punk to Come") — huh? The lyrics range from that kind of impenetrable venting on personal issues to more explicit, dare I say political, material, all suffused with an earnest longing. I think the drums are too high in tire mix, and the guitars too quiet. I'll give them credit for this, though: they don't really sound like anyone else. I imagine they'll develop what they're doing a little more by the next record, and it could turn out to be something interesting and original. I don't want to give the wrong impression, either — there are definitely high-energy moments, and haunting ones. My favorite part is the piano interlude near the end. -b *Exotic Fever Records, P.O. Box 297, College Park, MD 20741–0297*

*Alcatraz "Ni Dieu Ni Maitre, * A* Bas La Calotte Et Vive La SoCIALE" *CD (WHEWi): *Wow, * reviewing this is a pretty overwhelming prospect: twenty five songs from three different recording sessions totaling about 70 minutes of music, previously split up between about eight earlier releases, collected here with a 60 page booklet featuring lyrics, in-depth discussions of every song, and other texts in both their native French and also English, not to mention Spanish and Italian. Musically, this is raw, abrasive emo/ hardcore, in the tradition that still shows signs of the influence of Acme*

as well as Rites of Spring. The tempo keeps pretty close to the middle of the spectrum, but blast beats break that trend from time to time, and there's plenty of variety in the compositions, and plenty of spirit and anger in the music — and hope, too. Most of the time someone's shrieking, but one of the vocalists sings sometimes, and she has a beautifully clear voice. A horn and violin make a brief appearance mid-way through — good for them, more of that! That song, a sprawling improvisation, turns out to be my

favorite one. The recordings are clear and crisp and powerful, even the older ones. Ideologically, they're coming from an anti-authoritarian left-wing perspective (I think they identify as communists of some kind, but they don't really set off the bullshit alarms for me), with thorough discussions of the evils of corporate globalization, the difficulties in confronting

> entrenched patriarchy, the class war, and even one of those Silly little traditional

ranfsStbout how hardcore sucks now.:Let s forgive them for that, and sum up: this is an exemplary example of a great punk record, and miles ahead of almost everything else out there in terms of content and packaging. Even the layout is artistic and yet clear! If only every band would go to the trouble of building this much content into each release, -b

> ***Stonehenge do Christophe Mora, 21 Rue des Brasses, 78200 Magnanville, France***
>
> *Anti Otpad "Rdnicki San"* CD: This is punk rock at its best with charmingly bad sound quality and a whole lot of energy. This style reminds me of spiking my bihawk, getting a ride from Dad and circle pitting at the local teen center where we would book shows. I hear a bit of the Pist, Crudos, Naked Aggression and even a touch of Pennywise and Bouncing Souls. This is all in Croatian but the English translations, included on a separate photocopy — which perhaps was slipped only into the copies going to stupid self-centered Americans

Bruce's Top Ten Since the Last
Inside Front

1. Lack — Blues Moderne: Danois Explosifs LP and live in Scandinavia
2. SpintaLAffiay — Animated film from Japanese master Hayao Miyazaki
3. _Russian Ark_ — dream-induced derive through the Hermitage in St. Petersburg in one unbelievable 90 minute sequence of 2, 000 actors, a dozen time periods, and not one single cut,

4. “La Boheme” — New Broadway production
5. Pony Club — Home Truths LP
6. _Safe Area Gorazde_ by Joe Sacco
7. Against Me! — Ihe Disco Before the Breakdown 7” and live in Carrboro, NC, December, 2002.
8. _The Black Book -_ by Orhan Pamuk
9. Yage — October LP and live in Holland
10. ‘Zines: “Half Wild, ”“Invasion of the Bee Girls, ” and “Cometbus” #49

actually has some stuff in it that sounds like ska, and a lot of stuff in it that’s essentially pop punk, with major key rock riffs, nasal melodic singing in harmony, the whole bit. Almost anything in that whole genre just makes my stomach turn, and most of this is no different, so I’ll focus on their content: there’s a Noam Chomsky sample about U.S. hypocrisy regarding the treatment of the Kurdish people by Iraq and Turkey, and all the song lyrics address important stuff (con: religion, the entertainment and animal exploitation industries, war, globalization... pro: freedom, non-consumer values, burning down banks!). I appreciate that, and really, as a pop punk band, they’re not bad — I’m thrilled they’re out there in a different milieu than my favorite bands work in, having a good influence on pop punk fans. Right on. -b

Household Name, P.O. Box 12886, London, SW9 6FE, England

Apes of the Union “” CD: I think I’ve got their name right, though I’m not certain... the kind of packaging the bands (is that even the right term?) in this genre (the wave of noise/dada/experimental stuff coming from the likes of Lightning Bolt, USA IS A MONSTER, Monster Attacks King Noise Machine, Herds and Words, etc.) opt for is usually deliberately confusing. Besides, I have a suspicion that this is actually a recording of a band I saw perform under the name “Ground Monkeys”: like their performance, the basic fair here is guitar noise, ranging from psychotic to totally abstract, over chaotic drum improvisations. What I really liked about seeing them was the way they reinterpreted the use of the instruments, the drums especially: the drums weren’t there to keep a rigid beat so much as to experiment with different speeds and intensities, increasing and decreasing them at will — while the guitarist, left to fend for himself, made parallel, if often artistically disparate, noise. There are also some quieter pieces on here, more spooky perhaps, but not exactly evocative. There are forty one

Burn Hollywood Burn “It Shouts and Sings with Life...

> EXPLODES WITH *Love*[1]*.”* CD: It took me a few listens to figure out what kind of music they’re playing for the first minute of this CI): surf music! It arrives through the filter of their cutting edge soulful hardcore

aesthetic (think Zegota, perhaps?), so it wasn't easy to pin it down, but that's what's going on. After that part, the Zegota comparison becomes more appropriate in the actual parts and composition for the

remainder of that song, but there are definitely some surf rock parts elsewhere on the record. Really, the seamless transitions between parts drawing on entirely disparate segments of music history demonstrate what skilled musicians and songsmiths they are. Things get really interesting around the middle of the third song: there's a quieter break, with intensifying guitar noise, and the singer's declamation is suddenly the center of all attention, in a moment distantly descended from Jim Morrison. That song ends, to name a more recent reference, with the same spent acidity as the end of that older Breed/Extinction song that closed with Greg spitting "boxes... inside boxes..." The fourth

song is an instrumental from the lineage of Godspeed, You Black Emperor!, named after an ancient Latin palindrome that probably comes to this band titrough Guy Debord's use of it if that doesn't identify for you the recent punk tradition they hail from, I don't know what will! The recording itself is a little dry, reminiscent (as are their title and cover art, snatches of their lyrics — "where do we go from here?" and perhaps some of their politics) of Refused's "Shape of Punk to Come, " and 1 think a less clinical, warmer, more ragged recording might have flattered this more it could have made them sound more like a band showing off their heart and soul than flaunting their technical precision. My favorite moment on the record is probably the opening riff of the fifth song, which sounds like a cover of some lost segment of Orff's epic *Carmena Burana.* Politically, this band doesn't stray too far from their forebears here — the liner notes emphasize that this is a commodity, and as such cannot compare to the immediacy and precious ness of a life lived for desire's sake — but their personality is apparent in the elements they choose to emphasize: their variation on Zegota's "Wreck Your Life" motto is "fuck it all, " or, elsewhere, "we fuck your world, " and elsewhere, "we fuck ourselves" It's ambiguous whether this is a sex-negative avowal of nihilism or an invitation to the world to make endless (and potentially sado-masochistic?) love, and in that playing with terms and fire there is an unfettered, volatile, dangerous power — one that rarely is engaged except by young punks too wild-eyed to know better! In that context, of course, when the vocalist, whose pronouncements throughout would be hard to interpret as anything other than individualist/adventurist, declares (in the Dennis/Refused tradition) "well get organized, " it's clear he's just borrowing the anarcho-syndicalist lingo to refer to something much more disruptive than recruiting factory workers to the union. And — fuck, oh no!!! — finishing this review, I realize to my horror that we have put

my *least favorite* Burn Hollywood Burn song on the CD that comes with this Inside Front, and it's far too late to rectify the situation. God, what a disaster, -b

Bisect Bleep, P.O. Box 80249, 35102 Rennes Cedex 3, France

[Image not archived]

fucking tracks in all here — that's pretty overwhelming, not to say self-indulgent. See these guys play (assuming I've pegged their band right) and try to glean your own interesting perspectives from what they're doing, rather than starting with this CD — that's my suggestion, -b *www. massivedistribution. com*

Aside From A *Day "Maieutics"*

CD: This is metallic hardcore from France that is certainly more metal than hardcore. They sound like a combination of the Black Hand and Isis with shrieking vocals,

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layered guitar harmonies and impressive instrumentation from every angle. This CD sounds pretty good too. There are full- on double kick assaults, vulnerable pretty pieces, noise samples here and there and tense build-ups. It has metal harmonies in strange keys, starts and stops, blast beats, bass slides, mosh parts, d-beats — you name it. They're not necessarily doing anything original but there's enough variety to keep it interesting throughout the twenty five minutes that these songs fill. If you're into metallic hardcore certainly check this out. -s *Ari-Scenic Production 13 rue de Vignier 25000 Besancon France*

CASSETTE: Clean-channel guitars build an atmosphere, before distortion and shrieking kick in, the band still playing the same chord progressions. They're coming from the same scene as Cathode, although they lack that band's dedication to and mastery of the Gehenna aesthetic, leaning instead towards a less distinctive take on the noisy, screaming hardcore genre. The best moments for me in this recording are the ones when they push the intensity of the guitars, cymbals, and shrieking vocals almost to the point of white noise; the tempo rarely really accelerates, but the moments when it does are also among the best. Maybe they could do with more speed, or maybe that's just my own tastes. For the last song, there's a sample of a Kafka story (the guy who waits his whole life at the gate for access to the Law); a sort of light-hearted, clean improvisation (and — is that a cowbell?) begins over it, switches suddenly over to distortion and screaming and chaos, and back and forth a

couple times more. ‘1 he demo comes with a little pamphlet version of the excellent Kurt Vonnegut story that is their namesake, in which “dynamopsychicism” the force of the mind, and its ethical applications, are

discussed — presumably this is a metaphor for the power we all have to control our own destinies, and thus the world, if we only take responsibility for ourselves. I’m really sympathetic to this band, their lyrics are earnest and passionate and they’re going about everything the way I love to see d.i.y. bands go. I’ve got my fingers crossed that their next recording will really cross the line to be something unbelievable, -b *Phale, Schonauvensingel 8, 3523 JG Utrecht, The Netherlands*

Burning Bridges “The Best Revenge” CD: This is precisely- recorded tough hardcore a little bit further into the toughguy spectrum than Walls of Jericho was. There are fast parts, which helps to keep the music interesting outside the kickboxing pit, and the playing is tight. Hardcore kids familiar with the history of Albany hardcore will know exactly what tradition this band hails from, and it’s clear in the gruff vocals and mosh-parts with double bass blasts that they’re set on carrying that torch forward. The singer counts off “one-two-fuck

you!” before the vocals come in on the fifth track, which also begins with that sample from Romper Stomper (the Australian movie about racist skinheads), “We came to wreck everything, and ruin your life.”The

lyrics are starkly individualistic, covering the various letdowns and frustrations of friendships gone awry. The burly, bearded singer has x’s on his hands in the live photos, and kids are singing along — maybe straight edge is not dead yet after all! -b *Losing Face Records, P.O. Box 14641, Albany, NY 12212*

CARAHTER “”CD: North American and European metal/hardcore listeners take note, especially if you have political convictions, for you will probably not read about this great record in other hardcore publications from the global North. With their dramatic

downtuning, totally overloaded production, and unearthly atmosphere, Carahter manages to capture the same atmosphere Systral did on their amazing “Fever” 10”. In fact, I’ll be damned if they haven’t been listening to that record — the occasional metal leads and harmonies, deep rumbling and high shrieking dual vocals, and discordant chords are all here... let’s cover the differences, then: Carahter lack the punchy bass drum Systral used, they don’t work with samples (there’s a noise track in the middle of the CD that I believe is from Kubrick’s 2001, but that’s not the same), and they tend to employ a pretty arbitrary song structure — the transitions make sense enough, but parts never come back around. That last quality might make the actual songs a little less memorable, but if you’re listening to the record for its terrifying, dark ambiance, it won’t bother you. The packaging includes extensive liner notes in both Portuguese and English about third world resistance to neo-liberalism, consumer culture, and imperialist capitalism in general, which is awesome, -b

Liberation, Caixa Postal 4193, Sao Paulo, SP 01061–970

Cementario Show “” CD: 1 love this band on their split with Sin Dios (reviewed below), and while I think this recording might be a little older, I’m thrilled about it too. At their best (say, tracks 7 and 10) they mix up their frantic, top-speed hardcore punk with a sort of surf/devil rock thing, and it’s fucking great. The drummer’s love affair with the snare drum is also in evidence here, everything from the raging vocals to the hyper-kinetic riffs evidences attitude with a capital A) and no part goes on any longer than it should. The recording is fine, but somehow I feel like it would be possible to make a more flattering mix of this, one with a scarier atmosphere perhaps. The lyrics appear in translation on the last page: attacks on child-worker exploitation, religious dogmatism, the mass media, soulkilling routine, even controlling parents — yes, this is punk rock, -b

W.C. records, Juan I. Herrero, Apdo. 41019, 28080 Madrid, Spain

Chesterfield Symphony

ORCHESTRA “” CD: Yes, an anarchist symphony orchestra! In a time when the evolution of punk and hardcore forms and conventions seems to have stagnated, this is exactly what we need! This could be something in the genre Neutral Milk Hotel plays in, if you know them: strings, strummed acoustic guitar, classical horns, theatrical narration. The third song works with those same elements, but adds another narrator; the variety of voices and the layers they form intensifies the effect. It would be easy to be annoyed with the vocalist in this format, but he sounds so earnest that it’s hard not to find him endearing: I imagine him a young Walt Whitman, waving his script emphatically, starry eyes swimming in youth and dreams, delivering these spoken word pieces with all he’s got — “the walls will spill, encouraging the waves — and the waves will triumph, when we are the making of freedom!” Trust me, it’s not bad. He’s still there on the fifth track, but in place of the orchestral background, there’s an a capella piece sung smooth as silk by a group of women — at least for the first minute, before the ensemble kicks in again. The mood throughout is subdued but complex, melancholy and reflective; the playing itself is spectacular, symphony orchestraquality to my untrained ears. And speaking of Whitman, and Allen Ginsberg for that “ matter — these five songs are followed by a fucking hilarious, eloquent take-off on those poets’ compositions, composed and narrated on the evening of September 11, 2001: “America, why don’t we enjoy the real explosions as much as the video games? America, why are the dumpsters locked?” Three more spoken word pieces by two other speakers follow: depression, confessions of troubled dreams, responding to rape. I don’t think this band is still together in this format (that is, if these folks

ever thought of themselves as a band), but hopefully this CD can still be tracked down, -b *Try this address (good luck!): Kalie, 3415 Juno Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15213*

