

**48 THRILLS: *That's How It Go!Oh!Ohs!:* CD**

My choice of listening material when leaving work is highly influenced by the preceding nine hours or so—if it's been a day in which I feel I have achieved something then I can hit 'Random' and will almost certainly be happy with the outcome. However, it's more usually the case that, having dealt with petty office politics, dunderheads, and an IT system that works to its own "let's fuck with the users" approach, I'm in need of a musical elixir to help me regain my sense of self. I have a playlist consisting of bands, artists, songs, and albums—all of which have the power to return me to my former self. 48 Thrills has just made that list with this, its second album and first release in four years. The equation is simple, featuring big guitars and anthemic songs with hooks aplenty, leading to a collection of refrains and choruses that nestle firmly into my consciousness with ease. It's the kind of music that gives me that much needed reboot thus making the trip on a crowded bus infinitely more bearable. By the time I alight the vehicle, I find that I'm ready to bounce along for the half mile walk home and, as such, able to greet my wife and kids with a smile rather than a scowl. This is by far the best 48 Thrills release to date, much of which is down to the all-round upbeat quality it possesses. I must acknowledge my own stupidity in that the first two notes of the excellent "No Excuses for Regrets" always lead me to believe I'm in for a cover of Jane Wiedlin's "Rush Hour"—even having heard it over two dozen times. —Rich Cocksedge (Self-released, 48thrills@gmail.com, 48thrills.bandcamp.com)

**ACHTUNGS, THE: *Full of Hate:* LP**

Lo-fi garage punk rock from this trio of trouble. Guitar distortion hangs over the songs like a dense, buzzing fog, with the belligerent vocals buried in there—though you can hear them—just not exactly clearly. There's some attitude that huffs and puffs amongst the driving tempos, urgent beats, and dirty guitar growling. Just about every song on here is a keeper, but really, the ultimate standout of this record is the slow, late night burner "Feeling inside of Me." Which alone is reason to snap this up. It comes on unexpectedly after a string of mid to moderately fast rockers. The bass gives this a morose feel, backed up by vocals that give the listener an idea of reflection and pangs of regret. Then the guitars have a psychedelic edge that really helps work this one into your brain. One of those songs you get up and put back on a couple more times before letting

the rest of the record play through. Then again, once "I Don't Want You" closes the record, the first thought, and rational response, is to flip this record over and listen to it again. —M.Avrq (Going Underground, goingunderground.storenvy.com)

**ACxDC: *Discography 03-13: Picture Disc:* LP**

I'm a rock'n'roll fan and, by default, an AC/DC fan. So whatever the contents of this record, the copycat/ripoff band name and logo are a real putoff. And that's probably the point. Powerviolence like this has a very specific audience, one that probably thinks the real AC/DC sucks big balls. But even as a fan of D.R.I., C.O.C., S.O.D., and T.N.T., this collection of riff raff is still noise (pollution) to me. And while there's no beating around the bush musically, I gotta give it up for the concept of using shit like *Lebowski* and *Casino* as lyric fodder, though the execution just doesn't flick my switch. Regardless, since this is a singles collection, you already know if this is gonna fire your guns or not. Buyer beware though, side two is some seriously ruff stuff with badly recorded live songs and demos, though at twenty-three songs itself, side one contains more than enough decently recorded studio cuts to get fully kicked in the teeth. Man, if I could have been a fly on the wall for that band name discussion... —Chad Williams (To Live A Lie, tolivealie.com, info@tolivealie.com)

**ADVLTS: *Self-titled:* EP**

It's the cover art that drew me to this. It's their logo that looks to be made up of torn bits of paper shaping the letters, running diagonally from the bottom left corner to the upper right. When you're sifting through the review boxes here at the Razorcake bunker, you have to rely on the old ways of choosing records, which is artwork, song titles, record label, ex-band members, and gut instinct. Those modes are not failsafe, especially these days (we all know anything after 1985 is highly suspect). But one of those applied methods is at least guaranteed to work ninety-five percent of the time. I applied cover art, as described above, and song titles: "Bag for My Head," "It Hurts," and "Chopped in Half." With that combo, I should be at least have some sort of expectation met. Though not snotty and slobbering, like I was expecting, Advlts kick out some catchy as hell punk rock that is pretty dern good, and has more going on, as revealed in subsequent listens. The songs are wound tight, with the bass bouncing off the drums, and the guitar jangling and scratching up next to them. The

vocalist has a sort of dry sound, and you can hear the words come through nice and sort of clear. “It Hurts” brings to mind early Wire, with the bass nice and strong in the mix, while the guitar skanks rickety notes, and there’s a dual vocal interplay. “Bag for My Head” is the standout due to its strong opening, somewhat sassy vocal delivery, and the lines, “I hate your face! I need a bag for my head!” sandwiched between a driving and super catchy riff. If I was to keep some sort of “best of…” list, then this one would be in it for sure. –M.Avrq (Southpaw, southpawdistro@yahoo.com, southpaw-records.com)

### **AGGROCULTURE: *Destiny Calls: 7” EP***

Straight streetpunk with a flash of pop. Aggroculture out of Orange County has an amateurish sound, but it’s pretty decent. Clash and Social Distortion work fine as comparisons, I suppose. They aren’t reinventing the wheel here, not that I think they have any plans to. Just own it. –Camillye Reynolds (Crowd Control Media, crowdcontrolmedia.net)

### **AJ DAVILA: *Terror Amor: LP***

The “chopped and screwed” vocals are largely unnecessary. Maybe a good gimmick for one song, but otherwise distracting and detracting from the songs. Outside of this, fans of Davila 666 will surely like this record. It’s got a similarly rowdy, Stooges-riffery, gang singalong vibe as Davila 666 albums, and even features fellow members on most of the songs. “2333” is my favorite. Sing it in English or Spanish and it’s just as catchy. Put it on your list of summer jams. –Sal Lucci (Nacional)

### **AMBER / LOCKTENDER: *Split: EP***

The minimalist packaging (unless an insert was lost in the mail) gives virtually no information about this record. Is this the birth of “mysterious guy” metal? A search on the web reveals this is a split on Halo Of Flies, who usually have some nice packaging. Anyhow, Amber are contemporary metal that has a bit of crust and hardcore swirling around, not to mention some emo-esque guitar parts. Throaty vocals devoid of much emotion blanket the song, but it doesn’t have my attention. Locktender are along the same lines, only with a touch more tension in their song. The throaty vocal thing here also blankets the song and buries some of the nuances in the music. On the whole, this record does nothing for me, as neither band does anything

to distinguish themselves from others of the genre. – M.Avrq (Halo Of Flies, halooffliesrecords.com)

### **AMERICAN MEMORIES: *Dreadful Night: Cassette***

It’s that mid-tempo, brooding, pretty-to-frantic-back-to-pretty screamo stuff that kind of faded from the collective radar ten or so years ago. It’s a genre that I still like, at least when it’s done well—and yeah, it’s done well here. Think Amanda Woodward, Todos Caeran, or Book Of Caves. Made up of two guys; there are only five songs here, and, unfortunately, no lyrics included. I was hoping these were epic, world-weary tunes about humanity’s unchecked desire for its own ruination, or maybe a treatise on Mandeville’s 1714 essay *An Enquiry into the Origin of Moral Virtue*, or something lofty like that. I mean, hey, it’s screamo! You kinda *gotta* write about obtuse shit like that, right? But the singer thanks “all the girls who made him bummed out” in the liner notes so that he had something to write songs about. Meaning these are probably just break-up tunes. Still, nice tape. –Keith Rosson (Lost State)

