

DISPOSABLE UNDERGROUND

VOLUME 17 NUMBER 40

CHAMPIONING THE MUSICALLY JADED FOR OVER 15 YEARS

FREE

FOR PETE'S SAKE

PETE PONTIKOFF SHOULD BE NO STRANGER TO *D.U.* readers. Besides being the singer in the now-defunct Benümb, Pete screams in *Agenda of Swine*, both interviewed in earlier issues (as always, go to the zine website to download 'em). He also helms the not-regular column *Get it or Die!* for us. Well, Pete is on the receiving end of a discussion once more, graciously sharing his views and experiences in connection to the Iraq war. He knows from where he speaks, having served in Iraq from February 2005 until January 2006, when his National Guard unit, BCO 1/184 Infantry, out of Dublin, California, was deployed to the International Zone in Baghdad.

"We got the word that we were headed overseas, several days after the Fourth of July weekend," recalls Pete. "We had gone through several weeks of clinics, paperwork, family support briefings—the National Guard is huge on family support and service. We then went to El Paso, Texas for close to five-and-a-half months' worth of training and family support briefings. I wish I was kidding. Training was comprised of training in patrols, convey ops, marksmanship, et cetera. After completion of that we traveled to Louisiana for more training and from there we flew to Kuwait. We did more training in Kuwait and some of us, myself included, drove up to Baghdad."

Pete continues, "It's easier to describe an average day than describe my job. Someone asked what was it I actually did, because no one knew. I told them I walk around a lot and be Sgt. Ponitkoff. A funny rumor that people had made up about me was that I secretly ran the entire program out there, and all the extended work hours and screwed-up shifts were all my doing. I, of course, passed this off as the truth and told them I was trying to make us the last unit to leave Baghdad.

"But in reality, it goes like this: I was an infantryman; I got detailed to do other taskings. An average day started about 7 a.m. I showered, shaved, et cetera, jumped in a Humvee, got taken to another FOB (forward operation base). My mornings were spent as a PLL (prescribe load listing) clerk. I tracked vehicle dispatches and maintenance; ordered parts for vehicles, weapon systems; and trashed talked with the other clerks. Afternoons were either spent in a stockyard or supervising local national workers. Towards the end of the day I would pick mail for my company. I would get picked up and taken back to where I slept. I helped drop off mail, take care of any vehicle maintenance issues which had to be addressed. If one of the line platoons, platoons on patrol, or checkpoints, which I really liked working with, had checkpoint duty or was going out on a patrol, I would go and help out for a few hours."

While Pete missed hanging out and playing music while he was in Iraq, he says, "Doing this was, like, the biggest thing I ever did."

Pete and the rest of the unit were first told that they were to provide security to convoys. "That was our original mission. We got tasked out for checkpoint duty, patrols; some of our guys got to do missions with the Navy seals. I was invited but didn't get to go—sore subject. Our people had a lot of interaction with the citizens of Baghdad and really got to improve living conditions for a lot of people.

"I am sure there wasn't a person there that wasn't aware of the U.S. interest in petroleum assets in the region," Pete adds. "But again, the general vibe is safety and a genuine desire to give the people of Iraq a decent existence. Though there might be many underlying agendas for the U.S. occupation, this

isn't the agenda of the U.S. soldier, Marine, airman, sailor. It's a genuine desire to do some good."

Not everyone from Pete's unit came back from overseas unscathed, however. "IEDs took the lives of several of our people; sniper fire. Within my region, two friends were shot and, thank God, survived. Over the course of the deployment, close to 100 people were wounded. There was one case of a suicide bomber."

ONE CAN HARDLY TALK ABOUT THE WAR, and its consequences, without talking about the politics behind the U.S. starting the war, and Pete has no qualms about expressing his thoughts on such matters.

To begin on these subjects, back in 2004, then-Defense Secretary Rumsfeld addressed and took questions from U.S. troops in Kuwait, where he heard tough questions from National Guard personnel, starting with one who hesitantly started that ball rolling. Complaints ranged from inadequate or nonexistent equipment to extension of tours to National Guardspeople being treated second-class to regular Army.

Pete responds, "Thank God for all the families and that soldier for standing up and saying something. Our unit already had better equipment than some of the regular Army units, but over the course of the 11 months we were there, drastic changes in body armor and policy came about, for the better. In regards to being second-class citizens, from my end I didn't really experience too much of it. The regular Army people I worked with really took me in as one of their own. But that's my story; I am sure there's someone else who would have a story that would completely contradict what I just said."

Rumsfeld and the rest of the Bush Administration repeatedly linked the Iraqi conflict to September 11, 2001 and America's so-called war on terror, and the media was happy to repeat it.

"This is almost the three degrees of Kevin Bacon," Pete begins. "History has taught us that anything can be linked together if you really try hard enough. Prior to

our occupation there was people scaring and hurting other people in Iraq, which can be perceived as frightening, but because there was oil in the equation, these acts can now translate into terror. But for real, of course there's traces, obvious and similar ideals as those which you could have found behind 9/11 in Iraq. But in the same sentence no one can take a blind eye to our previous conflict in Iraq and the fact the both Bushes were involved.

"All of this aside, I am totally behind the troops, and regardless of all this nonsense, they're fighting the good fight. Those which have died did so in the most honorable fashion, in service of their country and so someone else could have a better life. Most of us will more than likely leave this world in some rest home crapping on ourselves."

Continuing on, there's the revelations of the Downing Street memos and the Downing Street minutes, pointing to the facts being fixed around the policy to

"Doing this was, like, the biggest thing I ever did."

justify the war, and U.S. bombing starting a year before troops were deployed in Iraq.

“What a surprise. Why don’t they just come right out and say things? I don’t get it. Like the truth is any worse than what’s happening now. Imagine if our politicians came out and said, ‘Look, the economy pretty much is going to go to crap here in a hot second; we as a society are still way dependant on oil to maintain our way of life; our petroleum assets are in a hostile and unstable region of the world. We are sending forces in to that region to stabilize our interests. Yes, there will be loss of life, but there will be a resurgence in the economy and humanitarian efforts to improve life in this part of the world and quite possibly our portion of the world.’”

It’s been suggested that the Pentagon supplies inaccurate counts of wounded and killed U.S. troops in Iraq, because those that perish in transit to Army hospitals in, say, Germany, are not tallied with those in-country.

“Take into account that the media will always report faster than the military,” Pete explains. “Simply stated, the military and government have to go through procedures before actually reporting, while the media reports immediately. But in regards to the fashion it is reported, it’s almost reminiscent of the way the unemployment rate is tallied. Wow! I think the tragedy here is not in the way these figures are tallied or reported, but the fact that the value of a human life has been reduced to a statistic. There’s a real person behind each number, a person with family; someone’s son, daughter, father, mother, husband, wife. Someone who is going to be missed.”

Then, however, there’s VP Cheney’s comment of, “The President carries the biggest burden, obviously. He’s the one who has to make the decision to commit young Americans.”



PETE PONTIKOFF, STANDING TALL
(PHOTO: STEPHANIE PATTISON) COURTESY RELAPSE

To this, Pete is almost speechless. “What the hell can you say? How do you even respond? But let’s keep in mind, there was no draft. When you sign up for the chore you can’t cry when you got to take care of business, regardless of the politics behind it.”

Finally, Pete wraps up the whole ball of wax:

“Theoretically, this is what should be done. Forces should be concentrated in either one region or another, either Iraq or Afghanistan. But realistically speaking, after all the other countries have pulled out with only our forces left, with the number of soliders that we have a reduction of troops on the ground is not going to help the situation. It would be more of a reduction of safety. But if we were to *entirely* pull out, choosing a specific date, keeping the same numbers until that date for safety measures—that being convoy, security for patrols, both air and ground—would minimize possible injuries and fatalities.