Confusione “ [?]” 7”: Fast, anxious, distraught punk rock. Lots of starts and stops — and nine songs on a 7, ” no less. The tense melodies only add to the desperation conveyed by the shrieking, broken-voiced vocalist, whose lyrics express a self-destructive nihilism that seems to be overstated — I think this is the sign of an idealism that still lies beneath the surface, wounded but unwilling to die, revealing itself through its

opposite, -b *Heroine records c/o Boris Battistini, Via Galilei n. 6, 47020 Montiano (FC), Italy*

Dawncore "We Are Young... So We Scream... Just to Feel Alive" 7": I'm sure these kids have something new out now, maybe a couple records — but this is the latest one in my box, and part of what I do with my part of this 'zine is catalog my passage through the hardcore world, so here this is. The Budapest scene sure did figure out the whole metal hardcore thing to a t — this is top notch hypercomplex, hyperspeed, hyperintense, hyper-moshable hardcore, coming in at the top of its class: tight machine-gun bursts of double bass, intricate guitar-work, the whole thing. If I have any reservations, they would be (first) that it seems to be difficult to compose memorable songs in this genre — the parts hold together well and are memorable individually, but I think the world has yet to hear a classic in this genre that will have the staying power of some of those old blues songs that still get played today — and (second) that the lyrics put me in a sort of personal quandary: there is a song entitled "Let's Set the World On Fire, " and another, better yet, called "Killing of the Spectators, " and that kind of rhetoric gets me really excited, but I think they just mean it metaphorically, whereas

I actually want to see the world in flames and spectators bleeding to death outside the bullfighting rings. So should I be frustrated with them for posing, or just enjoy this as "brutal metal, dude, " or urge them to become actual arsonists? -b

Burning Season, Aufder Scheibe 20, 3130 Herzogenburg, Austria

Dead Things "Because

Sometimes you just Want to Ride your Bike to the Show" CD: It's hard for me to think of what to say about this band. Musically, they're not really my thing, but I love them anyhow. They must truly be a great band if their actions, personalities and sincerity win me over as a fan when I generally steer clear of anything that sounds like this. I'll first make a lame attempt to describe their music and then I'll get down to why I'm really into this band. Pardon my comparison if it's a little off due to lack of knowledge: I guess to me they sound like back-woods, more DIY version of Against Me! They definitely have that catchy pop/punk/folk feel to them with melodic guitars, harmonized male/

female vocals and a generally Upbeat, happy energy. Ihe instrumentation on this record is skillful and tight although the sound quality itself is somewhat thin and distant.

The artwork and layout are great and there are fifteen songs. Alright, let's get down to business. Dead Things are rad because they did a tour (playing shows) of the entire state of North Carolina — one of the larger states on the East coast — on their bikes. Also, they have lyrics such as "stop building your big houses on out mountain sides ya yuppies, we've got garden tools!" and "more than two wheels is too many for me, gonna run your car into a fucking tree." I want to hear more songs in the world about beating up yuppies with shovels! -s

Slave PO Box 10093 Greensboro, NC 27404

Del Cielo "Wish and Wait" CD: 1 grew up listening to. Kill Rock Stars stuff so this one wins my approval almost immediately. These three ladies definitely have their own style, but I'll compare them to Sleater Kinney for lack of a better reference. This is mid-tempo rock with dual female vocals and a lot of emotion. The songs are catchy and I totally find myself singing along. Ihe lyrics seem to be mostly personal about relationships and seif-reflection, which is refreshing for me since I generally listen to bands with straight-up political lyrics. These ladies might not be singing about what I feel are vital and urgent issues, but

they certainly are active. They're involved with a lot of projects in their community, the D.C. area. Plus, they're just really nice, charming people. They stayed at my house on their way to a show in Georgia and immediately made friends with my foster brother, Justin. Several days later, a mix tape arrived in the mail for him from the band. Anyone that makes Justin happy gets a "thumbs up" in my book, -s *Eyeball Records PO Box 1653 Peter Stuyvesant Station NY, NY 10009*

Divinity Of Truth "Untitled"

CD: This CD has some of the craziest packaging I've ever seen. Sometimes packaging like this just gets in the way when you just want to listen to the music, but this is so well-done that it's worth the extra effort. And that says a lot, because I'm pretty lazy. The whole shebang is wrapped in a piece of black cardstock, with no less than 3 screen prints on it, including lyrics. The CD is wrapped in black tissue paper (with handwritten words on it) and mounted on a brad. The entirety is wrapped in a piece of black ribbon, and also includes a small insert with thank-you's and credits. Someone really loves their band. The music doesn't let me down, even after they raised my expectations with their fancy packaging. Divinity Of Truth play really competent metallic hardcore, with seamless transitions into slower, more vulnerable-sounding parts. The vocals are heartfelt, with well- written lyrics about greed, remorse, pain, and finding your own path through it all. I wholeheartedly recommend this, but it's limited to 450 hand-numbered copies (with this packaging, at least), so you might be out of luck, -xb

DOT, P.O. Box 208, Kapowsin, WA 98344

E150 *[partial discography]*

CD: Through all forty five minutes here, El 50 are always incredibly energetic, often catchy, and sometimes unforgettable. It's not one of those classic records that will never fade from relevance (there's just not quite enough to set these songs apart from songs by the other great bands in this genre), but its pretty close to the top of the heap of runners-up, and makes for great fucking listening if you love punk rock. This is a collection of eight different releases, from 7"s to split 7"s to compilation tracks, ranging from '96 to '00 and totaling 28 tracks (covers: Poison Idea, Beyond Description, Toreros after ole, and a twenty second Larm song). Lots of fucking d-beats of all kinds, occasional blastbeats and plenty of snare drum rolls, grainy distorted bass, two vocalists: one shrieking, one yelling.

Some of my favorite stuff happens in the fourth song, where they complement the all-out craziness with some more haunting breaks. Political lyrics (in Spanish, with explanations in English too) covering

multinationals, nationalism, violent dancing, other sources of injustice... I first saw this band play one of the last His Hero Is Gone shows, and they later turned up in my life to rescue me from the sterile atmosphere of an oversized hardcore fest in Belgium, transforming everything for the few minutes of their set — suddenly the squatters, anarchists, and feminists appeared out of the crowd, to have a wonderful time moshing together, -b

Don't Belong, Apdo. 8035, 33200 Xixon, Spain

Employer, Employee "sic [sic]" CD: This is total A.D.D. chaos. I initially thought As the Sun Sets meets Converge with vocals via Cradle of Filth but then realized that they're doing stuff that is mostly their own. The recording isn't as clear as it could be so it quickly turns into a big mess. The lyrics are poetic and vague — in fact, they're so vague that I can't figure out what the fuck they're trying to get at with any of these songs. The packaging is equally strange — totally computer-generated with weird geometric shapes and other imagery that I'm just not comprehending. The music and the packaging work great together, I'll give them that much. If you're into that spastic, A.D.D., part-part-part-part-part — part kind of sound you have a new favorite band, -s

Rohodog Records 12001 Aintree Lane Reston, VA 20191

Endstand "Fire Inside" io": Its the irrepressible, ever-active Endstand, with another eight major key punk rock hits brimming with sincerity and enthusiasm. I say "hits" not because they're getting up there in the pop charts, but because these guys know how to write songs — yes, that's right, real songs with individual

personalities, catchy choruses, and streamlined structure! They're a little like the Ramones, in that there's one thing they do really well, and they're hell-bent on exploring every corner of that little space, but you can't blame them, since they are good at it and there can never be enough good songs in the world. Anyway, despite the major key, which is basically my musical nemesis, the raw energy, screaming vocals, and occasional melodic leads keep me connected to this. And, for all ye of little faith, the mighty Umlaut is on their thanks list — of course! -b

Combat Rock Industry, P.O. Box 139, 00131 Helsinki, Finland

Filth of Mankind "The Final

CHAPTER CASSETTE: This is a modern band that plays old style crust. Judging by the packaging and band photo I assumed that this band would sound like the Amebix and I wasn't too far off. I'd have to say that they tend to lean towards sounding metal a bit more than the Amebix though. This band hails from Poland and their lyrics are in their own language instead of English, which is refreshing. There are English translations of the songs and they are some of the better apocalyptic crust lyrics that I have read: "no one cares to admit that the helm is broken, blinded they count on salvation in the lifeboats, meanwhile like rats they fight..., "I'm suffocating in a

concrete jungle without sun or rain, locked inside walls, I'm suffocating, breathing in lead, in an endless traffic jam on the road to nowhere." The vocals sound somewhat similar to those of Zygote, although a bit rougher, with lots of reverb and echo. The songs are generally pretty long and hypnotic with driving bass and drums, chunking guitars with melodic parts in between, synthesizer here and there, and atmospheric noise samples at some points. If you're into bands like the Amebix, Axegrinder, Zygote, etc., I would suggest checking this out. -s *Scream Tapes/ Pawel Rzoska / PO Box 118/ 80 470 Gdansk 45/ Poland*

From Ashes Rise — 1st LP *at the*

WRONG SPEED: I'd definitely have to say that I'm a fan of these guys. I've seen them play several times and they were always

great, even the time when they were sick. I heard their second LP when I was traveling in Europe over a year ago and I remember it being pretty impressive. When I returned home a few months later I wrote to the band and requested a review copy — of course, I was also trying to get a free record out of the deal. In any case, they never got back to me so I've decided to review their first record at the wrong speed — a much slower version of it at 33 revolutions per minute instead of 45.

This must be the His Hero Is Gone LP that was never released. From Ashes Rise normally play pretty fast, have high pitched vocals and aren't tuned ridiculously low (I believe they're playing in D when the record is playing at the correct speed) so when it's all slowed down, it doesn't sound totally unnatural. It's actually quite good. In fact, some of the parts even sound better at the wrong speed. So, if you own this record try it yourself, -s

From Ashes Rise 7038 Bonnavent Dr. Nashville, TN 37076

The GoONIES "" CD: In high school 1 attended a show by a band made up mostly of close friends, who despite their short life recorded two or three amazing thrashing punk songs. That show, which happened in our friend's Lindze's apartment with people flying off the couches, friends hugging, everyone screaming along, the police showing up with video camera, then *leaving* so we could finish, was a mark for our community and a great band we didn't even have to share with the world. The Goonies seem to serve a similar function in their scene in Massachusetts. The documentation of the time and space of those moments with their self titled release must mean a great deal to the community around them.. The CD comes with a seveninch sized booklet made up of written contributions from the band and their friends, the lyrics interspersed throughout. It is reminiscent of Reversal of Man's efforts with their *Revolution Summer* CD in which they attempted something similar. The writers address, living outside the constraining expectations of a conventional life, rape (including male same-sex rape), critical analysis of world economic policy, personal antedates of wandering city streets, some sound poetry (!?!), growing older in punk, straight edge and more. All the contributions are thoughtful and come across as sincere. We can do nothing but applaud a band that goes that very critical extra length in attempting to communicate beyond the music and lyrics, and the Goonies efforts are quite successful and well

considered. There is even a great Nietzsche quote in the inside of the cover. Now for the music: The intro to the first song sounds almost like the beginning of a guitar-heavy 80's pop anthem, but once the song kicks in there is an early thrash punk sound that the Goonies are trying for, something like the first Suicidal Tendencies record; but they also mix in some horns and

something like ska-punk (I promise that is not intended as an epithet!) The Voodoo Glow Skulls tried a similar sound, hut the Goonies pull it off with a lot more energy and heart. You know, the singer sounds like Sam from Born Against on the first song! The next song sounds a bit like the Dead Kennedys. The third song is more ska based, and turns in something of a punk anthem. The lyrics are mostly straight forward: dealing with the rape of a loved one, frustrated youth, straight edge and consumerism and fit well with the music. The next song sounds like one of those short and to the point Descendents songs. Their straight-edge song (which they are retiring) again starts with ska, transitions to punk — Inside Front favorites Otis Reem come to mind, their song "The Sophomore" maybe. The band thrashes through "No More" and comes to the last studio song of the album (of which there are seven) "Consumed" — which is the best written, the horns are really well integrated here, the transitions make a lot of sense, everyone seems a bit more comfortable with their instruments; and it has great lyrics about rethinking the values were given by our society and finding better ways to communicate, love, and live. Most of the tracks were recorded in a single evening, the energy really comes across from that. But the recording and mix suffered some, its quite muddled in places. The Goonies have set themselves up for a great follow up. "Consumed" shows that they can grow as songwriters while maintaining that energy of the ska/punk sound that gave them their start. The last track is 18 minutes of a live show recorded in a basement. The recording — well, the recording sounds like it was recorded live in a basement! But I think it was worth including for a couple of reasons. One, you can get an idea of the energy of a Goonies show (I saw one about 2 and half years ago, and loved it), it's probably a great document for anyone who was at the show. Two, it's great to hear what the band has to say between songs — bands trying to communicate, hell yeah! And three, they play some new songs (for which they included an additional lyric sheet) and confirm for me that the Goonies are moving in some awesome directions! — B-Side *High Score Records — no address! Try writing the band at: The Goonies c/o Kevin Driscoll, Box 368, 500 Salisbury St., Worcester, MA, 01615*

Headway "" CD: Oh, Headway — the terrible tragedy of it all. In 1998 or so, they were probably the most creative and challenging band working in French

punk rock/hardcore. They were gifted with deep-seated soul, fearless artistic curiosity, undeniable creativity; I even saw them play an Acme cover and pull it off perfectly. Yet no one succeeded in getting them into a studio, and the moment passed. This is the feeble trace of the final incarnation of Headway, somewhat later, as an experimental instrumental jazz band, pure and simple. The music is still soulful and the creative risk-taking ambitious — it's just not recognizable as anything that ever proceeded from

the hardcore community. The material here varies from soft-lit, sometimes-haunting evening music to more frenetic, chaotic departures. The recording is

excellent and complements everything they do nicely. My only complaint, besides my above-mentioned regret that so much of what they did at their peak has been lost to us, is the same complaint I have with almost all jazz recording: since there is no vocalist, it's somehow hard for me (you may not have this problem) to connect intimately with the music. It sounds great, it's soaked in mood and feeling, but I feel like I'm listening to something outside me, rather than within me. -b