### **AMISTAD: *Amistad Y Rebelión: LP***

Kinda expected some heavy Discharge aping based on the cover/logo art, but what ye get for your buck(s) here is mid-tempo punk anthems and double-time pop-thrash *en Castellano* from a Spanish band well versed in modern punk conventions. Don’t usually go for this kind of stuff, but there’s a bit of an edge buried inside there somewhere to balance things so that the pop doesn’t get to syrupy. Their lyrics are strong as well, eloquently blending the personal, the political, and the poetic into a seamless whole with none of the ingredients diluting the flavor of the others. –Jimmy Alvarado (Amistad, accidentepunk.blogspot.com.es)

### **AMOEBAS: *“Telephone” b/w “Ain’t About Her”: 7”***

Time to shout from the rooftops, Modern Action has a new slab of vinyl out! Amoebas put out one of my favorite records of 2011 with their self-titled 12” and I really couldn’t wait to hear what they’ve got going on. Right off the bat, these are a couple of amazing songs but there is something slightly different going on here. It sounds less trashy than their previous effort. A little more—I can’t say polished—but... just different. Different and great! Like much of what goes on over at Modern Action, if you dig The Bodies or The Briefs, you know you will like it. Keep ‘em coming guys! –Ty Stranglehold (Modern Action)

**ANGER HOUSE: *Asleep: 7"***

Emo in the “before it was a bad word” D.C.-sense. An incredibly accurate, charmingly sloppy, palpably passionate throwback to Rites Of Spring, Embrace, 3, and One Last Wish. Strained, speak-yell vocals, plenty of repetition in the lyrics, vintage tones, and a very fitting production job make this one a definite “highly recommended” for fans of the above trailblazers and current stuff ala End Of A Year/Self Defense Family. Great job, folks. –Dave Williams (Happy Ass)

**ANOMALYS, THE: *Deadline Blues: 7"***

Tremolo- and reverbed-out straight-up garage rock from these Dutch cats. Well-played, beautifully-recorded, simple songs that are likely real ass-shakers in a live setting. Not really my thing, but it’s certainly well done. –Dave Williams (Slovenly)

**ANONYMOUSE: *2014 Demo: Cassette***

I confess that there was a time when, in dire need of a condom, I used one that had been thrown from stage to audience. (Hey, it was the ‘90s! I was young!) I’m not sure if, even then, I would have ever use one I got from a cassette bearing Crass stencil, as found in this Anonymouse demo. Based on the signifiers alone, I was expecting pretty much what I got: angry and impassioned slogans over tinny oompa hardcore. Unlike a lot of anarcho stuff, there is some melody to be found here, especially in the vocals—both the lead and backing variety are obviously American guys trying to sound British, and the production values are way too good to pass as a relic of foregone times. Still, not too shabby for what it is. –Michael T. Fournier (anonymouse.bandcamp.com)

**ANTI-FLAG: *A Document of Dissent: CD***

Twenty-six-song collection pretty much spanning the band’s recorded output. So here, on one easy-to-digest disc, you can follow the band’s sonic trajectory from their early spirit o’ 77 sound to their current, modern post-hardcore one. Though never a big fan of the band’s music, I have always respected the stances they take on issues and causes they support. Nothing new here for longtime fans, but this disc would make a great introduction to the band for casual listeners. –Garrett Barnwell (Fat, fatwreck.com)

**ANTI-NOWHERE LEAGUE: *We Are...The League... Uncut: CD***

A new recording of this classic? Yep, it is true. It sounds good, but whether or not you need this next to the original is your call. Apparently, the original record was banned by the police because of the lyrics on “So What.” It’s unclear if the lyrics had to be cleaned up back then to get it back into circulation. But, according to the liner notes, this recording features the original lyrics. So if you are into doing A/B geek comparisons, feel free. I wonder if this will sell more than Fear’s re-recording. –Sean Koepenick (antinowhereleague.com)

**AR-KAICS, THE: *Self-titled: LP***

Do the math: LP=more of what you love. This is a full-length from a Richmond band whose singles have been full-on bankers for value if you’re into the ratchety end of the ‘60s punk revival bands. Solid rock’n’roll with overdriven guitars, snotty attitude, Bo Diddley beats, and choruses with excellent back ups. Too many bands nowadays seem to think this sort of thing is easy to do. Those Thee types only walking the walk will falter at some point. This band is the full package. Never has something so unoriginal sounded so fresh. –Billups Allen (Windian, windianrecords.com)

**ARMADA, LA: *Crisis: 12"EP***

Originally from the Dominican Republic, Chicago’s La Armada has been bringing the “Latino Hardcore Fury” to audiences for nearly ten years. *Crisis* is the follow-up to the band’s 2012 self-titled debut on label Fat Sandwich. That album was a milestone for La Armada as they transformed from the more straightforward hardcore punk sound of previous albums and drew in a wider array of influences spanning punk, hardcore, and metal. *Crisis* is a natural extension of that forward evolution. Combining such an array of influences can be difficult to pull off, but La Armada’s songwriting and their musicianship are more than up to the challenge. Few current bands can rival them in terms of technical skill, never mind having the chemistry these guys have after playing together for so long. *Crisis* includes not only a number of ripping new songs, but also allows the band a moment to reflect on their roots. One track on side A of the record is them blasting through a medley of Bad Brains covers “Don’t Need It/Attitude/Shitfit,” as seamlessly as if they’d written the songs themselves. The record features creepy-looking apocalyptic cover art and comes with a lyric sheet that includes English

translations of their lyrics, a fold out poster, and an “UnBaptismal certificate.” The certificate details crimes of the church and encourages listeners to renounce their Christian faith. It fits the anti-religious and radical political messages of the band. –Paul J. Comeau (Fat Sandwich, armadahardcore@gmail.com)

### **ARNDALLES: *Dog Hobbies USA: 12” EP***

The Arndales are a thoroughly British post-punk group, featuring at least one member of the Country Teasers. I never got into the Country Teasers (everyone around me seemed to—hell, even JA released that The Rebel record), and that might have been my loss, as this EP is good. No doubt Arndales are familiar with Marc Riley, but there’s no nostalgia here. The production on this record is modern-sounding and the music is anything but by-the-numbers. You likely already know if this record is for you, as it surely has a limited audience (always a good thing) and I’m admittedly late to the party. –Ryan Leach (In The Red, intheredrecords.com)

### **ATTALLA: *Self-titled: CD***

Attalla proudly wear their Black Sabbath influence on their collective sleeve. However, they have some work ahead of them if they want to be in the league with other stoney bands like Sabbath, Electric Wizard, or Weedeater. There’s a lethargy that hangs over these recordings that make listening to this a bit of slog. Maybe they smoked too much weed in the studio. But there this “just get it done and let’s go home” vibe to these songs. Things pick up with “Lust.” The bass could use a touch more distortion, but that just might be my preference. The tempo on this song is more up than the prior two, and there’s more going on in the overall structure to make it more of an interesting listen. The singer sounds a hell of a lot like Danzig, which I found more preferable than the “growly, shouty dude” style that seems to be in many of the contemporary stoner rock bands. The second half of “Thorn” is pretty good, recalling later period Ozzy-era Sabbath (these riffs sound familiar, as well as the change up). “Veil” may be the best of the bunch. It rocks more than the others, with the quick tempo, and the drums coming to the fore. More songs like this in the future, please! Plus the sinister guitar tone in the opening of “Doom” is nice, with its dark and dirty feel, as though evil lurks around the corner. Attalla aren’t terrible. They just have some more work to do on their sound. The elements are there. Lose the first couple songs from this disc and focus on creating more like what’s on the last half. –M.Avrq (Attalla, attallabloodyattalla@gmail.com)