“If we were to continue with a peacekeeping mission, that region is not ready for that. We would still need soldiers on the ground. It’s nowhere like Korea was in the ‘70s and ‘80s or the borders of Eastern Germany. The situation is just too unstable.”

THESE DAYS, Pete’s daily life goes something like this: “Walk down to my mail box and open it; about every other week there’s a check. Translation: I professionally collect unemployment.

“I currently attend community college at night; one night a week I go volunteer at the 924 Gilman Project as a booker; I also jam on Agenda of Swine.”

With the conversation coming to a close, Pete ends

with this: “To all those who wrote, supported: thank you! Especially all at Relapse, Roadrunner, *Metal Maniacs*, *Revolver*, *Metal Edge*, Fuse TV and CMJ, and you too, Richard! Remember, you don’t have to agree with political agenda or leaders to support the troops; they are yours.” ■

BUCKSHOT FACELIFT

Buckshot Facelift’s got attitude, and aren’t just another PV/grind band. Some of their riffs are off-kilter for what’s typical in the genres, and that’s a very good thing. They mix it up with different influences on the riffs and with their song arrangements.

Their first offering, *Demo*, a co-label release (What the Fuck Happened to Tapes?/Drugged Conscience / Human Crush / Machine-Gun-Funk / Old Souls Collective) starts with a song featuring a good rock riff, it’s got a grind riff, powerviolence riff, and it’s over in 42 seconds. We’re off to a good start. With songs called “Giving Acid to a Gorilla Who Knows Sign Language” and “I Can Control Your Mind by Smoking God’s Toenail Clippings,” this four-piece has what seems to be an interesting outlook on life. The lyrics are very minimal and weird. The vocals are pretty crazy, with the musicians piling vox on top of the singer. And to top it off, there’s even a small insert

“You must give this 7” a listen”

with the back story on the release included with the EP. You must give this 7” a listen! And while you’re at it, look for the full-length, *Universal Goat Tilt* (burnitdown/REBUILD / Old Souls Collective). A bunch of the songs from the demo are rerecorded here, but there’s also a bunch of new material. One can hear the leap from the redone 7” tracks to the new ones obviously written later. And those are even better. All around, though, it’s totally raw in execution and vibe, and the vocals keep that vibe in the (relatively) more toned down, newer songs that are more interesting musically.

Buckshot Facelift is an OTT band that grind/hardcore fans are well-advised to keep an eye on, seeing as they are coming out with a second album. www.myspace.com/buckshotfacelift100, www.burnitdownrebuild.net. ■

DISPOSABLE LOCAL REVIEWS

A grouping of the local bands (from Maryland, Virginia, and Washington, DC) for this issue

Buck Gooter update

It’s hard to describe Buck Gooter. In the last review for the band that appeared in *D.U.*, it was a problem to describe them, so it’s not gotten easier over time. It’s one guy on vocals, drum machine and theramin, and another guy on backups, the occasional lead vocal, and acoustic guitar through a flanger and other effects. Basically they’ll have one beat and maybe two riffs for each song at the most and do that for anywhere from two to five minutes per song. While that’s going on, they have a verse/chorus structure to the atonal vocals, and in places whacked-out noise from the theramin. They’re really monotonous and silly, and as obnoxious as they know how to be. The problem is that their songs are way, way too long, and would be a lot easier to take if that weren’t the case. But live they work hard to win over the crowd and succeed in enticing smiles. The thing that rules is that they have a firm policy against ever getting a MySpace account.

TV Evangelist Song is a 12-track album on CD-R that was recorded live at Inner Ear in DC and features a warped Ramones cover. The drum machine beats here only utilize the kick and the snare.

Woman President is the next album, packaged in a cardboard slipcase, and the

recording quality is higher than the last effort. This time around shows a bit more energy, and they’re trying to mix things up with various noises, and more variety with the drum beats, which are still unchanging within the songs. They’re sticking to their guns, dammit.

The next release, *Animals*, is packaged the same way as *Woman President*, and shows advancement beyond their shtick so far. The first song is basically a noise piece (as is the last one), but besides that the tunes show more evolved guitar work (sometimes—other times the guitar is utter nonsense) and drum programming.

Finally, the 13-track *Welcome to the Last Day of Your Life*. Nothing out of the ordinary for Buck Gooter here. There’s a noise song and some of the same elements as before, but the beats seem to have degraded in complexity. Although once or twice a song will shift gears halfway through, and that is new for these guys. “Angel of Light” is kind of interesting, being perhaps the closest thing to a “normal” song for them.

One of the things that keeps Buck Gooter rooted in Buck Gooter-ness is the continuation of the in-your-face, ham fist ed vocals. These guys are completely crazy. www.buckgooter.tk

Disassemble *Demogrinder 2008*

Just a CD-R demo from these Marylanders, but it's hand numbered out of 100, so that's a nice touch. The songs have a live-in-the-studio feel to them. The music is a downtuned mix of d-beat metal, slow breakdowns, and grindcore along with snotty and gruff vocals. There's a bit of southern groove, EHG style, tossed in as well.

It's also a nice touch that the lyrics are included. Lyrically, it's a cross between way too preachy, like late-80s/early-90s HC preachy, and way too whiny, about how much one's life sucks existentially. But that's nothing new and we've seen it before, so it's cool. Musically, nothing out of the ordinary as well, but *Demogrinder 2008* is an entertaining, energetic four-song listen, so get it while it's hot.
www.myspace.com/disassemble

Dying Fetus *War of Attrition*

RELAPSE

Maryland's Dying Fetus once more applies the formula that has won them worldwide acclaim in the death metal community. Their style is homage to Suffocation, appreciably bloated with triggered double-bass drum rolls and snare on-beat blasting, hoards of noodley-Natalie noodley-Natalie guitar riffs inbred to perfection, and the inevitable sweep arpeggios like decorative icing on a big hollow cake that conceals the decomposing body of a violated woman. Not a feeble withering creature like its name suggests, Dying Fetus insists its continued existence by delivering feats of well-above-average musicianship. If you're a fan, surely you must own this album by now. **(by Lenny)**

Misery Index *Traitors*

RELAPSE

Pushing forward with their political ideals, Misery Index from Maryland have put out more of a death metal album this time 'round (*D.U.* has always classed them as grindcore), and what an album it is. There's fewer blast beats and ridiculously fast double bass riffs on *Traitors*, but that just makes the fast songs that much faster when they do come and steamroll over your woefully uninformed face (read the lyrics, then). The band has become more expressive musically (as on "Thrown Into the Sun"), opting for more feeling over the slabs of deathgrind that you can't stop, but they haven't forgotten how to write slam riffs either, so don't worry yourself. "Partisans of Grief" and "Occupation" are two examples that show that. As is always the case the musicianship

is top-shelf, and the production here is an improvement over *Dissent*, the last album. So what are you waiting for? *Traitors* is a fucking great record, so get off your duff and pick it up.

