



Termina!

No. 12 75¢

Read This?

What if you couldn't? Two out of five adult Philadelphians are functionally illiterate.

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OF THIS MAGAZINE, THE SCENE, THE MUSIC
WRITE!

•M.DINETTE•

Letters to the Editor

Saw the ad. It looks decent, and I actually got one order from it!

But Steve, what ever happened to ze local reviews (especially ours, of course)? Are you trying to make me 'noid? If there were two of me, I'd be paranoid! Suppose we make you come to our next gig and force you to listen to us playing covers of the Waitresses? How about Tommy Tutone! And we'll make you take LSD first!

Anyway, that's too bad about your printer problem. You oughtta get it done in Jersey as Sir Speedy, you know, 24-hour service, all smeared and stuff.

As for the cartoons, Furry's robots are adorable and Lee's amusing. They're all pretty groovy. The only one that bothered me was the Raygun ass-fuck one. I really don't like genitals in cartoons unless they're drawn really groovy (as in R. Crumb), absolutely essential to the meaning, or really funny. However one or two stupid fuck drawings probably wouldn't stop me or anyone else from buying Terminal!. My only criticism: when you have a full page of cartoons, it's confusing to the eye, plus ads get kind of lost. I'd rather see them all spread throughout the mag, and away from the ads.

Oops--gotta run now and put in the fabric softener before the Rinse cycle ends! Love, sex, music, etc.

-Reesa

P.S. Doesn't Phila.'s only original girl band deserve a review, live or otherwise?...nag, nag, nag....

Dear Reesa:

It would be very hard for Ronnie to get it from behind from Falwell while he's stroking big interests if someone there didn't have something to shove. Next time I'll tell Furry to use dildos...most suburban wives know about them. As for the drugs, you get 'em, let me sell 'em, and I'll cover you anytime...be an interesting article, f'sure. -SF

Dear Terminal!

Hey Rasta scam, why don't you jam your dreadlocks up your ass! Yes, Ethiopian Xmas it was at the New Waqner Ballroom (in jolly old Olney)--an exhilarating event this was! Supposedly starts at 9:00 PM, no bands have appeared by 12:30 but of course everything is "soon come" Of course to make a long story short "soon come" becomes "what the hell" About 1:00 AM they announce that headliner Augustus Pablo is still in Jamaica with a lame foot. You know he's not about to start swimming. Big Youth isn't coming either. No refunds on the \$7 admission charge, because 16 bands have been flown over from Ja (in a packing crate?) but it hasn't been decided who is going to play. Who's high?

Who in their right mind wants to stand around while these herb heads get it together? Not us, we soon leave mon. Oh yeah, the fat psycho at the door confiscated my knife and wouldn't give it back when I left. The non-rasta prick, hope you pick your nose with that knife.

Anyway, this gig was bullshit. Tell me these llars of Judah didn't know till late into the night that the headliners weren't appearing? Hey is Bob Marley dead? Rastas are jerkoffs! Rastafarianism is the most elaborately contrived pretend



ANS: Yes, the bill that would give them this unrestricted POWER is now before the Senate of the United States. It is Senate Bill S - 1407. If passed it would give any Chief Postal Inspector or any of the 600,000 employees designated by him, the supreme authority to subpoena you into civil court after having opened your mail without a warrant.

what's this I hear about the U.S. Postal Service having the right to fine us up to \$10,000 EACH DAY if they decide they don't like a book we are selling by mail?

Subliminal Rock

Q. CBS News recently reported that some rock-and-roll songs have subliminal messages recorded on them that can only be heard when played in reverse--as I have heard for myself on the song Snowblind by Styx. I would like to know if these messages will appear on tape when I record the song? And will these messages be audible when the tape is played in reverse?

PATRICK KILGORE
Rising City, Nev.

A. Since "subliminal" refers specifically to stimuli that are outside the range of conscious perception, I perceive a certain terminological confusion in your question. "Subliminal" has lately come to mean a technique that purports to plant ideas in a viewer's or listener's mind by presenting a message in such a way that is lodged directly in the unconscious, thus bypassing conscious critical evaluation. The purpose of the subliminal message may be legitimate ("Shoplifting is a bad thing to do"), illegitimate ("Vote for me"), or simply fooling around.

Editor: I dislike being intellectually manipulated or emotionally diddled, so I don't watch TV much. maybe two hours in the average year. I regard such intrusiveness as both absolutely tasteless and utterly shameless. Gilbert

Terminal!

Disinformation

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THE TERMINAL STAPH!:

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THE TERMINAL STAPH!:

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TERMINAL! has moved, well sort of. A bigger box came neccessary to facilitate the mail we get. Our new address is now:

Terminal!

P.O. BOX 2165

Philadelphia, PA 19103

A
LOVELY
SORT of
DEATH

Carol

Furry



1982 was the most pivotal year for New Music (whatever the kind) since the break-out year of 1977. For better and (not "or") worse, New Music arrived. It went legit, shedding its cult status in a year of transitions. Transitions that took the following forms:

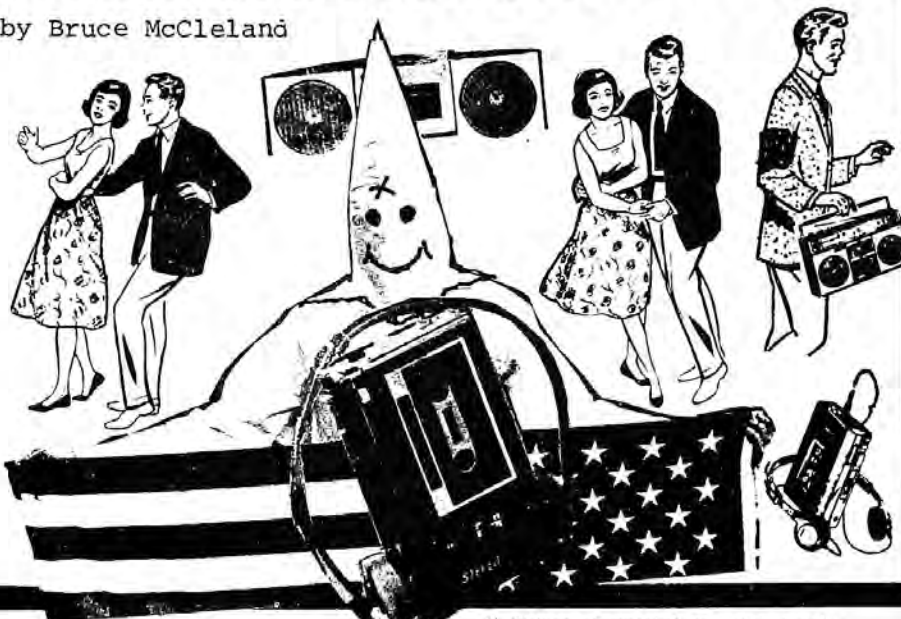
1) The winding down of many established bands.--Five years is a long time in popular music. For bands time is usually an enemy. It breaks them down through commercial failure, commercial success, intraband friction, or simply through exhaustion of creative energy. As Stereo Review's Steve Simel once wrote, "the best rock has generally been a product of terminal flame-out rather than long careers."

Now only the blindest fan could not see that the LP releases from most bands past the flame-out age were uniformly below standards in 1982. Whether it was through inappropriate seriousness (B52's) a dulling of edges (Gang of Four, Psychedelic Furs, Simple Minds), or simply a dearth of ideas (Clash, Jam) the albums of '82 made it clear that the New Wave had crested, leaving behind the seeds for the 80's new brand of prog rock.

You don't see that, right? Well, things would be clearer if records like FOREVER NOW, COMBAT ROCK, and SONGS OF THE FREE were flat out rotten. But they're not, and all contain some really fine material. You see, musical decline rarely descends like a thunderclap. It's usually subtle, easy to miss if you're caught up in the music. (I know. I lived through the 60's and 70's bland-out and, at the time, missed THAT). But try this. Play the albums named earlier in this paragraph. Then play TALK TALK TALK, THE CLASH, and ENTERTAINMENT and ask yourself if the new records are not merely different (as you'd expect) but blander, slicker and, on the whole, weaker. Then consider the healthy sales figures on the new records and ask yourself what it all

the Ears of the Overworld

-by Bruce McClelland



means to the creative future of the bands

2) The re-birth of singles-oriented pop/rock radio--The death knell may soon sound for the dinosaurs (Finally!). Singles are back on the radio and Top Forty is resurgent against the AOR that once shot it down. What's great about this? Remember that the 60's Top Forty played early Kinks, Stones, Who, Yardbirds, etc. as well as American punks like the Shadows of Knight, Blues Magoos, Standells, Count Five and the Seeds. Not the worst of formats. Granted that in its reborn form (we're talking WCAU-FM here) it copies more of the old vices (tight playlists, idiot dj's) than it does virtues, it still is more listenable than AOR and less hypocritical. (If it sells they'll play it, even if the artist is black, a color as welcome on AOR as red to the John Birch Society.)

3) Return of British pop hits to the American charts--British to American crossover was once the norm, but AOR, in its crippling of pop music in general (too simple for the damned "progressives"), severed the international ties. However the new commercial validity of pop radio and the growth of MTV, an odd (and frankly incompatible) amalgam of AOR and (essentially British) Top 40, have opened the sea-lanes again. In 1982 English chart hits by the Stray Cats, Toni Basil, Kim Wilde, Human League, Soft Cell, Bow Wow Wow, ABC and Haircut 100 have scored well (sometimes VERY well) in this country, and the end of the year found Basil, Stray Cats and the Americanized Clash in the Top 10 simultaneously. And whatever you may think of the particular artists, this at least means that Americans are buying some better stuff than they have in

some time. (That includes "Mickey" which if it had been out in 1980, wouldn't have been a hit and consequently would have been played to death on COLLEGE radio.)

4) The reassertion of dance music, free of its "disco" connotations--In 1977 Disco was America's Punk, in as much as both were danceable reactions to the jammy boredom of progressive rock. But unlike Punk, Disco was elitist, unliberating, producer (not artist) dominated, and basically so calculatedly boorish as to be some of the worst dance music ever made. Yet now we're hearing some of the best, much of it still readily labeled as Disco. The difference? I'll give you a big one. Inexpensive and easy to play synthesizers have liberated Disco, putting it within the creative reach of amateur musicians. It's a change reminiscent of the one from Bill Haley type rock and roll to that exemplified by Buddy Holly, and one that shows the Proto-Disco of the Village People era to be merely an unformed precursor of today's REAL Disco.

Now, lest you worry about the essentially mainstream bent of the changes of 1982, a few final points. First you cannot expect miracles overnight. And things are opening up. Kids are getting turned on to some exciting music again and finally have an alternative to music and radio aimed at people twice their age. Second, through it all, the cutting edge remains as sharp as ever, whether in the seemingly eternal brilliance of the Dead Kennedys or the revolutionary sound of Flipper. There will always be new stuff, and the support network of small labels, college radio, and clubs ensures that we'll always be aware of it. The changes of 1982 may not all be to the good (what change is?) but the legacy of the last 5 years is, ultimately, that the popular and sub-popular music will not for a long, long time be as dead as they once were.

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Be true to your own goals,
Better to die than to live a lie.

Photo by Rich Mueller

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LOCAL: Chuck Mattern has left the Stickmen. Rumore has it he has re-joined, but nothing definite yet. ...New bass player for Autistic Behavior is Ged...New drummer for Informed Sources is Sky Kishlo (ex-King of Siam)...Lana new vocalist for Sensory Fix...Crib Death, clever guys that they are, have gotten smart enough to realize that there are at least 25 other Crib Deaths in the U.S. They're now the Blunderboys ...BYO has landed a space, opening hopefully the first week of April, it will be across from 3rd St. Jazz ...THE BANDS TO WATCH OUT FOR: Ruin (w/ Vosco, ex-Sens. Fix--vocals, Cordy, ex. No Milk--Bass, Glenn & Damon Wallis--guitars, Rich--drums) and Y DI (Niel Perry, ex-Legion Of Decency--vocals, Chuck Mehan, ex-Little Gentlemen & Informed Source --bass, Howie, Ex-Ploit--drums & Mike--guitars). Sadistic Exploit are now A State Of Mind... LOCAL RELEASES: Little Gentlemen 3-song EP with "General Hospital" "I Am The Gun" & "Rant, Rant, Rant" on BTCP...Bunnydrums 4-track EP w/ "Shiver", "Crawl", "Magazine" & "Too Much Time"...Stickmen EP out with "Funky Hayride" (reg. & dub) "Action Man" +2 more cuts on Red ...Pretty Poison releasing 6-track EP "Tempest Nightmare" on their own Svengali Records...F.O.D. to release another tape...Burn Potential to release Philadelphia sampler, more on that later

NATIONAL RELEASES: A&M/IRS: Falco LP Einzelhaut; R.E.M LP: Suburban Lawns; Fleshtones; Gingo Boingo; NEW BAUHAUS; Split Enz; Police...CHRYSLIS: Spandau Ballet 12" Spandau LP "True! Fun Boy Three (w/their version of "Our Lips Are Sealed" They half-wrote it you know)...Db/PRESS: Half-Japanese 12" "Horrible" (well named), Pylon LP Chomp; Microscopic Quartet, Love Tractor and Swimming Pool Q's...Faulty: Anti-Nowhere League 12"...ISLAND: Robert Palmer, Gwen Guthrie, Malcolm McLaren LP's: Martha Griffith (1-3's) 12" written and Prod. by Bunny Wailer; Crucial Reggae Prod. by Sly & Robbie w/Mighty Diamonds orig. version of "Pass the Kutchie!"; Micheal Smith "My Cynaan Believe It!"; Gil Evans; Zahara (w/Roscoe G. and Reebop Kweku Baah, ex-Traffic & Can)...JEM/PASSPORT/PVC/EDITIONS EG: Greg Hawkes (Cars) 12" "Jet Lag" and LP Niagara Falls (shades of the 3 Stooges; Little Girls mini-LP; Gleaming Spires; King Crimson's Young Person's Guide... (on half-speed masters); Robert Fripp on lecture tour...U of P possible stop-point; Bongoes should be signing to RCA...NEUTRAL: Branca double-live LP; Sonic Youth 12"... SST: LB's by Overkill, St. Vitus; Canadian Subhumans; Dicks; Minutemen 12" and Everything Went Black by Greg Ginn, Chuck Dukowski, Dez Cadena; Robo; Migdol; Kieth Morris; Chavo Pedres; and a cast of 1000's (for legal reasons they can't call it a Black Flag LP)...SLASH: Violent Femmes & new Blasters (w/WB's FEAR on the road in May)...SUBTER-RENEAN: Code Of Honor 45 & Flipper LP...WB/SIRE: B-Movie; Roxy "Musique"; B-52's; Madness & Lester Bowie.



Shot News

Flipper in Philadelphia end of April...Husker Du hopefully 4/15 ...B-Movie at Ripley's on 4/13

We dedicate this issue to Karen Carpenter and Barney Clark...You got to have heart (s)

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BELLE STARS

BELLE STARS

-by Kurt Brennenman

The Belle Stars, survivors of Britain's Two Tone craze and recent Top Twenty singles artists there, were intelligent and anxious for the audience at the East Side Club to enjoy their mixture of pop, funk, ska and catchy chants, backed with a big beat and fronted by soulful vocalist Jennie McKeown. We spoke to Stella Barker, rhythm guitar; Sara-Jane Owen, lead guitar; and Judy Parsons, drums. Also in the group are Clare Hirst, tenor sax and keyboards; Miranda Joyce, alto sax; and Lesley Shore, bass, whose background in funk has added a lot to their sound.

TI: Four of you use to be in the Bodysnatchers—how come you got out of ska?

SB: We just find ska very limiting for the one thing, and as we became more experienced, we wanted to do other things as well. That's actually why we split up, because the other two didn't necessarily think the same way as we did. So that's how it really evolved.

TI: Your last three single have been cover versions—"Mockingbird," "Iko Iko" and "The Clapping Song." Why is that and what kind of songs did you look for when you looked for cover versions?

JP: Before that we had three singles out of our own material that failed miserably, and we'd always done "Iko Iko" in the set, which is one of the songs that Jennie first came to sing with us, and she'd never sung in a band before. By a huge coincidence, she happened to know the words for "Iko"...Then we had to do another single, and we still didn't think that we had a song that was going to be as good as "Iko" as a follow-up quite frankly.

SJ: So we still haven't had the chance to write a "pop" song.

SB: We've got lots of our own songs, but their not "Top Ten Hit" songs and we know that too, so that's why we end up doing covers.

TI: How'd you find Jennie?

SJ: She was going out with an old boyfriend of mine and—we were looking for a singer—I happened to ask him one day when I bumped into him, "Oh do you know anyone that's good?" And he said "My girlfriend sounds like she'd be the right sort of person. I don't know if she can sing though. Her personality seems just right for a front person of a band." So we went home and found out that she had done a bit of singing in the bath and kitchen. He suggested it to her and she was a bit tentative in coming down. And when she did eventually, she sang in the corner of the wall, she was so embarrassed.

JP: She failed to show up three times. She thought she couldn't do it.

SB: She's totally the opposite now.

JP: We just finished the album. Now we're working out the better way to do it → how to change the bits that you're playing so they sound like the record, rather than just going to the studio doing it how you would have done it.

TI: Is the album going to get an American release?

JP: The plan was to release it in America at the same time...in January, but we're on Stiff and their outlet in America—just folded, so I don't know.

SJ: We have to get a distribution deal.

JP: Stiff has to.

TI: I read that you're looking for a balance between the music and the visuals. Does that still hold true?

SB: Yes.

SJ: I don't think it applies so much now.

SB: I would agree with her, only because, in the past our stage image was far more contrived. We all used to wear the same theme...it was quite outlandish. There's lots of plastic fruits and things.

JP: They got a bit much really, didn't they? But when we got up on stage...



we felt that the main thing really on stage is to project something out to the audience and have a good time, so we don't stand there thinking "Oh, am I hitting the right note?" 'cause we're doing it and the audience don't care about everything like that. There's usually vomit all over the place, sticky beer, there's people jumping on you. If you want to hear the sounds, you get

SJ: For the beginning of the tour, I'm playing the right notes, standing there like a moron. Now I just go out there and enjoy myself.

TI: In your originals, what are you looking for?

SJ: I don't think any one of us considers what we're going to write when we wrote a song. Maybe that's the secret to chart success, when you actually sit down and think, you're going to write a song that's going to be like THIS. Usually they just evolve. You don't think "I'm going to write a Tamla/Motown song, or I'm going to write a..."

JP: Slow ballad.

SB: We're still working out which is our best...idiom.

TI: You think that's hurting you any?

SJ: Oh yes! Most bands that exist have been through a whole fashion of styles of playing. They've been through garage bands and playing in sheds, and they've done all the styles, so that they finally get to know what they want to play.

SB: Also other bands have just one or sometimes two writers.

On the stage, they were light and bright, Jennie a blur of furious motion, doing well as pop entertainment, and the large crowd responded warmly. On record, I prefer the original, group-composed B-sides to the covers as more substantial and creative. Certainly their music serves well as good, escapist, fun dance music.



THE BEAT

-by Doug Elmore

The Beat's guitarist Andy Cox lounges comfortably in a back room at Pennsauken's Halloran Ballroom doodling on what appears to be a child's plastic keyboard of some sort. When I ask him if he wants to talk he exhibits the same sort of low key nervous intensity as when I had met him before. He's a very nice man, but also one of few words, and even those are spoken softly and hesitantly. So between he and I, it sounded less like an interview and more like a mumbling competition. Most Beat interviews I've read are usually done with Dave Wakeling, the band's outspoken leader of sorts, but to me, Andy embodies one of the aspects about them that I find most appealing. His "Wot, me a star?" humbleness that makes their success seem like a freak accident with many rewards, but no expectations. It's a realistic perspective on fame.

It's been said (by Wakeling) that the new album SPECIAL BEAT SERVICE will either have to be their biggest record or their last one. Is it really that way?

"In a way" Andy says, "because you have to make a certain amount (of money) to carry on running the operation, living from day to day, and paying rent and everything. We're not really that popular in England at the moment. There's much more fashionable things you can be into than the Beat."

The album does seem to be more of an attempt at mass acceptance than the last release, which was slower and rootsier. The new one is a bit closer to the first in enthusiasm. Was the tempo change done consciously?

"From the second one, yeah. It seemed like quite a good thing to do."

And the songs seem to be individually varied with more specific styles...

"...instead of all mashed up. Somebody's gonna like one track because they're all so different. You can tell it's the same group of people, but it's definitely got sharper influences."

Isn't the album title "Special Beat Service" a pun on the Falkland's Special Boat Service?

"Could be"

The talk turns to singles which was always the band's strongest point. Their singles always seemed to leap up the British charts, at least until they released the second album, and suddenly came the all time worst seller, the self-produced, "Hit It" which according to Andy, "did very badly." The more recent ones are doing "slightly better." Even the monumental "Save It For Later" easily one of their best songs, didn't really sell all that well.



THE BEAT!



"So we've gotten in a really odd position with the record company, along with everybody else, they don't really have much confidence in us, in England anyway. It might possibly change, it might not."

This man certainly doesn't feel threatened by the lack of success, yet totally accept the reality of the situation. This is their fifth tour of the U.S. and aside from "losing a bit of energy" he really enjoys the travelling aspects of "being in different places everyday." This tour marks some changes for the band though. Former touring member, keyboardist Dave "Blockhead" Wright is now an official member of the band, as is saxophone Lesley Magoogan, who has taken over for the ailing Saxa. Both Magoogan and Saxa record with the Beat, but on tour the elder is sorely missed.

"It's not as much fun" Andy offers sincerely. "He was very entertaining in the shows. He could really keep your interest going."