### **AUDACITY: *Juvajive: 10”***

A younger, looser recording session with small hints of the summer punk hit machines that Audacity would become. More of a curiosity than anything else, but it was very interesting. A long lost record, with back story included in the liner notes, featuring their first drummer, described as a man that mimics The Minutemen’s George Hurley. The band as a whole resembles an ‘80s band on the edge of the hardcore punk scene. Too rough to be anything else but punk, but too experimental and wild to sound similar to other punk bands. Buy this if you want to hear yet another phase of a band that’s been constantly evolving for almost a decade. Grade: B. –Bryan Static (Cut-Rate, cutraterecords.com / Burger, burgerrecords.org)

### **AUTONOMY / NO SIR I WON’T: *Split: LP***

You would think a band would do a cursory Internet search before choosing their name. I’m sure I have more than one record by a band called Autonomy, and they are all “anarcho,” if that’s even a genre. Was totally expecting some Crass or D.I.R.T.-style U.K. black clad peace punk, and what I got was a band that sounded like Fugazi or some other revolution summer band from DC. No Sir I Won’t are definitely more expected, but much more hard-driving Conflict than off-kilter Crass vibes. The lyrics fall squarely into the long anarchist rant department, which is okay by me—shit still needs to be said right? Falling on deaf ears maybe, but better to say it than not. I dig both of these bands a lot. –Tim Brooks (Dirt Cult, dirtcultrecords.com)

### **BAD DATES: *Self-titled: Cassette***

Surf punk. Fucking rad. If P.I.L.-era Johnny Rotten sang over X’s Billy Zoom, and they had a steam engine for a rhythm section behind them, it might be good enough to compete with Bad Dates. This is the second review in this cycle that I have done for a release from Don’t Touch My Records and they have both been much-needed bright spots in an otherwise disappointing cycle of reviews. Do your ears a favor: check out Bad Dates and Don’t Touch My Records. –John Mule (Don’t Touch My Records, donttouchmyrecords.bandcamp.com)

### **BAD DOCTORS, THE: *Burning City: LP***

Over a series of previous EPs, The Bad Doctors formulated a collection of addicting new wave-influenced tunes with a heavy nod to Devo. The synth-driven sound that got me hooked on them is still present, but where records

like the “*Twilight of the Idols*” b/w “*Spit It Out*” 7” had a manic exuberance to them, *Burning City* feels darker. The exuberance is still there hiding beneath the surface, but it is tempered by a sense of gravitas, as in songs like “Departure (Letter by Letter),” and the title track. Much of this gravitas is carried vocally, with Matt McDermott delivering his finest vocal performance of any Doctors recording to date. Musically, he and the rest of the band are equally on point. The trio, McDermott (vocals, guitar), Luke Nally (bass, synthesizers and electronics), and Dan Shields (drums), have increased the dosage of both songwriting and musicianship on this record. The result is not only some of the most nuanced tracks in the Doctors catalog, but a host of catchy earworms sure to infect your brain with contagious tunes. While three of the songs on *Burning City* appeared on the previous *Re Animate* EP, as a whole, this album feels like a new evolution for the Bad Doctors. –Paul J. Comeau (FDH, thebadoctors@gmail.com)

#### **BAD IDEAS, THE / RED KATE: Split: 7”**

Right off the bat, The Bad Ideas’ frontwoman dominates the mix, wielding a reverb-drenched howl à la Siouxsie Sioux to great effect. The anarcho-leaning gothy sound is complemented by discordant riffs and blunt, driving drums. “I’m Stuck” mixes in some well-placed ranting, delivered in that perfect sarcastic riot grrrl sneer. Not usually my jam, but this band nails it (despite the mystifying refrain of, “Wussification of America!” which sounds like a misplaced Glenn Beck segment). Red Kate’s tracks on the flip side are less immediately arresting, but subdued might be what works best for them anyway. “On My Mind” has a plaintive ‘90s alt-rock feel that overshadows the more punk, less memorable follow-up track. All in all, a worthwhile slice of Midwestern punk rock. –Indiana Laub (Mills, millsrecordcompany@gmail.com, millsrecordcompany.com)

#### **BARBATOS / RAPEGOAT: Split: 7”**

This split took quite a few spins, it just wasn’t grabbing me. I sat down and gave it another shot today. Side A is two songs from the Japanese metal band Barbatos. I haven’t really listened to metal consistently since sometime around the late ‘90s. Today I can finally hear it. Barbatos is of the stuff that melts faces. They have screeched and squealed their way into my heart. I had no idea they’ve been putting out recordings since ‘98! Rapegoat opens with an original by the name of “Ass

Blood.” It’s what you’d expect of a tune by that name. For their second ditty, they cover Celtic Frost’s “Into the Crypt of Rays.” They play it a little slower and a little simpler but a great cover choice for them. I don’t know how these two bands got hooked up, but it’s a cohesive little split. –Jackie Rusted (Mystery School Records, mysteryschoolrecords.com)

#### **BASTARD CHILDREN: *To Kill in Cold Blood*: LP**

Bastard Children were an excellent 1990s political hardcore band that reminds me of The Pist. This LP contains two of their cassette-only releases from 1996 and 1998, as well as an unreleased demo. Members of Bastard Children went on to play in better remembered acts including Religious War, Wehrmacht, and Poison Idea. National Dust keeps putting out these amazing reissues of little known or forgotten bands. Anyone who ever played in an overlooked hardcore band should know that someone, somewhere might end up rediscovering them. Something as great as these Bastard Children tapes will never die, thanks to an uncommonly enthusiastic label. It’s not just sentimentality. This potent shit is legitimately worth archiving. –Art Ettinger (National Dust)

#### **BATON ROUGE: *Totem*: LP**

Artfully crafted, spacious, modern, wide-awake-dream-sequences with Slinty Jehu influences. These songs sound so meticulously assembled; it would only seem natural that members of this band were architects. Mapping out the album with AutoCAD-like precision. These are as much blueprints as songs. This is music that fuels your mind. Just throw it on and let the guitars sustain your brain. –Daryl (Adagio 830 / Purepainsugar / Bakery Outlet)

#### **BEACH SLANG: *Who Would Ever Want Anything So Broken?: 7” EP***

My first blush, knee-jerk reaction to this was an admittedly obscure one—”Piles”-era Alter Boys as interpreted by the Psychedelic Furs. Several subsequent listens later, I stand by that assessment. What’s it mean? Four tunes comprised of mid-tempo rhythms, quasi-raspy vocals, and meaty, punky pop hooks buried under a gorgeous wash of ringing guitars. These cats would’ve been revered in the underground of the ‘80s and worshipped as indie-pop gods in the ‘90s, and they would’ve deserved every accolade laid at their feet. Given the roughly twenty-year “what’s old is new”

nostalgia cycle, they could conceivably become the next big thing. –Jimmy Alvarado (Dead Broke)