Three Faces of Eve demo

Four songs from this three-piece band from Virginia. There's no lyrics or band information here, just a one-panel sleeve on this CD-R, used to get the band's music out there when they play shows. The high/low screams, furious blast beats, and catchy riffs do well to keep the listener into what these cats are doing. A tight and energetic live band with an active sense of humor, *D.U.* eagerly awaits an official release from Three Faces of Eve!

www.threefacesofeve.com

Various Artists *Satan Rock Records Presents When You Find Yourself Feed It Poison Volume One*

Yes, the local scene has vomited forth a couple of compilations. In this case, Call the Paramedics, The Seventh Gate, and Igon all turn in two tracks each, and there's also nine other bands on here, so plenty of tunes to rock out to. The No-Fi turns in a weird track, and there's also an instrumental and some doom and thrash and semi-industrial songs among the offerings. The various bands turn in epics that leave the 5-minute mark in the dust as well as the other extreme of 19 seconds. There's plenty of variety here, a good thing for a compilation, although there's noticeably no contact info for the bands.

www.satanrock.com

Various Artists *Virginia Metal—Volume 1*

DARK HARVEST

As the name suggests, the Commonwealth of Virginia has enough good bands to fill more than one compilation CD. Let the record show right off the bat that Deceased is on this one, so high marks go to Dark Harvest for that if for no other reason. There's contact and geographical info on each band appearing here (some of whom also appearing on the above compilation), as well as contacts for "supporters of Virginia metal." Hold on—was that just a bass solo from Sanguinus? Besides that, there seems to be some new-jack melodic riff metal of the post-At the Gates variety. That's been played out for a long time now. At the same time groove riffs and grind beats and doom and straight-up metal appear, again adding variety. Some bands are good, some definitely aren't, but that's how compilations go on the whole, so good stuff.

www.darkharvestrecords.com ■

DISPOSABLE MUSIC REVIEWS

Antigama *Resonance*

RELAPSE

This reviewer has to be honest and put out there up front that his band did a split with Antigama, so the review you are reading is going to be biased. With that out of the way, Antigama has grown in leaps and bounds over the years and *Resonance* continues that trajectory: there's still plenty of out-there, throaty vocals, blurry blast beats, and soundscape songs, but the songwriting is more streamlined while retaining crazy arrangements. Antigama is a cutting-edge grindcore band and that's exactly where they excel.

www.relapse.com

Asva *What You Don't Know is Frontier*

SOUTHERN LORD

Another magazine's review pegged Asva's latest offering as "epic doom metal." But *What You Don't Know is Frontier* isn't the Sabbath worship of The Obsessed nor the numbing drone of SunnO))), The record is a thickened aural tar pit, full of slow progression, a primordial congealing of instrumental tones. Monolith guitar chords are strummed once, then twice, then once again. Ominous keys surface briefly and then dive below, back into the pitch, as wah pedals shriek briefly and caustically. The press release reveals that mainman Stuart Dahlquist wrote the album during the one-year anniversary of his brother's slaying, wanting to "hit an emotional chord" and embody "the light at the end of the tunnel." The journey is beautifully and painfully slow, and Dahlquist's mission is ultimately accomplished. **(by Asa)**

www.southernlord.com

Balboa/Rosetta *Project Mercury*

LEVEL-PLANE

This split release features two bands with a chameleon-like, albeit cohesive, mix of predominantly atmospheric noise rock and what some might call "screamo," particularly applicable in the case of Balboa. But none of it's delivered with the kind of pretense and whiny angst you might expect from the later tag. This record seems a lot more honest to me. Each band's music is often spacey, swirly, and amorphous—in that dreamy, passive, surrendering oneself to the inexorable entropic oneness of the universe kind of way (i.e., judicious usage of reverb, delay, and a single-coil pickup)—yet the rhythm sections hold it all together rather well, thumping away in the background. While Balboa indulges in a momentary spasm of thrashcore, Rosetta is way heavier when they finally build up to it. The final climactic track, entitled "Project Mercury," is a collaboration between the two acts that succeeds spectacularly in going absolutely nowhere. **(by Lenny)**

www.level-plane.com

Balzac *Deep Blue: Chaos From Darkism*

MISFITS

It's appropriate that this Japanese "horror punk" band is on the Misfits' own label, as they couldn't possibly more strongly resemble latter-day "Graves-era" Misfits with a slightly more metal bent and pretty horrendous vocals, offering absolutely nothing even remotely interesting (much less original) of their own. Really, this is essentially a Misfits tribute band, albeit a nicely recorded, well-marketed, and occasionally fun tribute band, but it really doesn't merit any more consideration than that. Of interest only to those sad souls who for some reason can't get enough of the third-rate material the Misfits were cranking out in the late '90s; otherwise, avoid. The accompanying nearly two-hour DVD is a good bargain for fans, no doubt, with a couple of videos and a reasonably well made documentary of the band's last U.S. tour. **(by Mason)**

www.misfitsrecords.com

Behold... *The Arctopus Skullgrid*

METAL BLADE

Listening to Behold... The Arctopus makes the listener feel very inadequate. Seeing the band play live intensifies this feeling to the point of extreme discomfort. But at the same time it's a joyous experience, watching people who obviously worship Voivod and who knows what else (Watchtower? Cynic? Late-era Death?) rip into their instruments with such ease and jaw-dropping skill that Mozart would be in the front row thrashing and banging the wig off his head if that were possible. The instrumental tracks from this three-piece are, as has been showcased on past releases, of the highest quality, featuring jazz fusion, blast beats, crushing riffs, crisp, clean sound, and arrangements that are nigh-impossible to follow but still flow smoothly down Jodorowski's Holy Mountain. It's completely stupid how good this band is.

Big Nugz *It's My Time*

JUSTICE FAMILY

Hip hop from Connecticut that's nothing terribly special (*D.U.* favors the old school). The usual stuff about bitches and niggas, sort of thug and bling lyrically, but not hard musically or in the delivery. It's recorded well enough, but it's not straying far from the standard formulas. The best track might be "She Don't Care," teed up by a skit beforehand, so it's not all bad!

justicefam1@yahoo.com

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

NOW FOR THE SECOND INSTALLMENT of a series of interviews from antiquity I conducted and am reprinting here. These interviews originally appeared in two zines for which I used to write, *Deathcheese* and *Curious Goods* from California, that existed in the early 1990s. This piece originally appeared in *Curious Goods* zine #5 in 1991. For live photos of the gig at which we conducted this interview, go to www.disposableunderground.com. - Richard

Here we are once more at the backstage area of the 9:30 Club, with the beat up, old, rusty, squeaky couches. The focus of this article is Danny Lilker, bassist of Nuclear Assault [and Brutal Truth, but we'll get to that later].

D.U.: OK, question number one, I read somewhere a while back that you were on bad terms with Anthrax.

Danny: No, not really. There was somethin' that came out, I dunno, a year ago in a magazine, where they were saying stuff as a joke, and it looked like they were insulting us. But that's because the guy who wrote the article hated us, so he goes, "What do you think of Nuclear Assault, bla bla bla," and totally entrapped them into saying something.

No, I mean, I don't have any problems with them. Shit, it's seven years since I got thrown out. What, we're gonna stay mad forever? No, no problem.

Do you ever say to yourself, "I've played the 9:30 Club 10 times; I'm getting tired of it"?

No, it's always fun here, you know? It's always a wild show. I'd rather play a wild show here than some big theatre an' just have people have to sit down or some bullshit. I mean, yeah, there's bigger clubs where you can stand, but no, this place has a good vibe, you know? That's why we come here; it's always crazy. So it's no problem.

Do you ever feel that, since you're playing clubs, you're not reaching enough people? That if you sold more albums, you could get your message out, and plus, make some money while you're at it?

Well, yeah, that'd be nice, but anything I wish for is always gonna come after the musical desire. I mean, sure, obviously you wanna fuckin' reach as many people as possible [with] your message, but there's no reason to wimp out. You wanna do it by still making it Nuclear Assault, you know?

So, our rationale for that is that, you know, the people know it's there; they can read the lyrics and shit. If fuckin' Poison put out an album with environmental lyrics, then that'd be kinda weird, wouldn't it? Who knows. I dunno, man. You wanna reach as many people as you can, but you still retain your musical integrity, so you still gotta be intense.

What's the deal with you guys jumping labels all the time? You were on Combat for a while, then there was Under One Flag, then In-Effect ...

Under One Flag is just people who license it in Europe. Then we got the I.R.S. thing where we had to go back and forth—

Oh, yeah, I forgot about them.