Is he bad off?

"I don't think he's doing too well. I don't think he's really treated his body very well for about 30 or 40 years, and it's caught up with him. So he really doesn't have the strength that he could have for a body his age (early 50's)."

He always joked about wanting to die on stage with the band, I guess it stopped being a joke.

"Well, I think he probably would never have died on stage, probably in some fuckin' horrible Holiday Inn room, which really wouldn't have been the same. I think he really misses it, but it's best for him."

Saxa will continue to do some recording with the band "if he can manage it" but his touring days are now done "through post cards and things" sent to him by his traveling mates.

Personnel changes and flattering success sometimes spells B-R-E-A-K U-P and the Beat seem ready for anything. What would Andy Cox do if the band dissolved, continue with music?

"It's hard to say, I don't think so actually. I'd still carry on playing the guitar, but another band would have to be something that I was really into."

So you view your success as accidental?

"Yeah!"

And you're following it through...

"...until it finishes"

From what I gather, that could be anyway.

"Could be"

The Beat goes on. La de da de dec. La de da de dah...

LITTLE GENTLEMEN

By: Carol Schutzbank

the band that Hates You more than You Hate Them

Ardmore rules. Philly drools. Who can forget that memorable slogan heralding the arrival of Ardmore as a force to be reckoned with in the scene? Little did Philly realise that Ardmore, little innocent sleepy Ardmore, was soon to become home to one of the most controversial bands ever to slam their way across the stage.

Meet Little Gentlemen. A relatively new band on the scene, they are the keepers of the flame, symbolic of all that is (and is not) Ardmore. More Ardmore than Ardmore itself, they have roused a mixed response from people ranging from fear and anger (are they a gang? anti-city? anti-scene? hardcore? heavy metal?) to amusement and approval (they're on the move, like to make music, are unpretentious and fun).

When you attend a Little Gentlemen gig you never know quite what you'll get. Picture a cross between Anti-Nowhere League and the Bonzo Dog Band and you might get an idea of what I'm talking about. But the best way to understand is to go see them.

In conversation they are as much fun as they are on stage. Off the wall and easy to talk to these guys are better than a triple feature Saturday matinee with the popcorn included. If you were expecting to read about a bunch of ignorants making music with a suburban mentality then Cha Fool! You're reading the wrong interview!

Band members are: Paul Evalds, Wayne Paupst, Tom Ianelli and Rob DiJoseph. After eating pizza from the one and only Ardmore Pizza and drinking Dr. Pepper the interview began:

TI: How long have you guys been around?

PE: This is a trick question... Little Gentlemen itself has been around for a long time, about four years. But in this form it has been around since April... Easter.

WP: It was before that... we started with you and Meehan in February.

TI: How did the whole Ardmore thing get started?

PE: It started with Neil Perry of the great Y Di. He had dinner at my house... for about a weekend. Then he was at a gig shortly thereafter and someone asked him where he was from. At this point it was right after I wrote my famous letter to Terminal! and people would always look at me when I said who I was and go "Ardmore, right?". So he decided that he wanted to be associated with that letter. He was going to be associated with being non-associated. So he was going to be an Ardmore. And then Chuck Meehan was also an Ardmore. They decided they didn't want to say they were from Philadelphia because they were too damn embarrassed. And then from there it just blossomed... it was great! Ardmore, in essence, is really nothing. I mean, where the hell is Ardmore? Nowhere, right? It's not there. But yet everyone seems to know where it is. It's gaining an identity by not having one. You can't sit there and say "well, this is Ardmore" or "you're an Ardmore" because your taste could be different from our taste. People don't look at you and say "there goes an Ardmore." They look at me and say it, or anyone in the band, because they've seen us all. But there are over 50 of us now that are "official Ardmores" dubbed with wrenches. It's basically just being non-affiliated. We have no rules. Someone asked, "what are the rules?" and we said "there are no rules."

TI: Black Flag are Ardmores, aren't they?

PE: Aside from Greg Ginn, and now Chuck Biscuits, we have Dukowski, Henry and Des... Des, man, he's really into being an Ardmore. He can't wait to get his wrench.

TI: What's the story behind the wrench?

WP: That's a long story.

PE: The wrench was something I carried around a lot - past childhood experiences stuff like that... and then there was the great night of the Jam at Emerald City and the Rattlers opened up. And I didn't want to see the Rattlers - I came to see the Jam. And

it was two hours standing there and everything was shitty. And the drummer had this song about being shot. And he pretended to have a gun and pointed it at me and I pointed one back at him and he got all upset. So he starts giving me the finger. So I said "fuck you too" and tried to get up on stage and pulled out the wrench."

WP: I witnessed it. I thought for sure the Rattlers were going to get killed.

PE: We didn't really have a ceremony or anything... one night at City Gardens in Trenton these two guys wanted to become Ardmores. And I had the wrench with me... it can prove pretty hellacious. At City Gardens Dirt from the Doctor pulled a knife on me and I pulled out the wrench and he backed down.

WP: I witnessed that, too!



TI: You guys all carry wrenches?

LI: (Before the question is complete all band members have fished in their pockets and brandish their wrenches. Silly question to ask.)

PE: So anyway, the wrench was used at this gig. The two guys wanted to become Ardmores because they couldn't believe Philadelphia... they didn't like what they saw at all. So we decided to make some sort of a ceremony... like the "holy wrench." So we blessed the wrench. It's really useful to have around. It comes in handy for a lot of things.

TI: When you started the band did you have a particular image in mind?

PE: Yeah, we're Ardmore.

RD: We're everything and we're nothing.

TI: When a band tries to get political it usually comes off as being ignorant... take a band like the Dead Kennedys. All they do is bitch about Ronald Reagan and if they really knew what they were talking about they wouldn't be talking about him...

TI: What would they be doing?

TI: I don't know... but it just seems that with bands like that, that if Ronald Reagan wasn't the President there wouldn't be a band. All they do is bitch about America this and America that. What they don't realise is that if they went anywhere else in the world they wouldn't have it like this... the system's not that awful. Instead of constantly ripping at it they should do something constructive.

PE: Another thing about punk bands is that they make political statements and they get dated. You can't listen to a political band from years ago - say, early Clash, and relate it to today. The bands that come through... that really relate to you aren't like that. Like, we're not political, really, we don't have any political songs.

TI: But if you listen to the words they apply.

PE: They apply in a different light. It's more socially oriented.

TI: What about the lyrics? Do you want the audience to understand them? Do you care?

PE: Our material may be fast, but it's still pertinent.

TI: Some bands deliberately don't include lyric sheets with the music because they want people to be "unswayed" by what the words say. Other bands think the exact opposite...

TI: We might have a sheet.

RD: We have some new music that we're doing...

PE: I'm concerned, of course I'm concerned. I don't want to say anything stupid... people thinking how silly I am... I think it's great to have fun bands that are funny to watch without having to really listen. But... take S.O.T. Small got mad at me because he said I didn't take him seriously enough. A guy comes on stage with another head on his shoulder and I'm supposed to take this guy seriously? How am I supposed to act?

TI: Is there a specific response you look for when you perform?

TI: To be loved.

RD: To get people off their asses and not have them sitting there going "these guys are obnoxious."

PE: Yeah, we do offend people. I don't know why we do.

TI: It's fun, that's why.

PE: We can get pretty obnoxious. This one show was said by somebody to be one of the most arrogant things he'd ever seen.

TI: And we weren't even trying. Hammit.

PE: Yeah, when we play with Anti-Nowhere League... that's when we'll really go all the way.

(The show has been cancelled three times - ED.)

TI: Yeah, they're internationally obnoxious.

PE: Well, I don't think we're obnoxious so much as we are disgusting.

TI: I didn't realise there was such a fine line between them.

PE: Oh sure. There's plenty fine line. Being obnoxious is sitting around saying I'm the expert and Cha Fool all the time... then there's vulgar...

TI: Anyone can be vulgar. Vulgar is shitting on the stage.

WP: Although Anti-Nowhere League do have a certain flair for it... they are vulgar.

TI: Are you ever worried the audience will take you for granted?

TI: We don't always do the same songs. We try to be different.

PE: You never know what we'll open up with.

TI: Do you plan what you'll do on stage beforehand?

RD: Just songs.

WP: Well, I do plan on wrenching my snare drums.

PE: Yeah, that's planned. But the rest of it... like I really plan on breaking a mike stand... almost breaking my neck falling off the stage....

TI: We do plan on having no monitors, though. We never have good sound when we play.

WP: When we were at Love Club we barely had any monitors.

TI: Yeah, Eastside is notorious for that.

TI: Do you guys find you are supported by the "scene press" - the rags and stuff that come out?

RD: No way...

PE: Anti. Anti. Our first gig with T.S.O.L. Savage Pink skipped right over us. Didn't even print we were there. And Die Young was saying how Legion of Decency was really good and they were tight and Y Di were tight... and Little Gentlemen were sloppy.

TI: And Neil Perry, the singer of Legion of Decency said we sounded like a bunch of barbarians in a trash can being hit with a baseball bat.

WP: But you see, they like Neil. Neil could go out there and stand on his head and they'd like it... say it was great. It goes back to what I've said before... if they like you you can do no wrong.

TI: Yeah, a lot of times they don't care about what the bands really do and if they're really good. It's more like if they're your friend or not.

PE: A roadie for the Angelic Upstarts came up to us after a show and said "You guys are really good." And I brushed him off, like "yeah, right." But he said "No, I mean it. I used to do sound for the Damned and you blew 'em off." So, like, you heard the word.

RD: There are other people... not really into the scene.

PE: People who are "semi"... who come to hear the music.

WP: People who just hang out have come up to me and told me they really liked it... it's just people affiliated with other people... they get caught up in being cool and hating certain bands to be cool. It's one thing I've noticed on my travels... on the west coast people may look at TSOL and think they're assholes personally, but they'll give them gigs anyway because they're good. It's not like that here... not as much anyway. I hate Philadelphia. I'd love to get up the money to play other cities.

TI: Do you guys think you could make it on the radio... say, 'MMR'?

PE: We're not pretty enough. We don't make silly music. Robert Hazard is pretty safe... all the little girls runs around saying "oh Robert!"... and the Mothers will make it because they're pretty lah de dah de dah... but we won't. And we won't get played on the air because there's no money in it. No record company is behind us.

TI: Would you ever consider compromising to reach the radio audience?

TI: No!

RD: No!

WP: No!

PE: No way.

TI: Which is why we won't get played outside of something like 'KDU. Because we're not wrapped up and packaged all nice and neat.

Time is a funny thing. When you want it to pass it won't and when you want to slow it down, can't. Likewise with space. The more you have the more you fill and still there's never enough room.

By the time my interview was over with Little Gentlemen I was wishing for more time and more space. Unfortunately I had neither.

They may not be wrapped up and packaged neat... they may not be safe. But they are fun. And they know where to get hellious pizza.

If you're going to believe all the rumours you hear without checking them out then, Cha, Fool! You're missing something great.

- by S. Fritz

The song kicks off with a distorted variation of "Satisfaction." Yes, I tell myself, I've heard this before. But then Eddie's fast paced mumble demands my attention and by the middle of the song he shouts:

"Billy's in his car, been working too hard"
With a trailer full of kids back home in Alabama
People been pushin', been pushin' too hard
When he gets home gonna have him a pschodrama

Pop Music is war
Pop Music is more and more and more
Pop Music is a whore
It's strictly business

and in the back of my head I'm saying, yeah I've heard this before, but I haven't heard this much urgency in a long, long time.

Then towards the end of the song, the guitar goes crazy like some amphetimed Dennis Coffey, shredding all of Motown's glory in 45 seconds. No, I haven't heard this much desperation in one song in a long time.

In the next song Eddie combines his heavy use of reverb and analog with Greg's guitar going hell-bent on distortion to form a unified funk riff call "In The Middle Of." Greg's brother Barry follows suit on bass while Eddie's brother Kevin keeps the drums simple and clean. Fifth member Andrew sits behind the boards somewhere, insuring that the band's restrained intensity doesn't collapse into a muddy chaos.

The last thing I tell myself is this is just a tape.

One thing you can gather from this tape is that Cadre 8 is a seasoned band. In fact, they have survived with their line-up basically intact for over five years now. Originally known as Eddie & the InMB's, they formed in Austin TX in 1977 (now best known as the birthsite of MDC, Rank and File, and the Big Boys). Barry and Greg were originally from Atlanta, Andrew from Manhattan, with only Eddie and Kevin being the native Philadelphians. By 1979, the band has a rep as one of the biggest punk draws down there, and they were actually making a living off the band's income.

But in 1980, Eddie came back home to see family and check things out; and as he puts it:

"I went to some place for breakfast on Sunday morning at about 8 Am. This place was going full blast with two Greeks working there, a black dishwasher and a South Philly waitress...one of those places... and the air was filled with funk, Donna Summers and old Motown tapes. After six of seven years of Texas, I could relish that kind of music because all you here down there was Country and maybe some heavy metal."

"So after being liberated by that, I decided that even though the band was fairly successful in Austin, it was time to pack up and move. There wasn't enough room to grow any further there."

So in the Summer of '80, the band moved to Philadelphia and became the SKP's. Soul, Funk and other forms infiltrated their straight-ahead punk. Eddie and Kevin didn't have much trouble readjusting, but:

"When you first come here" begins Barry "you get your amusement watching things that are totally Philadelphian. But then you don't find things that amusing. At times I feel like it's a real trap. To try to create anything in Philadelphia, you have to build a wall around yourself, a real fortress mentality."

Eddie agrees, but then argues, "Philadelphia has kept a very traditional, conservative state of mind since its founding 300 years ago. But it's different also in that it's easier to get your start here. Nobody has anything that has become an established Philly sound."

But the SKP's still had a hard time breaking those walls. First off they were not familiar with the East Coast methods of doing business, the constant push of promoting one's image and never letting up. The South's attitude was slower, to put it more accurately, more laid back.

"We also had to convince people that we were a Philly band" explains Eddie. "The gossip came out that we were a Texas band and weren't going to stay. Here it is two years later and we're only beginning to shake that notion?"

So a year later, in the Summer of '81, the band landed its first gig. Not at any of the established music clubs though, but at Graterford Prison.

"As soon as I walked in there" recalls Kevin, "I was made very aware of those walls. And even while we were setting up was a shout of 'Two minutes!' and I hadn't even finished setting up my kit. Meanwhile, about 1000 guys there waiting to see us."

"So I decided then" goes Eddie, "that I was going to do a set that these guys would really appreciate. Our poppy material was out with the prisoners. So as I looked out from the stage, I decided that the first song was going to be 'Respect' followed by the Clash's 'Bank-robber' before we even got to our own material. We knew that if this audience wasn't going to like us, they'd really throw us off the stage."

"Yeah" nods Andrew, "but the audience just lost control...humping each other, throwing chairs (but not at the band), going like this (imitates mainlining)... they were having a good time!" He dead-pans.

"And after the set" says Greg, this old dude comes up smiling to me and kept asking me what do we mean when we call ourselves the SKP's. So I tell him to think about it, but he keeps on asking. So I tell him" and Greg's face lights up. "So the old dude starts shouting 'IT MEANS ESCAPEES, MAN! SOMETHING YOU'LL NEVER BE!'"

"It's like the people were coming up to me and asking me what was happening out there," Greg explains. "Like one guy put it to me that he hadn't even existed for the last ten years since he was sent there?"

"By the way" Eddie closes ruefully, "they didn't ask us back!"

It then took the band three more months to land their second gig.

The real start came in 1982. Due to confusion going with their name and that of SPK and the XKP's, the band changed their name to Cadre 8...Cadre meaning a highly organized unit (which they admit they're necessarily not); the 8 from their roots. The band had tightened their now diverse sound and heightened it with more hardcore awareness. With the band also more aware of Philadelphia and its own abilities, the Philadelphians in turn became aware of them.

"The real problem now" goes Eddie "is that Philadelphia use to be such a dance town and now it's a spectator city, at least the way new music is looked upon. Nobody dances to live bands here!"

"Yet it's like" and he points his finger out to the window of his apartment where the Ripley sign glows "every Saturday night, no matter what the weather or who else is playing in town, that place is packed on the Oldie's Dance Nights. hurt. It's the contact of audience and band, everybody going BANG!"

"Cadre 8 is like that, but I like to involve the music in as many different directions as possible. I'm telling each member of the audience 'I'm playing to you, but I'm playing to the person next to you too' and that involves more sacrifice in time to get it together musically!"

"I get bored with bands that stretch one idea over an entire set" explains Eddie. "Dancing different ways is liberating in itself. Now people know I think, that we're going to approach each level of music with the same level of intensity. People who come to dance to 'Pop Music' can also dance to 'In The Middle Of'."



So Cadre 8 are slowly blowing down the walls of Philadelphia. "What we're trying to tell people is to take a chance" closes Eddie. "I saw a lot of bands in Austin follow a formula and be more conscious of it. A lot of Philadelphia bands don't fall prey to that."

"What I've got to say is that I've led my entire life trying to achieve something, and even if I die and it all adds up to nothing, I spent my entire life working at it."

"Face it" adds Greg "Everything's coming to a halt. Everything sucks and it ain't getting better."

"Unless you first involve yourself" says Eddie "and fight it!"

All these 15 to 30 year olds are dancing their asses off to sixties rock and roll and Motown stuff. But the dance floor is always empty when a band comes on. You need the feedback that only dancing audiences can provide!"

"That's why I wrote 'Pop Music'. The relationship between artist and audience is getting warped by the industry and the people are led to believe they want that. That's why I love hardcore. Most people don't have the intensity within themselves to dance. Sweat and that kind of contact is an assertive way of saying I am here and not separated by a wall. I AM HERE! And when you get hit, it doesn't

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Listen to Martin Atkins on his band:
 "When we use to do the Brian Brain routine in England, we would play to five people who'd hate us. At the end of the set, a tape would go on of 100 people cheering and demanding more, and we'd give them more. But the five people, and he pauses for a swig of beer "want to kill us. It's fantastic!"

Delusions of grandeur? Nah, not Martin, or his partner in crime Pete Jones. Their just having their fun with the audience. They've pulled that trick for two years now, and Philly audiences have come to expect it (but Philly audiences are always two years out of date). But getting back to Martin...

"The most fun we consistently have is when they want to hang you and you insist on going back and doing more. But in the U.S. it hasn't happened for so long maybe we ought to go back to England. They hate us there!"

In April '82, Martin left his native London for the equally dreary skies of New York. He's got his residency and is doing fine, thank you. He's now dragged Pete here with him, leaving Lonesome Bobby Surgeoner to fend for himself in the wilds of England. But no matter, in February he got the airfare together (but no working papers) for Bobby to come over and BB managed to squeeze in four quick gigs, including our own beloved East Side.

The set itself was nothing new. ABSOLUTELY nothing new. It was the same exact backing tape they've used for their last three shows. When I bring this up, Martin agrees.

"This tour's the last time we're doing that. When we come again, in six months to a year, the tape'll be different!"

But then he counters, "two years ago when we first came here with the appause and the ventriloquist act, that was pretty radical. If you took that tape to Texas, your in a lot of trouble!"

We laugh. We're not drunk like the first two times we talked (I'd learned my lesson last year, Bobby last time... nothing like paying homage to the porcelain god to cap off an evening), but then again the tape recorder will be the only one who passes a breathalyzer test tonight.

You could laugh at the audience to. They were so drunk, the bulk didn't know it was the first poor show the BB's had done in Philadelphia. You couldn't blame the band, they played with their usual panache. No, but the sound left a lot to be desired. Sur-

Martin Atkins

Pete Jones

PIL

-by Sean Dunhill



geoner's borrowed guitar drowned out everything (including Martin's vocals). But the packed audience didn't even care. Now finally wise to the jokes, they ignored the discomforts and enjoyed themselves.

It shows. The Brains have their first established cult hit ("Funky Zoo") in the U.S. of A. (though not in England, of course). And it was a small miracle.

"Most people don't even know it's been out for six months" says Pete. "We had to wait for ages for our promotional copies. I don't even know what stores have it. Our distribution is really fucked!"

"We have tried to get an American deal, but our label, Secret Records, was run by a bunch of drunken idiots. Now Secret is run by our publishers, National Music. The success of 'Funky Zoo' has given us a chance of a deal!"

So Martin and Pete are having a big giggle, but...

The big laugh is now they are also performing with Public Image, Ltd. (Funny, it's been known for six months...but most people can't tell you who's in the band...aside the vocalist, but we'll get to that).

Now listen to Martin on PIL:

"When I moved to New York, I kept running into John (the vocalist) and Keith (Levene, the owner of Bobby's guitar). We had some words, I'll admit that, and if anybody had talked to them what they said of me amounted pretty much to the same thing. I called them some things that were down right irresponsible!"

Craig Baker

You see, Martin had recorded on three of the PIL albums (all of "Paris Au Printemps" and some of "Metal Box" and "Flowers Of Romance"), but things were obviously not so rosy. Words were had, and...

"It's funny now, but sometimes it would be six months after we got back together that our interviews would be printed. We are friends now, and when you're friends you sometimes fall out. Since September, Pete's now been part of the band!"

As for the music?

"Brilliant!" exclaims Martin. "It's difficult to describe, some of it's a lot more commercial...it's got the commercial possibilities of 'Death Disco' mixed in with a lot of newer stuff. And it's that way just because it happens to be!"

The album, called Below The Commercial Zone, will come out of PIL's own label, Public Enterprise Productions. It'll be distributed through some major label, as yet undecided. PIL, in Martin's words has "become what it was supposed to be two years ago, in New York!"