Stonehenge c/o Christophe Mora, 21 Rue des Brasses, 78200 Magnanville, France

Heaven Shall Burn "Whatever It May Take" CD: Pretty straightforward metal, with lyrics about various political movements, defending nature, and personal strength and conviction. Like many bands in this genre, it's pretty heavy on the personal conviction part ("they will never extinguish my flame"), evoking the tired image of the lone vegan warrior struggling in a world of impurity. If you liked Arkangel or Undying, you will probably like this band. At The Gates immediately comes to mind, but I don't mind that. The intro sounds like a sample from Star Wars, with creepy

music and laser sounds. In case you didn't know, Star Wars is totally crucial. The last track has clean, sung vocals, which don't really grab me, but the rest of the album is good. My, um, associate says these dudes look like ads for sportswear, so I guess civilization will be toppled by guys in Adidas running suits. I thought black Carhartts were the uniform for the revolution. Someone better tell Heaven Shall Burn. Hell, I'll settle for anything at this point, but, for some reason, the idea of kids humming metal riffs as they set a McDonald's on fire appeals to me more than the idea of those same kids humming David Roviks or Against Me songs. One question: where are the d-beats? Mother Culture, look out... you're about to get windmilled. -xb *Life Force Records, P.O. Box 938, Chemnitz, Germany*

Herds and Words

CASSETTE: This represents a much earlier stage in this band's development from the one covered elsewhere in this issue. This is basically a selection of neo-jazz songs with drums, guitar, bass clarinet, and a few other instruments (is that an accordion, or a harmonica, or what?), with occasional whimsical vocals. Most of the musical themes they later applied in their less musiccentered performances appear here, and there's a little clapping and yipping and craziness, but it's nothing like the atmosphere of what they

Kylesa "" CD: Kylesa is one of the best sounding bands that played in my basement The members of Kylesa have been playing in great bands for years and years and it shows. Live, they're tight and loud and totally succeed in creating a dark and urgent mood in the room. Recorded, they're fucking amazing — layers upon layers of down-tuned guitars (A-flat, believe it or not), one: of the best bass tones I've yet to hear — super low end but really clear at the same time — pulsing single-kick drums that are always doing something unexpected but steady, layers of high pitched male vocals and

super-guttural female vocals and even a bit of singing, and crazy samples, effects petals and studio magic throughout the entire record. The musicianship and songwriting are expert — they seem to have spent much time trying different possibilities to perfectly craft each part and each song (and album) as a whole. I normally wouldn't like a band like this — there is not a single d-beat to be found on this record, in fact it's all pretty mid- tempo — I think maybe it's even metal, but I'm not sure. But there is something mesmerizing, passionate and hypnotic about this record that keeps me listening to it again and again. Kylesa is doing something unique and vital and I'd suggest giving them a listen, -s

Prank PO Box 410892 San Francisco, CA 941410892

In Ruins Of "" 7": The whole downtuning thing has totally fucked up my life as a record reviewer. I this is the third record in the row I've listened to all the way through on one speed before concluding I probably had it set wrong. Anyway — leave it to the Swedes to get a great, mean recording, thanks to their socialized arts establishment and so on. This sounds thick, mean, and clear all at once; it flatters the music well. They're playing the hardcore that falls on the fast side of the slower spectrum, if that

Lack "Blues MODERNE: DaNOIS ExPLOSIFS" CD^2 : There is a beautiful part in the first song where the guitars are working furiously, the drums driving everything along and everyone comes to a full stop; only the vocalist comes back in for a moment, his screams torn but controlled — the rest of the band comes back in, but with a surprising shift in tone, almost a moment of reflection drawn out a bit before tearing into the rest of the song. The band's first LP does an excellent j ob of creating a tone of despair and hope, musically and lyrically throughout the record. I really can't convey enough how powerful it is lyrically! The band has an amazing grasp of the English language and engages in some very philosophical ideas made ready and pertinent to our times. I can't fault them for not singing in their native language, considering their command of English. Part of one song is in Danish, that works really well; and Lack goes where so many hardcore bands never dare to go and sings about sex. It's refreshing to feel a real humanness present amongst the very serious political and social critiques they develop throughout the record."Achilles and the Tortoise" is a harangue on the danger of just singing these songs without any consequence. ("And if this is not the world for me than I will set it on fire and watch it burn'til there is nothing but ashes left/ I can't believe my eyes/1 thought we were changing the times/ Are we changing the times?/ And are these flames of discontent really firestorms to purify?/ Have we lost our will to tear down the wall, burn the flags, and start again?/ History shall judge us/ We're history.") This song begins with a quick build, rolling snare, tight guitar and as they come they characteristically take you to a slightly different place than you awaited, in this case a clean guitar riff climbing step by step up the neck over an almost mechanical drumming. It has an intense effect, which they come back later to in the song to push its extreme: Thomas' voice dripping with anger and question and final proclamation as he sings over a deep open bass string the last words of the song, "were history."Solipsist Letter to the World" is probably my favorite song on the

record. The opening guitar sound feels just like a touch, something like the beginning of a Godspeed lullaby (and which appears again unexpectedly several songs later), but the drumbeat that comes in is bouncy, almost new wave-ish, the band waiting to thrash you around the first corner. The bass guitar 1 think is mixed best in this song, (sometimes the other guitar is mixed too high throughout the record — but generally they sound great; they are quick and scratchy, but quite distinct in the mix, which seems characteristic of many Scandinavian Hardcore-Punk bands, like Separation or Intensity). But the bass has a couple great moments in this one. There is a nice little break down, smooth, but keeping the song moving, where Thomas sings in Danish — hell except for the man screaming in Danish on this part, this sounds a whole lot like Joy Division! The last part of the song is the only time that shows off on the record the fact that Thomas can do something like actually sing, as in notes, and does so over an energetic hardcore-swinging-guitar part, sounding like his heart is breaking. Musically I would say this record feels in a lot of ways like a logical follow up to Refused's *"Songs to Pan the Flames of Discontent"* LP. There is no wacky electronica, but there is a fair amount of playing with the hardcore formula and experimentation, while maintaining the energy and focus. The great thing about that Refused record was how rooted it was in Hardcore and yet so unique to the band, and Lack has managed something similar here. There is a great part at the end of "Even the Most Honest of Emotions turns in to a Commodity" where Thomas is pacing his growl over the bass rumbling like thunder, while in the back ground an atmosphere, not quite noise, not quite a recognizable tone, builds slowly, eventually a drumbeat joins the thundering bass, the tone is brought to the fore, and they march all of this off, the haunting echoes left. Lack goes on to tackle body image, consumerism, marred heroes, and our attempts to assemble something meaningful in this shattered world. But right through to the end with Great Russian Nihilists (the Truth Hurts., .)" the themes of hope and despair are the focus of the record. ("So I'm caught in between hating a world that I do not want and another world I cannot have/ But I demand the impossible/ because its possible... Defy this deathculture and crawl out of this grave/1 will be a demon to you/ My wings come of the soil/ Fierce eyes shall smile as I lead you to your scaffold/ Come now, insignificant mortal/ Don't give up/ Don't give in"). There is so much to discover from this record (including a beautiful, thoughtful insert/ manifesto), and though its now two years ago since its release, it is still one of the most important hardcore records out there for our time. I'm very excited to witness what Lack will bring us in the future. And like the last song broken off, unfinished on the Trial "Our These are Lives?" record, Lack's final notes break up, incomplete, part of a song of which the last has not yet been heard. — B-Side

Nova Recordings/ Gladbache Str. 44/ 50672 Koetn/ Germany and in the USA thru Stickfigure Distro/ Po Box 55462/ Atlanta, GA/ 30308/ USA

reviews this long without line breaks?! Argh!

makes sense: the drums do that At the Gates one-two beat or beats I can imagine Botch (?) doing, not the speedy d-beats of the punk world, and the songs are spiced up

with various breaks and transitions while maintaining essentially the same tone and tempo throughout. I wish the lyrics were a little easier to read (they've been artistically rendered in one great block of brushstrokes, without spaces between words), but as far as I can tell it they're pretty right on, arguing angrily in favor of d.i.y. hands-on politics and just being angry in general, -b *Black Star Foundation, Suite 757, 21165 Malmo, Sweden*

Kenji "Demonstrations '02" CDR: This is packaged in a DVD case, which makes it pretty durable for a demo — it also means it takes up a lot of space. The recording on the first four songs somehow makes everything sound far away — but, now that I realize it's a live recording, I'm really impressed by how clear and well-balanced it is. This is competently played, energetic melodic punk rock, with an attitude that comes across in the gravelly singing (um, Hot Water Music or Planes Mistaken For Stars, maybe, for genre comparisons more so than individual similarities — though this is more rugged) and brash guitars. The lyrics are kind of vague, in that way that lyrics featuring poetic statements around pronouns ("I" and "you" a lot, with some "we" too, and one song filled with "her") often are in this genre. There's a part in the second song that surprised me, with drum rolls and double picking, that could almost have been played by the Amebix — that really helped spice this up for me. And then, hey, there's a feedback wasteland in the third song, and I'm starting to take this seriously! I'd really like to see this band play, they sound like they could really rock together in a tightly packed basement show. Yes, by the end of the fourth song, I'm a believer, and there are still five more tracks, older recordings, on here. Not only that — I'm starting to wish more bands would get good live recordings for their demos, instead of those studio recordings which can often be so clinical and dry. -b

P.O. Box 3441, Ventura, CA 93006

Keves"Nem Evtetek, Hanem MlALTATOK" CD: God, this is just bad. They've been listening to way too much Shelter and Limp Biscuit. They do a lot of annoying guitar rhythms that sound almost like funk or something and there's time that the bass sounds like it's from Seinfeld or the Red Hot Chili Peppers. I'm not digging this at all. On some positive notes — the artwork is good, the words are in Hungarian, the recording is good, the musicianship is tight and impressive and they do a variety of different stuff (I just think it's all bad). Man, I feel bad writing shitty reviews, especially

since their thank-you list includes some of my friends in Hungary. My apologies, -s | Editor's note: 1 remember being interested in these guys when 1 saw them play — they were doing some unusual stuff, and had distinctive personality. I don't remember Shelter or Limp Biscuit influences, but we'll have to trust Stef on this CD, as I haven't heard it. Out of all of us reviewers, she's the one who listens to Shelter, anyway!) *Nagy Laszlo, 9024 Gyor, Babits M. 71 — Hungary*

The Louisville Anarchestra "Tribute to J20 *Black Bloc"* CD: This is totally what I'm talking about! It's a d.i.y. experiment, at once self-indulgent and artistically liberating, connected explicitly to anticapitalist street

of my friends who were in By All Means, and as far as I'm concerned they can do no wrong. They maintain the dark atmosphere their music had then, take on a singer with quite a fierce high shriek, and keep the heartfelt anarchist politics. If I had to find another comparison for the music, I'd have to say Concrete, Stef's favorite Italian band, only with more nervous energy and perhaps shorter songs. Phenomenal drumming, freight train double bass included, that complements the discordant guitars with perfectly-timed transitions. The packaging is lovely, exemplifying all the best qualities of a certain hands-on d.i.y. aesthetic with printing in red, yellow, and black, and rough-textured illustrations with a style all their own framing the text. The lyrics and explanations (Italian, with English translations) cover conflicts with the State and fascists in the ongoing struggle for freedom — the first one, "reduction of charge, " about a court case that is dragged on by the "justice" system to terrorize an activist that they must eventually admit is innocent rings particularly true with me, as one of my friends is in the same situation right now (at least, I hope they'll fucking have to admit his innocence...). Oh yeah, like Dearborn S.S. and many of the other great punk bands of the last couple years, they've broken up, too. but this record is still worth finding on its own virtues, -b

Santa Sangre Discos, c/o Luca Mamone, Piazza P. Togliatti 9, 00030 Vallemartella, Roma, Italy., , or write guitarist Matteo, who is lazy at letter-writing but a great person, at Matteo Verri, C.P. 6, Smc *7, 41100 Modena, Italy*

> resistance (the "J20 Black Bloc" was the masked bloc of anarchist militants that fucked things up at the inauguration of George Bush back in 2001). The concept (and the liner notes that expound on it) here is at least as important as the commodity itself: this is an experiment in process-centered, participatory music, intended to deconstruct the idea that art and activism are the domain of specialists. (One wonders, perhaps, why it would be necessary to release such a thing on CD; if

Malefaction "Crush the DREAM" CD: This band is like Doom. No, they don't sound anything like the British crust band, but like Doom, you only need to hear one song. If you've heard one, you've heard them all. And that one song is pretty fucking good, but Christ — the same song twenty ' three times?! This band plays super fast thrash-metal-punk much like Phobia. Each song, with very few exceptions, starts with a blast beat, does something else for one to three seconds and then returns to the blast beat for the remainder of the song. The recording is pretty clear, the musicianship is not lacking by any means, but where's the creativity? I really can't believe that they do this for twenty-three songs. I'd imagine that this band is fucking incredible live, but for me at least, does not translate on to record very well... which actually is exactly what I think about Phobia. Fans of relentless blast beat brutality check this out. -s *G7 Welcoming Committee (see Swallowing Shit review for address)*

Manifesto Jukebox "Desire"

CD: As strange as it sounds, my first reaction to this is that it sounds somewhere between Rites of Spring and the first Foo Fighters album. This is good. It's mid-tempo dirty rock with a ton of emotion, good short guitar solos and vocals that are very similar to those of Guy, from the aforementioned Rites of Spring (and Fugazi) except a bit more melodic at times. The recording is great for them — any clearer and they might sound marketable, or something, like the aforementioned Foo Fighters. The guitars play a lot of open chords and then harmonize over the bass, which is usually

holding down the song structure along with the drums. That's a great formula for rock music that has been tested time and time again and works very well. These songs do allow for the bass to take the lead at times though, which is good because otherwise I might forget it is there. Wow... As I continue to listen I notice more and more cool guitar harmonies happening. The cover is a picture of some city with fire superimposed in back of it, which is amusing since it is very similar to the Umlaut record that is on the same label that I believe came out some time later. I wonder if Umlaut ripped off their cover image just as they rip off everything else. Hmmm. [Editor's note: Combat Rock Industries just bit the bullet after that and made their logo a city in flames — good for them!] This CD is just under a half an hour long, perhaps the perfect length as to keep up the momentum and not start to get boring. It's good all the way through. This band is great — I wish I hadn't missed seeing them play when they toured the states last year. [Editor, again: P.S., Stef, not only did you miss them on tour in the USA, our band played with them in Finland and you missed them that night too! Oops!] -s