So the first two are on Combat; then we have to go back and forth between I.R.S. and Combat. So *Survive* came out on I.R.S. and *Handle With Care* came out on In-Effect, which is basically the same thing as Combat—the same company. Now we gotta go back to I.R.S.

Again?

Yeah, 'cause it's just the way the contract is. They won't let it go.

Oh, you're trying to get out of it?

Yeah, but you can't always. You're stuck with something you sign.

Do you not dig I.R.S.? You'd rather be on In-Effect?

They're just more, you know, into what we're doing. They know how to promote a thrash band. I.R.S. is more like an experiment for them, you know?

What was your initial reaction when I.R.S. came up and said, "Hey, man, you're doing a video for MTV"?

Well, they didn't really say it like that. We said, "Yo, we wanna do a video." We wanted to do the video.

Oh. One of the printings of *Game Over* didn't have "Lesbians" on it, right?

The cassette of *Game Over* had "Lesbians." It was weird. And then we re-did it for the back of the *Good Times, Bad Times* deal.

Did you want to remove "Lesbians"?

No, no, it was just put on the cassette as an extra track, that's all. It wasn't ever on the *Game Over* vinyl.

How did you hook up with the People For The Ethical Treatment Of Animals, anyway? The last time you were here, they had a booth set up in the hallway and were passing out pamphlets.

[To himself] How did we do that? I think—I think we had that song, "Surgery," so I think we sent it to 'em and said, "Look, we're kind of talking about the same thing, and since you're based in DC, why don't you come down and do that." So I think we got in touch with them, as far as I remember.

How did you dig the *Handle With Care* video, the "European Tour" thing?

Oh, Dark Angel, that one?

No, the one that—

Oh, the video?

Yeah, the home video, thank you.

Oh, yeah, that's cool. I mean ... [pause]

Did you dig how it came out and stuff?

Yeah, we had to fuck with it a few times. It's pretty cool. I mean, they don't show much of me, but then again, I'm kinda boring. First I was, like, What the fuck? but, you know, it don't matter.

What made you decide to pick up the bass when you were little?

I just listened to a lot of Zeppelin and Sabbath an' stuff—

Time Out

Some of the walls backstage at the 9:30 don't reach all the way to the ceiling, so if you stood on the back of a couch, you could see over the wall, sort of. So John Connelly started throwing trash at us over the wall.

Danny: Just cut it out! John's trying to annoy the rest of us, but we'll just ignore him! So what's the question?

John Connelly: Oh, thanks!

Time In

Why'd you decide to pick up the bass when you were little?

'Cause I listened to a lot of Zeppelin and Sabbath and I loved the deep tone. It just seemed natural, just, it was meant for me.

So I started piano when I was a kid,

got an electric guitar. But it's like, I got a bass, it just sounded cool, so I was just into it. Besides, you know, bass players are hard to find, so it's easier to get in bands, right?

That's true, I know. What's the deal with Glenn [Evans, drums]—does he own Arena Records?

It started out as a tape label. Then he got a lot from a lot of bands and shit, started putting out seven inches and shit. An' then, eventually hooked up with people in Europe and got CDs and everything like that.

So that's his whole thing?

Yeah, he runs that completely.

You gotta ask me about my solo band later, so I can plug it.

Oh, yeah. Why don't you tell me about your solo band, Dan?

Oh. That's funny that you asked that. Since there was nothing to do, I started a death metal band called Brutal Truth, because—

Really? [laughs]

Yeah, really. I wrote a lot of stuff that wouldn't fit in Nuclear Assault. It's much more aggressive death metal type stuff. An' I figured, Glenn can put out a solo album—why the hell can't I? So I had a bunch of songs, I got a couple of guys—one of our roadies, Brent, plays guitar—and just did that. We did four shows already an' we've got demos and stuff.

Sounds happening, sounds happening.

Yeah, it's really death metal, but not like graveyard/Satan.

[in guttural tone] **Rrh, rrrh, rrrh.**

Oh yeah, it's got all those "brrrulh," but the lyrics are right on, though. The lyrics are more social/political. 'Cause, you know, I'm fuckin' 26. I'm not gonna sing about graveyards and Satan.

Do you feel morally obliged to write social/political lyrics?

Well, I don't feel morally obliged; I do it 'cause it's important to me. Well,

yeah, I guess a little bit, but not like it's a whole big design to do it. It's kinda like, a lot of people look up to us, you know? People like 15-year-old kids are very impressionable. If they really like Nuclear Assault or Brutal Truth or whoever the fuck, and look up to it, you might as well give it something cool. And also I can say that, it sounds corny, but you're doing your little bit, you know, to help.

When you look back on *Game Over* and you have these songs like "Stranded In Hell," with the evil lyrics, do you think, "God, I can't believe I wrote that," and you duck them live?

Yeah, pretty much. We didn't know any better back then, that's all. That's before we got exposed to a realistic lyrical approach. It sounds like an excuse, but it's true, you know? I wrote that when I was 17. Not to say people are stupid when they're 17; I'm just saying I was.

How do you decide on a lyrical subject to write about?

You just see what's going on around you. I mean, things that piss you off and things you think should be mentioned. You know, you see shit around you, like racism, intolerance, people gay bashing, fuckin' anti-abortion people, all sorts of fuckin' idiots. And, you know, you just want to make your statement about it.

On the new album, there'll be a song called "Hypocrisy," which is a pro-abortion song, which not many metal bands have written about. 'Cause I don't think anyone has the right to decide what a woman could do with her body, you know? I mean, it's your own fuckin' choice.

Yeah, right on, man.

Yeah, well, that's the way it is. That's such a personal decision, you know?

You guys sound like liberal Democrats or something.

I'm not really a politician, man. I just know how I feel.

I read this interview way back where John said, "I'm a registered Republican."

Well, John probably is, man. That doesn't mean you can't have liberal views. Being a Republican isn't the same as being a conservative. It's just, kind of, part of it.

What's a song that you got a lot of backlash about? Like "Lesbians"—did the Gay and Lesbian Front or somebody call you up and say, "Dude, man!"

No, nobody ever said that. You can tell it's just a stupid song.

Was there ever a song that people got pissed off about?

No. Well, yeah. "My America" off the first album—all the hardcore people got pissed off about it. Remember Ed Anger and the *Weekly World News*? He had a column called "My America"?

No.

Okay, remember the *Weekly World News*? It's still on newsstands. It's like the National Enquirer, but, instead of having Hollywood gossip, it just has complete bullshit, like "Baby Born With Three Heads" and, you know, shit like that, and it was such a joke newspaper. They had a column by a fictional character called Ed Anger, and his column was called "My America." And all he was just this total patriotic idiot.

So we just did a play on that, and people didn't realize that, and they thought

we were sayin' it for serious.

All the skins got on your back about it?

No, not the skins. They're the pro-American ones. They loved it. It was the fuckin', you know, peace types, the liberal types, which is understandable.

Oh, the ones that do the marching in DC?

Yeah, they didn't realize we were having a laugh, you know? They figured, "Oh, these guys are fascists."

Here, get this on tape.

Danny starts bouncing on the couch, making it squeak.

It sounds like somebody getting laid.

[laughs] **Do you still do gigs with hardcore bands?**

Nah, we haven't done that for years, man. There's hardly any good hardcore bands around anymore.

You think? Are there any from the New York/New Jersey scene?

Oh yeah. Nausea, Insurgence, oh, there's a lotta killer hardcore bands and stuff. But the thing is, it really died down as a scene because the CBGB thing isn't happening no more. I mean, just once in a while. Just all sorts of alternative shit. But we don't play with hardcore bands like we used to, no, not at all.

Do you miss it, or is it just, whatever?

Oh no, I liked it, I miss it. But, it's just kinda like, now we end up getting on Testament tours and shit, so you really can't bring the Cro-Mags along with you, you know?