**BEAR TRADE: *Blood and Sand*: LP**

Sunshine state melodic pop punk by way of merry ol' England. I guess it was only a matter of time before someone not from Gainesville took a swing at this, but what a big swing it is. Dillinger Four / Tiltwheel style guitar attacks coupled with the heart-string pulling lyrics reminiscent of This Is My Fist! and the Arrivals all sung back with a charming British accent much like Alan McNaughton of Giant Haystacks / Airfix Kits or Frankie Stubbs of Leatherface. A full-length as a debut is quite the tall order but most of the necessary components for a pleasurable listen seem to be in place, and while it's too soon to say for sure if they keep the momentum going Bear Trade could turn out to be something truly magical. –Juan Espinosa (Everything Sucks / Dead Broke, [everythingssucks.com](http://everythingssucks.com), [beartrade.bandcamp.com](http://beartrade.bandcamp.com))

**BEDLAM: *Mr. Rejex*: CD-R**

Blistering hardcore punk that brings to mind flashes of early Dayglo Abortions. Works for me. –Ty Stranglehold ([facebook.com/Bedlamxcchcx](http://facebook.com/Bedlamxcchcx))

**BENEATH THE CELLAR: *Lesions*: CD**

So I guess these guys self-label themselves as “horror punk” but consider The Grateful Dead a major influence? Anyway, its thrashy guitar and Danzig type caterwauling. It's serviceable enough, but nothing here knocked me out of my chair. If you are into graveyards and zombies, this may be a good addition to your collection. –Sean Koepenick ([nothingbutanightmare.com](http://nothingbutanightmare.com))

**BENEDICKTUX: *Pravus Musica*: CDEP**

Finnish hardcore from a band that was apparently on a two-year break but is now back in action. There's a helluva lot of metal infused into the tunes and their singer opts for a gruff growl here. Can't say it blew my skirt up much, but on the whole I've definitely heard much, much worse. –Jimmy Alvarado (Benedicktux, [facebook.com/benedicktux](http://facebook.com/benedicktux))

**BILDERS: *2014: 7"***

This 7" puts the “ear” in eerie. Bilders macabre, poetic vocals remind me of Vincent Price's “Thriller” intro monologue, with what I thought was synth—turns out

it's e-violin? Neat. Since Halloween is coming up, I might just put the speakers in the front window, blaring this creepiness to keep the little shits who stole our kids' Radio Flyer out of our yard. Enjoyable and practical. –Jackie Rusted (SmartGuy, [smartguyrecords.com](http://smartguyrecords.com))

**BITTER FRUIT: *It Gets Worse*: CD**

Everything about this—from the artwork to their sound—screams psychedelic punk rock. The vocals and instruments sound drenched in effects. The vocals remind me of Nick Blinko (Rudimentary Peni) if he was singing over Christian Death songs. Rather than a bunch of carefully written, poetic lyrics, there's a discomfort and angst here. *It Gets Worse* was recorded at the Ouija Cub in San Francisco. I'm picturing a lot of folks who look like rejects from a Tim Burton film in the audience. These guys sound really tight as a band, which makes for a good live record. –Ryan Nichols (Vetoxa, [vetoaxarecords@gmail.com](mailto:vetoaxarecords@gmail.com))

**BLACK WINE: *Yell Boss*: LP**

Bands should take more risks. I understand that you're good at one thing and you've spent your entire creative life revolving around this *one thing*, but human experience isn't monochromatic. *Fact*: Pushing outside of your comfort zone makes more engaging art. Black Wine do just that. They bring a lot to the table, and what they bring to this potluck is nourishing. Each member gets behind the microphone, sharing songwriting duties. It's energizing to hear three voices—each tuneful and distinguished—filtered through three distinct styles. On “No Reason,” Black Wine swirl like Hunchback, then rage like Hüsker Dü on “Magnet Time.” Closing the A Side, a solo Miranda Taylor mellows into a creeping melody on “Familiar,” then they shift up on “Piccoline” into a closing riff that would floor Tenement. Although the cover of The Guess Who's “No Time” is solid, I just wish those vinyl grooves were saved for another original song. *Fact*: It's satisfying to be treated to a potluck where all the guests didn't opt for casserole and bean dip. Highly recommended. –Sean Arenas (Don Giovanni, [dongiovannirecords.com](http://dongiovannirecords.com))

**BLANK PAGES: *Self-titled*: LP**

Musically, this ain't bad. It sounds like a European take on the Pacific Northwest's downer punk. Unfortunately, despite the competent musicianship, the songs all seem to blend together, leaving me without a single track that popped out. Even worse are the lyrics. While I'm

not thrilled with the human race and enjoy my share of bummers songs (hell, albums), I prefer my negative outlooks and despondency to be accompanied by a dose of catharsis. Here, however, the no-hope vibe seems like emo grade self-indulgent, focusing on the inability to form relationships with others because people are fake and shitty and you're too depressed to move. There comes a point where it may be worthwhile to look at the problem inside of that. Mighta been able to roll with a 7" single's worth of material, but an LP was too much. –Vincent (Dirt Cult)

### **B-LINES: *Opening Band*: LP**

When I saw this in my review pile I got really excited. A few years ago I saw these guys play a house show in Seattle on the last night of their tour from Vancouver. They fucking rocked. I bought their self-titled record and never heard from them again till now. B-Lines are a snotty, trashy, lo-fi, power pop punk rock'n'roll mixture. Songs are fast and straight to the point with a ton of energy on every track. Lots of attitude and confidence in the vocals, especially in the title track of the record, dissing on opening bands that just don't try. I really love the lyric: "cus being embarrassing is more appealing / than lying at home in bed and staring at my ceiling," from the same track. The ending of the record is these four Canadians freaking out on each of their respective instruments. Great, spastic garage rock in the same vein as stuff found on Burger Records. Here's hoping they get out on tour again soon! –Kayla Greet (Hockey Dad / Nominal)

### **BLUNT FORCE: *2014 Demo*: Cassette**

The recording on this cassette. Cassettes bring a lot of nostalgia with them. We all remember the time that our friend brought of some demo or taped-over-a-thousand-times cassette cartridge and it became the ever-life-changing moment that we first heard oi or hardcore. Blunt Force took me back there. Thanks, dudes. –John Mule (Self-released)

### **BRICK MOWER: *Teenage Graceland*: LP**

I hear '90s melodic punk, like Jawbreaker or J Church, before "emo" became the mainstream modifier. I hear Acid Fast on the West Coast and labelmates Black Wine. I hear strained vocals and plodding, mid-tempo melodies that never pay off. What I don't hear is Brick Mower, a fully actualized band whose sound gels the sum of their parts into something fresh. The earnestness kept me

listening, but the all-too-familiarity left me wanting. –Sean Arenas (Don Giovanni, dongiovannirecords.com)

### **BURNERS: *Adults*: Cassette**

If Kid Dynamite grew up listening to No Idea Records' bands. Or maybe if Lifetime was just as inspired by RVIVR? The recordings are tight and the band has talent, but the songs are constructed by elements that you've heard before. Your enjoyment of the music would more or less depend on if you think punk has gotten too slow these last few years. The songs hit hard and fast, and the musical changes are plentiful enough to entertain even the weariest of reviewers. Excellently performed, but borderline average songwriting. I'll withhold full judgment until I hear an LP from these guys. Grade: B. –Bryan Static (Muckman Pizza Point, no address listed)

### **BURNING KITCHEN: *Many Wonder about the Meaning of Life... (1993-2000)*: 2 x LP**

As discographies go, this thirty-two track collection of a Swedish band active for most of the 1990s stands out as a raging success. That accomplishment is not just because it documents a fine band but also because it's easy to listen to the whole thing in one sitting, a feat which eludes the collective works of some bands. I put this fact down to one thing—there is a consistency to the strength of the song writing from start to finish, making it almost compulsory to not skip sides or tracks. For anyone new to Burning Kitchen, the crux of what it did—or does, as the band is back together now—is an up-tempo, melodic thrust which accompanies lyrics that had crosshairs placed on many societal and political issues that are sadly still relevant today. Even though it's not a constant, there is a definite similarity to The Avengers on some tracks, none more so than the opener, "Stenad Stad," which musically and vocally is a case of taking a time machine back to late 1970s San Francisco and listening to Penelope Houston and co. Easily one of the best discographies I've heard in a few years. –Rich Cocksedge (Man In Decline, manindeclinerecords.com)