Combat Rock Industry, PL 139, 00131 HKI, Finland

Next Life "Red End" 7": "Songs are made using Amiga and distorted guitar, " the back cover of this gatefold reads, and clearly Amiga is some kind of computer program for making music that sounds like it could be used for an '80s video game soundtrack. The electric guitar, for its part, sounds a little tinny. There aren't many points of contact

for me to connect myself to this music as a human being — the only signs of organic life throughout are brief, distorted samples of people screaming, and even those evoke horror movies and techno music rather than actual human beings. I harbor no great love for that fucker Baudrillard, but in cases like these he was right — there is no reality here, just references to references, reconstructions of constructions: its like the sound of machines talking to each other, using human beings as an interface at best. My favorite parts are when the double bass and stranger computer sounds are dominating, but Ministry still did it better for me. -b *Hai Nguyen Dinh, Tandstadveien 10, 3140 Borgheim, Norway — though he encourages us to use email instead: assbasher@altavista.com*

Nothing to Prove "Erase the Metronome" CD: There's a late '90s chaos-hardcore thing going on here, maybe drawing a little on Botch or Converge, without any of the unpleasant masculine [ener]gy that often characterized bands in that genre. There's some interesting sample collagework done here and there, the song construction and

the parts themselves are complex, the playing and recording are competent, the vocals even cover plenty of ground between speaking, singing, and

screaming; all they really lack are unique, unforgettable song compositions, but if you listen to this a few times and get to know everything by heart that doesn't really matter. The lyrics are in English and cover general anti-commodification, anti-hierarchy, and gay-positive subjects; one of my favorite lines: "the toys prepare themselves for the cruel world awaiting

them." The layout is fascinating and original: photos drawing out the terrifying absurdity of death row, and connecting it to the emptiness of modern/techno-slave life in every context, the capital punishment that begins at birth, -b

Nothing to Prove, Pion Lucien, 9 rue de Montbouton, 25230 Dasle, France

PANOPTIKON [?] "[?]" 7": Fucking crazy! I've had this beat up 7" sitting in or around the review box since — I'm afraid- some time in 1999 or 2000; I think I brought it back from New Jersey on some long-ago tour. I wasn't planning on reviewing it, I just threw it on out of curiosity — and here's the deal, it's fucking soundalike Bad Brains! Seriously! Reggae that merges into Rock- for-Light-era noisy punk, H.R.-sounding vocalist, lyrics that appear to show heavy Rasta influence, the whole thing — and it's not even bad, not at all! Now, this will probably be a challenge to track down, but I think it's worth mentioning here, since there are so few records in this style. I could use another whole genre of bands following the leads Bad Brains set out on that Rock for Light record, myself, -b

10 Garvey Drive, Monroe Twp., N] 08831

Paragraf 119 "Music *Til*

UlemPF. ' 7": This may not even be this band's latest release, and it's not especially current (I can't tell how long ago it was recorded, because the band opted to include a page on legal rights in confrontations with the pigs in their home nation of Denmark in place of more conventional liner notes), but this is such a classic example of great pro-directaction punk rock that it has to get coverage here. The cover alone says it all: masked people chiseling up the concrete (yes, to make stones to throw at the pigs!), something I've only been lucky enough to be present for once in my life so far — what a good time that was! The centerfold, too, is classy — a picture split down the middle: what we must do — on the left, burning franchises, trashed cop cars, molotov cocktails, masks and riot gear — and what we want — on the right, gardens, squatted buildings open to the public, communal campfires and friendship. I saw a 12" by this band that had band photos of them in it — each of them was of a different member getting aggressively arrested! No rehashed youth-crew crowd shots for these kids! Six songs, in Danish with English translations, cover subjects such as not forgetting the injustices we've suffered at the hands of the State, breaking their monopoly on violence, and outrageous police brutality and lies — that last one insults the Danish police press secretary by name, reminiscent of the

Rambo song that addresses the police commissioner who beat up one of my closest friends and then charged him with assault. Ihe music is pretty standard up-tempo punk rock, with dual scratchy vocals, not especially outstanding; but if these kids keep it up on the action front, I'll get their records just to have them around as conversation starters. Oh — and what does "Paragraf 119" refer to you, you ask? It's the section of Danish penal code forbidding assault upon employees of the State, such as police officers, -b *Paragraf 11*9, *Box 578, 2200 Copenhagen, Denmark — assuming they're not in prison by the time you read this*

Pistols at Dusk "Demo

2003" MP3: Please do the following things in order.

1. Get access to a computer that has both internet access, and a comfortable and ergonomically correct chair.

2. Sit in the chair and turn on the computer. 3. Open an internet browser window. 4. Go to www.lonelybullet.com/ pistolsatdusk/ 5. Download all four demo songs by clicking on the song titles individually.

6. Listen to the songs. 7. Check www.wordsasweapons.com/ punkpistols.htm and read the interview I did with Bill from Pistols at Dusk and also check out the lyrics to the first song. 8. Repeat step 6 until head falls off and rolls under the kitchen table.

9. Turn off computer. 10. Stand up and walk into kitchen. 11. Kneel and attempt to find head. 12. Reattach head using any necessary means. If you do all of the

above, I promise you both an adventure and a great time, even before you bust out the duct tape to reconnect your severed head to your body. This demo will have that effect though, I promise you. Every once in a while a band comes along that just kills me... leaves me wanting to pound nails with my fists, scream until my voice bleeds, and makes it impossible to sit still. Pistols At Dusk is that band right now, and I see them poised to leave the world in flames. The four songs deal with personal heartache, hardcore values, and despair, and I have no doubt that Bill At Dusk could scream about anything and make me feel like I was ready to jump out of my skin. The music is guitar driven, but not in terms of predictable riffs... it is more an assemblage of emotions transferred through musicianship into constant motion. That is the one thing which just keeps hitting so hard throughout this CD: it is constantly changing direction and tempo without ever losing for a second the focus and intensity which makes the

each song and the entire disc so powerful. The screams are from the guts... from deep in the guts... and when on track two Bill lets out "I have only one last wish /1 hope you fucking burn" all I know is that I am ready to light the goddamn flames, regardless of who he is talking about. You can't help but get swept up in this thing. I have added this demo to my top ten list of records to own in order to laugh uncaringly

in the face of the apocalypse. I recommend you do the same. After all, you can't beat the price. And while you are on the web, sitting there next to the kitchen headless and stoked, contact bill_baker@attbi.com for more information on the band and their future plans. -JUG *Greg provides only internet addresses, so we can imagine this is an entirely virtual band.*

Planes Mistaken for Stars

"Fuck With Fire" CD: 1 had only heard one of their songs before on a mix tape and I remember it being good. And they have such a great name, so I was excited to pick this one out of the review box. This Denver band sounds like they should be from D.C. The closest things I can compare them too are Rites of Spring, "In on the Killtaker" era Fugazi and a little bit of Nation of Ulysses, but they definitely have something modern sounding about them too. This is heavy punk rock and

roll type stuff with sleazy, nasally vocals that I find just fine, although I know that vocal style can annoy the shit out of some of my friends. The guitars are pretty heavy sounding with a lot of distortion and on the more laid back parts, it sounds like any other band would have backed off of it a bit, but they haven't, and it gives them their own sound. I think most other bands that play this style of music would have chosen a much weaker guitar sound and I give Planes props for trying this out and in my opinion, succeeding. Come to think of it, the bass has a bit of distortion on it too, I think. Hmm. Think of that sort of His Hero Is Gone wall-of-guitar sound that a lot of heavy hardcore bands are going for (including my own) but being applied to mid-tempo, up-beat, almost P°PPy r°ck songs. And the songs have a lot of obvious emotion and energy. This is pretty good, -s

No Idea Records P.O. Box 14636 Gainesville, FL 32604

Planes Mistaken For Stars "Knife In The Marathon" CD: Stef says this band has one of the best names ever, and I'm inclined to agree. I've been hearing about them forever, it seems, but I'm honestly pretty out of touch. This is pretty good emotional hardcore, somewhere between Hot Water Music and the Exploder. The more I listen to this, the more I like it, especially the 4^{th} track, which is more ambient and brooding than the others. All 5 songs are well-written, and the lyrics aren't too abstract for my tastes (sorry, Jerome's Dream), just songs about love and trying to keep it. I give this one a thumbs-up. -xb *Deep Elm Records, P.O. Box 36939, Charlotte, NC 28236*

Point of No Return "Imposed Freedom, Conquered Freedom" CD: This needs saying first: the layout of this record sets a new standard for great punk/hardcore layouts that I can only hope other bands will rise to themselves. In masterfully constructed juxtapositions of photos from the last two decades of international conflict, the tension between the fake freedom that the neo-liberal "first world" would enforce at the end of a gun and the freedom won by those courageous men and women who oppose it is dramatized — it's more eloquent than any words could be, and serves to perfectly

frame the lyrics; these draw on the conflict in occupied Palestine, the struggle for agrarian reform, the injustice done political prisoners and all prisoners, and the twin faces of military and cultural imperialism to present a picture of a world in struggle

between the dreams and solidarity of ordinary people and the heartlessness of their oppressors. A lengthy booklet (in Portuguese, translation on the internet somewhere) discussing the necessity of redefining such social constructs as straight edge (yes, PONR are a vegan straightedge band!) for oneself is also included — that text almost made it's way into the "straight edge" feature of this very magazine, in fact, but it was too long. And — no, I didn't forget — the music: PONR represent the (soy) cream of the crop of the dance-floor oriented, metallic hardcore bands that came out in the late '90's. Typically they alternate between slow, open chords and really sinister metal riffs, the rhythms switching up beneath them to bring out different aspects of each part. There are fast parts, too, which break things up nicely. The three singers sound like thunder over the cataclysm evoked by the music. The recording is thick and powerful, complementing everything perfectly; yes, everything is in place here, -b Liberation, Caixa Postal 4193, Sao Paulo, SP 01061–970

Redencion 9.11 "9701" CD: At first, I couldn't put my finger on it, but then I figured out what's going on in the first couple tracks: it's like an emo/screamo band playing streetpunk/oi music! The third track is a little electronica experiment, and the fourth track could have been written by Fugazi, perhaps: rocking guitar and drums figure repeating, bass adding different colors to it, distorted speaking over it. As the record progresses, there are also places where they seem to be working from a more metallic hardcore tradition, or even old school hardcore; all this, through the aesthetic of their grainy, aggro-emo sound — and it all holds together better than you'd expect it to, thanks to that. Whoa, the eighth track is a free jazz break, although I'm not convinced they're serious about it. The lyrics, in Spanish with English translations, are a good mix of personal reflection and

> *Reversal of Man "Discography"* CD: Not a complete discography, this CD is comprised of 27 songs that were never released on CD, including their demo. Reversal of man were one of the screamy, energetic, socially conscious SXE bands of the mid — to late 90s, and, in my opinion, one of the best bands from that era. This disc came out a while ago, and if you were going to get it, you probably already have. For anyone who still likes Prevail, Inkwell, Hourglass, Frail, etc., and didn't manage to get all the Reversal of Man records, go get this, -xb
>
> ***Schematic Records, dist. by No Idea, P.O. Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604***
>
> *Selfish "Burning Sensation"* 12": Yeeeeaah! This starts with a bang with an intro that packs all the punch and drama of the best Iron Maiden, finger-tapping leads and all. Once things get going, this is more Oi/street punk than Maiden, with guitar solos here and there to maintain the '80s metal presence. This is really urgent, intense stuff, though — it doesn't sound sentimental at all. The power and dirt in the mix are balanced at just the

right proportions — and even the lyrics, where I can make them out, are positive, about seizing the day and so on. Where I cant make them out, they're more along the lines I was expecting: "Fight the fight dead people vomiting, right, no cry no tear from my dead eye — kill murder a sickly smile, just now as the fist bites!!!" Christ, every once in a while the vocalist sounds a bit like Roger Miret on old Agnostic Front albums... that's not too overwhelming, though, thankfully. What else remains to be said? Well, there are shouted backing vocals on the choruses, and the artwork harkens back to those halcyon days of early metal: full color, amateur illustrations of skulls, mysterious women with spiders, a naked winged bodybuilder angel with a flaming loincloth that makes the title appear a reference to venereal disease. And yes, these guys are Finnish, they're Finnish as fuck, -b *my friend who released this is so humble about his label that he just listed it as "available through Ebullition (P.O. Box 680, Goleta, CA 93116, USA)"on the cover*

Shackles Await "" 7": Dark atmosphere, primitive overloaded recording, fuzzy guitars and roaring, guttural vocals. There are parts that start out sludgy and crunchy and slowly pick up speed (think "Cave In" on the Gehenna 7"), there are parts where the guitarists will hit one note on two strings at once and then bend one up, there's even a part where echo pedals are used by the guitarists during a spare, atmospheric part.

The SPECTACLE "" 10": Here's the old story, once more: Somewhere in some small town, far from anything hip or happening, a few bored teenagers find a record by some old punk band that has long since declared punk rock to be dead and meaningless. Maybe the town is San Diego, maybe its Umea, Sweden, whatever, but no punk bands ever come through, so, inspired by the record and whatever others like it they can find, the kids make their own crazy punk rock, basing it on the stories they have made up to go with the impressions those first records gave them — and it's amazing, what they make, it becomes the most important thing in the world for them and then for everyone who encounters it. Suddenly the whole world is looking at their little dead-end corner, seeing it as the center of the cosmos; people start moving there in droves, whole battalions of copycat bands form, new generations found their own passionate life projects on the foundation of the music made by these former teenage nobodies. Eventually, under all this pressure, things cave in."Punk is dead, dude, " they all swear, and everyone moves away or tries to get on MTV or "grows up" and dies. B ut far away, far from all th is action, in fact north of the arctic circle, at the northernmost tip of Norway, in Bodo, some kids have found a record left from this brief explosion... and punk rock is born to triumph again.

But let's talk about this record, specifically. This is a good fucking record! Its exactly what I want to sec in a band's first release: the music is soulful, the packaging is extensive and original and includes lengthy essays about their intentions and politics (which I'd say are pretty damn close to the politics and intentions of, say, the people

who do the magazine you're reading) as well as discussions of each song — and yes, they've released the whole thing themselves. The lyrics are stunning in some places: let others scurry for cover-we rush to bear witness." For their sound, let me give the reference points you and I probably share: when I saw them play I thought of early Zegota, in that they were so unaffectedly passionate and earnest. pushing themselves like young maniacs, giving it their all; the guitarist, and possibly the vocalist, seem to listen to Undying -it comes out in some double picked leads, especially, which _all_ the same don't alter the much grittier, punker aesthetic of their sound (possibly influenced by His Hero Is Gone's recordings); the vocalist's painful, guttural delivery makes me think of Gehenna; I imagine, from their politics, that the interest Refused showed in Situationist thinking may have rubbed off some, too. But like any great record, this isn't just a mishmash of things other bands did better; indeed, no comparison to any of those great bands would be warranted if Ihe Spectacle were just a second rate imitation of one or a few of them. No, they have that soul that makes bands matter. Now, there's a lot of fucking music out there in the world, and a lot of it sounds the same, while being generally uninspired, lacking that requisite soul — so you may have to listen to this a few times to , recognize that it's of a different caliber than all that other stuff. But if you do, you'll be rewarded: you'll find these songs sticking with you as copycat hardcore doesn't, you'll find yourselt reaching for it in times of intense emotion. Yes, this is a good record of real songs.