I guess the labels have the say on that, too.

Well, In-Effect has fuckin' Sick Of It All and Agnostic Front and all that shit, so they're certainly not gonna tell us not to play with hardcore or punk bands. It's just that we're playing bigger shows now. I'd still like to.

Well, that's about it. Do you have anything to sign off with?

Well, we'll have a new album out, eventually.

You have any stuff written?

Yeah, we have two songs complete with lyrics, and then about four or five ones that are just music. You know the last one we did in the soundcheck that you were going, "What the fuck is that?" That was a new one, yeah, where we stopped in the middle 'cause we forgot how long it was.

What song was that?

That doesn't have a title yet. It's got lyrics. I'm not sure.

Are you gonna put the root note on the title and call it "Fb"?

I don't know how much longer we can keep that joke going. We're running out of fuckin' sharps and flats. We could call it "Fb," but that would be E. But no non-musicians would know that.

Back when *Survive* came out I didn't know what that meant.

Yeah, it was F with a plus sign, right? Well, it was in F#. We didn't have a title for it, so we just called it "F#."

Then there was "New Song."

Yeah, oh yeah, "That's the new song." But then the other one, F natural, that song is in G but it starts on an F chord, so it's like, call that F and keep the joke going, really. So, alright, well, I guess that's it. Don't forget to plug my other band. ■

REVIEWS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Biomechanical Cannibalized

EARACHE

Operatic opening. Blasting drums. High vocals descending into a brutal roar and then back into the wailing. There's a lot going on, right from the beginning of *Cannibalized*; the mix sounds fucking huge—ex-Dragonforce low-ender Adrian Lambert must be stoked at the idea of his playing being remotely audible. Opener "The Unseen" has parts that are all over the place, and if you like spastic tech-metal jams, then this is your dig. The title cut, however, alternates metal banshee wails with riff parts that are downright nü-metal at points. The intro to "Predatory" sounds like Scott Stapp and Scott Weiland duetting over risingly tense guitar plucking. Then the pummel riff comes on. Rinse and repeat. Some riffs are catchy for the short time they're presented, but then they disappear in favor of the next riff, and for every sweet riff, there's five "meh" ones. The record has a lot going on, but methinks John K needs to 1) capitalize on his strengths (clean epic singing) and 2) avoid taking publicity stunts where he's dressed in a Hannibal Lecter/Slipknot getup. (by Asa)

Coffins Buried Death

20 BUCK SPIN

Finally *D.U.* gets to hear the Japanese band on album, the ones that are getting written about so much. The first song is reminiscent of Winter, as are other parts of the record, but that makes sense, as Winter invoked Celtic Frost too. It's not really fair to class Coffins as strictly doom as that brings slow riffs and southern grooves to mind. The latter doesn't appear on *Buried Death* at all, thankfully. By the time they rip into the third track, "Cadaver Blood," they bring their slow doom to the forefront, followed by

the Frost gallop again, and then a fast part, surprisingly, all accompanied by that "rrrrggghhh" guitar and bass tone. Ouch! It's nice to see a mix between the Frost/Winter and the crushing doom. A strong as nails, ass-kicking effort from these Japanese sickos—really nice guys and hateful live, by the way!
www.20bucks핀.com

Collapsar Integers

ESCAPE ARTIST

What we have here is an attractive digi-pack presentation and a band deserving of it. My review of Louisiana mathmetalmeticians Collapsar's first record (*D.U.* #34) expressed appreciation for their musicianship, but also the sense of weariness I felt from the constant time shifting that is the cornerstone of their jazz-informed style. It's what they do, and they do it very well—and the fatigue I expressed is nothing more than the experience of having been challenged. Challenging is good. Collapsar is good. Now that that's officially on the record, I can turn this shit off and put on some Barry Manilow. (by Lenny)

www.escapeartistrecords.com

The Cotton Soeterboek Band Twisted

CAF FINE

Right out of the gate there's a nice fat rock riff backed by a jazz organ, a clear sign these gents are in it to win it. Clearly, the mid-'70s are the sweet spot in the ears of The Cotton Soeterboek Band (who do not in fact hail from the American South as one might suspect, but Colorado). There are time-tested hooks and smoldering blues licks galore. Of course, it all sounds vaguely familiar—but isn't that the *raison d'être* of the contemporary classic rock/southern rock stylist? Ultimately, I cannot recommend this

record because the first song is far and away the strongest and the rest of it is sappy and way boring. (by Lenny)
www.cottonsoeterboekband.com

The Dream Is Dead/The Gates of Slumber split 7"

RELAPSE

D.U. loves us some The Dream Is Dead, so this split is a welcome arrival. They deliver a Twisted Sister cover which is meh, and one of their own numbers, "The Praetorian," typically viscious. The Gates of Slumber turn in a very good Samhain cover, although this reviewer hasn't heard the original. If you love either or both bands, pick it up.
www.relapse.com

Dr. Slagleberry *Tuc Into the Tar!*

CRASH

Three songs recorded live on some British radio show called XFM, and what songs they are. With strong, energetic production, *Tuc Into the Tar!* is an enjoyable slab of instrumental prog metal, but perhaps the metal should come before the prog—no keyboards or psychedelic interludes here. These songs are a heavy, infectious good time and have a few left turns in them. Good job!
www.crash-records.co.uk

Dustsucker *Apocalypse of One*

While the musical influences might be clear to many listeners, it's right on the tip of this reviewer's tongue, yet still out of reach. Lyrically, there's a massive JR "Pig Destroyer" Hayes influence (one could even say "of Musical Darwinism fame"), or at least it reads that way. In any case, *Apocalypse of One* is a raging self-released album of nine songs constructed to play like one giant movement. After a while one would think they have Dustsucker's sound figured out, but then the last song takes a few turns unexpected, which is a nice quality these days. There's plenty of solid heavy rock/metal guitar and drum programming work here, and this reviewer is happy that Dustsucker has once again submitted music for inclusion in the zine, because Dustsucker rules. Interestingly, there's no contact info in the sleeve, but luckily we know how to get in touch with this one-man band from The Netherlands ...
www.myspace.com/dustsucker

Evile *Enter the Grave*

EARACHE

Above all, UK up-and-comers Evile display a penchant for the thrash metal of classic bands like Exodus and Testament. They execute the style well enough. The competent production on this record was achieved by none other than Fleming Rasmussen of Metallica and Morbid Angel fame. (by Lenny)

Heresi *Psalm II-Infusco Ignis*

HYDRA HEAD

I had high expectations for this one after spying the pitch-black, Goya-esque quasi-mythological cover painting of a horrific morphological convergence of a wing, skull, and gluttonous gaping maw. It's catchy melodic black metal like Hemlock, Watain, or Dissection. While powerfully performed, very well produced, and reasonably convincing, I find it underwhelming taken on the whole due to the sheer lack of originality. They take no chances and play it safe all the way. (by Lenny)
www.hydrahead.com

The Hidden Hand *The Resurrection of Whiskey Foote*

SOUTHERN LORD

Ah, yes ... one of the umpteenth stoner/doom trios Scott "Wino" Weinrich has fronted. But any heshier blessed enough to hear the tenege of past groups the Obsessed and Spirit Caravan know that Wino brings the soul along with his Sabbath worship, both in his vocals and his six-string slinging. "Purple Neon Dream" is a solid opener, albeit a misleading one, a tad bereft of the usual heaviness of Weinrich's doing. "Someday Soon" kicks that notion right out the door as he and bassist/singer Bruce Falkinburg dip their instruments in molasses to trudge forth with a perfect balance of swing and sludge, adding a tasteful "Southern" sound as they detail the mythic doings of Whiskey Foote. Some moments are even a bit reminiscent of Goatsnake's doom classic *Flower of Disease*, but never enough to make the record sound derived. Also of high praise are the song lengths—most of the nine tracks hover around the four-minute-mark. Instead of wearing the listener's ears in with riff-repeating monotony, Wino, Falkinburg and drummer Evan Tanner know exactly how to get in, get out and merit another immediate listen to nearly every cut on the record. Damn shame these guys have split; the future for Wino remains bright, however, as he joins The Melvins' Dale Crover, Neurosis' Scott Kelly and Sleep/Om's Al Cisneros in Shrinebuilder. (by Asa)
www.southernlord.com