So it was not much of a surprise when PIL did show up at the East Side. It was also no surprise that there was more people there than at Brian Brain. But as Pete puts it:

"There's certain elements, you can always see them from the stage. There's an element who's there because a cer-

H. Rumph, JR

tain gentleman in the band who once was Mr. Johnny Rotten is doing vocals. It doesn't matter that he's named John Lydon, they're there to see Johnny Rotten. There is another element who comes

On this night the Rotten clones won out. I saw two people get seriously hurt that night; trampled by the audience wanting to be near "Johnny". From what I could tell, the P.A. being on vacation when PIL was on, they are a very special, very different kind of BAND. This was a rock show as far as the audience was concerned (despite Lydon's statement that his first band, the Sex Pistols, having destroyed rock and roll), and the audience behaved accordingly; i.e. mindlessly.

So it goes...

...but back to Martin:

"We all contribute our part to the song. I feel more a part of PIL now than I did before. We're all living together. We're pretty good friends. Three years ago we weren't. It shows in the music. There's a sense of fun that wasn't there before!"

Which was missing that night at the East Side. Which was there the night of Brian Brain. You can say maybe next time, but will there be a next time is another question. I'd seen PIL three years ago at the Tower...it was a much better show. I'd heard some pretty good reports of PIL from other towns, including about the audience.

Maybe next time. Meanwhile, the band and I had another beer.

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Minneapolis trio, Husker Du burst on the scene with Land Speed Record, a blistering, noisy and chaotic live in the studio album. One of my fave albs of last year, they followed with the "In A Free Land" EP--more melodic, slower and a precursor of the current H.D. sound as evidenced on their new long player, Everything Falls Apart. Everything is definitely the Husker's foremost disc to date, it shows their writing, playing and trademark intensity breaking new ground within the hardcore genre. In the can is Metal Circuits, which holds in store even more surprises from this excellent band (to be released on SST--ED.). Bob Mould--guitar, vocals, songwriter for the group chatted with me via telephone recently about the band's history, records, and future plans. Here's what he had to say:

TI: Tell us about Everything Falls Apart and Metal Circuits.

BM: We recorded Everything Falls Apart in June and July of '82. We were going to do it with New Alliance again (where they recorded Land Speed), but it's on Reflex records, our own label. New Alliance was going to do it but they had some other projects that had been waiting for a while that were maybe not as important to them but were more important than our thing. So we just decided to find the money ourselves and do it. The one that we're working on right now, Metal Circuits, is all stuff we had written prior to leaving for this trip. It was stuff that I had accumulated, just my stuff, over the past couple months. A couple of songs are a lot older, maybe two or three years.

TI: How long have you been working on Metal Circuits?

BM: Sunday and Monday night. It's almost finished. We don't take that much time in recording. Mix down we like to take more time but if in recording it sounds fucked up, well so what? That's usually how we sound live. It's not perfect.

-by Steve Mercy



Glen Freedman

TI: Is this stuff real fast?

BM: Well maybe like for punk or thrash songs there's a couple. Most of the stuff is real fast, but it isn't hardcore. It sounds more like pop music. It still sounds like us but it isn't Toto or something, it's definitely Husker Du. It's just a progression for us, we're writing better songs, maybe less slogany and more actual lyrics and better riffs. We're real happy with it so far, it's great. Some of the best we've ever done that I've heard.

TI: Then when will it be out?

BM: I would say about June. It's a shame that it has to wait so long but it would defeat the purpose of putting out Everything out. So we will wait and see what happens.

TI: What happened to the lyric sheet to Land Speed Record?

BM: When we initially did the record, New Alliance first issued a couple of thousand copies and they had the lyric sheet attached. We then leased the record to Greenworld/Thunderbolt and they forgot to put the lyric sheets to the next several thousand. Anybody who wants a lyric sheet for that one or the "In A Free Land" single, can write us at Husker Du/Reflex Records/731 Pontiac Place/Mendota MN 55120. Tell them to include a stamped self addressed envelope. That way we'll be able to send them a lot of stuff. Also as kind of side note, when we were last there, we got our van stolen and we were carrying a lot of our mail with us in the van. So like anyone who's written to us in the last couple of months, the mail probably got stolen. So if they want lyrics or

shirts or posters or whatever they'd written for, please write back. Drop a postcard or something. That was pretty discouraging when it happened.

TI: What are some bands you like these days?

BM: Well, I don't know. I don't listen to that much music anymore. That's probably why I end up writing so many songs. If you had asked me six months ago I would have said a lot. I like a lot of 60's stuff.

TI: Such as?

BM: A lot of psychedelic pop, you know like Dave Clark. Neil Young is always good to listen to. Stuff from that era.

TI: How did Husker Du come together?

BM: I moved to Minnesota about 4 years ago from upstate New York and when I got there there was this record store we were all working for. We played a lot of Heartbreakers and Ramones, that sort of stuff. Greg had a bass, but he didn't really know how to play it, he was more into instrument repair and we just got together eventually, just out of boredom.

TI: So are you guys straight-edge?

BM: (Laughs) Uh...No. We're very moderate, let's put it that way. It really improved our playing a lot. We don't drink or use any drugs before we play at all. Like the whole day. After the set we usually sit back and have a few, but you're usually too tired to really get drunk. But like when we don't have to play or do something, I usually get drunk, but I don't make a big thing out of it.

I like to drink. I use to preferably like the personal habits kind of stuff, but now we've pretty much cut that out. We use to do a lot of speed and stuff before we played and

TI: What are some bands coming from the Minnesota scene, and what is the area like in general?

BM: Oh, yeah...Minnesota. Some bands that are really, really good are all the bands we work with. There are a lot of other bands that are just starting up. They're just waiting for a drummer or something like that. By summer there should be a

whole new scene. It's a relatively tame scene so the cops aren't always looking for somebody to take their bullshit out on. We had a problem with the Minneapolis Vice Squad for a while, but that sort of passed.

TI: We sometimes have trouble with the cops and locals.

BM: In Minnesota the people are generally more open; it's pretty much a progressive area. People who are generally into any kind of culture can accept hardcore whereas somewhere else you might get booed or shouted at. I don't know if you've ever seen any pictures of us, but we don't look hardcore at all. We don't wear our hair spiked or walk around

we thought "Oh cool we can play so fast" but then we used to get really sick after the set. So then we stopped doing all that stuff and we started playing faster, not to mention feeling really good when we got done.

TI: So you're moderates?

BM: Oh yeah! On Saturday night we're playing with Black Flag in San Francisco and we're going to have a Tab and capucino party before we get on. We're gonna go out and get some bonus cups. That will be a real drug blow out. It's really weird to explain, but out there in Minnesota it's real beer drinking, Midwest Rock 'n Roll country. It's real hard to decondition people like that. It's fun, I like to sit back with friends and have some beers. I don't go driving around in a drunken stupor, but I do like to sit there and drink. I don't think it's good, but I don't think it's bad. Everybody goes on their "I was on bad drugs" phase but people grow up. They learn what's good for them, and learn what to phase out. We don't let it get in the way of what we're doing, OK?

TI: When are you coming to Philadelphia?

BM: We're not sure. Maybe about April but you know about tours, you try to get two or three dates and set everything around those...but we really would like to play all ages shows. I don't know what the scene is like in Philly, but I would assume there's a lot of kids. It would be kind of pointless to play a place where there's a drinking age.

with chains. I'm just sitting here with my flannel shirt, my jeans and my t-shirt. You can look at most of the people who dress really hardcore like the Exploited and they have the brain of a pea, and then you look at someone who dresses pretty normal and they can think for more than half the bands in the country. We've found that normally the people that look fairly normal are the most intelligent. I think I found that as a general rule. I mean punker kids are real nice, they're really cool because they're big fans of what's going on but the people who are most normal looking are the best thinkers. I'm not saying though that one's better than the other.

TI: Any last statements?

BM: Yeah. Generally what we always close with is we hope people continue to think for themselves and do something with it. It's good to be part of the scene, it's better to do something with it. Get a band going, get a fanzine going, just don't get discouraged.

TI: That's one of the best things about the scene, the right to express.

BM: And everybody starts at the same level. It's not like a job and it's not like if you're born into money that makes things pretty easy. But when you start something in hardcore you start at ground zero and you prove your worth. Anybody can make music. It might not start very good, but anybody can do it.

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U.K. SUBS

The U.K. Subs formed in August 1977 attracted by the ideals of the punk movement. Although they have attained a sizeable following here in the States as well as the world, they continue to give just a time as they have almost six years ago when playing the Hot Club here in Philadelphia. It's this freshness of material, along with their attitude about the music scene world wide, and their honesty to the fans that turn out from city to city to dance and party to their style of music that has them still ready to Rock and Roll with the best of them.

Now, with some 12 albums, singles and EP's later, I found them embarking on still another USA tour; and the following conversation went down just prior to show time in Trenton's City Gardens:

TI: Could you give me all the names of the band and what they do?

CH: Well let's see, I'm Charlie Harper, vocals; that's Alvin Gibbs on Bass Guitar; Nicky Garratt on lead guitar and Kim Wy-

lie on drums and percussion; Kim is the newest. We added him a few months back. He used to play for the original Generation X band with Billy Idol and Chelsea.

TI: Is there a new record out at this time?

CH: Yes. It's called "Shake Up The City" and it's another EP.

TI: It's on an independent label?

CH: Yes it is, very independent, in fact one man company. Abstract Records and it's being distributed by Pinnacle Records.

TI: What are the titles on this EP and how are they doing back home on the charts?

CH: Well side one is "Self Destruct" and "Police State (Part One)" and the "War of the Roses" on side two. They are all doing quite fine on the charts back home.

TI: Can I assume political overtones are the theme of this project, especially "Police State"? Is there a part two planned for the future?

CH: Yes to both questions. We've got an album planned for the future mid-1983.

TI: Will it also be on an independent label?

CH: Yes it will, unless one of the major labels gives us a deal. A good one, not like the deals we've struck in the past. I will listen to my mate,

John Lydon, he says it all. What he has to say has a lot influence on the business, and the likes. I guess if I had to take one person and set him aside as an asset to the U.K. Subs, it would have to be our publicist Rich Bishop. He put us back on the map.

TI: Do I detect a possible migration for the band here to the USA?

CH: About a year ago we thought it would be a good idea to live here, but have since changed our minds. After thinking on it for a while we decided to stay in England since it is easier to travel to Europe from England than it is from the USA. It is a difficult thing to move to another country without a major record company behind you. We do think it's better for us having an American management team (Wartoke) here and we just come on tour a few times a year. If we were to land a major record deal perhaps our thoughts on the migration would change. Being a hardcore band the chances of that happening at the present time do not look too good. Billy Idol has moved, and so have the Clash but they are both on American labels and they have mellowed.

TI: Where do you see the music headed in the future?

CH: Of course I could give you the same answer to that question as everyone else and that is "If I knew the answer I would become a millionaire" but I won't. I think Scratch Music, where a DJ takes bits and pieces of many records and turns them back and forth on the tables to make a scratching sound in time with other music.

will become very big in the discos in the next year.

TI: Where will that leave you and other live artists if all it's going to take is a record, a turntable and a vivid imagination to make hits?

CH: Oh that's just one form of music for the discos. The live performers will always be popular be it Rockabilly, Electronic, Punk, R&B, Pop or whatever name the promoters come up with. Crazyes will come and crazyes will go but one thing is always certain and that is dance music will always remain popular and the live artist will always be there. I like a good Pogo or Slam to have fun. The Human League though, is still writing good music.

TI: What form do you call your music?

CH: Dance music, but with a message. No one is going to give you a job. You know? The economy is sinking, record sales are off world wide in every form of Rock Music. Trends set by different artists in the rock scene are copied by those who wish to share the riches of those who make it. Dionne Warwick and the Fat Larry Band have had hit after hit in England and all the pop artists back home try and copy their style. We don't try to copy anyone. Just be natural and write good dance music. The rest will follow. That's been our attitude from the beginning.

TI: Who does the writing?

CH: We three do it right now, we are still teaching Kim how to write our kind of music. Nicky and myself do most of it, each song has a different line; we try to have as many different songs as possible so that no two sound the same. Variety, that's it, variety.



DOA

PHILADELPHIA--The city of brotherly love; my ass. Point one in case: DOA, a band from Vancouver, stop here. They eat cheesesteaks (did you expect tacos?) at a local pizza place, are treated to an array of nasty workers and slow service and then called cheap bastards (DOA Joke: What's the difference between a Canadian and a Canoe? A: Canadians don't tip!). Then they return to the East Side Club to perform and the moron at the entrance refuses to let Dimwit, the drummer, in. When it's pointed out to the ESC cretin that this is one of the performers they hired he shows his loving and trusting nature by making a face.

Fortunately, Dimwit was at long last let in, and DOA dispelled the Philadelphia-born attitude that they are cheap bastards. Despite the events described, despite the fact that they had spent many nights on the road, playing Boston, Georgia, several places in North Carolina, Louisville, New York, to name a few; DOA put on the kind of show that one would expect from these guys: Pummeling through most of their new songs off War On 45 as well as their infamous "Fucked Up Ronnie". They were energetic, loud, fun, (and I won't go on anymore except that if you missed it, tough, cause I can't think of anymore adjectives).

The members of DOA have played together, apart and in other bands, since around 1977. They are (in no specific order): Wimpy Roy (bass, and former Canadian Subhuman), Joey Shithead (guitar, vocals), Dave Gregg (guitar) and Dimwit (the newest member and the brother of former drummer Chuckie Biscuits who is now everyband's drummer but currently with the Circle Jerks). All current members except Gregg have been in a band called Skulls. In all its various forms DOA have been involved in 12 recordings.

These punk veterans are presently riding along the hardcore wave, having put out an album, Hardcore '81, appearing on the Jellybeans compilation, and received lots of attention from the hardcore fanzines and radio shows. They do not consider themselves a hardcore band though; not that they are biting the boot that kicks them or any such thing. It's just that they don't wish to be stifled by a typecast. Explained Shithead: "The pissed element of the whole thing is the attitude that is supposed to come with it is being stripped away by the music. Hardcore should be something more than thrash music." Gregg continues: "Hardcore has become more of a musical definition than an attitude. We're talking about a subject that's like serious...you need a bunch of different musics to break away from the already established narrow scope of music."

If you've heard them then you know that their music is not thrash, but more of fast rock-punk (they play reggae and funk on their latest album) and their lyrics are sometimes simple; yet intelligent; sometimes goofy, but fun. And it is here that DOA's charm lies (at least for me)--don't doubt they are serious guys; with intelligent outlooks and political views, but they are not above a little fun.

Take their latest record, War On 45. They hit you with a bunch of anti-war songs on one side and then throw a song like "Let's Fuck" "Just to show we can have some fun" says Dimwit.

When I interviewed them, I was struck by their lack of sincerity and lack of pretensions. Some questions they refused to talk about, like what bands they liked. Others they just ignored or skipped over, but what they did say appeared to come straight from their hearts. Shithead, dressed in an AC/DC t-shirt and cowboy boots, and Gregg spoke softly looking the questioner straight in the eye. Dimwit and Roy were quieter, preferring to sit in the background, occasionally adding humorous comments. Here are some of the thoughts that came out of the talk:

DG: Basically what we think would be a good idea is that people get control of their own lives. Now going off to fight a war is like the prime example of losing control of our lives and giving it up for someone else, like dying for someone else's greed or religious beliefs. There's plenty of other things like being stuck in a little job and looking for a wife and home in suburbia is another example of someone not having to think for themselves. You get so wrapped up in those beliefs that you have to have two cars and color TV, a toaster and a blender, Right?

JS: You lose.

DG: Right. There's nothing wrong in having those things, but if you destroy your own life in having them you really miss out. I think the best things in life are free, and the ones that aren't should be gotten without selling your soul.

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DG: Most people's ignorance that I've found is built up on not moving. Like most Canadians will never make it out of their city their whole lives and they are going to believe every stereotype they ever hear about. Like a person from Texas, a person from Russia or Saudi Arabia, because these people believe what the media tells them. People are people. These guys are not evil.

DG: Anarchy is a word that is being re-defined everyday because as more skinheads draw it on the back of their jackets, like what does it mean?

JS: I have leanings towards anarchy but only in the idea of people cooperating with each other.

DG: I call myself an evolutionist; you know? I'd like to see humanity realize the potential they have as human beings, and not get squashed in by the little straight and narrow of it all. What I mean is that they don't end up 70 or 80 years old and really pissed off. I intend to be that old, and I want to be a really wise, happy old man.

JS: You always have to deal with the world, basically what you want to do is struggle up and down with every change. Like the evolution has to be constant.

Serious thoughts for a guy who reportedly urinated off the stage in Seattle and San Francisco. What happened--did he just drink too much beer and lose control? "Well, no just where the place makes me" Shithead grinned.

DOA hold the honor of being the first live band to ever play the ESC. Unfortunately, they wanted to play all ages show, but this was the only place they knew of (where were you BYO?). So those who refused patronage of this dump missed a really great show.

-by Steve Lawrence

They weren't the first nor the the most original, but LA's Black Flag has certainly been one of the most influential of the first-generation American punk bands. Throughout their evolution from Garage band Panic to their present status of don't-bother-us-we-won't-bother-you hardcore entrepreneurs of world renown, these five men have earned accolades for their primitive, adrenalized tunes and unathouritive, a-political stance.

Yet, Black Flag has remained equally unpopular among many of their peers, much of the established music press, the LAPD (not surprisingly) and, allegedly, many moms and dads who would rather not have their impressionable sons and daughters exposed to the Black Flag messages.

All this hoopla began very innocently with singer Keith Morris (now of the Circle Jerks) and guitarist Gregg Ginn, both of Hermosa Beach, who collaborated their seminal rebellion with that of bassist Chuck Dukowski (GG and CD were avid Ramones fans), and a guy named Miq-dol on skins. The Flag's early-day venues consisted of garages and friends' house parties. The Hollywood underground scene, unfortunately, bred a very clique-ish elitism which for a long time denied BF's entrance. But through their undaunted perseverance the Flag gathered a sizable following of young crazies from the various LA beach communities and by the summer of '79 had regular dancehall gigs.

That same summer the band organized its own label, SST Records, and from old demo tapes, put out a four-song "Nervous Breakdown" EP. Soon afterward, Miqdol bid the band farewell and Colombian Roberto "Robo" Valverde took his place until sometime last year, when he was replaced by Emil, and in the summer

By Chuckie Biscuits (formerly of DOA and now of the Circle Jerks), and now Bill Stevenson (from the Descendents). The rest is extraneous and the preceeding was just to set the mood.

"You've gone through a lot of personnel changes" I comment to Henry.

"Ya, well, Keith wanted to do different songs, different stuff, so then Dez took over. Then it was Chavo (Pedrast), who lasted about six months, Brenden Mullen (owner of the Masque) tried out for Black Flag, he sang one gig, but just couldn't handle it. (Johnny Bob Goldstein also tried his hand at fronting the band, and is featured on the new BF compilation Everything Went Black). Dez sang for almost a year-and-a-half, a real long time, but I'm closing in on him."

Skipping ahead to the December '80-May '81 period now, I recall that in the movie "Decline Of Western Civilisation" Dukowski was asked what the name Black Flag stood for. He said it meant anarchy. At that time, which was before Henry's, did the band consider themselves anarchists?

Henry pauses. "Well, no. Just people who thought for themselves, you know. I don't know what label that would fall under; then name means anything that comes to mind. It's the opposite of the white flag, which is the flag of surrender (oddly enough, Hollywood sports another band by the name of White Flag these days). It just sounded heavy."

What about collective ideas?

"There are a lot of ideas," notes Dukowski, who had a nasty cold and can barely be understood. "In order for things to work out, you have to constantly keep changing. The enemy is the past and that goes for me and the band. 'Decline' was overly simplistic in that department, so don't be misled. I'm not on any political platform, I'm not running for governor. We don't have any sim-

could sum up in one word. Listen to our songs, it's all there--the attitudes. For me to try and put it all in one word would be cheating."

"You have five different people in a band" adds Henry, "who all think for themselves. Our basic ideology is to just play as much as possible. I don't want to TELL people anything, as in telling them what to do. I'm not into preaching. If someone tells ME what to do, I'm very inclined to not even listen to them. I'll just say 'Fuck you!'"

SST Records, which I hear was instigated by the band only to put out the "Nervous Breakdown" EP seems to have become a major preoccupation for Black Flag. Why not simply turn matters over to an established label?

"They all came to us in the beginning" says Henry, "but we realized that if you really want to get something done, you have to do it yourself. It might take a lot longer, but it's really worth it to me."

"But you're not making a lot of dough off this endeavor," I retort.

"The money thing is fucked up right now," admits Dukowski. "We'd be doing just fine, but Unicorn hasn't paid us a penny. They owe us some twenty or thirty thousand dollars, at least."

"We live pretty near the subsistence level as a band, as people" says Henry. "We don't have anything we really own. We have this little shack here we all live in--the place is about as big as a bedroom, and between six and 14 people live here at once!"

"Yes, the ever-wonderful, luxurious SST Records office" laughs Dukowski very hoarsely. "I have such a wonderful view from my bedroom picture window. I can see Spot (BF soundman), Greg, Magger (of Big Hoist)...But ya, we live pretty near the subsistence level. But we get a lot of charity."

Does your work with SST projects drain much from the band?



"Well, we might not have as much

time to practice with, but we're putting out records by really great bands like Saccharine Trust, Minutemen, Meat Puppets, Overkill," says Henry. "Uh, St. Vitus, Wurm, Stains, the Dicks. The bands on our label are some of the best you'll find. I think these records are the best made in the United States."

"Maybe it's just me," I reflect, "but it seems that a lot of Black Flag's earlier material reflected more of a real raw, determined energy, like on 'Nervous Breakdown' for instance. On some of the 'Damaged' cuts you seemed a bit more polished. I even saw the band with longer hair and facial hair on the last tour!"