### **BUZZCOCKS, THE: *The Way*: CD**

New record from these punk legends carries on the quality that was evident in their last effort, 2006's *Flat Pack Philosophy*. Steve Diggie and Pete Shelley splitting the songwriting duties. Shelley sticks to "lost love" ideas, while Diggie is more off kilter. Shelley

shines on the title track and “Virtually Real.” Diggle goes for broke on “People are Strange Machines” and “Chasing Rainbows/Modern Times.” The tough-as-nails rhythm section of Danny Farrant on drums and Chris Remington anchors the proceedings with bombast. Be sure to seek out four songs from this session that didn’t make the record (but should have in these days of bonus content). The playing on *The Way* is stellar throughout, so why you *wouldn’t* pick this up makes as much sense as listening to Celine Dion for pleasure. –Sean Koepenick (Buzzcocks.com)

### **CAL AND THE CALORIES: Demo: 7”**

Lumpy And The Dumpers by any other name is Cal And The Calories. Same shit-fi recording, weirdo lyrics (“I know I’m ugly and I smell like Spam”) and stupid asshole vocals but not hardcore-tinged like Lumpy. Can’t say it’s more “poppy,” though. In other words, buy this fucking record, knucklehead. –Sal Lucci (Spud Boy Incorporated, spottedrace.bigcartel.com)

### **CAMPAIGN: Enemies: Cassette**

Atlanta’s Campaign are catchy like ‘90s skate punk, but play at a thrashing speed with beefy guitars. My reference points are a little out of date, but I could see them doing well on the Bridge 9 scene with Strike Anywhere. –Chris Terry (itlikestparty.com)

### **CANADIAN RIFLE: Deep Ends: Cassette**

You can tell the difference between guitar-driven bands and bass-driven bands. Chicago has a long bass-driven history: Raygun, 8 Bark, most of the Touch And Go roster. Add Canadian Rifle to the list of Chi-town luminaries. *Deep Ends* is a perfect snapshot of a band hitting its stride, shorter than their first full length, but laser sharp in its precision. I was recently discussing trust and it’s an easy leap that a band that has graced a *Razorcake* cover will have won your trust. Their members will be genuine and their tunes follow suit. Raw, gruff, and real... and “Fucked Up When You Die” might be the happiest sad song ever screamed into the void. Highly recommended. –Matt Seward (Dead Broke)

### **CANCERS: “Dig” b/w “Moral Net”: 7”**

Catchy-as-hell, filthy-as-shite grunge pop from Lenny Unfun and Ella Dead Dog. Truthfully, I’m already pretty goddamned worn out on the grunge-revival thing, but this is a few cuts above most of the derivative Nirvana

and/or Dino Jr worship that dum-dums still think is fresh and clever. Great pop songs, awesome vocals, and simple, memorable riffs. The b-side is even a clean(ish) ballad that hits the intended target dead-on. Killer. – Dave Williams (Dead Broke / Dirt Cult / Kandy Kane / Off The Books)

### **CAPITALIST KIDS: At a Loss: CD**

In the nineties, I once heard a Christian hardcore band who growled their excitement about The Christ saving their souls over Earth Crisis-style e-chord crunch. Besides being absolutely hideous, they were also baffling. If they were so stoked about the redemption of their buttclenched Protestant asses then why were they trying to sound so pissed off about it? Key word here: *trying*. They missed the point. It came off as insincere. Now this might sound completely unfair, but Capitalist Kids remind me of that band, not when they’re playing annoying, toothless pop songs about girls, but when they’re trying to be political. When they repeat the bouncy refrain critiquing “infinite growth on a finite planet” I don’t believe them. When they sing “bop da da bop bop, ba da da da bop, state-sanctioned murder, woah-oh-oh”, sound like they’re stoked about it. They make it sound like something I should add to my shopping list. Don’t get me wrong, I’m sure these guys care about these issues, but obviously, not enough to break from formula. The reason these songs suck is right there in the first song “Not ‘95”. In this song, they complain about how “nobody in this town likes pop-punk”. See, Capitalist Kids say they “only care for melodies/interesting words/like spelling bees/occasionally (having) something to say”. “Some hate (their) songs about politics/Others hate the tunes about pretty chicks”, but Capitalist Kids don’t care because they’re “only doing this for fun”. More power to ‘em, but that’s my problem: their political songs are *fun*, the songs about girls are trite and, son, pop-punk sucked long before ‘95. –Craven Rock (It’s Alive)

### **CARTE DE VISITE: Be a River: 7”**

Rough, jangly emo/indie rock in the vein of some of my old faves like Penfold, Christie Front Drive, Promise Ring, some Kind Of Like Spitting vibes, and definite hints of Sebadoh/Dino Jr here and there. Cool, angry, hopeful bum-out songs that are typical of the genre without being a direct copycat of anything in particular. A refreshing take on a resurging style (as opposed to the hordes of too-slick, Midwest-emo-revivalists churning

out slabs of Kinsella-clone mediocrity). –Dave Williams (Float Away, Dangling, floatawaydangling.tumblr.com)

### **CASTRO: *Hidden Agenda: 7***

If *Razorcake* reviews had headlines, this one would be “Aging Norwegian Punks Form Band and Release Outstanding Debut 7.” In lieu of such a sea change taking place in this publication, let me give you the facts. In terms of personnel, Castro includes members of Life... But How To Live It?, Angor Wat, and Israelvis. All three of the songs owe a huge debt to the vocals of Katja Osvold whose voice possesses a quivering, yet formidable, quality that I find hugely appealing and which makes this record for me with its dynamic delivery. Musically, it’s a fusion of punk and rock in equal parts, much like Osvold’s previous band, Life... But How To Live It?, was able to do so well, with guitars adding a handful of memorable leads to provide some extra flesh to the bones of the songs. All three tracks are superb, but in “Glass House” Castro has written a track which broods, bites, and explodes over a four-minute period, having me reach to return the stylus to the opening groove as soon as the last note has faded away. –Rich Cocksedge (Kong Tiki, kongtiki.com/ Boss Tuneage, bosstuneage.com)

### **CHEST PAIN: *Weltschmerz*: LP**

Chest Pain has built some hype on the internet. That’s always hit or miss (and rarely the band’s fault in the latter’s case). Either my expectations are set too high and the band falls flat or the band is, in fact, *that* good. Thankfully, Chest Pain, from Austin, Texas, deserve a beehive worth of buzz. They’ve chucked the blood-pumping elements of hardcore, grind, powerviolence, fastcore, and all those other meaningless nomenclatures into the proverbial blender. From the blender, the spiraling mess of elements are agitated over a hot flame and, through some form of reverse osmosis, purified into a pissed-off medley comprised of everything exhilarating about extreme punk music. They then poured all of that dark, oozy goodness into a circular disk for our listening pleasure. The drums somehow speed up and slow down at head-spinning rates while the buffet of brief attacks constantly juke, avoiding all tedium. My only gripe is that the vocals sometimes have an echo-y effect that detracts from the overall impact. This is an LP for hardcore fans who are burnt out and for those prepared to move onto the next level.