Impiety *Dominator* mini-CD

PULVERISED

The mighty Impiety return once more to slash and slaughter with Slaytanic precision. Blasting forth from the smoldering death pits of Singapore, this elite and unabashedly hateful force expulses poisonous black vomit into the face of anyone foolhardy enough to dare stand in the way of an evil that's triumphant and ever on the march. Beware: here's no peace, nor sensitivity—on past records their lyrics have venerated historical mass butchering of humanity. Yet, far from serving as the pulpit for a clan of mere racists, Impiety is an artistic invocation of violent misanthropy. Like an accursed mirror, they forcibly and relentlessly serve up for humankind a twisted reflection of its own horrifying capacity for murder and mayhem under the banner of whichever lies served the end. This record also includes a rapacious Sarcófagó cover that outpaces Impiety's

closest competitors in the Sarcófagó cover stakes by a solid 2 and 10 seconds, respectively. I can say without risk of hyperbole that Impiety hopes you fucking die. (by Lenny)
www.pulverised.net

Incarnated *Pleasure of Consumption*

SELFMADEGOD

Extremely harsh and concentrated guitar frequency reeking of Old Sweden—with crushing riffs to boot! Animalistic guttural vocals sound like a lion is devouring your head. Unstoppable grinding drums. Bizarre noise guitar solos. Total brutality. All the time. No one is safe. Not even the president. Poland's Incarnated steamrolls over your fucking existence like the Hunter Killers in *The Terminator!* (by Lenny)
www.selfmadegod.com

Ipecac Lollipops/The Brown Bag Drunks split CD

DISSECTED ANGEL

A warning on the back of the CD reads: "All music written under the influence. Do not try this at home." Fair enough. Two bands from Ohio teamed up for this split. Ipecac Lollipops deliver goregrind-style vocals and thin production over a drum machine, with lots of odd samples of 1950s authority figures talking about drugs, among other things, interwoven in the songs. There's some cool ideas here and there.

As for Tha BBD, we find more musicality and songcraft, although with similar thin production and a machine. (*D.U.* should mention that the zine obviously has no problem with drum machine bands.) Lots of ripping, fast riffs and d-beats, and there's even a lead and singing back-ups. It'd be interesting to hear this material recorded by a full lineup.
www.myspace.com/dissectedangelrecords

Lair of the Minotaur *War Metal Battle Master*

SOUTHERN LORD

Chicago's Lair of the Minotaur's third full-length offering to the gods of the Greeks is meaty and fleshy—a mythic display of teeth gnashing and blood drinking from a discombobulation of freshly cleaved human appendages—just as anyone who's seen or heard them before should expect. This recording has all the saturated heaviness and signature gut-busting vocals, and once more the instrumental performances are spot on. They even mix up the beats a bit more on this one, while the doom metal moments that appeared on their debut have lapsed. Check this out if you want some non-derivative American death metal that is utterly traditional while simultaneously sounding atypical of the majority of the genre's representatives. (by Lenny)
www.southernlord.com

Lazarus Blackstar *Tomb of Internal Winter*

FUTURE NOISE

The Brits have turned in an EP of some doom with which *D.U.* can get down. With large helpings of hate in the vocals, appropriately thick yet clear production, and plenty of variety across the three songs, *Tomb of Internal Winter* hits the ground running (or should we say plodding) and keeps going. When they turn in a gallop beat or a slow grinding beat, it's doomy and vicious, and when the singer lets us know what he and the band are trying to say lyrically, he uses wide range of vocal styles, which is very refreshing. The music doesn't stick with one idea for each song; far from it. Lazarus Blackstar understands well that there's many different ways to approach doom metal and this EP is much better for it. The boys know what they're doing and are very good at it.
www.future-noise.co.uk

Light Yourself On Fire *Love and Death*

SEVENTH RULE

A six-song EP full of energy, crunch, dissonance, samples, and hardcore sentiments, *Love and Death* isn't your usual Floridian metallic hardcore, kiddies. That certainly goes for the vocalist, who has his own style, going from low to raspy to spoken. He bases some of his lyrics on short stories and some on personal experience, so there's thought behind it. The band isn't afraid to change up the mood on this EP either, as they do on "Intimacy." This reviewer is impressed with Light Yourself On Fire's brand of choppy, swirling, mid-paced music.
www.seventhrule.com

Netherbird *The Ghost Collector*

PULVERISED

Imagine the gothic theatre of a King Diamond opus. Sanguine aristocrats making merry at a secret and doubtless Satanic masked ball. An icy bell chimes, tolling the hour of a deceived virgin's fate—you know the deal. Then, if you will, imagine a slick, modern Swedish melodic metal band with a meticulously polished production, prevalent yet tasteful keyboards, the occasional clean female vocal, burly death metal grunts à la old Amorphis, black metal hissing, whispers, and various bird sound effects. I expect there's some kind of narrative going on, but the story remains unclear. Though "keyboards" and "clean female vocal" are typical code words people like myself look for when casually perusing reviews of records we won't buy, I feel I should take an extra moment to add that this is well-played and actually quite listenable. (by Lenny)
www.pulverised.net

Passion *The Fierce Urgency of Now*

GOODFELLOW

Ah—another metalcore melodrama of fake angst realized through incessant screaming, thick production, and start-stop rhythms. I understand they are now defunct. Good for them. Damn, what a hater I can be. (by Lenny)
www.goodfellowrecords.com

Pro-Pain *No End in Sight*

REGAIN

It starts out just how one might have expected (hoped?) Pro-Pain would sound at this point in time—with their East Coast urban flavor undiluted and sporting major wood for the concussive rhythms that helped make Hatebreed a household brand. I was thinking, alright, this is solid shit, they're keeping it real, it's not bad. But then other songs came, and oh, sweet sodomized Jesus, how they suck! The problem is the repetition of (alleged) hooks featuring so-bad-it's-surreal vocal experimentations that keep coming and coming much to my sheer terror. One song has this idiotic pop-punk chorus going on forever and another one—a full on power metal-style anthem—leaves you feeling like you just got kicked down a flight of stairs while strapped to 10 lbs. of shit in a 5 lb. bag. Are you wise to da game? And then, like the welcome return of an old friend, the bruising metalcore once again rears its ugly, meaty face. Pound for pound, that streetwise, slugging approach full of familiar clichés has always been their strong suit, and it might have made for a decent album if they hadn't saw fit to work in so many awful parts to muck up the works. **(by Lenny)**

www.regainrecords.com

Ramming Speed *Brainwreck*

TEENAGE DISCO BLOODBATH

The thrash revival has been old and stale for a while now, so hearing another record from that batch isn't a thrilling proposition. While Ramming Speed has plenty of touring under its belt, and the chops to play thrash, nothing exciting is coming out in terms of the compositions. The lyrics are mostly about politics/social subjects, which is great, but the band uses the standard associations for the genre: "we're a beer-soaked thrash band." Napalm Death gets name-dropped when reading about this band, but *D.U.* doesn't hear it beyond some blast beats Ramming Speed employs. All in all, not a bad effort by any means, but there's other bands *D.U.*'d rather listen to for this kind of material.

www.tdbrecords.com

Mark Riddick *Killustration: The Art of Mark Riddick*

What we have here is a softcover book packed full of bursting with Riddick's illustrations from over the years. A good deal of it has graced the covers and t-shirts of tons of death/grind bands, such as Arsis, The Black Dahlia Murder, Circle of Dead Children, Dying Fetus, Misery Index, and Through the Eyes of the Dead. There's also a section displaying some of the many band logos Riddick designed. In fact he has another book out on just that subject.