Henry is angry. "You're starting to sound pretty ridiculous yourself with that. What does hair length have to do with you determination? If what's is on the outside matters that much, then what's on the inside must not."

BLACK FLAG



The band is just as serious and determined as they were on day one, if not more determined. Things are harder for us now. We're moving around a lot more now, we're running into a lot more financial problems. We're having to deal with a lot of different attitudes that are being thrown at us."

Dukowski adds: "The more tension there is, the bigger the vector you provide for people to play up their own attitudes. As far as the attitudes thrown at us, I suppose we wouldn't be doing this if we didn't want those reactions."

"I got into a whole mess of fights," continues Henry "'cause of my hair. I had to break a few people's noses, but that's no problem. If someone takes a sucker punch at me, they'd better have a gun, 'cause I'm gonna try to kill 'em. I fuck with no man until he fucks with me."

The hair caused that much trouble?

"It wended out the assholes" says Dukowski. "I'll be real blunt: I think none of that fashion consciousness matters. Some people think these ARE important though. To me, it's a conscious I couldn't give a fuck what people think. I like people with hair down to their asses and I like people with none. I can't condemn people for what they believe, it's not how I think!"

What about record sales?

I think Damaged sold 50,000" says Dukowski. "I know it could have sold better, just because I know they (Unicorn) didn't put any money into distributing it."

Are you happy with the sales?

"It doesn't matter whether I'm happy or not," asserts Henry. "I'm doing what I want to do. To me, life ain't about happiness. I'd love to sell millions of records, but only for the simple fact that we'd be reaching millions of people. I'm not into success, money is something that I don't need for myself. Like, if I turned around and did something wonderful and made a whole lot of money, I'd probably buy myself some new records and throw the rest into SST so we could get some more albums out by these great bands. See, money means nothing to me, I'm into EXPRESSION. The more people that buy our records and come to our shows, the more people we're gonna expose to what we're saying."

"Anyway," adds Dukowski, "we really can't talk about recordings right now. We have a compilation LP coming out (it's out--but under the members individual names--SF) and probably a new LP (pending release from Unicorn at this time). Things might get held up in court by Unicorn though."

So how do you feel about the future of Black Flag?

"I don't know, it's a band," says Henry. "We could all crash our van and die tomorrow. We can't wait to get the fuck outta here, away from the telephone, all the backstabbers. We're not into sitting still for too long--we're a bunch of folks who like to move out!"

In what direction?

"Just the Black Flag direction," Henry continues. "We write songs we like to hear."

Silence.

"Listen," Dukowski says very mysteriously. "I'm driving a 451 and you're driving a Porsche Turbo. We can both win different types of races--just don't tell me which ones to run."

Class dismissed.

-by Bruce Silcox



EXTERMINATOR! by William Burroughs
(Calder and Boyars £2.95)

YOU CAN cut into "The Naked Lunch" at any intersection point. "The Naked Lunch" is a blueprint, a How-To Book. Black insect lusts open into vast, other planet landscapes. Etc., etc.

The following is a chapter excerpted from William Burroughs' forthcoming novel, 'The Revised Boy Scout Manual'.

A cold dry windy day clouds blowing through the sky sun shine and shadows. A dead leaf brushes my face. The remind me of St Louis.

Panther Science Fiction

NOVA EXPRESS 5/- William Burroughs

This venture into the SF field by the controversial author of *The Naked Lunch* is a scabrous, black story of cosmic war for the control of men's minds, waged between the Nova Police and the very weird Nova Mob. This chilly, disturbing tour of the modern brain's landscapes takes the reader into a succession of murderous sub-worlds whose outlines, suggests the author, are already shaping up in contemporary America. Jack Kerouac claims that Burroughs is the greatest satirist since Jonathan Swift: certainly, in *Nova Express*, SF takes on a new, urgent dimension.

BURROUGHS. b. 1914. American novelist. Became addicted to heroin in 1944: his addiction was described in 'Junkie' (1953), his first novel, published under a pseudonym. In later books - 'The Naked Lunch', 'Nova Express' - gave up realistic narrative for 'image tracks': repetitive clusters of phrases and images (predominantly homosexual-murderous landscapes. In pursuit of distocation, developed random cut-ups - mixed up fragments from Rimbaud, Shakespeare, Joyce and SF. Influenced by Surrealism and Reich (qv).

COLLECT. AND ORIGINATOR

In a neck brace and woolly hat, Patti Smith among the guests at a New York party to mark the paperback publication of *NOVA EXPRESS* by William Burroughs' *Junkie*, the movie of which is to be 1977 screenplay by Terry Southern with music by Miles Davis and/or Lou Reed. Patti sent her.



W.S. Burroughs



WILLIAM BURROUGHS

Title: *Twilight's Last Gleaming?*

-by Andy Darlington

This can be no neutral tract of reportage.

We're crammed in on wrap-around concrete stairwell. A bodyguard-like Norman salesman, smart suit, laser-set hair.

William Seward Burroughs shakes my hand but avoids eye-contact. Is courteous and pleased to talk, but--distant, amputated, disconnected. Nuttall's "nervous hypnotic man? Not quite registering anything. L'Homme Invisible stood like a dead ancestor. Philosopher-King designate of a private fantasy zone. Adrift like a muttering trance on a killing floor...

A single bronze-wood table, solid, lathe-turned legs. A "V" of angled silver mikes zig-zag in. Burroughs wasted, thin and expressionless; green shirt, brown patterned tie, brown jacket, CSA white & grey sectioned jumper, grey socks, and air of bored grey resignation. It's unreal. A mid-Manchester Club vaulted tram-shed high, cats eyes and M-way bollards fencing the dance area into a traffic island, industrial severe and austere. Twin huge screens slurred with Factory Records direct relay video slicing in at table, mikes, aged Beat relic, heroin novelist, subversive fan nihilist. A humorless humorist. Slightly unhinged. Freeze-frame in a conceptual film of... (text continues)

numbness.

The camera is the eye of a cruising vulture at a slaughterhouse carnival.

There's much ratty satin 'n' tat. Dressing down in Oxford chic. Much movement and bored ritual display. It's frayed at the edges and veered off into wrongness. Sure, there's a token infiltration of Lit-freaks and word-junkies, but I'd guesstimate most here know Burroughs mostly from cryptic notes dropped in Bowie interviews. Item: "Cracked Actor" film with cut-up lyrics in the back-seat of a speeding Chevy. And who here among this throng of pathetic, repressed, sexless, repressive, cultural beggars knows that Burroughs' faded influence has spread way beyond that point, like a nerveless discomforting disease to so irradiate Rock culture it goes undetected? The lead exhaust in the air you breathe? How does THAT stand cold and old, frail, vulnerable and antique, here in the epicentre of Now? What's been did is history, and what is yet to do still indeterminate. Their attention drifts, a lethal dissection of metal and flesh without discrimination.

I'm here with pirate publisher/Fantastist Mike Butterworth and his Japanese Lady. She speaks fractured English, and describing Burroughs in "Ladybird Books" Key-Word vocabulary and elaborate semaphore mime isn't easy. CP Lee hangs on from his "Lord Buckley" review, and clusters of self-nominated celebs hang out beneath the screens. The Burroughs/Tony Balch cinema verite movie "Towers Open Fire" swivels few heads, there's spastic jerky monochrome movement, panning across Tanagers Harbour 1962, syringes in wooden flesh, fire arms, narcotics, retributive atrocity exhibitions of the several senses, flashes from the archives of Beat Hotel oblivion, Rue Git-Le-Couer in Paris, the orgasm gun, lens blurs in ferocious hand-held distortion, an iron brain smooches out random codes and... (text continues)

components which escape into the two-dimensional auto-suggestion of flat film.

Released from celluloid. He coughs. Sips some what-looks-like water. Shuffles fleshless legs and shuffles A4 transcripts. No introduction. No warmth. Just straight into "Place of Dead Roads" recited in a dead language void of inflection or emphasis. Autobiography? "he has a dark side to his character--and he loves it! Paranoia? "dead people are less frightening than live ones" Scripts and dark dark spliced sentence fragments that hit like knee-cappings from blurry speakers, soaking like acid corrosion, like Virus B-23. Malcolm Whitehead's video bounces and out-focuses from green haze to alarming razor-cut-clarity. Germ warfare with Smallpox-impregnated Bibles. Equestrian telepathy, tales of Junky cannibalism. A statement from the Immortality Control Board: "immortality is the only goal worth striving for...immortality is something you have to work for and fight for, like everything else in this life and another. We want the whole tamale! It's ours and we're going to take it!" These are head dramas dense with narrative threads running vertiginously. Like the ghosts of unwritten novels. Blueprints to wrest control from the Boards, Syndicates and Governments of the Earth. From the conspiratorial systems of social, cultural, genetic and sexual coercion. "Shoot-out At Dead-Ass Saloon" with the Wild Fruits. You must "identify with death" he instructs, to rapt attention, providing open cranium image trax from "Ah Pook is Here" and "Port of Saints" New codes. New as in Nova. There's laughter and jumpy applause at the more grotesquely blood-splattered gross-outs of the Dr. Penway tract ("performing cut-rate abortions in subway toilets, operating with one hand, beating the rats offa my patients with the other"); the De-Rights, and the "No Nukes In God Nukes" punchline. His

words are disease that attacks cell by cell. Already I'm jet-lagged from going nowhere. A zone of drones. But there's no doubt he's closing all kinds of synaptic connections in unprepared brain-centres with the mere black opacity of his presence, his understated delivery. He ends his Final Academy some 20 minutes later with "Twilight's Last Gleaming" from "Nova Express" ("Cross the wounded we intersect--poison of dead sun in your brain slowly fading) and he's gone. Doubtful if he saw the audience, if their presence even registered. But against the odds he's spun the weight of a four-decade mythology and come off with it intact. What's been did, and what's yet to be done.

New York poet John Giorno slots on. By contrast with Burroughs' minimalist starkness his pugilistic projection tags loud Disco-mix tapes onto his powerful "We got here yesterday, we're here now, and I can't wait to leave tomorrow" It's a massively charged incantation, and he's a pioneer of this rap delivery. It's eager and aggressively anxious to please. The Genesis P. Orridge's Psychic TV videos flash up. A skull test-card. A print-out reading "THOSE WHO DO NOT REMEMBER THE PAST ARE CONDEMNED TO REPEAT IT" And a 23 minute chromatic montage running a repeat image of technological violence, castration, napalm, ritual torture, felatio, and military chic. Burroughs lateral implications and junk-games ripped off the page onto naked celluloid. Words falling. Photos falling. Breakthru in the grey room. Then and now. Then into now.

But I'm already worming backstage over cables and power-lines, crammed in on wrap-around concrete stairwell, shaking Burroughs cool, smooth, presureless hand. He looks bored, humorless, sad a look of borrowed flesh. And there's something else, something vaguely universally absurd about a

POLITICAL PORN

JUST A FORM TO FILL IN, A NAME AND ADDRESS

TWO VOLUME SET: ON JUCHE

by KIM IL SUNG

tall angular 68-year old St. Louis gentleman hung out behind the soundstage of a Manchester Disco. He seems amiable, accessible, mellow even.

I insert a wedge gradually, suggest it must be gratifying to get such reactions from this charnel house assembly.

"Absolutely. They were a good audience" he replies. His voice dry, a monotonous desiccation to it. His eyes avert, and pace a magazine I've passed to him.

The biggest response came to the more obvious obscenities and the more visceral passages in the "routines" I offer guardedly. Do you think you're always appreciated for the right reasons?

"I'm not prepared to say what makes people react. Or whether their reasons for reaction are right or wrong? But do YOU respond to their reactions when you're performing? I may make changes as I go along according to how I feel an audience is reacting! He speaks of his "routines" as "almost like a stand-up comic act when you analyze it. Short pieces. Usually comic. Very pointed!" The humor of Lenny Bruce re-written by the Marquis de Sade and ghosted by Dr. Goebbels. Everything viewed through anal-tinted glasses and fed through that Burroughs Adding Machine computer brain, tapes shredded and spliced.

How do these audiences compare with...

"...the last time I was here?" All right, sure. Let's relate past to present. What's been did and what's yet to do.

"They are more alive this time," spake without conviction. But also, perhaps, on this trip, there IS less vehemence. Less perversity. On this trip he DOES seem to enjoy his fame/notoriety. And if what he says is anything more than platitude then that could be interesting. They once tagged him "guru for the Flower-Power set." An inaccuracy. Ginsberg, yes.



Kerouac, yes. Their vision has an optimistic naivete segueing neatly onto that movement. His friends/lovers, yes, but Burroughs was always too cynical and cold, too evil to catch that role. He's more at home here with the dead 80's generation. He catches but also challenges the cult of defeat, of disillusionment.

"I wasn't involved in the 60's at all" he concurs unbidden. "I was out of the country most of the time. I really led a very secluded life. Apart from the Democratic Convention in Chicago which I wrote about." He speaks low, now side-face, and in a rush so's I miss some of it. He paces up and down in the confined concrete cell talking. But before I get a chance to cut in and get to specifics he switches tack. "Do you live here?" He's politely interested, but amputated. Restless with a nervy edge. The Mormon salesman smiles beatifically and benignly while glancing at his watch.

Pity tour organizer Genesis P. Orridge couldn't make it. I comment.

"No. He couldn't be here. He's ill with some skin infection or something. But there are the films..."

...and it's interesting to compare the films. The differences between "Towers Open Fire" and "Psychic TV" the then and the now. The "sexual magic" that's also present in the latest novel "Cities of the Red Night." The shift in perception that occurs when Burroughs' sex and death preoccupations get naked, visualization in less, um, subtle mediums. The differences...

"But there are similarities. I feel there are common points too. They are statements of a kind." In Burroughs fiction the mediums of print, vinyl, and celluloid get intermeshed. He experiments at length with tape effects both in the novel "Ticket That Exploded" and on his Industrial-records LP, while his

character Agent 23 gets literally sucked through the film barrier. "Most parts of a film are left in the cutting room, as in music or recording as well. But because a written text is visual does not necessarily mean that it's cinematic!" "Naked Lunch" was compiled in this cutting room/tape editing fashion. "For every ten pages published there are 50 pages of notes to be edited, some on tape, and some filed!" And the guy who once quoted "writing techniques are at least 50 years behind those of painting" now deals in frames per second, enthuses about Whitehead's video tonight, and encapsulates his words as often as possible on vinyl as in print. Each new record adds new dimensions and emphasis to his work, indicating new directions and considerations for future explorations.

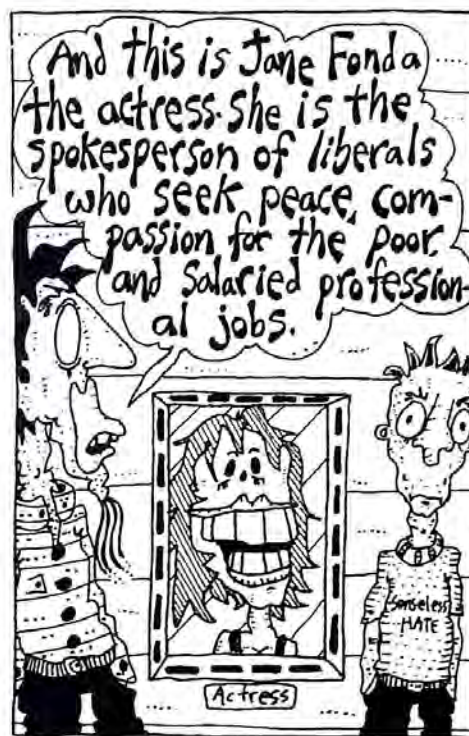
But aren't there also dangers? He comments aside that the authorities "use sex as an addiction for control, just like alcohol and drugs!" But taken from the context of Burroughs dense prose and projected up stripped down into video, or marketed through the vinyl circus, isn't there a danger that the images get subsumed into that control? He provides his own pre-empted answers. "That's true. Absolutely. It's a very old tactic. The English are particularly good at that, at absorbing dissident elements. The authorities always try to put dissent into a category where they can deal with it more easily!"

Burroughs form of dissidence is more difficult to categorize. But before I can get down to analysis, at a signal, he turns to go. He hesitates and comes back again. Reoffers that same bone-ridged hand, but still not his eyes. Then he's gone. The smiling Mormon blocks me. "Was that all right?" voiced like some post-coital ritual. And even though circumstances fall far below optimum levels I can only confess that it was more than all right.

William Seward Burroughs was born 5 February 1914. His contributions to the Rock infrastructure is second to no other writer, although he claims no great love for it, preferring older music forms. He near-invented the literature of verbal assault, and now that some claim the power of language is castrated and debased by repetition, he returns to show it not only stunningly alive, but more essential than ever before. Immortality now his only goal worth striving for. An earlier interviewer flung a line at him--"I am bound to the past," from "Cities of the Red Night"--and asked how it applies to William Burroughs in '82.

He dismisses it. "It's only the statement of a character. Obviously I intend to continue!"

Absolutely.



JOHN CRAWFORD ©



THE RUNAWAY FETUS!

-by Andy Darlington

Like Rome, Sheffield is a city built on seven hills. We've just crested one of them, now bottoming down a long slow drag of urban wasteland when a huge ad lunges out of the beat-up terraces, the chickweed 'n' rubble infested vacant lots, the dilapidated shops and corrugated iron sheetings. A gleaming new Billboard announcing "ABC CAR RENTALS" with sleek chrome-gleam auto-fantasies of opulently engineered indulgence. Raised disdainfully above street level, and tantalising those less fortunate pedestrians shuffling beneath, there's a wealth of analogies there begging to be drawn on. I point the ad out to Stephen Singleton who's beside me in my "P" registered down-at-heel Viva. He grins sideways beneath his exagurated blonde quiff, the quail-boy in the Lexicon Of Love, the SEXophone player, angle-saxophone player... There's all kinds of ABC's he points out, acknowledging no portents, and failing to pick up on any of the allusions. ABC cinemas, and ABC-TV network, ABC radio cabs, an ABC record label...

Then we're into Sheffield's notorious experimental "tidal flow" traffic scheme and the incident gets filed away for future reference. We are chasing ABC's drummer and newest recruit, auburn haired blue-eyed Pophead David Palmer. He's moved into a new flat located off the city clearway and down some zig-ziggy side-streets where Rasta's watch us go by and dole-kids hang out on the corner chewing out rhythm on their bubble-gum. We slow to a stop in an aerosol graffiti'd cul-de-sac, ditch the car and head off on foot, but just for a moment I remember that ad, and it comes back to me that in Sheffield there are 7000 unemployed under-18's hunting every 26 job vacancies. Kids who go to sleep dreaming of show-biz lights, with the ABC example hung over them like some gaudy neon Billboard of success.

The Music Industry can do strange things. Tony Perrin--manager of the symbolist darkness band Artery--told me "Rock is the only business you can get into without anything other than talent, and get into a position of power. In all other businesses you need capital!"

And in ABC's hi-gloss Neutron Records HQ Sarah shows me new product, the material tokens of that success. A Fan Club membership card designed and perpetrated by Stephen, a lush fake passport ushering admirers into "Neutron's Consumer Paradise".

"It took something like nine weeks for me to get across to the people that were making it what I wanted" travelogues Stephen. "It was really complicated. They said 'It'll be REALLY expensive, and I said 'I DON'T CARE. I want it to be RIGHT!'. It doesn't matter that they all cost, like, 90p each to make. I couldn't care less if it was \$9, they just HAD to be right!"

THIS from a band who once stayed up all night hand-folding 5000 monochrome record jackets for their first DIY release! Rock is a fantasy world where such transfigurations occur. In ABC's case it took something less than twelve months. Martin Fry--golden-throat preacher of ABC--is quoted to the effect that their formula works on the principle of "co-existing inside the absurdities that are the world of Pop Music". It's a serious game, but it's also a rather absurd one.

Music is a strange and often wasteful industry. I raise the point later when we're sitting in Singleton's front room, a neat terraced house in no way distinguishable from its neighbors--but for the Gold and Silver Discs in the hearth on the wall. Together we monitor Corporation policy and Big League programming; as distinct from Neutron's manual hand-held model. I suggest that the Big Barons issue ten singles in the hope that success of one will pay for the failure of the other nine.

"Yeah. It's like slinging mud at a wall to see what will stick. It's stupid" concurs Stephen. "They ought not release records if they're not 100% committed. Phonogram (who distribute Neutron) are quite good at that though, they seem to push all the acts they've got really hard. That's why they've been fairly successful this year" But the pushing goes both ways. "When we signed to Phonogram I put ideas to them and they'd say 'you can't do that, it's impossible'. And I'd say 'but I've DONE it! It CAN'T be impossible'. But they are a good company to be with, they do bend to what we want. It was difficult at first to explain that we wanted things a certain way, and if it was slightly different we'd be really angry about it. They realize that now, that we're very meticulous. Perfectionist in a way. A strange perfection. Like with the last single you got a postcard in the 7" version and a poster in the 12". So it's really good--it's like ALL THIS AND MORE. You get goodies! Because I don't like it when people say "HOME TAPING IS KILLING MUSIC" and you have this big ugly symbol splashed on half of your album covers. And there's people in record companies walking around in T-shirts with "HOME TAPING IS KILLING MUSIC" on--and they go out for \$100 meals! THAT'S what is killing music. People wasting money."