Big bonus: The LP includes a large fold-out poster of the cover art. –Sean Arenas (To Live A Lie, tolivealie.com, tolivealie@gmail.com)

### **CINEMA CINEMA: *A Night at the Fights*: CD**

Weird mix of Touch And Go-styled skronk rock and maybe early grunge. Can’t really say it works for me, but they get points for going the extra mile and writing tunes with some structural heft and nuance. –Jimmy Alvarado (Cinema Cinema, cinemacinema.bandcamp.com)

### **COL•LAPSE: *Enfonsat*: LP**

Somewhere between a very polished down Dag Nasty Can I Say and some band like Turning Point. Poppy and melodic hardcore punk that is so clean there’s not much, if any, soul left. The recording is huge. You can hear the bass and drums and nearly feel them pounding across the floor, while the guitars are certainly up in your face with the vocals, but this lacks that needed grit and dirt to be convincing and attention grabbing. I’ve sat and listened to this album front to back at least ten times tonight, thinking maybe it might grow on me, and after each listen I’m still feeling “meh” about it. I hear bits and pieces in the songs that I like, such as “Ansia De Veritat,” with the guitar riff at the beginning that wants to wind the listener up into something high energy, but it’s not enough to warrant deeper listening. What’s missing from this is desperation and urgency. The songs just lie there and don’t make much fuss—at least not one that is convincing. –M.Avr (Amendment, amendment-records.com, amendmentRecords@gmail.com)

### **COLD BEAT: *Over Me*: LP**

I’m impressed with this band. Hannah Lew, best known for being in Grass Widow, fronts and hits the low notes on bass, with members Kyle on guitar from Neon Piss and Bianca Sparta from Erase Errata. They create a sound all their own. Hannah’s ethereal vocals are at the forefront, ambient with layered, harmonized echoes; it both soothes and propels. Cold Beat has an undeniable new wave sound, with its intricate post-punk melodic guitar, synthesizers, and mid-tempo beat. Each song is incredibly catchy. Hannah has a way of layering her song melodies, building to a climax and then giving a very satisfying resolution which makes each song complete. Sounds like a mix of Blondie, Joy Division, Portishead, B-52’s, Go-Go’s, and Joanna Gruesome... at least those

bands came to mind throughout the course of listening to this LP. You can't really pigeon-hole them; it's an authentic sound. Great LP. –Camillye Reynolds (Crime On The Moon, [crimeonthemoon.com](http://crimeonthemoon.com))

**COLD CIRCUITS: *Out of Hat Yai*: LP**

This is my favorite record of the bunch this month; definitely some of the best post-punk I've heard in a while. The guitars sound like cables being strung, reminiscent of Big Black. Every song fits into the two-minute category. The lyrics are abstract and minimal and complement the music really well; you won't find any heart gushing songs here. If you're a fan of Steve Albini, the Crass Records bands, or Mission Of Burma, you'll really like this record. I could see these guys pairing up well with the Estranged. Cold Circuits plays tight and precise post-punk as it should be played. I would let these guys play my par-tay. –Ryan Nichols (Erste Theke Tonträger, [vaukajott@gmx.de](mailto:vaukajott@gmx.de))

**CORRUPT BASTARDS / CALAFIA PUTA: *Split 2012*: CD-R**

Corrupt Bastards and Calafia Puta both play powerviolence. Corrupt Bastards are from Houston. Calafia Puta are from Tijuana. Corrupt Bastards are screamier. Calafia Puta are more on the growling end of things. That's about all they gave me to work with. –Craven Rock (Self-released)

**COVE: Self-titled: LP**

Somewhere between Converge and Copout/His Hero Is Gone, lies Cove. True Memphis grit. Dirty black hardcore stinking of blood and excrement from the gutters of Boxtown. The soul difference between Stax and Motown. The LP is more polished sounding than their live sound, but the listener has the opportunity to hear every start/stop and every nook and cranny of each track. Cove finally delivers their distinct southern hardcore to vinyl and it is absolutely exciting and absolutely essential. –Matt Seward (Fat Sandwich, [fatsandwichrecords.com](http://fatsandwichrecords.com))

**CRIME: *Murder by Guitar*: LP**

One of the downsides of the Internet is the loss of mythology following certain bands. San Francisco's Crime is one of those groups written largely in lore. For a time, no one could acquire their singles and few could hear them on worn mix tapes. And nobody deserved the mystique more than Crime. The band released only three proper singles between 1976-1980 and helped

define punk with loud guitars and attitude. "Hot Wire My Heart" is the classic you may have heard. All their songs are that good. You can now use the Internet to order a collection of singles we would have killed for at one point. This LP contains the three impossible to find singles that launched the legend of San Francisco's self-proclaimed first rock'n'roll band as well as some good demos and such. It doesn't get better than this. –Billups Allen (Superior Viaduct)

**CRIME: *Murder by Guitar*: LP**

This release took me by surprise. Heard some Internet speculation that it was coming, but I believed that like I believe most Internet speculation. Their original 7" plus nine unreleased songs? Too much for my brain to handle. Crime is what punk rock should sound like. Or maybe The Pagans—I go back and forth a lot. Crime channels the essence of "fuck you" perfectly through their searing guitar tone. I was surprised cleaner versions of some of their songs existed, but that does nothing to diminish their power, even if they have songs like "Gangster Funk" or "Maserati." –Sal Lucci (Superior Viaduct, [superiorviaduct.com](http://superiorviaduct.com))

**CROW BAIT: *Sliding through the Halls of Fate*: CD**

I had to check my copy of *Three Tickle Guys* to make sure this was the same Crow Bait. *Sliding...* is like loving *Sorry Ma Forgot to Take Out the Trash* and the next album you buy is *Don't Tell a Soul* without realizing there were four LPs and eight years between. But not caring. Because it's genius. If your freshman year roommate had given you a dubbed tape of this album in pre-internet 1984, you would have thanked them for changing your life. It's like the-first-time-you-heard-*Murmur*-good. Hasn't left my car disc player since my review materials arrived. Hopefully that and dropping this many '80s rock analogies will clue you in that *Sliding...* is a shower, and a grower, unrestricted by genre, and will easily be a contender, if not the winner, for full-length of the year. –Matt Seward (Don Giovanni, [dongiovannirecords.com](http://dongiovannirecords.com))

**CRUDE STUDS: Self-titled: 7" EP**

Crude Studs has been a punk staple in the Sacramento scene going on three years, and are seriously one of my favorite bands. This is their first EP and it's well worth the wait. They've got a serious no-frills approach. What you see is what you get: simplistic, catchy, Cramps-style punk rock with a menacing surf-rock edge. Sophia

has great range in her voice, able to reach those high, piercing wails—very Siouxsie and the Banshees—but it’s gnarlier, dirtier, all tattered edges. Highlights include “Video Drome,” which gets all whipped up into a hot, frothy mess with a progression that walks the razor’s edge of anxiety attack and pure chaos. “Ground Chuck Night” is one minacious motherfucker. Sophia has her nails dug in tight with fed-up, shrill hollers of tenacious spite, all propelled with knuckle-dragging, almost primal bass and throbbing drums. Only one hundred pressed. GET IT. –Camille Reynolds (Phono Select)

**CRYPTICS, THE: *Continuous New Behavior*: LP**

Oh fellas, I am so sorry to do this, but this record sounds like it was recorded—drums, bass, vocals—and then someone accidentally turned the guitar up to eleven on the mixing board, including the guitar solos, thus drowning out everything else that makes a band a band. The guitar sound is so thick in my headphones that I’m not sure I can fairly judge the rest of the record. I see online that you have recently toured with Angry Samoans. That’s fucking rad. Sorry. I can’t give this record a John Mule stamp of approval. –John Mule (Pine Hill, pinehillrecords.bigcartel.com)