Whether it's digital art or old-school pen and ink, the man knows his guts and his zombies, and he knows how to make not only bands but also readers happy.

www.riddickart.com

Rudimentary Peni *No More Pain*

SOUTHERN LORD

The Peni are pillars of the anarcho-punk movement, and therefore should bear some audibly significant sound. And yet, the first two songs are little more than one or two riffs repeated at a healthy midtempo ad nauseum with a tightly wounded throat uttering minimal lyrics like "I will you show fear in a handful of dust." "Eyes of the Dead" more or less continues the pattern. "Grave Object" almost manages to break the monotony with a bit of feedback towards the beginning, but then settles back into that samey, steady chug. Their seemingly non-ironic cover of Pachbel's "Canon in E" is indeed rudimentary, and could've been excised with little detriment as it progresses at the same tempo as the rest of the songs on the record, only with an added dose of sloppiness. The veterans' playing sounds incredibly tired; perhaps there will be no more pain when a sense of urgency is injected at some point in their future releases. **(by Asa)**

www.southernlord.com

Samothrace *Life's Trade*

20 BUCK SPIN

In the post-Eyehategod sludge ghetto, any aspiring act of such narcotic persuasion joins the ranks of a bloated fraternity of undistinguishable plodders. A huge guitar sound is crucial, and Samothrace chooses a distortion with an agreeably grainy, slow, and chunky break-up, like gargling a gravel pit. Good so far. What next? Musical content. With some bands, typically more commercially viable ones steeped in bourgeois nostalgia for the '70s, it's all about tripping on the good-time boogie out in the desert. With other comers, aping Burning Witch or Corrupted is du jour—and for others still, whiskey-sodden feedback and vague notions of Southernness come to bear—but for Samothrace, melancholic melodies and harmonies are the sweet spot, and they do an appreciable job invoking the somber. Conservative pacing is an understatement. Spare yet sprawling arrangements consisting typically of only one or two themes. Delicately woven guitar flourishes. If My Dying Bride were equipped with a precious handful of blues licks and living a reflective, threadbare existence on the windswept plains of the American Midwest, a Samothrace might you have. **(by Lenny)**

www.20bucks핀.com

Those Who Bring the Torture *Tank Gasmask Ammo*

PULVERISED

These guys have a dumb name. Their album artwork is also dumb and so is this album title. The music is pretty decent though, being a crushing blend of death metal and grindcore elements. Though it's all put together well and up and running with a good head of steam, I can't help feeling that they're missing something. Something important. Maybe it's the vacant concept or slop-job art direction that's throwing me off, but probably it's the whole picture, which ultimately leaves the distinct impression of a paint-by-numbers affair. Despite these complaints, I found myself enjoying this record

DISPOSABLE UNDERGROUND 40

more the second spin. **(by Lenny)**

www.pulverised.net

Slank *Anthem for the Broken Hearted*

What sounds like a totally lame American wuss-rock band is actually a totally lame Indonesian wuss-rock band. These self-styled slacker jocks got love for Allah (may his peace be upon you!), they're sweet on their pretty girlfriends, AND they like to get high every night. Coolness, dude! You should buy this record and pirate as many copies as your computer can handle, in keeping with Indonesian custom. **(by Lenny)**

www.slank.com

SOS *Adult Situations*

3:16 PRODUCTIONS

SOS is pumping, groovy rock music from NYC. They sound like a good, honest club band without pretense or ridiculous posturing. No frills, nothing fancy, just solid rocking that isn't derivative. You can't go wrong with that. **(by Lenny)**

www.316productions.com

Taste of Fear/The Communion split CD

LIFELESS MIND

A filthy-looking CD containing filthy-sounding music. Taste of Fear should be familiar to those who are into crusty punk hardcore. They put in a bristling performance here, with fuzzy guitars, guttural vocals, Discharge beats and blast beats. Some of the songs are faster, while others have a mid-paced crunch feel. It's good, unclean fun.

The Communion is cleaning house, with two tracks left over from 2007 that feature strong production and vicious musicianship. The two other tracks will leave the listener that follows The Communion nonplussed. One is a quick, 20-second grinder that's very simplistic by The Communion's standards, and the other is a 20-minute-plus electronic noise track, much of which produced through guitar feedback and effects. One can't say whether this is a new direction for The Communion or just a filled need to stretch the experimental muscles.

lifelessmind@hotmail.com

Third Degree *Punk Sugar*

SELFMADEGOD

I avoided this record because of the cover art of a screaming little girl holding cotton candy. Then, when I was finally (reluctantly) opening the packaging I noticed it was released by Poland's Selfmadegod Records. Ah ha! Me thinks this might actually be good! Poles Third Degree deliver something like contemporary Euro-hardcore/grind, in which d-beats, occasional blasts, and churning mechanical-sounding riffs are minced and simmered in a postmodern stew with assorted root vegetables and discarded computer parts. If you like stuff like Counterblast, Sayyadina, Wolf Brigade, and most especially *Diatribes*-and-newer Napalm Death, you are the kind of decadent who would enjoy this record. **(by Lenny)**

www.selfmadegod.com

Thousandswilldie promo

DYING FAITH

The band is giving away 12 tracks peeled from four of their releases via free download, which is awfully nice of them. And this band rips, so this reviewer isn't advising against downloading the package, certainly. The package rips too—a PDF comes with the tracks, so you can print it out and cut it out and fold it, and—what do you know—you have a four-panel booklet suddenly. It's definitely worth it, and the lyrics are definitely worth reading. You can't say that about all bands...

www.myspace.com/thousandswilldiegrind

Today is the Day *self-titled* + *Supernova*

SUPERNOVA

Since their inception, Today is the Day have remained defiantly original, seamlessly juxtaposing the most chaotic elements of noise-rock and grindcore while carving out their own specific, psychically damaged idiom to spite any kind of homogenized genre trapping. Truly menacing music is a real rarity, but Steve Austin knows how to evoke exactly that: when he spits out the lyrics from "Kai Piranha"—with its twisted, lumbering riffs and schizophrenic vocal phrasing—the vibe TITD create is assuredly one of authentic evil, easily more disturbing than, well, pretty much every grindcore band you can imagine all lumped together.

Despite frequently changing personnel from album to album, Austin's supporting rhythm sections are consistently of the the highest order. On both the self-titled album and *Supernova*, as each track unravels and gradually threatens to derail completely into free noise-dirges, the insanely tight drums and bass always manage to keep the chaos contained, somehow. It's too uncommon to hear a band so uniquely damaged (and damaging), driven by a truly sociopathic sense of "mission" and equipped with the proper tools to carry it out. When Austin screams "Kill the children and burn their souls/Strip them naked/Shoot to kill," you're hard-pressed to think that he's just fucking around. These two early releases document the singular, batshit-crazy genius that is Today is the Day, and both are as compelling as they are brutal and disturbing. The bonus tracks don't deviate whatsoever from the TITD sound, and while they're not quite up to the quality of the material released on the original albums, their inclusion certainly cements the fact that these re-releases are absolutely essential purchases. **(by Mason)**

www.supernovarecords.net

Turn Me On Dead Man *Technicolour Mother*

ALTERNATIVE TENTACLES

Wow, what a fabulous analog sound! Compared to the lame digital productions on all

these metal records, this is as deep and rich with mineral deposits as the great earth mother's rocky womb. Turn Me On Dead Man is that sweaty stranger on a street corner offering you a little pill from his upturned palm. Are you experienced? (by Lenny) www.alternativentacles.com