"Product should be attractive. Like these Joni Mitchell albums I've got" he burrows behind the sofa hunting out the LP's to illustrate his point. "The packaging is just brilliant, they've got nice inner sleeves and this one's got all the lyrics and a painting. They're worth buying. If somebody got the opportunity to home tape it they'd see how good the cover was and the way it's been presented and they'd go out and buy it. But if you get something like this (a fatuously sleeved Walker Bros. compilation), it's so horrible you

unscripted spontaneous sax solo in there somewhere, just to crack the hi-gloss... But it's a first album and the Neutron philosophy realises that a lot depends on making early maximum market penetration, establishing a brand image, as soon and as emphatically as possible. Second chances don't come easy.

We further our investigations into strategic procedural corridors and operational structures.

The Industry, says Martin, "is like the Rules of Law. You've got the Police, the Monarchy, and the Judges. All inter-related. A Monopoly. In the Music Business you've got the acts, the Record Companies, and the Press. People talk of 'Selling out' or a compromise having to be made..."

"A lot of people use the Record Companies as a whipping post--for credibility" Stephen contends. "Like 'I'm an artist, and the company doesn't understand me m-a-a-a-a-n!'"

"The Companies love that. It means that artist will sell more records"

"But we found that Companies realise they've made mistakes in the past and they are looking for radical intelligent ideas--and people who can carry them out"

I withdraw in time from the conversation and fast-search my memory. First time I met ABC was the first time they played Sheffield City Hall--mid '79--then they came across as three equal aptners: Stephen, Martin, and Mark White. Since then--to present the media (and those Companies) with one image--Martin got separated out. He was chosen to be the logo, the lens, the focal point through which the ABC vision was transmitted. The ethos--be wise, synchronize. Co-exist with the absurdities--at least on the surface. The marketing of ABC was important, and had to be carried out with care.

But at the same time--when ABC call the shots, they also set up the targets. The concentration on Martin was a logical step, a necessary simplification--

wouldn't bother. You might as well have a tape of it"

I quote Dave Robinson--Stiff label supremo--to the effect that "a lot of people buy records with their eyes"

Stephen agrees. "I like this one (Madness hits collection). Nice picture on the front. All the information about the singles. And a collage of all the little Madness trinkets that are part of what Madness has been about. They've spent a lot of time on it. So you MUST own it, even if you already have all 16 tracks, you still want it just to read that information. So often it's just 'that'll do, that'll do'. There's not the care and attention that there should be. I don't know how it would affect sales if everything was done right, but it might just tip the scales."

I buy records, but when you can't decide and it's 'shall I buy it or not?' if there's something there that'll swing it. Something a bit different. I'm interested in all that side of it, all the packaging and marketing of albums. It's like the Japanese, they re-package a lot of the English albums and they do it ten times better. High quality pressings, fantastic paper, and the strip-bands down the shrink-wrap, you just can't do it in this country. It's too complicated. But in Japan it's standard..."

All that might come over as superficiality and phoney as the opulent ad boarding masking the slums, the elevation of marketing over content, if it wasn't that the micro-adjusting is carried over the music. Or is it that the artful premeditation of the music overflows into its promotion? The two aspects are indivisible from the project that is ABC.

Lexicon Of Love is no blunt instrument job. There's no throw-away or filler, there's not a lightweight "that'll do" or an unexplored unexploited phrase on the whole set. It's a concept album that's almost TOO satin finish, TOO perfectly executed. It'd be nice to get an but how does that effect the rest of the group cohesion when every time the BBC phone up for a TV chat-show, it's Martin they want?

Stephen dismisses the point. "We knew that would happen. Initially it does with every group. But they're opening out a bit now. You see, maybe the media think Martin is the leader of the band, but in other ways people might think I'm the leader. If I'm working with a record sleeve designer then he thinks I'm in charge. Somebody else will think Mark is the leader for another reason. They'll whisper in your ear to tell you 'looks like it's suppose to be Martin Fry--but I REALLY know. David Palmer is the leader. HE'S the man to see!' Everybody has their own role. We work as a group, but if a person likes doing one particular thing then they naturally lend themselves to doing that. Mark likes looking through contracts, so with documents and stuff we go 'leave it to Mark, leave it to Mark'. And I'm most interested in artwork. I'll sweat over designs..."

Does that division of labour carry over into the studio? How do four individuals work together?

"I don't know. Sometimes we argue, other times things just fall into place automatically--probably due to an argument we had a year ago about a similar point. Someone told me a camel is a compromise of four people trying to design the perfect racehorse. That can sometimes be true in a sense, but we are right strong people. We don't compromise easily. It's not a democracy in the sense that if three outvote one then that's what we do. If the one person is really strong about what they want then they usually get their way. If that person feels strong enough he can outvote the other three. That happens quite a lot. It is a strange sort of democracy"

But, of course, the success resulting from four-wise recording percolates on down four ways. And sometimes more ways than four! ABC eliminate (with extreme



ABC: A Strange Democracy

- by Andy Darlington

prejudice) the pervasive greyness that is Thatcherite UK. Martin Fry--the sunshine of his smile on a thousand bedroom walls--opens up many doors to moving pictures of action, excitement, and LOOT! And inevitably bootlegged memorabilia is already big business, its appearance producing by turn, anger, and fascination. "I buy them, know them, love them" concedes Stephen. "I buy everything, every horrible thing about us. I like it when they come out--I'm angry--but I like it as well. It's something you can't help in a way, but I'm going to collect everything."

Earlier Martin had free-associated HIS ideas on merchandising spin-offs, its crassness, and its incidental advantages. "We've heard about bands who say 'we are going to popularize contemporary artists'. I saw a picture of Chris Stein of Blondie, just lying on a bed with a Man Ray T-shirt on. He's popularizing contemporary artists because kids are gonna say 'Man Ray?', and check that out. That's going to do more than Bowie's

'crafted thief' approach. He popularizes things, only he doesn't even read the books, he just quotes the titles..."

Just reads the reviews in "SUNDAY TIMES" I suggest? He agrees, and sends up the whole attitude effectively. "Somebody asks 'have you seen the 'Tin Drum' yet, and I say 'no, but I've read all the reviews, I've got the belts, I've got the T-shirts, I've got the pillow cases...' He winds down with the obligatory disclaimer, "no, I'm not that sick. But we tend to work with those ideas. Rock 'n' Roll is like that!"

Stephen bends over his Sanyo Rack-system MusicCentre and cues up the "Overture" obverse-side of their latest hit. Then sits back in an armchair as conveyor belt orchestration pours syrup-thick, a soporific seamless tapestry of phrases and motifs from the album pulped down into prefabricated Mantovani kitsch. It comes as a hi-pressure compendium of '82. The year of ABC.

He travelogues that year. Lists

"Tears Are Not Enough" "not as good sounding as it should have" as the low point of his career. "What happened with that first single was, we weren't pleased with the end result, it wasn't what we'd expected to get out of going into a studio and recording." A detailed probability study led to a fresh personnel realignment for its follow-up. David Palmer was drafted into the stickman chair following a three-year stint with Jazz-Funk band Hot Quisine, a career that had included an American Disco hit and a Biddu-produced Top 50 UK chart entry with his own composition "Skunking".

Then there was Trevor Horn. "He's not really a producer, more sort of artist/producer. He writes his own songs and everything. So when we met him it turned out to be a good relationship. It was the right time in our and his development."

Does Trevor suggest production ideas?

"We sat down and played him the songs, and we discussed it. He listened from an artist side, as well as the producers side. We played him the songs and said how we wanted them to be. We wanted EACH song to be epic and powerful. We wanted things to be extreme, and he's sort of an extreme person, as meticulous as we are about getting things to sound exactly as we want them to sound. There was never a time when anybody said 'that'll do'. It was always 'we'll do it again, and we've got to get it a bit better'. We did things like mix tracks three times and say 'this is the one'. Trevor would listen to it a couple of days later and say 'we've got to do this track again'. He was able to make decisions that we would probably have made later on. We'd get engrossed with it we'd think it sounded right, but he was involved--and also sufficiently detached. HE KNEW whether it WOULD sound right or

not. It was a very intense album to make."

Pause. Stephen gets up and I glance across the rows of albums at the bookshelves beyond. There's the thick black "Dada-Art and Anti-Art" by Hans Richter with its selections on Man Ray. There's Dorothy Parker's fictionalised biography of Jazz suicide Bix Beiderbecke with its line about "a sucker for syncopation" that got sucked into the "Alphabet Soup." There's some Pop biographies; Tremlet's scissors and paste jobs on early 70's glitter-gods. Scaduto's "Jagger" and "Bob Dylan." Poet Jeff Nuttall's apocalyptic "Bomb Culture".

Perhaps now's the time to shove the tacky question of THOSE lines on the "Lexicon Of Love?"

"There's lots of different lines and reference points from things that have gone by" acknowledges Stephen. Quotations from the text-book classic of Pop, infiltrated into ABC guise. Smokey Robinson's "Second That Emotion" Bob Dylan's "gravity fails and negativity don't pull you through!" So what's the thinking behind it? A 'popularization of contemporary artists' like a name on a T-shirt? "It's just putting something back in, just tiny references" he fences. "Little tributes. There's quite a few of them knocking around. Martin tells about them. He'll play me some old Temptations LP and say 'listen to this next line'. He's taken something out of a line but swapped it all around, changed the meaning so it's a completely new thing. But it's odd, the papers pick up on those things. People write in--'Dear NME, guess what I spot!'"

I'd surmise it's like adding a game element? "Mix and match/and melt in my mouth! Any familiarity with ABC's writing shows that it's rich enough not to have to resort to plagiarism. "We don't do it because we can't think of our own lyrics or anything like that" he parries. It's just interesting to put things in a different perspective, just take elements from the past. There's a whole new generation who won't be familiar with those

elements, but once its pointed out they'll probably ask their big brother if they can listen to it. Track it down to source. But also it's like John Lennon said--he just pulls things out of the air. And we don't know where a lot of what we do comes from. We don't sit down and coldly calculate phrases. We don't know how we arrive at certain phrases, but just occasionally we might think 'hey, I'm sure that's like something I've listened to in the dark distant past!'"

The wall of Sheffield City Hall carry the scars of World War II shrapnel deep-embedded in its west wall, which Jobs-worths will point out with something approaching pride. This night, ABC--in different tempo continuum--leave their own mark on its municipal grandeur. Outside as the sell-out crowds con-verge, the number, and the vociferous energy of ticket touts and bootleg merchandisers indicate that the spirit of free enterprise is far from dead in this allegedly socialist republic. Yet there's a marked absence of weirdness about the clientele they're assailing, those who queue in orderly lines to show their pink tickets, those who clutch the lavish World Tour brochures and wear Martin Fry badges on their lapels. Inside, the buzz subsides as the largely tribeless/trendless devotees locate their seats. Above them Holst's "Planet Suite" sequesters into a brief set by Manchester's Carmel, and further impressions separate out. The girl singer apparently enjoys the personal stamp of Martin Fry patronage, so her torchy delivery of standards like the Miracles "Tracks of My Tears" and Anne Peeble's "I Can't Stand the Rain" bears some scrutiny. Emoted in slow smouldering red light they're melodically de-structured to the bone, then rebuilt according to oblique and fascinating logics. The freedom provided by the razored back-up of only congas and deep double bass allows each line to become a 22-carat



ABC (cont.)

flight of inventive fantasy.

Another fistful of cryptic clues get reshuffled as the "Overture" is unveiled in ice-blue light served up by a six-piece typing pool of girl violinists who extend the mood into "Show Me," the fade-in track on the "Lexicon." And ABC are THERE in their matching black glitter jackets and shiny black patent leather slip-on shoes, vocals blended at first near-inaudible until the mixing desk finds its balance, and crests into a 12" version of "Tears Are Not Enough" with a long central drum solo that shows how remarkably good David Palmer is.

There's a lot put in, if slightly more edgy reproduction of the album's syrupy lushness—but sometimes the greatest effect can depend on what is left out. And doubts to this effect are beginning to gnaw just about where the lights go down and the stage gets cleared like it's a bomb-scare, leaving just Fry and keyboardist David Clayton to infiltrate 'a quiet song'. They bring the mood clear round to a night-club setting armed with Sinatra's "I Wish I Were In Love Again" (which Martin later informs me is from Rogers & Hart's catalogue). He croons it basically straight with few frills, an approach that highlights the limitations of his abilities as interpreter of other peoples material. He's more at home, and shows greater vocal maturity on "Mantrap" with bluesy Lounge Lizard piano and muted trumpet coloration.

Part two opens with a costume change, and it's time for the gold lame suits—gaudy as a billboard—the band trooping back onstage to "All Of My Heart." The strings 'put a little culture into my bohemian lifestyle' quoth Fry. So whoever heard of gold lame bohemians? And when Stephen plays extrovert to the front row of the audience with an intimacy it serves to emphasise Martin's essential aloofness, and self-distancing from such populist techniques. Sometimes he seems uneasy with the front-man role, his movements mannered. But playing

"home turf" can be both personally gratifying, and also a scary trial by ordeal. "After this" confides Mark ap- pres the show, "everything else is a wind-down!"

An earlier polite management request to stay seated and not obstruct sight-lines gets squashed as Fry urges the largely passive assembly to dance, there's an immediate unseating and a migratory surge to cram in around the footlights. There's isolated pockets of dance but the majority seem to regard this as spectator sport, and ABC as for looking and not dancing to. This despite a blistering "4-ever 2-gether" climaxing in the self-congratulatory "Alphabet Soup", one of their first-but still their most exciting live piece. A tip of the hat back in the direction of Brit-Funk with Martin's reserve unwinding into full frontal assault, leaping, dancing, and milking each ounce of power from the song. The inevitable encore of "Poison Arrow" and a near-perfect reprise of "Look Of Love" liquidates all quibbles and qualifications, proving exactly how good ABC can be when all elements come together and cook super-hot.

Sheffield streets are rain-drenched patent-leather black. In the Mayfair suite of an expensive out-of-town Casino ABC celebrate with friends, relatives, and liggers. It comes to me that despite detailed sleuthing on the theory of ABC, and observation of the machine in motion, the tale still bears scrutinizing, and still reveals no exact answers.

But it's been fun reaching that inconclusive conclusion. I've just witnessed probably the most UNUSUAL act I've seen all year. Not unusual in the exhausted Rock cliché sense of transvestite flirtations, et al.; but unusual in its reliance on clean intelligence. They've opened out beyond the tired restrictions and taken a show-biz road that leads from the music centre in your living room, all the way to the Las Vegas consumer paradise. They entertain;

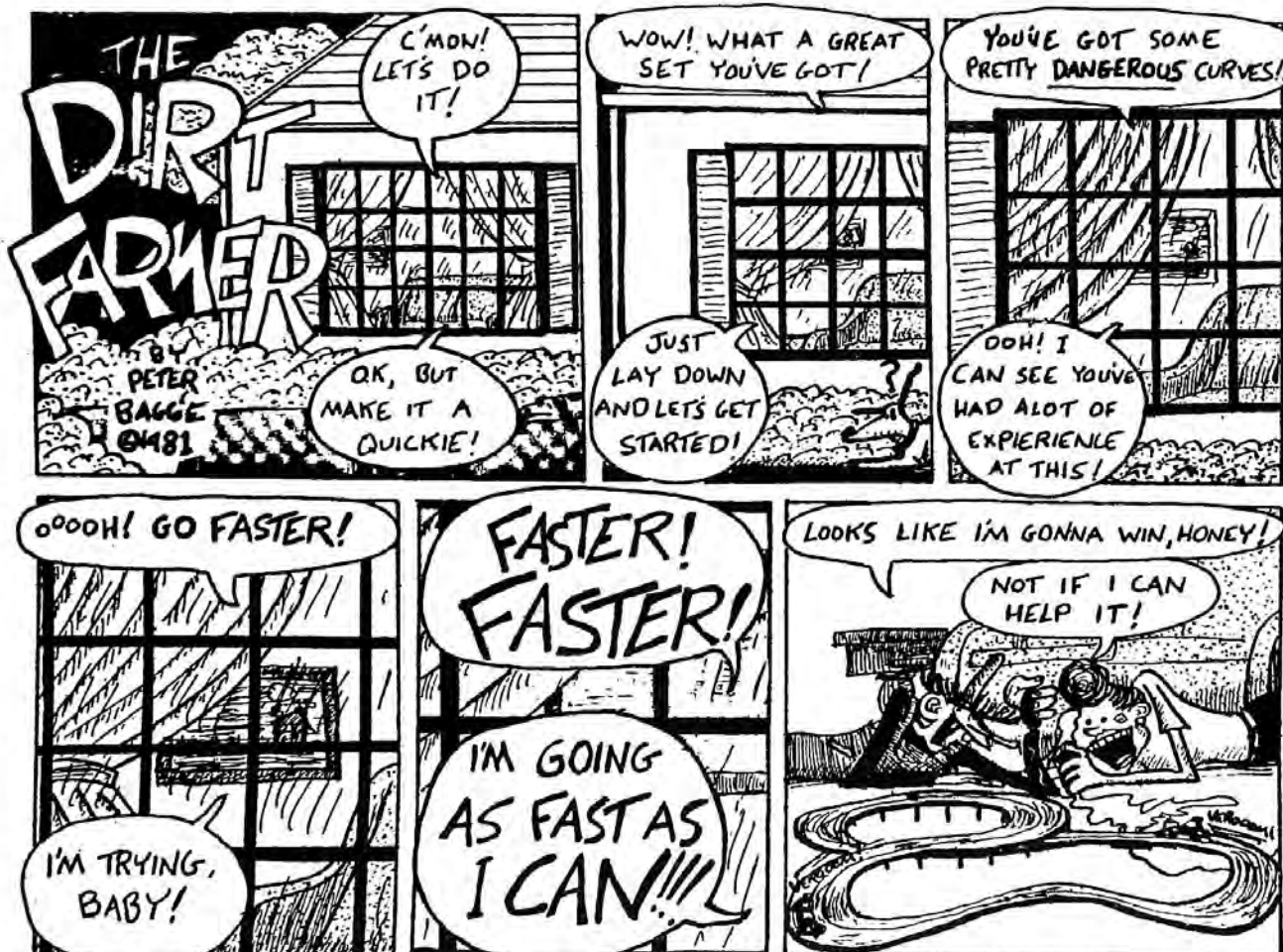


ABC

the spectacle, the gold lame, the string section, all conspire to that one end. Back in '79, after THAT City Hall gig, I'd asked Martin Fry how he related to—and if he considered he was still working within—the Rock genre. His reply was an emphatic YES. Perhaps now—in light of the Holst's and the Roger's and Hart's—he'd amplify that point of view? I don't know but I'd like to find out.

I'll probably save that question for next year...

-7 mins



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-by Stevie Mercy

As the old cliché goes, there are two sides to every coin. When discussing country music we find that the old adage holds very true indeed. On one side of the C&W coin we find lush strings, frustrating overproduction, garish rhinestone suits and all that laughable cornball hick shtick. But, flip the coin over and you'll find songs of hard times, good times and the whole spectrum of human emotion, a simple music as chronicled by such greats as Hank Williams (the Godfather of C&W), Johnny Cash, and the Merle's (Haggard and Travis). Stirring roots music, a pure American music sometimes called "white man's blues." In this second category we find Rank and File. R&F are composed of Tony and Chip Kinman (ex of the Dils that seminal punk band, creators of classics like "I Hate The Rich" and "Class War"), Alejandro Escovedo (ex-Nuns) and Texan Slim Evans.

Rank and File have that stripped down sound, and believe me they are classic "no bullshit" country. Also discard that "Punk Country" tag, which is just an easy label that just doesn't hold the juice. In a recent appearance at Filly's the quartet was in peak form reproducing tunes from their excellent debut album *Sundown*. and several new selections such as "Hot Wind." Although I find the album excellent live the band was even hotter: T. Kinman's bass puts out a melodic dancing line and his Cashian vocals bob and weave with Chip's twangy tenor. Slim Evans has the beat down to a science--a driving one-two that powers the stark, jaunty guitar work of C. Kinman and Al Escovedo. It's hard to pick a standout, but the "Conductor Wore Black" (a great train bound for hell number) and "Coyote" (about the plight of smuggled illegal aliens) seem to be my faves. Oh yeah, in our never ending search for new dances, we came up with this sort of country-square-slam dance which was neat, but we had to stop when we kept crashing into tables and receiving "if looks could kill" looks from humorless spectators. Obviously Rank and File are highly recommended. If you like country music pick up *Sundown* and catch them next time they roll around. After soundcheck in the lovely Filly's dressing room we pulled up crates and chatted with the brothers Kinman.

TK: Nuclear disaster. It doesn't say so strictly in the song but you don't have to in these kinds of things. I kind of take poetic license when I write.

TI: It's like the first slower tempo song I've heard from you.

CK: Well it's sort of like in the same groove as "Sundown". The real stripped down country sound. Not so many jangly chords.

TI: What country bands were a primary influence on Rank and File?

TK: Waylon Jennings and Johnny Cash. There were many more, we listened to all sorts of stuff. But I think a good way to look at us is Waylon Jennings and Johnny Cash when they had that real stripped down kind of sound. Their sounds were layered but they were like thin, nothing lush or overproduced. Real rhythmic.

TI: Kind of like "Live At San Quentin"?

TK: Yeah. I kind of like that.

TI: You're hitting more of a rock market, the way the album is being promoted. How is the country market accepting you?

TK: They accept us well when they hear us. Like when we're booked to open for some country performer or when we play some place like this that has a real variety to offer. We just played in one place where they opening band was the Big Boys, also from Texas. When we play Austin, we draw a very varied type of audience. Actually, the first place that booked us was a country club. Now, with the record out, partly because it's on Slash and partly because of our past and the reputation that we'd developed we are playing a lot of new wave or rock clubs. The best show we did was in the Lone Star in New York. I expect that if the album was offered to the country market for radio play there's some stuff that'd go over real well.

TI: Has Slash offered it to them yet?