Or perhaps I'm telling this all wrong, as if I'm a voice from the sky, not involved in the tale at all. Here's what this record means to me personally. In 1999, horribly ill on tour in Scandinavia, 1 totally lost my voice; for a week I actually thought I'd destroyed it forever and I'd never be able to speak or sing again- it was really scary. Maybe some of you have heard this story before... now, in the last two days before I became completely mute, 1 was still able to sing, though 1 was really sick. We were on tour in Norway, and the first of those two days we played a fucking great show at the Blitz squat in Oslo. At least one of these kids was there; 1 think a few of them were. I was a wreck, but, sustained by the spirit of the crowd, we still reached that beautiful place a room full of screaming, sweating people can reach; I remember when we finished the set, I made a break for the gap al the edge of the stage, through which I hoped to escape to the toilets to crash out in utter exhaustion — but the huge, wild, woolly squatterpunk descendents of the Vikings beat me to it and blocked my way, pushing me back and shrieking "YOU PI.AY MORE NOW!" as they brandished their vodka bottles."We can't play more now, " Matt informed the crowd — four singer is going to die." Eater that evening a somewhat-inebriated squatter punk without very good English approached and, solemnly, addressed me: "I am very sorry to hear that you are going to die." I was mute, of course, and couldn't correct the misunderstanding... but I'm getting off the subject. The next night we played a hardcore festival a few hours away, and the kids from Bodo were there again, having come over a thousand kilometers south for the two shows. Ihat night I was on my last legs, barely able to move; I'm sure it was painful for everyone there to have to watch me struggling to

make something beautiful when it was all I could do to stand up. If we made any real music that night, it was the inaudible music, the music we couldn't make but wanted to so desperately that it must have been wrenching for folks there, like the Bodonites, to see. We had to cancel our show in Trondheim, the next day, and that was the first of the days I woke up without any voice in my throat at all. Anyway, two years later, we returned to play in Oslo at the Blitz again. Ihe Spectacle played, too, and they were great — and we were in good health, so we were able to return the favor; I recognized them from the earlier tour, and probably bragged about how healthy I was this time around. A few nights later, we were to play with them in Trondheim — but, of course, I had suddenly become so sick again that I couldn't even stand up. I slumped in the room behind the club, doing my best to talk with the Bodo kids; I imagine we talked about how important it is to make music despite the costs and challenges, that sort of thing. That night I couldn't do it-my friends took me back to a house and laid me on the floor, where I lay in fever-delirium — but the rest of our band played, and 1 heard later that the kids from Bodo had taken the microphone and passed it around the crowd, everyone singing and having a wonderful time. That made me feel good, to know that even when I can do nothing others are still out there making it happen: and getting this record was a wonderful reminder of that. To all of you who will keep punk and passion and music alive, even when I'm too fucked up or ill or defeated to participate, here's a salute. Maybe I'll never make most of that inaudible music audible, though I'm sworn to try; but I know if 1 don't, you will. Thank you. -b

Smart Patrol, Kirkeveien 5, N-8009 Bodo, Norway, www.smartpatrolrecords.com, ihatethespectacle@yahoo.com

Sick of Silence "Crusader of Individuality" CD: When passionate young people are getting started making music of their own, they often start out trying out the words and songs of others on their own tongues, as a way to develop their own voices. Ulis record definitely shows the influences of Refused's last record; the first song actually has that breakdown from Refused's "Protest Song'68" about how much more our music could be, impassioned manifesto and jazz buildup included. It has a catchy chorus, and I'm happy every time it comes around, so that's good! The second song kicks in with a part that could be a more rocking Tragedy, for my favorite part on the record; it has a break that sounds like something out of Botch, and then the clean channel parts with narration that could be the result of listening to various modern emo bands, or parts of the "Shape of Punk to Come" record. The third song has another breakdown with a string section, and the vocalist exhorting "let's set the world on fire, let's start tonight." The fourth song starts with some more rock'n'roll stuff that I like least out of everything here — when they get to the chorus, I wonder if they've been listening to Propagandhi, too. Anyway, derivative or not, I feel like these kids mean what they're saying, and that's the really important thing. If

they take what they're doing seriously, and develop their own sound, their own style, their own voice (just

*Tragedy (first lz", * 7",* and "Vengeance" *12"); I'm at the end of my career as a music critic, writing the final review in the reunion issue of the 'zine I started as a teenager, so for once I can afford to be speechless before a record, to decline to attempt to describe it. In fact. I'm not going to attempt to describe any of these three records; all I can say is, since the last issue of this magazine, as fewer and fewer records came out that I could get really excited about, this band has maintained my faith that punk rock can still surprise and transform me as much as an adult as it did when I was a kid. Even when I couldn't listen to the records, these songs were defi nitely playing in my head in every ridiculous, miserable, or triumphant situation I've survived or celebrated over that time, keeping my spirits up and my resolve firm, Thank heaven for punk rock, that's all I can say. If you haven't heard these recordings, hunt them down — not to put anyone on a pedestal, but for me, in my world, this is the Amebix of our generation, -b*

Try the address in the interviews section

repeating another band's departures from the genre will not set you free!) — well, that's the next step they have to take. For now, I'm thrilled they're singing about something, not just rocking out. -b

Freedumb Recordz, 101 Place Charles Lemoyne Longueul, Quebec, J4K 2T3, Canada

Speak Up! "This Day Is The Perfect Day" CD: Western imperialism rears its ugly head again, as the lyrics for this old-school Hungarian hardcore band are in poorly-translated English. I just wish to hell bands could feel safe singing in their native tongues. Though the points the band are making(condemnations of war, the class system, and animal exploitation) are right on, I don't really like this album. The music isn't catchy or powerful enough to make up for the old youth crew formula, and the singer doesn't have very good delivery. A lot of the energy is probably lost by the words being in English, and this just doesn't sound desperate enough for me. Altogether, not a bad release, but not outstanding enough to stay in my stereo, -xb

Bertalan Andras, Gazdag 13, Szombathely 9700, Hungary

Strike Anywhere "Underground Europe 2001 *Genoa Benefit* EP" 7": This is this band's 1999 demos, but the fact that they're released here as a benefit for arrestees at the Genoa protests makes this record worth mentioning even at this late date. I get the impression that Strike Anywhere, at least here, is the band some of us wished Avail would have been — they're out of the closet about their antiauthoritarian politics, keep a high energy level throughout and a youthful idealism in the foreground, their music is fast and gritty but they're not afraid of melody in the vocals or, for that matter, major key guitar parts — which still often have an undertone of sadness. Listening to this, I can sort of tell that Against Me was

just around the corner in punk history at that point. If you like Strike Anywhere, or, fuck it, Against Me, I'm sure you'd really enjoy this: as they sing in the last song, "1999, but it could be anywhere, any year" — that's almost too perfect a note to end this review on. What is this, Rolling Stone magazine? So instead, I'll conclude by complaining that they actually sing"Oi Oi Oi!" in that song, too, at one point — what is this, 1979? Anyway, pay no attention to the grumpy editor, -b *Scene Police, D.P.M., Humboldstrasse 15, 53115 Bonn, Germany*

Swallowing Shit "Promo Copy — Not For Resale" CD: Okay, so that's not the name, but I thought it was funny that our review copy was stamped with that. It's actually selftitled. This is an anthology of this Canadian band that was together from around 1995 to 1997 whose members have since moved on to play in bands that you've probably heard of. These songs are over before you possibly could get bored. They're fast, intense, to the point with non-stop energy and great recordings (with the exception of the last few songs). They sound like Crudos, then Drop Dead, then Slayer, then Umlaut and then Tear it Up. These guys are all over the place. But even with such short songs they manage to break into parts that sound totally original. This band is really tight as well. The lyrics are political, serious and straight to the point. On the contrary, the song titles themselves are fucking hilarious: "Lyrics That May Offend the Honkys, "" Burn Winnipeg to the Fucking Ground, " "Christian Metal=Nazi Reggae, " "You're Not Old School, You're Just Old, " "If Assholes Could Fly, This Place Would Be an Airport, " etc. This is great! If you're a fan of fast, relentless hardcore definitely check this out. And check out the record label's name... -s *The G7 Welcoming Committee PO Box 27006, 360 Main Street Concourse Winnipeg, MB R3C 4T3 Canada*

Unconform "The Pursuit of Happiness" CD: This is some of the first punk music I've heard from Moscow, and I'm not disappointed. It's basically old school hardcore, but it's top notch, and there's plenty of variety and personality to set it apart: the two guitar parts complement each other well, the rhythms often switch up in interesting ways, the recording and playing are both excellent, and there are many flourishes and experiments that are above and beyond anything any old school band from this hemisphere has tried in a decade and a half: the intro features some

be.iutitulcelloplayingth.it really sets it : apart (think Cwill), another song includes sweet-voiced singing as a counterpoint to

> • the usual grull yelling and occasional youth crew vocals. Those unexpected moments are my favorite parts — the intro is so good, Unconform should ask the cellist to sign on for the long haul — but even in the moments when they're doing what many bands have done before, choruses, breakdowns, and all, they don't sound like anyone else; their transitions are still original, and their riffs are really good. The lyrics are sung and printed in Cyrillic, but the explanations also appear in English; they are about the individual struggle for dignity, as straight edge band lyrics often have been, but they come across as sincere. I'd recommend this highly to

anyone who liked any of the various waves of self-consciously "old school" hardcore, and to anyone who enjoys punk bands who reinterpret old traditions to make them interesting again, -b *Unconform, P.O. Box 64, 109147, Moscow, Russia (unconform@mail.ru)*

Upsilon Acrux "Last Train

Out" CD: I'm going back and forth between being annoyed and intrigued with this one. It's a quiet, spare sound, cleanchannel guitars and bass and jazz drums in front exploring math-rock rhythms — presumably with a calculator in hand, as these time signatures are confusing the fuck out of me! At my favorite moments, the music is alien but softly beautiful, capturing the natural, almost non-musical beauty of distant rain; the second track is definitely an example of this. In those cases, their strange aesthetics work to throw the listener off in a way that forces her to open herself up to what's going on more. In the more annoying moments, the actual sounds the instruments are making are unpleasant and jarring enough (think — the alarm on a digital wristwatch) that, combined with the foreign time signatures, one can't help but wish it would just stop. As a musician, I'm fascinated by some of what they're doing, and would like to listen to this over and over until it makes sense to me intuitively; as a music lover, there are a couple tracks I'd like to hear often, and then some I'd like to skip from now on. Not bad, though, for something so out there compared to what I usually listen to. They get full credit for exploring, anyway; without bands out there doing that, it would be hard for other bands to keep composing new heart-rending, timeless anthems out of the same old materials. No vocals, so no lyrics; presumably no political pretensions, so no liner notes or essays, -b *www.hactivist.com*

Uwharria "Fury in the

Foothills" CD: I think this band used to be a side-project for the people involved, but they recently converged in North Carolina and have been more active. I saw them play the other night and Rick, the

Charlie Don't Surf/Unison/ Intensity "Live from the dom Omladine, Beograd" three way SPLIT CD: Check this out — fuck you and your bourgeois limited edition colored vinyl records by spoiled North American hipster "hardcore" bands, records like this one are what I love about punk rock! This is a live recording (and over 77 minutes!) of the first real d.i.y. punk show in Belgrade (May 5, 2001), following a five year vacuum caused by the war in Yugoslavia. The drama of that setting alone distinguishes this from all the uninspired records pouring out of uninspiring suburbs (not that you can't make great music in the suburbs, but you have to contest those suburbs to be able to

do anything good there). The recording quality is great-and for my part, I often really prefer the unmediated, raw quality of a live recording to any studio fanciness. The first two bands are from Belgrade — Charlie Don't Surf starts out with a Charles Manson sample ("who put your voice up over my voice? who says your god's bigger than my god?", in part), chilling, which repeats as they begin playing a powerful, energetic, yet deeply sad introduction — the whole effect is really moving, it layers a number of different emotional responses over each other. Their music, once they get going, is fast and crazy, punk and fuck, really powerful yelling vocals cutting through — they're fucking great! Unison are a little less direct — they work more with dynamics, moving back and forth bet ween restrained tension with melodic vocals and buildups and moments when everything busts oiit into intensity and screaming. They do manage to build to some grc.it dim ixes neat the end. though. Intensity are in their natural environment here, playing the straightforward high energy hardcore that they do (did?) so well. Ulis is as good as any of their studio stuff in my opinion — all the intensity is here' — and has extra personality, thanks to their songs explanations and banter. They play twenty songs, including a Citizen's Arrest cover, compared to Charlie Don't Surf's fifteen and Unison's seven. The packaging, also very classy as a d.i.y. three-panel cardstock design, includes liner notes describing the context of this record and emphasizing the importance of keeping punk/hardcore'a permanent struggle against nationalism, racism, homophobia, sexism, and all forms of exploitation." Right on. Contact these folks and demand a copy of this, if you want some more nutrients in your punk rock diet, -b *Dreamstate, Milesevska 61, 11000 Beograd, Yugoslavia (drcamslatc99@yahoo.co.uk)*

> She can sing so sweetly, sounding almost childlike, then shriek with such hurt and anger and strength that it cuts right to my marrow, then sing sweetly again, this time lower, like one who has lived and suffered and is not guarded, exactly, on account of it, so much as deepened. And the band is behind her, ready to carry her everywhere with their music, just as she carries us. At the time I saw them play in Yugoslavia and Bosnia, I somehow had the idea that they were the Baltic Fugazi, but now I'm not sure exactly where that was coming from; they're tight and expressive, like Fugazi, but I think they play their fast parts a little faster, and generally use more emo musical

conventions ('emo' in the very best sense, I promise!) — lots of melodies intertwined, sudden dynamic changes. To sum up: this is great, such poetic, touching, expressive music, and I only wish for a full record of their music. Now, Unison: the first beat is distinctly a d-beat, but their aesthetic is far from the standard dis-band — the recording is a little thin and small, not dirty and overloaded, and some stuff sounds more youth crew than hardcore punk. They experiment with a huge reverb effect on the vocals in parts of the first song, a build-up with guitar noise in the background

in the second one, and make their third song by far my favorite with some eastern European guitar lines and a related percussion part in the middle. All around, I can't say I'm as excited about them as about Analena, but that was a tall order, -b