**CURTIS HARDING: *Soul Power*: CD**

The album is called *Soul Power*, he’s on the cover with a neck tattoo, smoking, and yet this sounds like music you could buy at Starbucks. Bland, professional R&B scuzzed up and made casual just enough to come off quote unquote real. I can appreciate that he can sing, that there’s a suggestion of Bill Withers and Cody Chesnutt in the music, and that when he goes off-script (the garage pop of “Surf” and “I Don’t Wanna Go Home,” the dirty blues of “Drive My Car,” the synth bubbles in “The Drive”) he hints at the wider, out-there Shuggie Otis or Prince possibilities he may have in store. But right now he’s making some easy throwback stuff in the age of Devonte Hynes, Frank Ocean, FKA twigs. He could do something remarkable. He just needs to catch up. –Matt Werts (Burger, burgerrecords.org)

**D BERRY ROTH: *Junkie Fuck*: CD-R**

I can’t tell you much about this artist from the mysterious internet, other than he lives in the South and likes to get high. This is a four-song release that deals exclusively with sex. The song titles would give you the nod to this anyway, but I thought I should make you an educated consumer. There’s only about nine minutes

of music here, so I should wrap this up. Think Metal Mike singing if he borrowed Steve Albini’s Roland and you get the picture. Raw but enjoyable.

–Sean Koepenick (facebook.com/dberryrooth)

**DADDY LONG LEGS: *Blood from a Stone*: CD**

Three piece combo originally from St. Louis now shacking up in NYC. Down and dirty swamp rock with wailing harp to muddy the waters. Usually I don’t gravitate towards bands that use cleaning utensils for percussion purposes, but I will give these guys a pass. If Mojo Nixon jammed with The Flesh Eaters, you might have gotten a hambone stew like Daddy Long Legs. –Sean Koepenick (deathtrainblues@yahoo.com, nortonrecords.com)

**DARTO: *Hex: 12” EP***

Four tracks of stoner jam-laden post-rock. The big sound thing that you envisage a post-rock band making is present and accounted for, and it gets kinda crazy and captivating at times. Haven’t listened too much in the genre since I saw Pelican live back in ‘08 or ‘09 and wished that I had a book with me because they were so boring, and it doesn’t seem like these folks bring much new to the table. This EP, while nice, won’t be turning me away from my Mogwai recordings the next time I have the slightest interest in hearing something along these lines. The record also came with a short story called *Faith*, which I will not be reading. –Vincent (Mother Image, motherimagerecords.com)

**DASHER: “Go Rambo” b/w “Time Flies”: 7”**

If I had any real problems with the first wave of post-punk, it’s that I never found the aggression in it that I really enjoyed about its punk rock predecessors. Modern music seems to finally be correcting this grave injustice in musical history. Dasher plays a brand of noisy post-punk whose vocals take more of a hardcore edge. The music is well-constructed and layered, but beautiful in its primitive anger. The only real problem this record has is the kerning on the cover art. I could have sworn that this band was named “Das Her” until I googled their name. Grade: B+. –Bryan Static (Die Slaughterhaus, dieslaughterhausrecords.com)

**DEAD ANYWAYS, THE: *Direct Me Home*: CD**

Four meat ‘n’ potatoes melodic punk anthems with gruff vocals, lyrics full of boozy regret, and a song called “Oscar Wilde at Heart.” My wife just walked in the

room and said, “I bet lots of girls in their hometown like this.” Right on, dudes. –Chris Terry (thedeadanyways.bandcamp.com)

### **DEAD BARS: Self-titled: 7”**

Guess what label this was released on, guys! Gruff pop punk, more or less inspired by the vocal delivery of bands like Hot Water Music, Leatherface, and Jawbreaker? Check! A “gritty” album cover, either drawn in oddly bright colors or a photo in black and white? Check! At least one member of a band you already know and love (ex-Big Eyes)? Check! Have you guessed it yet? It’s the newest from No Idea Records. As much as I kid, you can’t knock the label for lack of quality. Predictability? Well, maybe a little. We all have our tastes and if I ran my own label I’m sure people would quickly pinpoint exactly the type of music I actually like to listen to. Though Var has a predisposition for signing and releasing bands like Dead Bars, at least their songs are good. Grade: B. –Bryan Static (No Idea, noidearecords.com)

### **DEATH VALLEY GIRLS: Street Venom: Cassette**

Nine songs of a desert rock band channeling Bikini Kill vocals. Did you buy the record yet? The guitars rest in the sweet spot of fuzz before it gets too indistinguishable and after it’s well past the point of purity. The band as a whole works to create a sonic landscape, with the piercing high winds of the desert air seeping through the production, interrupted only by the grinding industrial sounds of a civilization. This is pioneer rock. This is cowboy garage fuzz. This is fucking amazing, get on it! Grade: A-. –Bryan Static (Burger, burgerrecords.org)

### **DESTRUCTORS, THE: Dolor Googler: CD**

Long-running English rabble rousers are back with another concept record. This platter tackles the quest for drinking enough booze to make people look better than they normally do. That’s the most tasteful way I can explain this, but you get the idea. “Punk Rock Piss Up” comes rollicking out of the stall, and it doesn’t let up until the last chord. “Whiskey Train” and “Don’t Mind If I Do” are some of the standouts here. So raise a glass, crank this bad boy up, and rock responsibly. –Sean Koepenick (thestructorsuk@gmail.com)

### **DEVIANTS, THE: Barbarian Princes: Live in Japan 1999: CD + DVD**

Wow, what in god’s holy name is this? Imagine a nasally Alan Rickman aping Bob Dylan over dull, dull, dull,

dull, rock’n’roll. The sound is good, so if you’re into these guys go ahead and pick it up, but I didn’t like it one bit. Yuck. –The Lord Kveldulfr (Gonzo Multimedia)

### **DFMK: Negatividad: 7”**

Another solid release from this Tijuana, Mexico powerhouse. Since the last few times I’ve been lucky enough to catch these guys live has been in the USA I almost forgot how great their double guitar sound is (one of the members can’t cross the border). Angel and Boti riffing off each other is a true treat. These recordings remind me just how much I love bands like the Descendents, T.S.O.L., and Avail. This is so unpretentiously punk and straightforward you can’t help being the guy who starts the circle pit. I hadn’t been that guy in years. Thank you, DFMK. Very highly recommended. –Rene Navarro (Blood Pact, bloodpactrecordstijuana.com / Detesta, detestarecords.webs.com / Barba Negra)

### **DIRTY NIL, THE: “Cinnamon” b/w “Guided by Vices”: 7”**

This record kind of blindsided me in that it certainly didn’t sound like what I’d expect to be coming out on Fat Wreck. This Canadian band deals more in raucous garage rock/pop than it does in the more standard, melodic punk fare that I’m accustomed to from the label, but I’m guessing it could well be a case of testing the waters as part of a diversification in its roster, much like Epitaph has done over the past decade. Whatever the reason for this choice, I back it one hundred percent. The Dirty Nil manages to grab my attention pretty damn quickly with “Cinnamon”—the musical equivalent of a firework exploding gloriously in my ears—before the wonderfully titled “Guided by Vices” snaps, crackles, and pops more than my favorite breakfast cereal could ever hope to do. This is sheer brilliance. –Rich Cocksedge (Fat Wreck, fatwreck.com)