TK: Not yet.

TI: What instigated you to move to Austin?

TK: We'd been through Austin before (the Dils were originally based in San Francisco--ED.). The Dils had played there several times. It's really a nice town and it seemed a good place to learn country music. It's easy to learn there because there's so much of it and you could see it virtually every night of the week. That's all we did. We went there to learn what we're doing now, just to be in it...be in the middle of it and see it done well.

TI: Are you afraid of being typecast like the Eagles or Poco?

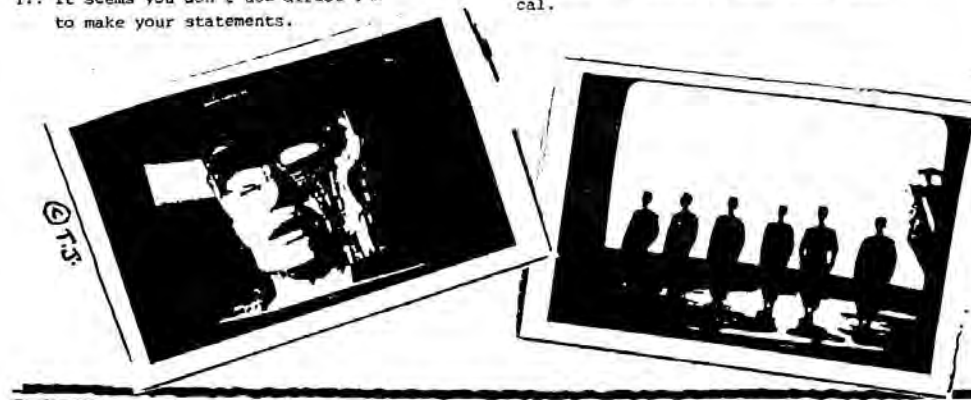
TK: Only by people to whom that is their background. People in LA seem to compare us to Gram Parsons...the Burrito Bros. even though we never listen to that kind of stuff. Lots of straight country people relate us to Johnny Cash.

CK: They do that because of Tony's voice is along the same lines as Cash's timbre.

TI: What's "Coyote" about?

TK: Well a coyote is a smuggler of illegal aliens who are known for doing nefarious things. Things like strand people in the middle of the desert, make sure that guys are locked up while they rape the women. And all the while they get paid their blackmail money. It's sort of like a little dramatic situation.

TI: It seems you don't use direct in to make your statements.



Rank & File

-Mike Yonkauskas



TK: Yeah, I think that's a much more... well there's a time to say things direct and there's not a time. I don't care as long as they both accomplish the same things. From the time I first started writing songs like "I Hate The Rich" it was something I wanted to do. It's like the first song you asked about--"Hot Wind"--a lot of imagery from that is drawn from the Bible. Biblical descriptions of the Holocausts that they said did happen and will happen. I do that because Biblical imagery is such a striking thing.

TI: You're talking about American culture?

TK: Well any Christian culture in general. I choose allegory instead of ranting and chanting in general.

TI: Do you consider yourselves a political band?

TK: When we choose to, we are.

TI: What are your politics?

TK: I've learned my lesson as far as that goes, I wouldn't say. Anybody who already agrees with us will go "Yay!" and those aren't necessarily the people I want to talk to. I want to talk to people who don't agree. Those who don't stand up. Those are the type of people that as soon as they read something go "oh those guys are assholes" and then shut up.

TI: So you prefer to keep your politics to your songs?

TK: No. We all have...we play quite a lot and then we go home and wake up the next day and be ourselves. We all do different things. Give money to different causes, write about whatever. Do whatever may involve being termed political.

TI: Any commentary on Anarchy?

TK: OK, OK...this is what I'll say about Anarchy. If anybody is really interested in it, and I think hardly anybody knows about it, read any objective description of Barcelona during the Spanish Civil War...when it had its anarchist period. Read George Orwell's description in "Almost to Catalonia" about anarchy in Barcelona in 1936 and that's exactly my opinion of anarchy. If people don't want to hunt it up and read it...then they'll never know. The term is getting so messed up and botched by people who don't even realize what they are talking about. talking about. Like you read half a dozen hardcore fanzines on the West Coast and whenever they start getting into that the punks just start going crazy and biting their tongues and speaking babel. They don't even know what they're talking about, they start hyphenating it, qualifying it, adjectivating it until they lose all meaning to it. They take it down to where they're saying "I want to drink beer past closing time, buy my first beer when I'm 14".

TI: So getting back to the band itself, have you played any support slots for major country artists?

CK: No, but I'd like to play with Hank Jr., Waylon or someone like that. Some country artist that's a little bit out there, someone worthwhile.

TI: It sounds like you want to get away from Nashville and more...

TK: No, further away from the perm and beard crew.

TI: Well, c'mon you guys are out to play the Opry, aren't you?

CK: Oh yeah. But what I mean is we're not trying to be the Sex Pistols of country. We're not out to piss them off. We're just trying to make our star.

TI: Have you dealt with many people in the business end of country?

CK: Just a little. We've talked to some producers, people who we respect. Nothing has come out of them. We've talked to some critics. Lots of country fans in Texas, because the word's getting around about us down there. But that's a real hard market to crack. Especially compared to the New Wave or Punk market.

TK: But you last much longer which we would enjoy.

CK: Right. But we helped establish the punk market so for us that's no sweat. Like, we've been around for a while, but nothing compared to these guys.

TI: Have you tried playing the country circuit?

CK: Well most of those places have a totally different format. For one thing they usually have 3 or 4 sets, which could include the entire history of their repertoire to the latest country hits. You see, we're playing clubs like this (indicating Filly's). Next summer we're hopefully going to play country fairs and rodeos. That's a real bread making circuit. What we're playing now are not real country clubs. We did play the Lone Star, but I'm not so sure how country that is.

TI: I've read in your bio that you grew up on country, your father's music. It seems that when you started the Dils that was the music of your adolescence and now you've gone back to the music of your childhood.

TK: Which is really the case.

CK: We went right back to the womb!

TI: Which didn't tell me where you're from.

TK: Yeah, but I'll tell you. My folks are from the south. My father was from Kentucky and my mother from the Carolinas. My parents toted country around with them. They're pretty dyed in the wool people, they're not hillbillies or anything like that, just pretty normal southern people. But as far as credentials go, we were very much a southern type family, though I don't know how important that is.

TI: Right. You could have come from anywhere as far as I knew.

CK: Right. People who listen to country music are everywhere. Generally they do live in the country, that's why they call it that. Being from the south or southwest, I don't know how important that is or if that should be that important either. The first country star was from New York, he was an opera singer in the 1800s. He had nothing to do with real country.



THE MIRACLE OF ZIPPYVISION

Bill Griffith

ROOM SERVICE? MORE COOL WHIP, PLEASE

At 7 p.m. on a Thursday evening your intrepid correspondent approaches the sign-in desk at the Chateau Marmont and enquires after Bill Griffith. I have been given to understand that he is occupying the bungalow where John Belushi "bought the farm," as that unfortunate expression goes, and I must admit that in San Francisco. Furthermore, he realized, "if I get thirty-two pages of strips that I've published in the *East Village Other*, I can put them in a comic book and maybe it will get printed." This led to a collaboration with another New York underground cartoonist, Jay Kinney, and the birth of a comic strip saluting sappy romance comics. The name: *Young Lust*, and it was slated to go down in history as one of the underground-comic classics of all time, but when Griffith attempted to sell it in Berkeley, every publisher of underground comics he took it to said no dice. "Finally I went to one of the true black sheep of the underground publishing scene, Company and Sons, which only lasted a couple of years. Rip Off Press had said [*Young Lust*] didn't have socially redeeming qualities. That wasn't the reason, but they thought that if it got busted, they couldn't defend it on those grounds. Last Case rejected it because it wasn't 'positive' enough; they were looking for something like *Young Lust* that was positive. But that was not a word I related to."

When Griffith took up permanent residence in the San Francisco area in 1971, he also had an earlier, underground-comic book, *Tales of Toad #1*, to his credit. The chief character in *Tales of Toad* was a misanthropic amphibian, Mr. (The) Toad, "a mean, hostile bad guy, albeit charming—which might say something about my underlying feelings about everything," Griffith admits. Deciding that Mr. Toad needed a sidekick to soften his sometimes unsettling misanthropy, Griffith pulled out a character he had drawn in an earlier strip, a pinhead who had been named Danny but who was now renamed "Zippy." "The name 'Zippy' came from the original pinhead that P. T. Barnum displayed in the 1860s, named Zip The What-Is-It—with the 'Zip' just referring to nothing," explains Griffith. "Zippy was Mr. Toad's opposite in every way. Mr. Toad was vengeful and egocentric, and Zippy was innocent and had no ego, with no idea of how one consequence follows another. Mr. Toad was always plotting something; Zippy was always just reacting to what was going on around him. They were a good team, but maybe because of something growing in me, Zippy took over from Mr. Toad."

WHAT IS THE SOUND OF ONE PINHEAD RINGING ALL BELLS AT ONCE?

Today, Zippy has not only taken over from Mr. Toad, but he has also captured the hearts of a growing cult of readers at home and abroad. (In some cases, he has captured some other organs as well.) According to Griffith, who seems to collect such data, a lady tattooist in Phoenix specializes in adorning various body parts with the image of everyone's favorite pinhead. The Zippy strips have been translated into a number of foreign languages, including Japanese and Finnish, and, as a result of feverish Euro-Zippmania, toward the end of the year 2001 Press of Hamburg, Germany, will publish *Madmen and Wise Guys*, an ambitious 196-page bilingual collection representing almost every aspect of Griffith's work. Griffith is delighted that 2001 will thoughtfully include a glossary of American terms, enabling mystified Germans and other European readers to understand some of the more profound subtleties of American life addressed in the book, such as exactly what a Ding Dong is.

Furthermore, as if all this weren't enough, a major record company has expressed an interest in releasing an album of Zippy music. Griffith will write the lyrics for the songs on the proposed record, and the music will be supplied by a group of musicians who, he says, are ideal for this particular project. Their musical approach combines early saxophone rock with atonal jazz, switching styles every few seconds. The working title for this wax masterpiece-to-be? "Chubby Checker Owns My Building!"

Why, I asked Griffith, who seems as pleased about all this as a kid on Christmas morning, is his wayward and illogical offspring such a hit with so many people? "People are bombarded with more than they can absorb," he theorizes. "And Zippy is a symptom of media overload. Zippy becomes the way that you can alleviate the backlog up that's happening inside you when you're overloaded with too much information. He makes nonsense out of it—which is how you're perceiving it to begin with, but you don't necessarily articulate it that way. It just bottles up inside you and it makes you unhappy, so you drink or something. Zippy is a release valve for a lot of that stuff."

Griffith emphasizes that the delights of Zippydom only come to those who approach the pinhead themselves. In this case, not only does Mohammed not go to the mountain, but Mohammed is so busy imagining huge bugs careening into the walls of Fluffo while listening to "The Best of the Righteous Brothers" that he doesn't even care if there is a mountain. "You have to go to Zippy; he doesn't come to you," says Griffith with a weary look that seems to indicate many hours of being obliged to jump through mylar hoops by his unpredictable, pointy-headed buddy. "Well, he does come to you," he adds after thinking a second, "but you might not want him to. You might want him to go away for a few minutes until you get used to him. This phenomenon happens to me all the time, where people will tell me, 'When I first saw Zippy, I thought, hey, I can't read this stuff. Who is this guy? What's he talking about? I can't understand one thing about what he's saying.' But something in them makes them go back to it. Maybe they like his costume, so they keep reading. Zippy is consistently inconsistent, and that gives you a way into him. But like I said, a lot of people come up to me and say that Zippy grew on them. I look around and see where he grew. But they made an effort to go to him, or they opened up a little part of themselves and let him come in, which is real different from the usual experience you have with a cartoon character or a comic where it's designed to ring familiar bells. Zippy is not ringing familiar bells."

"But he seems to be such an American archetype," I suggest.

"Well, he's ringing all the bells at once. Zippy can not only be a release valve, he can demonstrate the absurdity of some situation or other. Like when Zippy drinks two quarts of Red Dye No. 2 and says, 'yum yum,' there's something else going on there. It's like, check out the Red Dye No. 2 in the food that you're eating. Zippy is surreal, but always in the context of the real world. That's something I always make sure I'm doing. Once in a while I'll do a strip where you're inside Zippy's head, but I can only do that when I've done ten strips where he's in the real world, so I can space the ones out where you're inside his head. Because if I did that all the time, I'd be talking to an audience of eight people, or they'd all be in a nuthouse somewhere."

Furthermore, Griffith explains, "Zippy is in some degree innocent, so he can get involved in any situation. When I felt like making comments on the presidential race, like I did in 1980, I made Zippy a candidate for the presidency. "And, as you pointed out, he got elected," I say. "Yeah, he got elected. He's just got a different hairstyle, and he gave Nancy Reagan the opportunity to redecorate the White House without taking it on himself completely. Zippy's favorite color is red, too."

"I think what's so depressing about living at this point in history is the realization that Zippy is indeed in the Oval Office," I observe bitterly.

"Not entirely," says Griffith. "Zippy would be much more benevolent. He might make decisions in the same way, but they'd be different decisions. They'd have different results, but they'd be made in a similar fashion."

PINHEADS I HAVE KNOWN

Lest any supporters of microcephalics' rights fail to get the point about Zippy, let it be said up front that Griffith's approach to the entire squeamish issue of the mentally deficient is a thoroughly compassionate one. Not only that, but the man has done his homework. "I've met a couple of pinheads," he says. "microcephalics—which does not mean 'small penis.' That had an influence, of course. I met a pinhead once through a friend of mine who drove a cab in a small town in Connecticut, picking people up at the train, or picking people up at home and driving them to someplace they worked locally. One of his jobs was to pick up a guy named Dooley, and Dooley was a pinhead. Dooley worked in a plastic-bag factory doing an assembly-line job, which he loved. "For years in our apartment building in San Francisco we've had a gardener who is not a pinhead but who has some brain damage or is retarded. I'll look out the window and he'll be polishing a little part of the gate for three hours, or watering the same spot until it's a crater, but he's very happy to be doing it. He's living in the moment to the degree that he doesn't know about the passage of time at all. "You have to remember that pinheads are not—in the real sense of microcephalics—like your usual retarded person. They have large vocabularies, they have a hyperawareness of what's going on around them, they have an arrested-development kind of a brain. But they're not like four or five-year-olds, they're more like twenty-one-year-olds in a four- or five-year-old body." Most important, he says, "Zippy is not a pinhead per se. He's his own kind of character."

Griffith has never had any flak from any group involved with the mentally deficient. "I was on a radio show in Santa Cruz once and a woman from a mental health center called. But her angle was, 'You've made Zippy a hero, and since you've made him a spokesperson for the retarded, why don't you come down to our place and check out what it's really like, and then you can write strips that reflect that?' This woman was not too attuned to what a cartoonist is, or what comics are. But I was complimented by it." He adds proudly, "Zippy is a superhero without muscles. His muscles are all between his ears—he's a little bit muscle-bound, or brainbound."

"He's also like a lot of regular people," I suggest.

"That's probably another reason people like him, or it explains some of his popularity. He's not that removed from you or me."

ARS LONGA, PRETII ZIP

Griffith admits without evasion or embarrassment that the merchandizing of his pinhead protégé is important to him. "I like to do items," he says, a glazed patina quickly appearing over his previously clear blue eyes and his hands beginning to shake with excitement. *Step right up, ladies and gentlemen, and see the gen-u-uine All-American Pinhead in his fur-lined fallout shelter. Now appearing on T-shirts, buttons, rubber stamps, and various and sundry other items, the character is available through Last Gasp's Zippy paraphernalia catalogue, which at one dollar per is itself a good strong seller.*

"As a kid I was fascinated with little Disney toys and spin-offs from cartoon series, little key chains, T-shirts, whatever—that whole range of 'How can we squeeze as much as we can out of this product?' The objects themselves can be nice, so I try to retain as much control as possible over the way they're done. At the ABA convention somebody came up to me and wanted to do Zippy-on-a-stick, very realistic, with a body hanging down from the stick and a rubber head. You'd squeeze the head and it would whistle. If it's done well as an object—

"Are those objects we're talking about done for art or for royalties?"

"Both," Griffith replies. "If it weren't for all the merchandizing I've done, my income from Zippy would be—well, I don't know the breakdown of what the products are compared to the comics, but I know the products are substantial. The T-shirts are big, they sell real well, and you can make more out of a T-shirt than you can out of a book. There's always a reason to do another T-shirt."

TOILING IN THE BUNGALOW OF DEATH?

At this point, Griffith's wife Diane Noonin comes out and takes a seat in the living room's other armchair. A pleasant, bespectacled brunette in a sweater with a Fifties Moderne poodle pin perched on one shoulder, Noonin is also a cartoonist and contributor to underground comics. (Her best-known character is probably DiDi Glitz, an archetypal suburban lady with a beehive hairdo, pointy glasses, tattered pants, and an unreasoning passion for interior decoration—sort of a "Valley Girl" curdled into middle age.)

Noonin, I soon discover, has for the past two weeks been collaborating with Griffith in the rewriting of a comedy screenplay, the plucky duo toiling valiantly every day from 9 in the morning until 6 at night. And now the issue of John Belushi's death bungalow once again raises its spectral and eerie head, for Noonin and Griffith explain that until only a few hours ago they had been tenants in one of the hotel's spacious cottages, but that the persistent cacophony of nearby construction workers had caused them to request quieter quarters. As a result, they were given the most isolated bungalow in the complex, located on Marmont Lane. "It was sort of musty, like it hadn't been rented in a long time," says Noonin in a hushed voice. "We were thinking that maybe it was—that it was—the one where John Belushi—"

"Now we don't know that for sure," cautions Griffith. (As it turns out, the cottage in dispute was indeed the scene of John Belushi's last moments—a fact that, when they discovered it, made Griffith and Noonin doubly glad they had evacuated the bungalow of death. As Griffith explains, "We didn't get much writing done there.")



'People are bombarded with more than they can absorb. Zippy is a symptom of media overload.'



Despite the fact that Griffith and Noonin have enjoyed working here, a dark cloud is nevertheless currently obscuring Griffith's Hollywood horizon. The story is, like so many other Hollywood nightmares, thoroughly Byzantine. Not too long ago the front page of the *Hollywood Reporter* featured a hair-raising story describing how the Robert Stigwood Organization and a young hotshot film maker had, in cold blood, stolen the title and concept of Griffith's *Young Lust* and had turned it into a movie of the same name. According to the story, Griffith, in turn, was suing RSO for misappropriating his title and all its associations.

Griffith explains that when he first saw announcements that *Young Lust*, the movie, was in the development stage, which was the first he'd ever heard of it, he contacted the Stigwood people and asked them to pay him for use of his title or at least to allow him to look over the finished script. But he got no response from them, he says, and when he subsequently heard that the film had been sold on the basis of the title alone, he didn't feel much better. You can't copyright a title, he points out, but his case relies on the basic assumption that a title has associations built into it. "[Stigwood has] all these lawyers on retainer. We're dealing with a subgroup of insurance companies at this point," Griffith complains. "They're working on an insurance deductible, and [when they get to the point where that deductible runs out] they'll probably settle. But they probably will have spent more money defending it than they would have had to give me to begin with."

PATAPHYSICS 101, PROFESSOR GRIFF PRESIDING

If Griffith has a hero, or an antihero, it is probably Alfred Jarry, the brilliant, often exasperating nineteenth-century French writer and madman who has been called the grandfather of Dadaism. Griffith has sometimes used Jarry as a character in various comic strips (he contributed a two-page illustrated mini biography of Jarry to *Raw #4*, for instance), but in my opinion Griffith's best employment of the diminutive surrealist is in *Zippy Stories*.

With his characteristic commingling of sublime and ridiculous elements, Griffith manages to have Jarry join Zippy and Griffith himself in a videogame arcade. Watching rows of zombie-like youths drooling helplessly over the bleeping, pulsating machines, Jarry is horrified. "Hell will be like this," he mutters. Just then Jarry and Griffith discover that Zippy has turned his (and Griffith's) entire

Westwood Marquis. Isn't that where people like the Rolling Stones stay?"

He points down at a large billboard for the movie *Wrong Is Right*, with a much larger-than-life Sean Connery standing in front of an exploding nuclear bomb, all of which is just barely visible through a dense thicket of trees. "When we were in The Bungalow," he says, "that billboard was much closer—you'd look out the window and it really looked like it was the end of the world or something." He smiles a guilty smile. "I wanted to get a ladder and climb up there and paint over Sean Connery and paint in the real guy."

The real guy being, of course, our beloved President. Also known as Zippy.

THE END—OR, MORE APPROPRIATELY, THE POINT

After enduring God knows how many hours of my interrogation with good-natured fortitude, Griffith mentions almost apologetically that he's supposed to go to dinner with somebody, so I haul out the question I've been saving for last. I ask him to comment on the increasing trend toward misanthropy and anti-humanism in popular culture, especially in the new breed of cartoonists that seems to be springing up, intent on savaging human relationships in the pursuit of satirical comment. Griffith, I observe, addresses these selfsame human foibles in his work, but he doesn't go after his targets with a sledgehammer; somehow he manages to be more forgiving than some of his colleagues. What does he think is the underlying difference between his own outlook and that of his fellow cartoonists?