LibberTea records, c/o Davor Bolant, Ivana Mazuranica 32, 10362 Kasina, Croatia

Bob Barker Youth/And I *Can't Wait* SPLIT 12": When I was in my mid-teens, a punk kid I knew was in a band called Bob Barker and the Abortions, so my life has pretty much come full circle. The latest tribute to Bob features those crazy, barking vocals that come across in a vehement, screaming, indecipherable monotone, fast punk with a recording that may be a little overloaded in the bass register, and that general atmosphere of excitement and recklessness that kids making this music for the first time can create. There's a section of static noise at the end that had me really concerned about the condition of the record player needle for a minute. And I Can't Wait, who have the audacity to put xs around their name at this late date (wow!) have a better recording that makes their impassioned, inexperienced punk rock come across a little more clearly. They play a little slower, but their vocalist is also screaming one anguished note over and over throughout most of the songs — and wait, those are breakdowns with youth crew vocals! And, oh shit, their side ends with a screaming call and response that gets me really excited: "Where's your heart/It's right here!" Fuck yes! B.B.Y. puts information about Food Not Bombs and vegetarianism on the back of their lyric sheet, while A.I.C.W. has a song called "Outnumbered 70 to 1" about "straightedge sisterhood! With my heart on my sleeve and an x on my hand I'm breaking into your boys' club." That's fucking awesome! I hope there is a small army of teenagers listening to this record in their parents' basements, their hearts pounding at the notion that their peers make records they like more than anything in the malls, slowly hatching commitments to d.i.y. that will last the rest of their lives, -b *Damn it, FUCK everybody who cant be bothered to provide a street address! There's just one email address in here, and if I know email, it won't do you any good: kingcobra recording@hotmail.com… and oh, here's a webpage: www.andicantwait.com*

Cementario Show/Sin Dios "El Hombre Contra Si Mismo" 7": Sin Dios has been around forever, working hard at spreading their old-fashioned Spanish anarchism with CDs that come packaged in books of history and political theory, and I'd seen them a couple times already in Poland (once in a squat, no less), but all the same this listening is the most excited I've been about their music yet. Fast punk rock with all the traditional drum beats, earnest, angry singing, occasional guitar leads; the lyrics are in Spanish, but "la etica no existe para el capital — la vida no es mercancia" is clear enough, at least to me — especially accompanied by a photo of an armored pig hitting an old man in the head with a baton. I saw Cementario Show in their native western Spain, after over four fucking months of straight touring, and I was still thrilled about their d-beats — I danced their whole performance, waving my fist in the air and guessing right every time a new transition was about to hit! A band with good d-beats is a thing of beauty, not to be taken lightly. And they don't sound like

every other excellent d-beat band, either — the drummer does some original stuff on the snare drum, keeping a roll going throughout one whole part as a beat rather than a rhythm, and the hoarse vocalist has his own personality, as do the songs. Memorable songs — that's the dividing line between a good band and a great band. The riffs have something of a blues sensibility to them, under all the distortion, I think. Anyway, in my book, there's something to be said for any band that plays d-beats with those high guitar leads at the end of verses and doesn't sound like a total dis-clone. I was a little worried about some of the lyrics, until I recognized that was a G.G. Allin cover — now I'm more concerned about their musical taste. Regardless, I'd love to see them again just wave my fist in the air in time to the bass drum, -b

La Idea, Difusion Libertaria, Apdo. 18.251, 28080 Madrid — c, Santa Barbara, 9, Spain

InFECT/DiSCARGA SPLIT CD: Infect is a high energy, fast, intense straightforward hardcore band quite possibly influenced by Infest and reminding me of Sweden's Intensity at their best. My comrade here in the kitchen I've occupied to compose reviews is thinking more along the lines of Melt Banana and Super Junky Monkey, but I think their blastbeats and catchy choruses are more directly connected to the U.S. forerunners of those bands. They're rocking here, full power, and their singer's clear voice cuts through over everything with great personality and fury. Yeah! And then Discarga comes in, even faster — yes! faster! — with over-the-top blastbeats, yelling vocals, and plenty of energy of their own. I wish they'd offered more originals, though — after that great first song they offer a good Circle Jerks cover, a painful-to-listen-to Kiss cover, a good Nations on Fire cover, and a half-decent Motorhead medley (sorry,

Northern Ireland's Bleeding Rectum did it better) before finally playing one more song of their own and ending with a big drum finale. Both bands print their lyrics only in the original Portuguese — but from what I know of them, they're all right on people, so don't worry about that, -b

78 Life records, Caixa Postal 2505, cep 09190, Sto Andre, SP, Brazil

Makhnovshchina & Guardia Negra Demo CD: This is two Boston bands sharing a CDR with a color-copied cover/insert for each band. Both covers are impressive for a demo, especially the Guardia Negra one, and both bands have pretty rough sound quality. Makhnovshchina (that's a mouthful!) play mostly crusty hardcore sometimes leaning towards street punk and sometimes towards metal, strangely enough. There are a lot of d-beats, blast beats and fast rock beats. Their lyrics are straightforward and deal with topics ranging from destroying the World Bank to killing cops to stopping gentrification. I like this. I'd love to see this band live and 1 look forward to hearing a better recording from them in the future. Guardia Negra are a bit sloppier musically but they sing in Spanish, which is exciting. They play simple four-chord street punk rock with melodic vocals that sometimes almost come to a scream... but not quite. I wish this band had a bit more energy. The songs sound sort of laid back and I don't think that is intentional. The singer could help improve this if he sang a bit harder and sounded like he was giving it his all. There are English translations of the songs and

they seem to generally be well-researched words about class struggle and revolution. I'm not digging this one too much, but it is sure nice to hear North American bands singing in Spanish, -s

Barricada PO Box 73 Boston, MA 02133

Overmars/Donefor "In the Arms of Octopus" split CD: This is two French bands splitting a CD. One song is in French and the rest are in English with all the song explanations in French. Overmars starts off the CD with a long minor key clean guitar intro that I suspect is intended to slowly build tension before the heavy part of the song kicks in — but doesn't quite succeed, as it gets pretty boring about half way through. The song finally comes in as heavy sludge similar to some of the stuff that Face Down in Shit or Neurosis play. There's some effects and impressive guitar work now and then, but for the most part, the ten minutes and twenty-six seconds that comprise this first song are pretty uneventful. The second song, however, comes in really rocking. It starts with a down-tuned, shitty sounding bass guitar and then the rest of the band comes in with upbeat drums and high droning guitar notes. This song is much better — they should have put it first. Unfortunately, much like the first song, the parts go on for much

too long without any exciting changes — and I'm bored again, Same wW theftird song though they do suddenly break into

'• • a quiet part in the middle of-the chaos. I'm only into six, eight or ten minute songs if they're interesting enough to captivate my attention for that long. Donefor is a whole lot more interesting with their first song ranging from parts that sound like Converge to Sonic Youth to Earth Crisis. The band continues to encompass a great deal of variety throughout their other three songs with different tempos and guitar tones and an indication that they are working from many different influences. All of the parts flow together really smoothly too. This is good song composition although I'd have to say there are a few too many "mosh" parts for my liking, -s

Overmars 21 Grande Rue La Guillotiere 69007 Lyon, France; Donefor 27 Rue Des Combes 69250 Curtis Au Mont D'or. France

Unsane Crisis/Ekkaia split

CD: As I listened to the first few songs from Unsane Crisis I thought I was in for seventeen songs of non-stop blast beat that was going to be difficult for me to get through since songs like that usually make me want to rip my hair out and poke out my eyes. But I was in for a surprise as I got a little further into the CD. They do a good variety of stuff that keeps it interesting. Don't get me wrong — the majority of this is blast beat chaos, but now and again they break into good d-beat parts, fast street punk sounding stuff, powerful "floorpunching" parts and even some slower heavy parts that sound like Korn, but surprisingly not in a bad

way — perhaps it only sounds like that cuz they're tuned so low. The vocals are ear piercing shrieks for the most part but there's some cookie monster grunts and growls here and there. If you like fast thrash metal sounding stuff and can deal with a bad recording that really buries the guitars than this might be for you. Oh, the lyrics are great — English sung by a Spanish band: "Just another more song. Why would have any sense. I only want to fun". Ekkaia, who have four songs on here, sing in Spanish and fall somewhere in between screamo, metal and thrash. This band has a lot of skill and a decent recording, but even though they are doing some really interesting stuff, it's not really moving me. They sort of remind me of Converge at times — really good technically, but I can't find much emotion. Maybe I take some of that back. It may be that I'm just worn out by the first band's seventeen songs. I think I'd enjoy seeing both of these bands live, but this CD is just mediocre, -s

Difusion Liberataria La Idea Apdo 18251, 28080 Madrid, Spain

Vuur/Seein' Red "Another Fine Punk Product" split 7": Vuur is rocking, taking everything that was good about Systral's "Fever" record and going with it: grainy bass, chord progressions that

print reviews

X 949 MARKET: This is fucking great, a stellar example of the heroic endeavors and creative documentations that come out of our community. In spring of 2001, a vast building in downtown San Francisco was squatted; it hosted a punk show attended by 600 people, enormous servings of free food, and the dreams and ambitions of a wide circle of people from all walks of life who cleaned and rewired it, and decorated it floor to ceiling with graffiti murals. This is their story, told through various accounts and interviews and photographs, from the moment the space was discovered to the eviction and its aftermath. This account does exactly what it should do — it captures those events in a way that makes the reader feel like similar adventures might be possible in other contexts, rather than glorifying some past achievement. I'd recommend this highly to anyone interested in squatting or messing with the fabric of reality in general in this repressive country, -b *Zara, 3288 21rst St., P.M.B. #79, San Francisco, CA 94110*

A *Kind of Epic:* Everyone sit up and take note, though I can't promise it will do you any good! This little 'zine, probably produced in a print run of only a few dozen, is one of the finest collections of poetry I've read in some time. I'm very rarely excited about poetry — when I find a great poem, or even a great line, I dwell or soar on it for weeks, but that's extremely rare. Rita Mae Brown's "The Hand that Cradles the Rock is my latest favorite discovery in the world of poetry, and it was 1997 when I came across it. This 'zine is up there with that book, for me — all the more impressive, since

the author is from mainland Europe. His English is effortless like only a true poet's can be, though, shot through with those occasional moments of revelation when the language and the world you thought youd known all your life suddenly, simultaneously open up new horizons before you. Yes! But good luck getting your hands on this. Some of my favorite poems in here are not actually part of the'zine — they're written on scraps of paper, tucked into it (when I was in Europe, I was lucky enough to bump into the author and get him to give me copies of some unpublished ones) — so your best bet is just to try to track this guy (Maarten Das is his name) down and get him to share

> something with you. He's since released another 'zine of poetry, which I don't like as much (he works more with straightforward rhymes in it, which gives a singsong quality to the work), but I'll print the email address from that one, since the contact on this'zine doesn't work anymore, -b *whydaredevilspray@hotmail.com*
>
> *Communicating Vessels Volume* 1, #7 *and Willful Disobedience* VOLUME 3, #5: These 'zines are two of a kind: both feature consistently intelligent anarchist theory from an insurrectionist/ ultraist perspective, balance historical

and even statistical precision with a taste for surrealist fantasy, are illustrated with borrowed woodcuts and cartoons that xerox nicely, and appear at remarkably regular intervals. C.V. is more prone to artiness, with significant parts given over to poetry and somewhat overwrought narratives one might expect to see from the Chicago Surrealist Group; it also focuses more on a politics of daily life resistance, as opposed to the hyper-theoretical critiques, abstract glorifications of revolt, and dry news blurbs of W.D. 'Ihe highlights of this issue of C.V. are two reprints — an excellent analysis of the differences between "antiwar" movies that subtly glorify war and works which succeed in undermining its grip on the psyche, and an anti-work manifesto translated from German — and a contribution from a food service worker who interprets his (?) experiences engaging in on-the-job resistance in terms from class struggle theory. If the similarities in format and subject matter were not enough, this issue of Willful Disobedience quotes the same British 'zine in the same discussion of how anti-war agitation cannot convincingly be pro-peace, either. Of the two, W.D. has the deeper analyses, and this issue is one of the better ones — the arguments about anarchism being about means as well as ends, the role of festival as pressure valve in oppressive society, and the centrality of desire in anarchist economics are convincing, and might even usefully inform one's practice. Still, I have to admit, I want to like both these 'zines more than I succeed in liking them — if only the poetry in C.V. could actually move me, I would be deeply faithful to it, but it has yet to; and W.D., on the other hand, is demoralizing in that it tends to include a lot of abstract ranting about stuff I deeply believe myself (immediate struggle against alienation and oppression in all their forms,

etc. etc.) that still fails to leave me with any particularly new ideas of how to realize those abstractions, coupled with news reports about real life exciting things happening very far away — which offer no practical information on how I could be involved. Mere thinking about revolt won't help us — we have to think and act, and my favorite papers are the ones that offer equal proportions of philosophical and practical armaments. All the same, between these two I'd recommend Willful Disobedience, especially, as a stellar example in the tradition of verbosely theoretical revolutionary anarchism. Just make sure you leave the armchair after reading, -b *Communicating Vessels: Mutual Aid Portland, P.O. Box 7328, Portland, ME 04112 Willful Disobedience: Venomous Butterfly Publications, P.O. Box 31098, Los Angeles, CA 90031*

CREACTIV@ [#4?] t El ateneo ha publicado una coleccion de pequenos ensayos politicos en un 'zine de 32 paginas. Queda enfasis en la cuestion de los presos en Espana, y tambien hay

escritos sobre el espacio libre imaginative, fisico, y psicologico que debemos ofrecerles a nuestros hijos para ayudarlos a crecer mejor; algunos contra los efectos aniquilizantes y estandardizantes de la escuela y del trabajo; una biografia de Louise Michel, educadora libertaria francesa del Siglo XIV, y una description corta de la utopia protoanarquista Sinapia. No profundizan mucho en estos temas, pero la mayoria tienen una energia sincera e idealista. Aparece tambien una lista de las pubiicaciones que tiene el ateneo en su biblioteca.-

@***Ateneo Libertario Eliseo Reclus, Apdo. 586, 11480 Jerez Fra., Cadiz, Espana***