Vixen *Live and Learn*

DEMOLITION

Hey everybody, Vixen is still around. Apparently they've been off-again on-again since '91. I have vague memories of a video on MTV circa '88 or so—light pink leotards and tights, black lace gloves, ragged strips of silken fabric adorning various body parts, shocks of ungovernable platinum blonde hair (am I right?). Well, this album features some of the original gals teamed with a new vocalist. Vixen today delivers everything a nostalgic Vixen or Bon Jovi fan who came of age in the late '80s could possibly want—a well-played and well-produced rock record that delivers their tried-and-true message of love and heartbreak wrapped in a mature package that (much to their credit) doesn't shy away from acknowledging the passing of time. Calling all cougars! Dust off your acid-washed mom jeans and that white leather jacket with the cowboy fringe; the girls are back in town! (by Lenny) www.demolitionrecords.com

Wetnurse *Invisible City*

SEVENTH RULE

Calling New York City's Wetnurse a band would mislead a reader. To understand them you must think in terms of boxing. You expect to see fighters, you expect punches, but instead you're kicked in the face. By the referee. Wetnurse doesn't act or sound like other bands, and that's a refreshing change. My first exposure to Wetnurse was at DC's Warehouse Next Door, September 2005. They seemed shy onstage, perhaps a little awkward. I was hooked as soon as they started playing. Lots of emotion, palm-muting, and original music all without a smidgen of pretense. I gladly bought their self-titled CD, which brought me happily back to earlier days, with my hair down to my waist and a room full of thrash tapes.

One of my first impressions of *Invisible City* was that the production sounds almost exactly like the previous release. Vocalist Gene Fowler is moderately low in the mix, guitars are prominent and almost warmly distorted, and drummer Curran Reynolds sounds eerily similar to the last full-length. None of this is bad, mind you—it's a great recording. Where Wetnurse's self-titled CD boasted complicated palm-muting and spacing, *Invisible City* is more melodic and contains power chords reminiscent of early metal. I enjoyed the first CD so much I hoped for more of the same. *Invisible City* has a different sound. It isn't afraid to move around in musical styles, going from faded stadium sounds to modern heavy and even acoustic. Yet Wetnurse is not a band that sounds like it's saying, "Hey, look what styles we can do." Wetnurse can be a modern update to older styles of music in a respectful and interesting way. The variety is one of *Invisible City*'s greatest strengths.

Wetnurse is a musician's band. Look elsewhere for the tight pants and poppy Swedish metal jams. What you get instead is audible honesty, and freedom to get a

sound across without living up to an image. The sounds have grown and diversified, though I sometimes yearn for the complexity that overflowed from Wetnurse's first CD. Still, *Invisible City* is an excellent release from a band you don't want to miss. (by "American" Dave) www.seventhrule.com ■

DVDs

Dark Funeral *Attera Orbis Terrarum Part II*

REGAIN

Another two-discer from these Satan-loving Swedes. The first disc is another high-quality, multiple-angle Argentine gig during which we get to see these guys tear shit up with blast beats, screams, and sharp black metal riffing. There's also a fan-shot section, clips from North American tours over the past 10 years. Disc two is more of the same, this time with a gig from Sao Paulo and fan-shot clips from South American tours. Those South Americans love their black metal and they really love Dark Funeral. It's great to watch these mofos light one up on stage on this DVD collection. www.regainrecords.com

Fuck the System

LOADED DIGITAL

A porno flick taking costumes and situations from the punk/hardcore music scene, like gutter punks exchanging sex acts for change and intercourse in front of a band playing at a bar. Punk bands fill the background music. There's extras including lots of behind-the-scenes footage including conversations with some of the girls. The package includes a CD with bands from the soundtrack. Nice and nasty and filthy, and not bad at all. www.loadeddigital.com

Porn of the Dead

LOADED DIGITAL

Another porno flick, with five different scenes, the concept is zombie guys and zombie girls with bloodshed after some of the orgasms, and a death metal soundtrack. There's some extras like a few cum shots that didn't make the final cut, and as above, lots of behind-the-scenes footage including impromptu conversations with some of the zombie girls. Good fun. www.loadeddigital.com

Vinyl Scrapyard

Billups Allen, previously of Generalissimo (see *D.U.* #17) and Darkest Hour back in the day, picks the brains of independent record store owners and clerks in this 30-minute documentary about the decline of such stores. The subjects of the interviews do all the talking and express all the views found in the piece, a DVD-R release. Entertaining, and you'll find yourself nodding in approval or smiling at least once. www.billupsallen.com ■

Musical Darwinism with JR Hayes

D.U. played JR some records. Here are his first impressions of each.

Bloodsworn *All Hyllest Til Satan*

AGONIA

Now that's a metal riff. A little "Four Horsemen," maybe, a little gallop? Oh, pooppy black metal drum machine. You gotta have more than one riff in a metal song, you know what I mean? I don't see what's so dark about this shit. It just sounds bad. The chiming guitar sound; the treble's all cranked up. Take this out. This is terrible. Can't take it.

www.agoniarecords.com

John Wilkes Booth *Sic Semper Tyrannis*

TRIPLE T

This kinda reminds me of Only Living Witness. Like a heavier Quicksand, post hardcore, all those Revelation bands, Orange 9mm, all that shit. Reminds me a lot of Rollins Band too, the way he's kinda talk-singing the vocals a little bit. The guitars are fuzzy; that's pretty cool. The drummer sounds like he's listened to some Helmet records. This sounds like a band you'd see open for a band that you like, you know what I mean? Like, you go see Kreator at Jaxx and these guys are fuckin' opening that show. This is alright. It's not my thing.

www.jwbooth.net

Runemagick *Voyage to Desolation/Dawn of the End*

ENUCLEATION

See, this looks like it's gonna be black metal as hell, but it already doesn't sound like black metal. The drums sound too good; the guitars have too much low end. It almost sounds like a Dick Dale riff or somethin', like a surf riff. Oh, that's got Jungle Rot

written all over it. It's not a total lost cause. I mean, it still shits over almost all the metal you'll hear anytime recently, but it's it's just boring. It's not my thing. Take it out.

www.enucleationrecords.com

Rwake *Voices of Omens*

RELAPSE

I'm kinda biased 'cause I like this band. I wasn't crazy about this record, but it's still a good record. 'Cause I like the first album, too, but it was more like you were listening to the potential of the band than you were listenin' to this great record. You were thinkin', "This band could make a really good record, but it's just not this record." There's a little bit of change up with the vocals, but the guitar players are really good. They come up with some creative stuff. You heard Thou, that doom band from New Orleans? They kinda remind me of this band, because the guitar players are the strength of the band.

www.relapse.com

Wino *Punctuated Equilibrium*

SOUTHERN LORD

The word "punctuated" isn't very rock. Sounds like something Ron Keel would do, or ... too funky for Dokken. I just mean it's got that Night Ranger groove. There's a million stoner rock bands you could prob'ly reference, but it's just Wino doing his thing. It rocks like ZZ Top would rock or something. Your dad could rock out to this. Fuzzed out boogie stoner. This record is very Sabbath. Sabbath Sabbath Sabbath.

www.southernlord.com

If you didn't see your release reviewed in this issue, it's because a) I didn't want to review it, or b) it didn't make it this issue and will (hopefully) appear next time. Thank you for your patience. Disposable Underground by

Richard Johnson unless otherwise noted, in 2009.

Disclaimer: Richard's band is signed to Selfmadegod, whose releases are reviewed herein, and released a split with Antigama, whose new album likewise appears here.

Contributors this issue: "American" Dave Kline, Asa Eidenhardt, JR Hayes, Lenny Likas, Mason.

—Richard Johnson, editor

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