"I have those tendencies myself," he replies. "When I started, the Mr. Toad character was misanthropic tendencies personified. It's a process that I think most people go through, just as eras of human history go through it. When I start developing a character, it seems like a conscious process where I invent the character and the character comes alive over a period of years while I'm working on him. The character becomes like a roommate, and you don't live with someone unless you feel affectionate toward them, no matter who they are, even if they're totally different from yourself. If you don't get affectionate toward a character, you stop doing them. Like I have some affection for Mr. Toad, I suppose, but I'm basically afraid of him at this point and so I avoid him, just as you would avoid a person you were afraid of in life. Zippy or Claude Funston (the laconic stud from *Young Lust*) or some of 'The Griffith Observers' characters that I do, I basically like. I think you were right when you said 'forgiving.' They're human, and they have flaws. They have good qualities and bad, they're boring sometimes and sometimes they're fascinating, so you grow to like them."



"There's a big difference between cartoonists who do strips that are character-oriented and strips that are more topic-oriented. When you get characters to a certain point, they do become like real persons. I never have trouble, for example, starting a Zippy strip—I mean, I sit down at my drawing table and Zippy literally says, 'OK, put the pen down and do this.' But when you're doing strips that don't have that familiarity with a certain character, where you're not putting on a certain kind of mask or persona, what it comes down to is that if you feel—well, this sounds corny—but if you feel affection toward yourself, then you feel sort of expansive about the world. You recognize that at the heart of it, it's absurd, but 'absurd' is to say it's human. It doesn't have a logical superstructure, or if it does, it's just a construct. A cartoonist's job is to point out that the emperor has no clothes, and you can do that two ways. You can do it in a hostile way, which winds up just turning back on yourself, really, or you can do it in some way that's sympathetic to that phenomenon, just say, 'Well, this is what people have been about since they populated the planet,' and I guess that's what I do."

"Most cartoonists, if they work at it long enough, reach that point. I don't know what the process is that makes some of them not reach that point; I don't get that exactly. There are some cartoonists who are misanthropes, like S. Clay Wilson, but who take a perverse pleasure in it, to the point where they take a sensual delight in the perversity of it all, and that can transcend it and become a weird kind of affection."

"What it comes down to is tightness versus expansiveness. If you focus on one little thing and exclude all the other things, you're trapped yourself in a corner. If you try to take it all in at once, you stop being the viewer and the viewed, and you start seeing it as all one mush. Once you see it as all one mush, you can't hate it, or love it, or anything—it's just that's it, there it is. You're part of it, it's there, you're it, it's you—we're getting very Zen here."

"We seem to be getting back to beatniks somehow," I say.

"Yeah, man," Griffith agrees, snapping his fingers with protobeatnik cool. "Like, I like Ike."

■ In the heyday of underground comics, Nigey Lennon was co-author of a strip called "Suburban Angst." Her latest book is Mark Twain in California (Chronicle Books)



MINISTRY

by S. Fritz

MINISTRY

Al Jourgesson is tired. It's the end of the night and he's waiting for his equipment to come back to the hotel. His girlfriend, Athena, sits quietly on the bed beside him.

"If there's anything I had to say to anybody" he starts, "it's stay out of this business unless you intend to go through setback after setback. I know it sounds weird to hear it from a band who's been signed to a major label after not existing for even a year, but I can say that we've condensed three years in that time."

Al Jourgesson and his band, Ministry, have come a long way since their first performance on New Year's Eve '82, and they've done a lot, including being signed to a major label (Arista), having a Billboard charted single ("Cold Life" on independent Wax Trax), and they've toured, toured (two national tours in six months). They have an album prepared for release and should be out in time for the band's first anniversary. They're moving fast, Jourgesson is tired. The only thing he's not doing is stopping.

"I don't mean to be cocky" he goes on, "but we worked hard. Most bands work for a couple of weeks then take a little time off, then work again and take more time off. I just realized that the first thing you need is direction. I knew which direction I wanted to go and I already had a product before I had the band. 'Cold Life' was me and Steve (the drummer and only original member left) jamming. It was strictly studio, never meant for release. I even had management before I had the band. So that's why it happened so fast--because I thought it up before I jumped into it."

"Cold Life" was actually written two years before it's release. It was a culmination of Jourgesson's previous experience (his other bands were Immune System and Special Effects plus several years of kicking in San Francisco, though the two bands were from Chicago). Jourgesson always had leanings towards the funk direction, and he had the backbone to back it up from living in the South Side of Chicago (home of many a famous bluesman, a neighborhood he describes as "99% black").

The band itself grooves smoothly. Jourgesson on synth and vocals, two other members on synths (now including Vince Eli, ex-Furs) and Steve providing sparse, accurate rhythm. It's hook laden, heady pop.

"99% of our music is quite danceable" says Jourgesson. "But I would like to be more than just a record that the DJ just whapped on the turntable. I want people to take it home and possibly relate to it. Also I want to have musicians to be able to identify the things we do and respect it...but definitely I want the music to be dance!"

"I hate drones to be honest. I hate performing to them every night. That gives me ulcers. From night to night, if I come out with anything, even bottles being thrown at me, I'm happy. Anything is better than a motionless audience, it's the scariest thing in the world. If they're antagonistic, I can use that and feed it back to them because we take all that hostility and shove it right back down their mothering throats until they have to like it."

And the audience, at least from their two shows at the East Side, do like Ministry. They stole the show from under Romeo Void once and then packed it for their own headline night.

The material is strong as well. Slated for the hit charts next year include pop craftworks like "Work for Love" (their next single) "Same Old Madness" and "America! They all have hooks that grab, a tight, deft pop feel, and Jourgesson's clear vocals.

The new album (I've heard the rough tape) is the music of the times: crossover. Synthetics, funk, new music and pop are mixed to create a fine blend. Added to this is Jourgesson's penchant for lyrics that are easily identifiable (boy meets girl, boy loses girl, everything sucks/is great...stuff written a million times before but done without a jaundiced view) and you have immediately accessible music with the added punch of good melodies.

So the future of Ministry looks bright. And even if things fly in Jourgesson's face (and he's expecting it to), Ministry will keep on. "We've found the people accept our newer stuff more than the old" he says. "So the Ministry will keep on performing!"

This is not a hobby" he concludes. "It's a very cut-throat, serious and fucked off business...but" and the roadies come into the hotel room, so he grabs a bottle of wine and Athena "it's the only thing I want to do" And we both call it a night.

SUBTERRANEAN RECORDS

SUBTERRANEAN RECORDS (see also Singles)
ARKANSAN MAN"e p. 4 \$4p.p.
-clubfoot members instrumentaldancep
WITCH TRIALS E.P..
"Taser"EP \$4p.p.
-a nasty ep of new electronic
by dead ken. members and friends
CODE OF HONOR/SICK PLEASURE lp\$6p.p.
-two new bands share this record of
new Hard core noise and rock tunes
FACTRIX/ZEV/CAZZAZA/LIVE LP \$6p.p.
-new release of industrialdeathnoise
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-hardcore rock at its best
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and wierd rock music by youths
NERVOUS GENDER/BEZULBUS YOUTH LP \$6p.p.
-two badasspunk andelectronic band
s share this hairraising record
DANNY AND THE PARKINS SISTERS LP 4p.p.
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REDSPOTSAMPLER L.P. \$6p.p.
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YOUTH MANIFESTO TAPE MAG..... \$5.50
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- THROBBING GRISTLE
- SUN RA
- THE SUTS
- YOUNG MARBLE GIANTS
- ROBERT A. BROWN
- (Soldier of Fortune
- FACTRIX
- NO!
- CONSPIRACY THEORY GUIDE
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- SURGICAL PENIS KLUNK
- FLIPPER

FREEDOM OF AND FROM RELIGION



RELIGION

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Live!

Live!



bauhaus

BAUHAUS

Photos by Rikki Ercoli

They came, they draw, they left. Bauhaus returned to Philadelphia with an American label now behind them, their full stage show, and a big audience. It these pictures show anything, it's that Pete Murphy is probably one of the most dynamic frontpersons in new music. Pity none of the pics with the dry ice clouds developed, but Murphy's working of "Hollow Hills" with himself glowing like some radiated corpse was probably the high point of a show packed with many surprises. For further illumination, they've released a live album, Press The Eject which contains about half of the show. Check it out, and meanwhile, imagine you were there.



THE MEATMEN

-by Stevie Mercy

DATELINE: Washington D.C./9:30 Club/ March 6, 1983. A date that will live in infamy--the last performance of the-- well, what else can I call them but my idols--The Meatmen. The Meat's were hot rolling thru their classics with a venom. "Orgy Of One", "One Down Three To Go", "Crippled Children Suck" and "Blow Me Jah" complete with Tesco in dreadlock wig and smoking a fake spliff. Genius! Also a nasty cover of "Dance To The Music" with the versatile Mr. Vee blowing trumpet. And you guessed, they closed with "Meatmen Stomp" their wad blowing anthem.

And oh yeah, special guest was Lyle of Minor Threat as "Boy Lyle". The Meatmen make you uncoil a huge King Snake, a bloody viper ready to raise its angry hood and spew the pearly poo of mellow jism!

The Necros and Faith also played. The Necros were great and Faith was pretty good. If you missed it, well too bad, but don't fret Tesco will rise again.

MEATMEN!





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Reviews!

Albums



TSOL

Beneath The Shadows (Alt. Ten.)

This is not TSOL's best release for sure, it's still to be made. I've said before that this band stands for diversity. Each record they've ever released has been different from the previous one, but this time it's a greater jolt than ever before. With Beneath The Shadows TSOL have dropped all past "Hard-core" connotations and released an album that might be categorized "progressive". The music is highly melodic, softer than anything they've ever done before, and the additions of keyboards doesn't hurt either. The only flat notes hit are by vocalist Jack, his voice doesn't have the range to carry these songs and his lyrics are often lame. But the technical musicianship, as shown in the instrumental "Glass Streets" is superb. I can hear now cries of "sell-out" and "garbage" from the band's previous following, but when you get down to it, the band has maintained their standards, and if they do make money off of it, I'll be surprised. TSOL has created such an anti-punk album that IT IS a punk release.

-S. Dunhill

THE FALL

A Part of America, Therein 1981 (Rough Trade) Room To Live (Kam Era)

In *Therein* Mark Smith ends one of the songs with "That usually clears the hall!" How true, The Fall have no intentions of compromising themselves for anybody, including their audience.

But the band's raw garage sound and technical capabilities plus Mr. Smith's vocal rantings, personal mythology and no bullshit attitude (listen to "Hip Priest") then see your favorite band again... (I dare you) is what compels me to listen to this outfit. *Therein* is a good way to test whether others will also listen to this band. This live album includes some of the best material Smith has ever written, and the sound is surprisingly clean, with little flab... just lean production and direct Fall music. You can even understand Smith's heavy Manchester accent.

The new studio album, *Room To Live*, is musically some of the most challenging stuff they've done since *Dragnet*. It's also just as hard to grasp. Lyrically, Smith is still razor sharp...but I wouldn't recommend this album for the short of patience. The Fall have released another album that DEMANDS you listen to it, and have made a dense, soupy mix to insure it, but at least, as in all Fall product I've ever heard, you'll know they'll make it worth your while.

-S. Fritz

THE FALL



Stephan Spata



MUSIC FOR A NEW SOCIETY

JOHN CALE

Music For A New Society

Music For A New Society (Ze/PVC)

He opens with "Roll up the history books/Burn up the chairs/Set fire to everything/Even the air". He sings it with quiet, yet passionate, conviction; using only keyboard, guitar and subtle effects. It's paradoxical; Cale's most powerful album in his near 20 year recording history should also be his seemingly calmest. He sings of people chained by their environment and also themselves and, in the same songs, he also warns "not to take their lives in their hands, like me". *New Society* is a sad, retrospective album, and one I feel should be called great. -S. Fritz

PHEW!

Second LP

This band is from Japan, and are like WOW! Mix together electronic/noises/rock/environments in an eastern setting, with the aid of Holger Czukay and Jaki Liebrecht (Can), then produce it by Conrad Plank. Like WOW! This band has a unique sound that at times is reminiscent of Holger C, but mostly is a form of e-music alien to our Western ears. Finally fun!

-Chucko The Rockin' Robot



CABARET VOLTAIRE

Hai! (Rough Trade)

IKE YARD (Factory)

Creativity and technology are not the easiest bedfellows. When together, one always tends to be on top performing its will on the other. Now Cabaret Voltaire have been mixing it up for a long time now. Somehow, they take their industrial electronics and force it to such extremes that it ends up hypnotic. No mean feat, and good nightmare music.

Ike Yard though make a strong case for the opening statement. Their industrial music is so wrapped in its studio gimmickery that any thought, feeling or creative spark is totally lost. A truly boring album. -S. Fritz

SOUNDTRACK

Vortex (Neutral)

If you cut out half the tracks from this LP, you'd have a killer EP. Adele Bertel's "Once In A Lifetime" is a gem of blue-eyed soul, and "Black Box Disco" is some very innovative funk. But a lot of this record is useless noise and not worth noting any further.

-S. Fritz

DEAD KENNEDYS

Plastic Surgery Disaster (Alt. Ten.)

The DK's are in top form. They show the world once and for all they can play their instruments, pushing their abilities through high speed tempo changes with smooth ease. Also Biafra is writing some of his cynically best lyrics ever (Classic line off "Riot"—"Tomorrow you're homeless/Tonight it's a blast"). It's hard to review a classic, can I go home now? -S. Dunhill

RIC OCASEK

Beatitude (Geffen)

THE DARK (Ambiguous)

Ric Ocasek (if you didn't know) is the major domo of the most copied band in the world (the Cars, dildos). His first solo album holds no real surprises either. Although some tracks display a fine sense of electronics ("Jimmy Jimmy"), they all taste of Cars outtakes. This album is easily forgettable.

Ocasek's production ability what catches my attention though. He's a master. His four tracks on the Dark's debut mini-LP makes an overly smart group of art monsters sound incredible. Not to knock the talent of the band; vocalist Jace Williams has a wide, expressive pop voice and guitarist Roger Greenwald (who also shines of *Beatitude*) is a person you should keep an eye on. If anything, the Dark's main problem is that they are neither going far out enough to make any strong new music or creating strong enough pop (with the exception of "The Moron's Are Coming") for major commercial acceptance. Check out this band's NEXT release, and hope that Ocasek produces that too. -S. Fritz

The You'll Hate This Record Record

VARIOUS

You'll Hate This Record RECORD (Only Label In The World)

Sometimes you get some really weird stuff in the mail. For instance, I open this box and there's this pretty black record sleeve with fake hair glued on...um, tasty... but so what? The title I liked though.

OK, OK, so you wore out your copy of *Inna-Gadda-Da-Vida* trying to get rid of that unwanted guest who doesn't get hints. Even worse, the twit likes the record. What do you do?

There's supposed to be something on this record that will offend everybody, and *You'll Hate This Record* does that... sometimes. I mean I and my friends like G.G. Allin and the Fuck-Ups (some really gnarly hardcore if ever). So it goes.

Aside the tracks though that leave me totally neutral (Tina Peel...like who cares?), there are other cuts guaranteed to turn your bowls to water and make your ears bleed. Prime winners are Art (amateurism at its worst). Psycho-drama and The (Legendary) German Shepherds come in tied for second (electronic pretentiousness to the max). T.I.'s own art direction, the ever resourceful Furry Copch, also contributes his own doctoring of the "Quincy" TV show, but I find it a very nice song to go to sleep to (I dream very weird dreams). Guess you can't piss off all the people all the time. This record tries, maybe next time. (Write: Michael Board/75 Bleeker St./NYC 10012) -Sean Dunhill

TAV FALCO'S PANTHER BURNS Blow Your Top (Animal)

This skimpy EP (only ten minutes!) is a change from PB's first Rough Trade album. As it is on Chris Stein's Animal Records, it's well produced in a smoother style than the primitivism of the debut and features new drummer Jim Scavunos, a fixture of NYC's noisiest avant-garde. In contemporary rockabilly revivalism, their faster, wilder, spookier sound is preferable to the Stray Cats' clean, mannered music; unlike the Cats, Falco's gang wouldn't mind getting their clothes messed or their shoes muddied. As with modern rockabilly, this still is a contrived image, without cultural roots. Falco sees himself a preserver of songs and styles from the roots of rock, updating them, though rockabilly is the only form used here. Their attempt to capture the lust and taint of sin in rockabilly's hill-billy origins is admirable: the big beat, scratchy feedback, and unearthly screams along with Falco's slurred vocals and rebel yells fuel the covers of "I'm On This Rocket" and "Bertha Lou". "Fanthierman" is an anthem about prowling the swamp. "Love Is My Business" is forgettable. PB is the messy, untamed side of rockabilly, but here it is only an artifact, a reactionary stance without the vital connections to the outer world. -Kurt Brenneman

SUBHUMANS

The Day The Country Died

(Crass)

The Subhumans' singer songwriter Dick may be right when he sang on this album that Mickey Mouse is dead, but it's what he doesn't say that's important here. If this album is any indication, those of you singing death hymns for British punk better change your tune fast. This is one of the best albums I've heard in a long time. It's fast and intense enough for flag-waving hardcores with a '77 bite to it. Beside Rudimentary Peni, this is the only Crass band I've heard that knows how to play their instruments. The lyrics are angry as shit (if shit can be angry) without any of the duh...what's-my-name or let's-bash-a-copper mentality. "No More Gigs" is probably my favorite song of the moment, and all the others will probably rate as favorites as I continue to listen to this. If I was reviewing a boxing match (which I'm not, but what the hell) I'd say the Subhumans were fighters with heart who hit for the head. But since that made little sense I'll just say listen to this album and be knocked out. Fuck the analogies, it's great. -Gal Friday





NEW ORDER

Blue Monday/The Beach
(Rough Trade)

I approached New Order's latest release with hope. Their second single, "Procession", was one of the best electronic records I'd ever heard. But with every new record, the band rapidly became a top level dance band and nothing more.

So when I put on "Blue Monday" again I was confronted with THE FORMULA: mechanical rhythm, over-precise drumming and unemotional vocals singing cliched love songs... somehow I expect more from this band, especially if Africa Bambaata & Soul Sonic Force are producing it. In fact, it took me only four minutes to hit the eject on this 8-minute thing. It took me less time on the dub version on the other side (though it does sound a lot better on 33). The thing is, I'm hearing it a lot on the radio already, and I know this will be a huge dancefloor hit, but when it's on you know where you'll find me! By the bar. -S. Fritz

FLIPPER

Get Away/There Was An Old Lady...
(Subterranean)

A new year, a new single and both fit like clenched fist in glove. Flipper's new release is fast (for them), with Falcone cutting a brainscorching solo over his and the band's wall of noise rhythm. Will Shatter's lyrics also hit on the target in classic gut-level style. At least one person is aware that the future isn't going to be too easy to take. The question now stands: Are you ready for this record? (Write: 577 Valencia Dr./San Francisco CA 94117) -S. Dunhill

PAUL McMAHON

How I Love
Your Paintings/Movie Star
(Eon)

An eccentricity from NYC. The A-Side is a sparse ballad (with quiet sax from Peter Gordon, of Love of Life Orch.), sung in McMahon's flat, distanced voice from the perspective of a guy who becomes a habitue of some person's house and personal collection. The subject of the paintings are ordinary--"The birds, the fish/the fire, the streams"--but they have a subconscious hold. "Movie Star" is a simple, jaunty tune where a faded actress, right out of Lou Reed's world, takes the narrator to her elaborate home and asks him to "make me smile" all told in a deadpan style. This different 45 seems a glimpse into a private world, but a private world is only as compelling as its presentation, and the thin melodies and too-distanced vocals prevent more complete involvement. (Write: 167 E. 74 St./NYC 10021) -K. Brennan

ROBYN HITCHCOCK

Eaten By Her Own Dinner (Midnite)

Syd Barret's strange offspring returns with his last effort. With lyrics of self-cannibalism and auto-eroticism, replete with influence guitars and a 60/80's sensibility, it becomes a very nice piece of braincandy. A bit sour to the taste (maybe a little acidic to the palette...were you expecting cream cheese?), but addicting. I've got the habit. -S. Dunhill

BROKEN ENGLISH (Intense)

Radio Dial/It's True

THE ROCKING CLONES

(Love In The) Twilight Zone,
(Edible)

If I was a fan of these groups or their respective scenes, I would probably know and enjoy these recordings: however, with physical distance comes critical distance, so...

Broken English are basic Midwestern pop/new wave rock from a Chicago band. BE calls it "beat pop" and it can be done well, but the difference is the roots--where a band like 20/20 refers back to the 60's garage pop bands, the vocals here are too reminiscent of Queen, and the heavy metal guitar solos are too long, veering too close to mainstream rock. Bad signs: they credit their hairdresser on the sleeve, the A-side exhorts everyone to listen to the radio, and the accompanying info says "Their music is new, fresh, vibrant, yet foreign" (meaning it won't stifle the music director). Chicago's Robert Hazards?

"Twilight Zone" is an odd record, because it has a reggae/dub feel, while "Kidnapped" is catchy heavy metal pop, with brief, cool guitar solos like a lesser Cheap Trick. "Twilight Zone" is surrounded with imaginative production; however, the weak melody and lyrics, plus average singing, make it only a surprising oddity, and less exciting than the more traditional flipside. (Write: Intense/Suite 834/2421 Pratt St./Chicago, IL 60645 & Edible: 802 E. California/Urbana IL 61801)

-Kurt Brennan

ANDY T (Crass)

Weary Of The Flesh

The sleeve says poetry and songs by Andy T, but there are really no songs on this single. Just ten very effective rantings along the lines of Seething Wells and Attila the Stockbroker with sound effects, cockney-talk, a few simple piano tunes and many other undecipherable sounds that more often than not, interferes. But if you like this sort of thing, this is really very good. Listening to this hasn't turned me into a vegetarian, but I like the power and emotion Andy T evokes. Byron and Blake clones can go fuck themselves. -Gal Friday

BAUHAUS

Lagartija Nick/Paranoia,
(Beggar's Banquet)

Bauhaus and ol' Nick two-step with a direct rocker leaving little room for breath. Both demon and band have never been too concerned with salvation, so it's a damn good match-up. Bauhaus win this round with another good record. -S. Dunhill



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CASSETTES



ROIR just dropped another load on my doorstep. As you probably know by now, unless you've just spent your last year or so working for NY Rocker, they are a CASSETTE ONLY label. Here's an idea of what's hot and what's not.