Disorderly Conduct #6 *and* GREEN ANARCHY #12: Like Disorderly Conduct and Communicating Vessels, this 'zine and paper are so closely tied to one another in terms of content, tone, and even personnel that it makes the most sense to review them together. Both of these, taken together, constitute the best-known voices of anarcho-primitivism in North America, or at least the really confrontational strains of it (I'm not counting Derrick Jenson here, nor Daniel Quinn, for good or for ill). Do I like them? I go back and forth — when the contents just seem too outlandish to do anyone any practical good in the actual struggles for freedom and authentic living that are going on, or, worse, when too much space is given over to vitriolic attacks on other radicals, I can get really fed up (especially with Green Anarchy, which seems to be edited by people with scant social skills in the important field of conflict resolution!); on the other hand, on good days, I enjoy the fact that there is a wing of the anarchist community at least as far out as I am, and take interest in their perspectives for the sake of diversity at least (this is more the case for Disorderly Conflict). So what are the differences between the two? The obvious distinction is depth: Green Anarchy is a tabloid, with coverage of environmental direct action, radical struggles from around the world (seen through a primitivist lens, of course), infighting between various anarchosplinter groups, and intermittent essays (that, when they don't just boil down to another repetition of the obvious "Destroy Civilization, Already!", can be interesting: the fall of Rome, how to prepare and eat roadkill); Disorderly Conduct, on the other hand, has the space to

add some subtleties and diversity. In addition to direct action news and exhortations, this issue includes, to its credit, a story by Italo Calvino, an account of a trip through the anarchist squat circuit in southern Europe, a piece on the Aborigine concept of Dreamtime, and even my now all-time favorite poem on the subject of spelling and grammar elitism (no, it wasn't a competitive running, but anyway): "its or it's": "it's or its, I really don't care — it's its 'it's' and 'its, ' it's its shit, not mine." Of the two, then, I'd recommend

> *Beating Hearts of the World Unite:* This is such a beautiful project, the kind that takes a deep generosity to undertake, since it's easy to feel like this world just doesn't deserve anything beautiful like this, and that it won't shelter anything like this that is brought into it. This is a 130 page handcrafted book, one of quite a few they must have put together, handbinding them, hand-gluing in photographs of haunting landscapes, hand-stamping the covers, hand-writing in words. Rather than selling them, they offer them in trade for other gifts or works of art Or imagination from others, a grand gesture in itself. And the content is absolutely top-notch — it's essentially everything I would want to read in the d.i.y, press, gathered together. There's fiction, personal narratives, essays and manifestos, art and poetry, even a little news, all covering the spaces where anarchist and activist politics, sex and love and sexual/ amorous liberation, and passionate living in general intersect and intertwine. Some of it is plagiarized, some reprinted, much of it original, all of it high quality and yet very personal, even intimate, as if everything here was done by someone you knew, with you in mind. By the time you're reading this, it may well be a couple years since they put these together, but you should write them all the same, sending something beautiful you've dared to make yourself, so this quixotic gift won't be entirely wasted on this world after all.-b
>
> ***Beating Hearts Press, P.O. Box 444, Wollongong, NSW 2520 Australia***

Disorderly Conduct more, in view of it offering more variety (and balancing out the vindictiveness with humor and even verse), though it might be easier for the indigent reader to get her hands on Green Anarchy free, -b

both available from P.O. Box 11331, Eugene, OR 97440

ILEGAL #2: Este 'zine espanol es bien escrito e interesante. [Tambien esta un poco viejo (del enero de 2002) — pero eso es por la culpa del programa de publicacion de Inside Front, no por otra cosa.] Se trata de ka escena punk con un enfoque en la polltica (especificamente en el anarquismo y movimientos asociados con ello). Hay columnas sobre el rol de la musica en cuanto a la difusion de las ideas; sobre como podamos vivir unas vidas DIY, no solo comprar discos y leer 'zines DIY; sobre la prostitucion, los okupas en Holanda y en Espana (los dos un poco pesimistas), y el vegetarianismo.

"EL PUNK ES ODIO" nos anima a reclamar el punk por afirmar nuestro asco a la gente, pero su tema mas grande es como hacer que el punk como movimieno pueda escaparse de su asimilacion enervante a la corriente principal cultural. Hay entrevistas con Submission Hold (muy larga e interesante: tratan temas como la crianza de ninos, el

separatisms er. Quebec, t.anada, las drogas. y losordenadores), Tragedy, an hombre de laescena punk de Groningen. Holanda, Ruidoactivo (de un pueblo pequeno espanol), y, por dios, otro con Catharsis. Las preguntas por lo general son originales y las respuestas no aburren. Hay dos articulos

feminists, local communities, and even, occasionally, good bands! So at this point, sometimes I'm more thrived just to see a nesAssue of an old, old (I mean old in punk years) paper like Slug and Lettuce than I am to see a brand new band demonstrate some strange new hybrid of punk and cutting-

enough to keep doing exactly the same stuff, printing interviews with young anarchist bands and ranting simply against the government and religion over and over year in and year out? I wonder if there are any elements missing in the anarcho-punk scene (more tactical information, new insights

sobre ateneos colectivos, uno de ellos en Brasil. Las resenas tienen personalidad propia.-

@***Don't Belong, Apdo. 8035, 33200 Gijon, Espana***

Profane

Existence #40: I've always been perplexed when little magazines like Inside Front reviewed much more widely- circulated ones like Profane Existence — what good could that possibly do? But in this case, it offers

Half Wild: I lack the poetry to extol this 'zine as it deserves to be extolled. Suffice to say, it is an eloquent, intensely personal testimony, written very much from inside the world of emotionally conflicted, mentally unstable, nature-loving social dropouts — and yet possessing the power to communicate far outside that context. It is the equal, and yet the opposite, of a 'zine like Burn Collector: where Burn Collector is astute but cynical, this author achieves wisdom through her insistent, impractical artlessness, flaunting her raw idealism and the unhealed wounds it occasions. It is as moving as, and yet utterly different from, any literature in the vein of Harbinger: it is not a manifesto, nor an exhortation — it has far more in common with the personal 'zines of old — but yet communicates and inspires with that power, a power deriving here from the intimacy and openness of the author. I have to say-I've gotten a lot of really important insights out of reading and rereading this, as I have out of few 'zines tn a long lime, and 1 know others who have too; at her best moments, the author looks at the world through a sort of permaculture perspective, piecing together different ecosystems and the ways they function (or, tragically, break down). In case all this praise still leaves it unclear * what this is actually "about, " let me offer some selections from the contents: crazy, "glory tramps, "*"nonmonogamy, "*"disaster, "*"creatures out of their element." Got it? -b

Kika Kat M the Grubumkin House, 726 Frederick, Olympia, WA 98501

me a chance to think through some things I've been preoccupied with anyway — so damn the torpedoes, I'm gonna do it, and hopefully you'll get something out of it too. Now, as a younger punk rocker, I was all about innovation — everything had to be new, an unheard-of idea, a challenge to

everything taken for granted, a break with the past even if that past had just been a break with the past before it. Getting a little older, though, 1 discovered within myself a profound love for longstanding punk conventions — d- beats, patches, dreadlocks, badly xeroxed 'zines and basement shows, sullen teenagers, the works. Every time I saw, heard, met, or went to one of these,

edge jungle techno. That would make you think I'd be overjoyed to see this new issue of the mainstay publication of the U.S. anarcho-punk community, and I am, but... I've got to air some misgivings, too. The problem for me is that P.E. has changed so little over the years that I'm afraid it cant possibly be as useful to the new generations

Jack Frost's Top Ten sources of Motivation Whilst Laying out this zine:

1. Fear of Editor's swift reprisal'

2. ***Envy — Any recording I can get my mils on***

3.
Memento Mori: *s/t*

4. Lightning Bolt: *Wonderful Rainbow*

5. ***Mirah — Advisory Committee***

6.
7.
8.
Spring landscape in bloom right outside the library window *(damnit!)*
Pizza dumpster awaiting me after every night's work
Panda Cam: http://unvw.sandiegnoo.org special/fandas/pandacam/
Explosions in the Sky — *Peel Sessions*
10. Asschapel — Total Worship (don't let the band namefool you — they'refaking amazing!)
9.

of punks as it was almost fifteen years ago. I mean, "making punk a threat some more" is critical, but the original punk scene they formed to radicalize no longer exists — their readership and "target audience" is now made up of kids raised on the bands that were reading this magazine in the early'90's,

it felt like less of a ritual and more of an affirmation of persistence: twenty-some years into this counterculture, literally tens of thousands of sell-outs, age-outs, arrests, prison terms, and catastrophes later, and we're still at it — the punk community is still somehow spawning new generations of anarchists, activists, squatters, radical

while kids in other parts of the punk scene seem to languish on without any connection to radical possibilities. It would be ridiculous for me to think these folks would move on to radicalizing the emo scene or the metalcore scene, so I guess what I'm saying is that they (and all of us anarchopunks) need to focus on how to keep developing our scene, and our role in it. Is it

[3] ***Just kidding!***

into the advantages of a marginal lifestyle, new connections to others communities, new anticapitalist strategies to try) that Profane Existence and others like them could come up with and spread, elements which could really make punk twice as dangerous as it already is, just as this magazine succeeded in doing in the '90s. Anyway — in this issue, you'll find middlefinger anti-government/ war political rants, a little activist news (including an exchange about squat legalization reprinted from the fucking internet — are we living in the last days of print culture, or what?), angry demands that punx "live up to their patches"

based on the age-old notion that punk rock isn't as right on as it once was, Felix von Havoc's history of Crust punk in the U.K. (which is fascinating for us old folks, and probably also for young folks who were in diapers at the time — but it's troubling to me, too, since for our scene to be powerful and healthy we have to focus primarily on the present, not on the old days), and, on the back cover, even a good old-fashioned attack on Christianity. The most troubling parts are the interviews, which are so superficial as to read like interviews from Maximum Rock'n'Roll, and the reviews, which are similarly superficial for the most part (and, though I'm sure reviewer Nate didn't mean for this to come off as badly as it does, I really cringed when he wrote "most bands can't pull off the female vocals" in the Tern Eyos Ki review). If my fears that this is all too rooted in the past were not great enough already, the magazine cover is taken from one of the first Metallica records. Here's my dilemma: just existing, even without any evolution in content, approach, or quality, is an achievement for Profane Existence and everyone associated with it — so maybe it's OK that their contents don't challenge me today the way they did a decade ago, maybe they challenge some modern-day teenager instead. But, on the other hand, maybe today's average teenager needs to be challenged in some other way, too, since the world is evolving — and I really hope anarcho-punk will be able to remain a challenging, empowering force for the next generation, somehow... so how could P.E. evolve to address the needs of these new kids, assuming they are different? It certainly can't help that many of us older

punks are now twice the age of the kids getting involved now, when it comes to the question of what we should be doing to be useful. Maybe it's Profane Existence's job just to hold down the fort doing what they've always done well, and Inside Front's

job to try out the complementary stuff — but Inside Front doesn't exist anymore, so who's ready to take that on? -b

Profane Existence, P.O. Box 8722, Minneapolis, MN 55408

SOFAKARTOFFEL #4: This zine reminds me a lot of Lieve's *Ugly Duckling'zine, * one of my favorites from Belgium: like that 'zine, Sofakartoffel (that's literal German for "couch potato, " but the 'zine is largely in English, with little flourishes of Spanish) is mostly written in handwriting, with all the intimacy that can create between the writer and reader, and ranges from personal confessions and reflections to explicit considerations of such issues as "pro-life" bullshit (represented here by a debate between editor Sandra and some Italian holdover from the ghost of hardline past) and whether it is anti-Semitic to criticize Israel for their genocidal oppression of Palestinians. The hardcore scene is present throughout, not so much as a subject of coverage as a backdrop. There's a massive account of her travels last summer, including a trip through Argentina that I believe is the counterpart of Cyril's Argentinean scene report in this issue. The reader will probably come away from* Sofakartoffel *with an invigorating dose of optimism and idealism, and a finer sensitivity to the precious things in life, -b* Sandra c/o A. Fleischer, Bachbohlweg 47, 78467 Konstanz, Germany

Wasteland and Prolefutter: These are two excellently produced graphic works by the same artist. Wasteland is a dystopian story in pictures (think Lynd Ward, only grittier, bleaker, more terrifying), about an individual lost in a literally heart-rending world; there is some text in Deutsch, but it's not central to understanding or appreciating the work. The line drawings are simultaneously raw and precise, and convey alienation and disconnection without distancing the viewer from the sadness they portray. Prolefutter is more provocative, even political, art/manifesto than narrative; the graphics are largely collage-based (think early CRASS layouts, plus twenty years of

development), with really intricate work throughout. Rape, patriarchy, capitalism are portrayed with the kind of graphic genius and mental acuity that lays everything frighteningly bare. There is more text — English for the bold statements, Deutsch for the fine print — but again, an English speaker would still get a lot out of this. Not every picture is worth a thousand words, but these two compositions are worth their weight in Cometbus 'zines and George Orwell books. If you take d.i.y. visual arts seriously, try to track these down, or other work by this artist, -b

Flatline-Imperium c/o M99, Manteuffelstr. 99, 10997 Berlin, Germany

CATALOG *OF^MERChInDISE* FOR CONSUMPTION

CrimethInc. Far East is, by far, the most efficient distributor of CrimethInc. materials. Those motherfuckers are horribly overworked, though, so only send them simple, paid orders. Send generic requests for free stuff, special requests, and personal letters to the Urban Pirates address instead. The Urban Pirates also mail out vast quantities or free literature-'zines, posters, etc.-whenever they have the money to afford the postage. For that matter, they re the ones who could get you shirts or patches (various anarchist,

Catharsis, Zegota, Blacken the Skies, etc. designs). Sen impersonal orders for CDs and copies of Inside Front to Stickfigure, along with all inquiries about buying those items wholesale. Stickfigure is the best place for retailers and distributors to order items from the record label division of CrimethInc.

Payment to CrimethInc. Far East can be made in cash or money order made out to CrimethInc., or order online with credit card {yes, that's disgusting, but let's not be coy: this is the getting-our-hands dirty-in-commerce part that hopefully somehow finances and enables the creating-community-and-killing-heads-of-state part). Payment to the Urban Pirates should be in the form of well-concealed cash or blank checks. Payment to Stickfigure can be made in cash, check or money order made out to Stickfigure, or you can order online or over the phone with credit card; customers that order only one record have to pay an additional $.50 for shipping, customers that order one record , or CD and want it sent by priority mail need to pay an additional $3, and all Georgia orders add 7% sales tax — isnt that fucked I

[Image not archived]

PAPER:

Inside Front postscript issue: This is what you're holding, silly. *1 copy/tS postpaid in the USA ($7 world), 5+/t3.50 each postpaid in the USA (t5 world)*

Inside Front #13: The supposed final issue of the magazine you're reading! This issue focuses on how to create communities that both foster freedom in the lives ot those involved and fight for positive change on a larger scale; it also includes extensive reports from many of the activist demonstrations and similar undertakings of 1999–2001; discussions on alternatives to monogamous relationships and gender roles, and the usual pages and pages of fine-print columns, how-to guides, reviews, etc. 164 pages, and comes with a cd compilation featuring an international cast of punk/hardcore bands: Milemarker, Newborn, Endstand, Point of No Return. Newspeak, Constrito, Shank, Abuso Sonoro, Ruination, Cwill, many more.

1 cofy/SS, 5r/$3.50each

Inside Fr_ont #1_2: Features a lengthy retrospective/intcrview with Refused, an interview discussing hardcore imperialism and the third world with Brazilian band Point of No Return, a new take on the old tradition of scene reports (including the Appalachian Trail and Lewisburg, North Carolina), an analysis of Reclaim the Streets protests, and a whole lot more. 136 pages, and including the already-classic eleven song 6" by Finland's most notorious roadsters, Umlaut.

1 copy/W, 5 r/$ 1.50 each

Stone Hotel: This book of poetry is a no frills ride through one man's experience in the United States prison system, and all of the lunacy; horror, and meditation that entails.

71|g|iM *2/tl7, 3/t22, 4/t26, 5-9/i6 each, 10 or more/$5 each (this is a fund-raiserfor the upcoming Fighting For Our Lives reprint)*

Days of War. Nights of Love: Crimethink "for beginners" — your ticket to a world free of charge.

1 copy/$8, 2/$14, 3/H9, 4/$23, 5-9/35 each, 10 or more/34.50 each

Evasion: The controversial account of one boy who left his destined place in society behind to steal, scam, and hitchhike to personal freedom.

1 copy/$6, 2/311, 3/$15, 4/S23, 5-9/34 each, W or more/$3.5O each

Fi_ghting For Our Lives_: This free paper discusses, in simple language, what is anarchist in everyday life, and how those spheres of cooperation can be expanded. It addresses common questions that often deter people from exploring anarchist ideas and approaches, and endeavors to help introduce new terms and possibilities into the public consciousness.

Individual copiesfree to all. Bulk orders will be possible again one day, hopefully by the lime you see this — -we haw to raise the money to reprint them.

1 _lunter/Gatherer — Crim_ethl_nc. Journal_ ol Folklore and _Folkwar, #1:_ A manifesto of confusion to make war on nonsensel A journal celebrating the decentralized, radically participatory do -it-yourself underground, mass-produced and distributed by a vanguard elite? A broadside emphasizing your capabilities by glorifying the adventures and achievements of a privileged few? A fable chronicling traditions of revolt, a pioneer expedition into the past, a retelling of time to rescue the future? History or story, legend or legerdemain, anthropology or propaganda?

Individual copies free to all.

(note: the Urban Pirates distribute many of the various follow up issues of I lunter/Gatherer, most recently including the audio I lunter/Gatherer on CDR, which can be obtained from them for $2 and 2 postage stamps.)

D.I.Y. Guide #2: This rugged little urban pirate handbook includes practical information on participating in demonstrations, direct action, shoplifting, software piracy, d.i.y. spelling and grammar, traveling on trains, backpacking, urban camping and evasion, herbal gynecology, d.i.y. abortion, sewing, d.i.y. oil change, making your own quarter pipe for skating, forearm guards, pressing records, CD's, and zines, book publishing, beating the postal system, food not bombs, plaster casting, black and white photography, and safety pin tattoos. *Individual copies free to all, bundle of40/515 donation*

The Walls Are Alive: A how-to graffiti guide, including wheatpasting.

Individual copies are free. 50 copies/$8, 100 copies/$15

~~Off the Map:~~ Personal travel zine by two young women dead set upon making their lives what they dream of and vice versa. 94 delightful pages across Europe squatting, hitching, and creating new worlds in which to frolic. Amazingly well-written and much more than just another mindless recounting of traveling stories. Highly recommended.

Free to all, donations appreciated

Dropping Out: Rather than a comprehensive foray into the subject of dropping out, this zine aims to provide some practical tips along with some personal writing on the experience of droppingout of high school. Strongly recommended for those in the heart of high school hell, and them alone.

Free to all, donations appreciated

ROCK:

Blacken the Skies CD: Punks/activisrs push the anarchopunk musical tradition to a new level of creativity, intensity, and emotional expression. Imagine Zegota as a d-beat band like Diallo or From Ashes Rise: the heart and soul, the long improvisations, but with fist-waving, dreadlock-swinging crust parts! Ten soulful, dark, wide-ranging songs in 50 minutes.

1 copyA9, 5VS5.50 each ‘

~~Countdown to Putsch “” double CD:~~ Pioneering, political hardcore drawing on the radical traditions of free jazz improvisation, spoken word performance, and experimental noise — absolutely unique, and breaking important new ground to keep the genre vital.

1 copy/flO, 5r/$6 each

Catharsis “Arsonist’s PrayerVNewhorn “_Ready to Leave._

Ready to Live” CD/LP: The last recording from Catharsis (one ten-minute song) and Newborn (three songs on the CD — the LP has four: hectic, intricate, soulful compositions from this incredible I lungarian band), packaged with the usual creative (i.e. ripped off) CrimethInc. finesse.

CD-I copy/$8, 5r/f5 each; LP-1 copy/SlO, 5r/$6 each

Catharsis ‘Passion_’ CD_: To sew seeds in barren fields where there is no more fertile ground. To bear the fragile worlds within through the ruined one that surrounds. To lift us up, to bring empires down.

1 copy/tlO, 5r/$6cach

Catharsis — _Samsara CD:_ A Pandora’s box of suffering and tragedy, with hope trapped at the bottom... includes four tracks from now-unavailable 7” record (once on the now-unavailable eponymous first cd).

1 copy/SlO, 5+/$6 each

~~Zegota Namaste ’ CD:~~ The much anticipated sophomore record from this North Carolina punk band. For those of you who’ve seen them live, this record truly captures the spirit, energy and artistry of a live Zegota show, from beginning to end, creating a record that captivates the body, soul and mind. 71 minutes of musical improvisations, new songs, medleys, and their cover of Neil Young s “Ohio.” When I first got this record it was the only thing I listened to for an entire week (and I listen to music almost non-stop). Comes with hand-screened packaging and elaborate booklet, etc.

1 copy/$8, 5+/$5 each

Zegota Movement in t_he Music CD/LP:_ Their soulful, youthful, idealistic debut record.

CD-I copy/$8, 5+/15 each; LP (import)-l copy/flO, 5+/$6 each

U~~mlaut Havoc Wreaker~~_s" LP:_ Ready to wreak whatever havoc must be wrought... Holy Shit! Song titles like "Thrill of the Open Road and Duct Tape and Distortion" with matching lyrics: *Come on!Let's blow this town, raze the streets to rubble — set a land speed record for causing trouble — I want to ride a sonic boom across a land with no borders, PH be the crash test dummy of the No World Order! Yeah!* 28 songs of wild abandon and an utter refusal to give in, this record will break your fuckin' record player. Comes with an elaborate 28 page half-size booklet. Released by Finland's Combat Rock Industry Records. *So don't rod the vote — vote with the rock, mothers and fuckers! The hand that cradles the rock rules the world! Rock around the clock!*

(import) 1 copy/SlO, 5+/$6 each

Aluminum Noise "Totally Fucking Lost" CD: A d.i.y. experimental noise project undertaken by kids who set out to broaden the spectrum of the audio arts, challenging everyone's conceptions of what music itself is. This recording has a haunting beauty, made sharper by a tension that steadily increases over the seventy minutes of music, rather than discharging itself. We think it's fucking amazing, like feeling new chambers of the heart being carved out — but the average pop punk listener will probably find himself alienated and confused.

1 copy/$6, 5r/$4 each

Ire "_What Seed. What Root?" CD:_ Their last recording. Five- songs of their great political sludgy French Canadian hardcore. *$10:5r/$6.60*

T~~imebomb, bull Wrath of the~~ _Slave CD_: Italian, vegan straight edge, anarcho-cornmunist black metal.

1 copy/S7, 5r/$4

jlnDur I'imeLLP: compilation with Damad, Systral, Gehenna, Timebomb, Jesuit, Final Exit, Congress and an elaborate insert discussing standardization of our world under capitalism... and what to do about it. Beautiful packaging and vinyl.

1 copy/$8, 5+/$4 each

SCISSORS

Wheatpasti_ng Posters:_ A variety of 11x17" posters celebrating resistance and lampooning the war on terrorism, the psychiatricindustrial complex, etc. — perfect for public redecorating.

Free with orders

Stickering Kits: For adjusting public spaces to broadcast messages that line up with reality. Currently, two designs are available: "this phone is tapped" (as per the Patriot Act) for telephones, and "fortified with 100% pure Iraqi blood" for gas pumps/SUVs.

is for 100 — sorry about the high price, we're selling these at exactly what it costs to make and mail them

Pick_Axe/Breaking the Spell video:_ The second edition/ reprinting of this 158 minute tape featuring these two excellent documentary films. *PickAxe* revolves around an anarchist struggle to save a forest (Warner Creek) in Oregon from logging! *B.T.S.* covers the events at the infamous W.T.O. meeting in Seattle, and the ensuing media

focus on "Eugene Anarchists." Arrange a public showing at your school, house, or community center.

1 copy is $12, 2-4/$12 each, 5-10/$8 each

Coming next: A new issue of our free tabloid Harbinger, a new Face Down in Shit CD/LP, discography CD sets from Umlaut and Catharsis, a new anarchist cookbook... then we'll get down to fucking business.

In autumn of 20011 sat with my band in the Kopi squat in Berlin, eating a delicious meal prepared for us by a local friend. The many residential floors above us hummed with activity, squatters and artists and dissidents of literally dozens of nations and cultures chatting and cooking and repairing together; around us, hundreds of punk rockers were gathering for the show. The room with the stage was huge, and featured the most sophisticated sound equipment I had ever seen in a d.i.y. space; in fact, Rage Against the Machine had asked to play here on their last European tour, but the squatters had turned them down on account of all the compromises the band had made with the capitalist culture industry. The neighborhood around the squat was alive with infoshops and gathering places and radical culture, so much so that the yearly Mayday festivals inevitably turned into violent clashes with the repressive police.

As I sat and looked around at all these beautiful, crazy people and all the structures they'd created and defended against the demands of the market and its enforcers, it hit me: sixty years ago there were no anarchists or queers or rebels in Germany — they were all dead, imprisoned, or overseas. Just two generations back, there was nothing like this in Berlin or within a thousand miles of it. I was looking upon solid proof that the burning passion of human beings for freedom and creation cannot be extinguished: the bureaucrats and fascists can threaten us, bully us, even slaughter entire generations (Latin America, the Soviet Union, Palestine), but their very children will grow up to defy them, as if raised by the ghosts of their parents' foes. A mere three decades after the Nazis reigned supreme here, squats like Kopi were appearing all around this city, thousands were filling the streets to contest the status quo, white children of the middle class were even taking up arms and risking their lives to fight in solidarity with those in the third world whose exploitation benefited their rich parents.

Maybe we haven't beaten fascism and oppression once and for all yet, but they've had their chance to finish us off, and failed.

So before the war — any war, every war — even begins, we know who the winners will be: us, the anarchists. Call us by that name or any $_{\text{ot}}$her — we who treasure freedom-to above power-over, who stake our lives bn mutual aid rather than cannibalism, we shall prevail as we have always prevailed. We've been defeated in every revolution, crushed by every regime, persecuted with every torture known to humanity, and still we come out on top.

Wait — isn't that pure arrogance, the ultimate in over-privileged disregard for the suffering of those who die under the bombs of the empire-builders? And — historically speaking — isn't it just plain inaccurate? Haven't we in fact lost everything over and over, failed whenever we had a chance, been conquered in every struggle?

> No, my friends, we haven't, and it's not arrogant to celebrate the miracle of our survival. Let's look at what is meant by this word, failure. We compete badly in their market economies — is it failure to focus instead on living out our dreams, to whatever extent we're able? We are anonymous, unknown, unsung — is it success to spend one's life in struggle against others for status? We have a penchant for lost causes, naive idealism, emotional excesses — is it nobler to choose popular causes that make one stupid and unfeeling, or to embrace the paralysis of cynicism? We are not failures — we have

shown brilliance in sensing which wars not to win, which victories would be our downfall, for we know whenever some triumph at the expense of others, all are defeated. That we anarchists, at least those who deserve the appellation, have never traded integrity for power is perhaps our greatest achievement; it even suggests that, should we one day vanquish all the oppressors we struggle against, we might be able to succeed in establishing true freedom where every champion has failed to before.

There are no shortcuts to real revolution. Even capturing the White House would mean nothing, unless everyone else was ready to ignore (or defend themselves against) its new occupants. The worst thing that could happen would be for some of us to seize power in a nation of people who had not yet learned to exercise power over their own lives, and be forced to rule our fellow human beings — not that that would be any worse than the countless times throughout history that has *already* happened! We won't be ready for a total anarchist revolution until we can *make one, * collectively. The struggle for state power is a struggle we've been smart enough to lose, thus far, as we concentrate on developing individuals powers of selfdetermination.

To refuse to take power when one would have to wield it over others, to focus even in the face of the greatest affronts on affirming life rather than seeking revenge — these are tremendous triumphs. Some victories are more humiliating than a thousand defeats: communism, fascism, capitalism, all these have won and had their chance over the past century, and thus been shown to fail. Anarchy, the dream of communities based on cooperation and respect, is the one scheme that has not yet had the opportunity to be tested on a mass scale in our civilization. It is the one hope for humanity — not only in some possible future, but also whenever it exists between individuals today: for wherever human beings are free to live as they see fit, wherever relationships blossom outside the logic of coercion, there life is worth living. It is those moments in which anarchy reigns that keep us alive, both individually and as a species. Without the counterweight that joy provides to the lust for vengeance, without the moments when cooperation and compassion win out over antagonism, we would have annihilated each other long ago.

They are the losers, then, who invest themselves in the order of today's victors. 'Join us — we're doomed, their billboards might as well beseech new generations: their killings cannot nurture life, their industrial economy cannot last more than a few more

decades before the planet itself gives way beneath it. Better join us we are doomed, useless and damned in their world of destructive production and judgmental piety, and thus endowed with a new world far older and more durable than theirs.

> In a cubicle at the library, a boy listens through battered headphones to a new punk anthem of hardship, resilience, and triumph, and steels his will for a lifetime of resistance. In a maximum-security prison cell, Mumia Abu Jamal holds out with the strength and patience of a song by Peter Tosh. In a bedroom, a teenager looks at herself in a mirror and feels, for the first time, that she herself is her own standard of beauty, not some airbrushed magazine cover; at that same moment, an aging Iraqi father embraces his crippled son. In the face of warfare and tyranny and terror, against all the usual insurmountable odds, anarchy triumphs again.

The Ted K Archive

Inside Front: International Journal of Hardcore Punk and Anarchist Action
Almost Complete Archives, 1994–2003
2019-02-06

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This text still contains many OCR errors, so is currently more useful for skimming and word searching.

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