VARIOUS ARTISTS Singles

A historical document of the NY hey daze circa '75-'80. All the bands (except the Ramones) that should be represented (i.e. Patti Smith, Television and Richard Hell) are. Also some that should very well be (the Model Citizens, who later became Polyrock and the Dance and the Speedies immortal "Let Me Take Your Photograph"). In general though for us old guys (Ye Gods! I'm over 25!) this stuff is nothing new...I have 2/3's of them. But for the historical buff and the novice it's well worth a listen. It showed a form of music that was around before the names "Punk" and "New Wave" were coined for it.

TELEVISION

The Blow-Up

Another ROIR live retrospect (seems to be their bag). This time it's one of their best... Recorded during TV's last performance, you get classic material ("Venus", "Marquee Moon") and some treats in covers like "Knocking On Heaven's Door" and "Satisfaction". The killer though is Verlaine's 15 minute work-out on the first recorded TV piece, "Little Johnny Jewel" where Verlaine stuns with sharp, clear and masterful guitar solos. Well worth

NICO

Dead Or Alive

The immortal question: is Nico alive or what? Can't tell from this tape, or from any of her live shows for that matter. It certainly leaves you wondering from this release. In fact, I've always wondered...so maybe that's why I can't stand this one.

PRINCE CHARLES & HIS CITY BEAT BAND Stone Killers

Now if the P. Funk Thang was still firmly lodged on the street instead of out somewhere in the universe, you'd get a very good idea of what Prince Charles is all about. Tough, gritty and sweaty synthetic dance music that blows all those English poseurs back across the ocean where they belong. It does have it's dull points, but not many and definately worth a check.

-by Sea's Dunhill



VARIOUS Youth Manifesto

This is an audio chronicle of sentiments from the L.A. scene, presented in a well produced cassette. The package could use some expanding, the inclusion of more photos/data pages would have helped. But the ideas mixed with snatches of music on tape are as strong as the bands involved.

BRAVE COMBO Originals (4 Dots)

A while back a national mag did a piece on the punk polka movement. Brave Combo is in the forefront of this new dance craze. Really if you speed this up ska just a little bit you get polka, anyways. This tape and their subsequent single contain a funny form of rock that is far more appealing than you'd think. Sometimes a heavy pop/ska mode is adapted but most is a unique rhythmic melodic mixture. Give a listen, call up the dj!

VARIOUS ARTISTS

Bang Zoom #1

This is more of a strict audiotape, with narration and well done interview segments. Music of Ramones/X/Bush Tetras as well as a Devo selection by Book of Holy. Well done and full of insights but the tape is hindered by the record reviews (segments) at the end of the tape. This has a more rock-n-roll feel to it in content and intent. The coverphoto is even a baby toting a geetar and American flag.

VARIOUS ARTISTS

The Public Doesn't Exist (Dog Tapes)

16 Seattle area bands ranging from hardcore to synthnoise. Mostly powerfully young bands shoving their sounds out at you with all the force and urgency we've come to expect from new music. Notable is a cut from Audioletter. Too much for one reviewer to list here, it just boggles the mind. (Write: Dog Tapes/P.O. Box 9609/Seattle WA 98109) -Chucko The Rockin' Robot



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BOOKS

-by C. Shutzbank

BOOKS

Tra la, tra la. Spring is almost here --the time when thoughts turn to love, or if you're like most of the people I know--cheap sex. If the object of your affections isn't exactly receptive, don't despair. Instead of getting into drugs or alcohol, get into a good book instead. It's healthier (and in a lot of cases cheaper). And by the time you are finished the book you may have forgotten a little about your unrequited passions, unless you decided to read Romeo and Juliet. Here's a list of the latest offerings for you to choose from. If none of these works, well, pass the drugs, pour a shot and to hell with the world.



New Women In Rock

(Delilah Books)--Edited by Liz Thompson. How can any book about women in rock music go to press in clear conscious without Exene Cervenka? What is she...chopped liver? Other than that glaring exception, the book is pretty inclusive (play a game with your friends and see if there's anyone else they might have forgotten...it will keep you busy for hours...well minutes anyway). From Ann and Nancy Wilson to Lene Lovich, from Bonnie Raitt to Nina Hagen there are women from each end of the rock spectrum. One page is devoted to each personality, and the pictures are clear and vivid. A definite must own for the music literature collection.

Monroe

(Dolphin Books)--by James Spada. If you aren't depressed already because you can't have what you want by way of female companionship this book may push you over the edge. Monroe comes alive in a variety of pictures: candid, honest, amusing and touching. Most of all: human. The text is plain and to the point--it chronicles her life through the bits and pieces of snapshots that we see, with none of the plastic, sympathetic wordiness that seems to be prevalent in many "fallen film star"

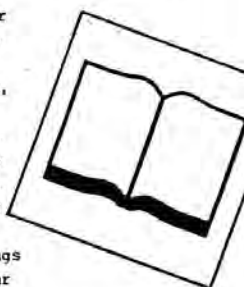
biographies. We see the good and the bad, and it makes us love her even more because we know underneath the crinkle of plastic Hollywood hype there beat a real heart.

Sinatra,

The Entertainer (Delilah)--by Arnold Shaw. OK--so maybe Ole Blue Eyes isn't exactly your cup of tea... maybe you prefer ole black and blue eyes crooning to the tune of raw punk power. But Sinatra was--and still is--a force to be reckoned with, the first in a long line of many teen idols and one of the few who aged gracefully and can still command a large following. This is an interesting book chock full of pictures and facts about the reclusive tenor. (C'mon Sinatrafiles will love it and even those interested in other forms of music will be mildly interested).

The Rock Chronical

(Delilah)--by Dan Formento. Tune in to the radio and listen to the Source, that five minute spot that tells you what happened in rock history on any particular day, or pick up the book. Dan Formento is the name behind those facts, and here he has presented a whole journal of them, some for each day of the year. There are birthdays, anniversaries, deaths, families, events and more. If you are looking for a way to pass the time... this beats counting the tiles on your bathroom floor. Also makes for good conversation when you run out of things to say (impress your friends with your in-depth knowledge of music happenings and their dates...who knows, the next person may be "the one" and they will be dazzled by the way you reel off terrifically trivial information). Of course I don't trust someone who claims that Paul McCartney was only able to join the Beatles after Stewart Sutcliffe died, but considering that was only one out of eons of facts I should not be a nitpicker.



READ AND DESTROY
EVERYTHING



illustrating popular fashion items for application to newspaper layout.



-by Carmen Sylva

Fashion(fash 'en) 5) Something that is in the current mode. 6) Fashionable or style conscious people: the social elite.

Those are descriptions from a second-rate dictionary for the tastes of a second-rate social elite. Are you accepting the second-rate mentality that strangles Philadelphia, or are you going to follow the advice of a first rate fashion plate?

Carmen Sylva is watching you! She is amused. There are many terrifically fashionable people, I've compiled a short list of them. There is also a list of those who lack imagination and style.

THE BEST

Carmen Sylva--who else?

Robbie Nelson--Nearly perfect all the time but can he cook?

John Green--Just made the list this week with his clever use of sweaters and jackets. We're all tired of the macho Matt look.

Gigi Jones--How does she do it?

Swell Shell--Black is always in.

Ernie--Maybe a bit theatrical, but who else could do it so well?

Bobby Startup--I like his shoes.

Ruth R.--Kitch at its best.

Lisa--It's a shame that everyone at Skinz doesn't look like her.

Tracy--Dresses so well, she's difficult to describe.

THE WORST

Michael Downs--How can someone spend so much time to make himself look so silly.

Jade Starling--A general eyesore in the scene.

The Ghoul Sisters--Frighteningly horrible.

Michel Pillozzi--Polyester bell bottom pants! O'est drole.

Sean Dunhill--Oh my!

Lee Paris--Give me a break!

Chuck Dobbs--Buffaloe girls...

Rochelle--Back to the suburbs dear.

Fa-fa-fashiön

Is everyone properly insulted? Hope so. Now that you're ready to burn your clothes, don't worry. I'm opening a boutique on Pine Street. More details about that in my next issue.

POETRY

Things Change

-by Teri R. Riley

Lie down
sweating words seen; their arms and legs
cut off
blurring scattering windwords
across a winter face.
Eyes look snowingly.

Minutes freeze
as a sparrow seen; its toes iced on
metal
beating straining wingward
across a winter face
Eyes look wildly.

Wear the world below again
my suit of armor and defense
of familiar discontent,
a confusion, i'm
well-aware.

Insight, depression,
more love, then
passionless, repression i know, but
can i control?
wasted emotions-guilt
circling the mind-an empty chair spins
until you touch my face-nothing
stands by my soul.



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Kneelt in the corners of her mouth,
Crazy love ran from her lips.

She had so many children
She didn't know what to do.

Carolyn was a child who
Was terribly afraid of
Following her mother
to the grave.

She was good and she was bad,
And then she held a shotgun to her head.

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Yes Ladies and Gentlemen, it's really very tragic. Doctors say the damage to the rock critic's mind may be quite severe!

Is Blondie here?

OH!
NO!!

Baboon, please, tell it like it was...

Well, I was minding my own biznis, uh, I just walked into this club and whammo! This guy conked me on the head!

But that certainly won't stand in the way of this boy's superfine career!

Where's Peter Shelley?

YAP! YAP!

Arf! Arf! Arf!

CLAP! CLAP! CLAP!

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In here it is dark, warm (his skin was sticking to the sheets) and silent. This could be anywhere, Jonathan thought. It might be a rural suburb of the suburb of Manhattan or it might be a wheat field in North Dakota by a missile base on a night without wind.

He heard the ticking. What time was it? he thought. Hell, it doesn't really matter. Why live your life ruled by a piece of steel springs and machinery, obeying a concept that no one fully understands anyway? Relativity, he thought. Einstein was so sharp--a needle of focused energy puncturing the inertia and ennui of human ridiculousness, magnifying our smallness in the face of all those stars. Awesome. He got a stiff neck just thinking about it--being out in the smoky breath cold, drunk and alone after one too many Beck's in Puffy's Tavern, staring out at the cloudless sky. Harrison and Hudson. Hell, most New Yorkers didn't know where that was.

What time is it? he asked himself again. Must do something about the way these multiple thought streams run in and out of consciousness, he thought. Jonathan remembered he had taken his watch off and left it on the night table. He groped around, finally pushed the right button (damn clever, these Japanese) and the Seiko digital read 3:55 am. Big deal, he thought. And what difference does it really make? came the automatic reply. I wonder if this is how other people think or should I be paying some shrink \$60 an hour instead of drinking therapy? he thought. Oh well, it was time. Whatever time it was hardly mattered. Every night was time. Any night was time.

Outside only the crickets were talking. You could never hear any near Union Square on any evening. Just passed on by, minding his own business, hunching his shoulders, happily attired in basic black. Who in



their right mind would stop some six foot two dressed in basic black at 3:30 in the morning? Maybe someone desperate, with grey skin, shaking hands and vacant universes for eyes. Well, it could happen...

He remembered something about the Underground, Mission of Burma, Wednesday night. What the hell were they playing in plastic fantasticland for? Hmmm, he said quietly.

Jonathan got up from the bed, walked two large steps across the narrow, darkened room and pushed a button. The small dial light came on. Power. The album was already on the turntable platter. He turned the volume down, flicked the loudness switch on, cleaned the record and dropped the cueing.

Another time. Yes, once again. He could be anywhere tonight. Deidre was in London now, taking a walking tour of the city. The letter said she had caught Delta 5 at the Venue. The Venue, London--he had read about it in one of those British magazines. They so hard to find uptown, he thought. Always sell out so quickly and they never order anymore for next time. Always the next time. Wait till next...he grumbled. Who has the patience to wait?

He was back in bed. No one was watching. Not at this hour. These people had respectable jobs. No it was silent and he was alone. Just me and this brainful of thoughts. It was true--he could be anywhere tonight. It was not entirely dark. His eyes must have been totally dilated by now. He could see the album's white cover just barely standing out. He thought about the statues in the cover photograph. Were they in Venice somewhere? Were these dimly lit figures in some saint's cathedral? What did it mean? Closer. Closer. Closer. Closer to what? He could guess, although he didn't want to. He was not afraid of the word. He had said it many times before to himself, passing a squirrel in the street. DEATH.

Finality. The word had a ring of finality. Drama too. A play that is repeated over and over. Man makes rituals of anything that happens with regularity, Jonathan thought. One thing's for sure: DEATH. Oh yeah, washing dishes, taxes and garbage. Let's not get too profound here.

Just then, the bass picked up speed, demanding attention. What a tone. Here come the guitars, he thought. "Twenty Four Hours" Sing it. Another day, another night, another song. Tomorrow, maybe tomorrow. Now he was neutral. Impassive. Merely curious. What a waste, he thought. All that was left, time left. Everything one can do.

Why? Why do people kill themselves? He turned away on his side. The record played: marches. Marching to sad melodies. It didn't matter if it was a real organ. Perhaps a synthesizer. It could be anything. But Ian Curtis was gone. Young, confused, and definitely not a hero.

There was tomorrow, he remembered. Tomorrow he had a few appointments. Take the subway down to MacDougall, then over to Broadway and Houston. How different they looked--these streets, so inert in the dark. All the business closed. The hustle and bustle nowhere at all. But dawn was the best time. No pigeons at all. Stumbling down those treacherous long stairways at 622 Broadway, pushing open the black door to realize a blue sky. How could he forget that? Just the truth, he thought. He remembered how it looked--so deep, so clear it could go on forever without end. And no cars. Over the opposite corner, Chase Manhattan bank. The doorman was still there. The clock read 5:45, 46 degrees. It was too late for another visit and besides no money. His friends were there, waiting patiently by the curb, blinking timidly in the new light. He realized sleep was not a necessity. Not at his age. Just pretend the day never happened. Jonathan liked to imagine that. You are not tired, he told himself.

You are not human. Now go get a jump on everyone else. Start the day out nice and early, before all the exhaust fumes.

Silence. The record must have been over for quite some time. Somehow he could never really pay close attention. His attention wandered. It was difficult. All those obsessions. All those troubles captured on vinyl. Perhaps he was watching and he knew, Jonathan thought. Tomorrow night, Jonathan promised himself. Tomorrow I'll listen more carefully. See what I can find.

The small things go unnoticed, he thought. The small things. How can you put a value on them? Like some old high school friends had gotten married. No headlines. It had happened nine years ago. Nine years of ups and downs, but together. He had been the best man. And why not? Just that these two people should feel that way after Nixon, Cambodia, Brixton, Northern Ireland. So simple, so basic.

It's not really that hard after all, he decided. It's all how you choose to view things. It's all what you think about. Now he understood: right now he could be anywhere. What mattered was not where you were but what you thought. How you approached it. No one else could tamper with that. How could they possibly know what you're thinking?



DATA DAY 083

simple stuff

-by Ben Leimer



Tonight could be Chinese New Year's for all I know. Last year at 3 am walking over from White Street, muddled mind and all, thinking about moo goo gai pan. Turning the corner, one restaurant open (Wo Hop, not the best by far, but thank God anyway). The street littered with red paper an inch thick. Firecrackers. Thousands of them. But the loud noises were over the hard working people already asleep. There would be another Chinese New Years. And another. More time, always time stretching forward. And that sky at dawn again. The sun was just starting, radiating that frail blue around. What a sight that was.

He thought about John Forgerty. He thought about keeping it simple. Simple melodies, perfect chords, simple solos. He thought about Elvis--young, hungry Elvis. Simple stuff is best. Wasn't that what Ian McCullough sang about on that early Echo & the Bunnymen single. Simple Take a word like...happy. A rare word.

Such a resonance to it. Jonathan thought of a thousand songs all bursting out simultaneously. All those choruses, a thousand voices. They could be in any language he thought. That's happy.

Interesting. Now he was fully aware of it, just as he was doing it. What a mind was capable of, he thought. Using the mind to think about the mind. Wonder what a shrink would say to that thought? It could be an unsettling proposition, like holding a mirror to a mirror and looking at its endless series of its own reflection.

He remembered Deidre. She would be in the English countryside soon, touring around small towns and pastures. A vintage day--no rain. All the flowers. Daisies in the sun. He could see a whole field of them waving in the wind. A strong imagination, a teacher had once told him. He realized the ceiling above his bed was perfectly dark. Was he awake or was he dreaming? That didn't matter. All the millions out of work and she's running through the daisies. Hah, it's strange. Just the simple stuff. The simple stuff is best. It's not our of control, he thought.

You still remember. I do? came the automatic reply. Yes. Think right, act right, be right. Must try to remember that. Lock into it and not let it go just this once. He smiled in the dark in his bed. The covers were warm. He was not hungry. He was not fat wither. The roof wouldn't leak. He could not complain. He smiled again. Finally, a smile. After all these years, how simply it came to him. There was no burst of dazzling imagination

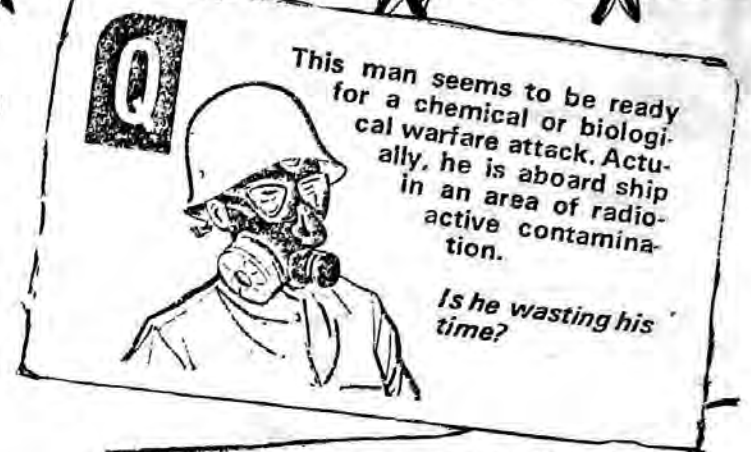
no comets exploding. No, it had been like a leisurely stroll through a park in the afternoon of no real importance. Perhaps all those private walks had done him good after all. He had wandered aimlessly, rummaging through his head, paying no attention to whatever he chanced upon.

He remembered and looked across the room. The record sat there on the turntable, a presence from another time. A reminder that someone was watching. A reminder of the past and all the troubles. Tomorrow had no reason. Well, he would just have to make that one then. It was out there waiting for him in the dawn. That was all that mattered. The plants in the park would keep on growing. Deidre would be having tea soon. Tomorrow night, yes. Tomorrow night, the stars and the crickets talking. There would be a tomorrow night. The record would wait patiently in the dark. Goodnight, he said softly. Rest easy, my friend.

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THERE'S
ALWAYS
SOME
EXCUSE!

SIDES... I'VE
RENOUNCED
FLESHLY
PLEASURES.

THATS EASY
FOR YOU
TO SAY!

I STILL
LOVE YOU,
OF COURSE.

...AND AFTER I
LOST ALL THAT
WEIGHT FOR
YOU!

SIGH.

JESUS CRITERS

HIPPITY-HOP
ON MY FEET!

CUTE LITTLE
BLESSED
ME!

DARLING
EASTER
BASKET!

OOH, MR. EASTER-
BUNNY! MAY I HAVE
A BASKET LIKE
YOURS?

OF COURSE
DEAR
CHILD!

LITTLE BIRD!
WITH HIS WING
CHOPPED OFF!

QUICKLY I MAKE
A BASKET WITH
MY FEET, USING
ALL NATURAL
MATERIALS!

HALLELUJAH!
ALL THE LIVE
LONG DAYS!

SINGS WHILE HE
WORKS, HOW HEALTHY!

OH, BLESS YOU!
NOW I HAVE
A SACRED
PLACE TO
DIE!

READ
THE
BIBLE
NOW,
O.K.?

HPP! HPP!

PRASE GOD!

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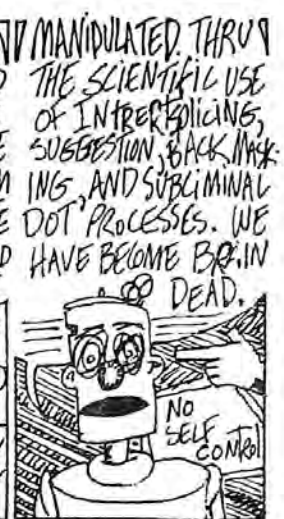
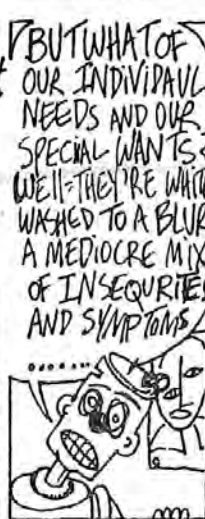
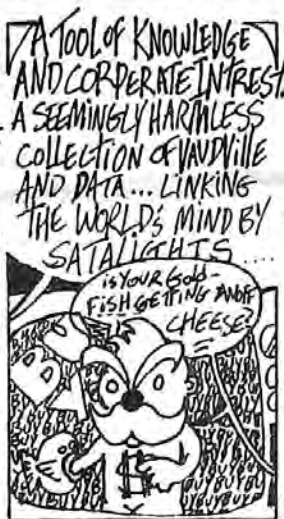
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