### **DISTRACT / WARRIOR TRIBE: Split: Cassette**

Warrior Tribe play stomping hardcore with some gang vocals scattered throughout, influenced by New York hardcore and oi with some of the gnarlier modern hardcore sounds of bands like Fucked Up. The lead singer’s super masculine vocal would fit well into the aforementioned categories, but lyrics to “Flats” call out entitled meathead behavior and bros who have to start fights to feel strong while at the same time playing up a victim mentality. Good form! With only three songs,

Warrior Tribe show much more promise as a lyrically and socio-politically sound band. I'm not into Distract as much, but they put in some pretty solid, politically-relevant hardcore with lots of fast to slow tempo changes. However, both sides suffer from atrocious sound quality; another thing that sucks about the cassette trend is its blurring of the line between a demo and an official release. On that note, let's just call this a demo, because these are serious slop recordings. Bands to watch, regardless. –Craven Rock (Self-released)

**DOCTOR AND THE CRIPPENS: *Fired from the Circus: 2* x LP/CD**

Once again, Boss Tuneage raids the archives to bring some 1980s punk rock goodness into the new millennium. This time it's Doctor And The Crippens, a band best described as being utterly bonkers. With an approach that rarely settled on one method of delivery, this band was capable of taking the same USHC-influenced path that The Stupids trod, mixing it with the occasional Lemmy-like vocal and applying the same ferociousness that helped Discharge define a whole new genre, thus dispensing an enjoyable racket. However, the crowning glories are the lyrics/song titles, which, to this day, have me questioning the sanity of whoever wrote them and which confirm that earlier description. Plus there were exploding cabbages—okay, maybe not on record—but in a live setting this would be one of many unusual effects employed to add a sense of occasion to a Doctor And The Crippens show. This release brings together the band's first album, a twelve track John Peel Session, and some assorted demos and live recordings. What is noticeable is how the Peel recordings lost some of the raw quality of the album but in its place added a much more powerful sound—this was the case with many bands thrown into far superior surroundings than any had been privy to in the past. For me this release benefits from two versions of my favorite Crippens track, “Freezer,” with the Peel version having a much more melodic quality than one would expect from a band heavily influenced by noisier contemporaries. I would say half of the twenty-three tracks on the album stand the test of time, whereas the Peel Session is worth the price of the album alone. –Rich Cocksedge (Boss Tuneage, bosstuneage.com)

**DOCTOR AND THE CRIPPENS: *Fired from the Circus: 2* x LP/CD**

Once again Boss Tuneage delivers another crucial reissue

from the vaults. As always, I wonder how many people give a fuck apart from the couple of hundred who were actually there. This is another record that came out when I was sixteen and completely immersed in the UKHC scene. The Crippens from up North hit a middle ground between the U.K. blurrcore bands and U.S.-influenced bands like the Stupids and Intense Degree. The most notable thing about the band was they used stage props and had an almost lightweight Gwar stage show. This disc has the debut LP that is an absolute stormer as well as their first Peel session, possibly the best thing they did (I think this only because I remember lying in bed listening to the actual session the night before school). As far as I am concerned, Boss Tuneage's entire retro catalogue is mandatory for anyone with even the slightest interest in the late '80s U.K. hardcore scene. For me, it's much more than a history lesson; it's part of what made me who I am. Class. –Tim Brooks (Boss Tuneage, bosstuneage.com)

**DON'T: “89” b/w “Dead End Drive”: 7”**

Portland four-piece made up of three old dudes and a lady who provides whiny, Bif Naked-esque vocals. Trashy rock'n'roll, but not in an intentional or campy way. Their cover of “Ghost on the Highway” sounds just as shitty as the songs they wrote themselves. –Alanna Why (Dead Broke, deadbrokeec@gmail.com, deadbrokeekords.com)

**DRIP, THE: *A Presentation of Gruesome Poetics: CDEP***

These six tracks are blisteringly fast, clocking in at twelve minutes. It's as though Landmine Marathon had a male vocalist and sped up all their songs. Or perhaps it's more similar to Magrudergrind. Either way, you get a requisite throat clearing or two, some breakdowns, and a decent range of vocals from Brandon Caldwell—both screaming and growling. It's all over before you know it, but none of the songs do much to distinguish themselves. It's a frequent casualty with this sound: a lack of distinctiveness. It makes it hard for me to excitedly recommend this, but I suppose if you're a big fan of the style (speedy, hardcore grind? fast death metal?) then this'll do. –Kurt Morris (Relapse)

**DUKE DECTER ARMY / F: *Split: 7”***

Apparently F is a defunct old Florida punk band of some notoriety. And apparently they regrouped for their half of this split. Seems like kind of a pointless return though, with “two inessential new tracks” (their words),

not because they suck but because they're both rather pedestrian covers songs (Germs and The Seeds). The flipside is a newer band from F guitarist Duke Decter, with yet another cover song (Channel 3) and one lone original, which is pretty goddamn cool and makes me wish all four tunes on this record were originals. —Chad Williams (Jailhouse, jailhouserecords.com, info@jailhouserecords.com / Foolios, foolios.com, info@foolios.com)

### **DWARVES: *Invented Rock 'n'Roll*: LP**

Like I was saying last issue, 2014 is the year of the Dwarves. This latest full length offering from the undisputed Masters of Mayhem has yet another generation shaking their asses and questioning their morals. You have got to hand it to Blag Dahlia and company. Very few bands can come from the depths of depravity that the Dwarves have mined and survive as a band for thirty-plus years, let alone continue to evolve and actually *get better*. Punk, hardcore, pop, rock... The Dwarves do it all, and do it all better than most. As far as this record is concerned, I think that it's the most completely cohesive album they've done since *The Dwarves Are Young and Good Looking* (holy shit, did that really come out twenty years ago?). There isn't a dud to be found. As usual, the songs are so catchy and beg to be sung along with... You might want to be aware of your surroundings when you're singing aloud though. —Ty Stranglehold (Recess)

### **DWARVES: *Invented Rock'n'Roll*: Cassette**

The Dwarves!!! What I love about the Dwarves is that despite the myriad changes in lineup and sound over the years, their records are always, I mean *always*, good. They just fucking rock start to finish *every single time*. How can that be? How can a band be this consistently good and fresh not just over years, but decades?!? I mean, Christ...I got my first Dwarves record in 1990 and a quarter century later they still beat me senseless with every record. The Dwarves brand means quality rock'n'roll, goddammit, and this record lives up to expectations. Of course, these days (i.e., the last four records or so) those expectations consist of songs that alternate between bouncy, melodic, quasi-pop tunes with ultra-underbelly lyrical content and full-on punk rock ragers, along with a few forays into other genres here and there. And this record doesn't disappoint in that regard either, but it pains me greatly to say that it seems just a wee bit formulaic this time. Oh well.

Don't care. It's the fucking Dwarves, man! If anything, this record is a bit more heavily weighted on the rager side than the last several releases, and there's less production value on this record than we've gotten used to, so the overall effect is what I imagine would be the sonic equivalent of having my skin taken off with a blowtorch and enjoying it. The Dwarves!!! —The Lord Kveldulfr (Burger / Greedy)

### **EARWORMS: *Self-titled*: LP**

I've lived a reasonably virtuous life, so the karmic overlords are just gonna hafta cut me some slack for taking this one off midway thru the first side. I just did not want to fucking listen to it anymore. Sounded like a speedmetal version of Rites Of Spring before I pulled the plug. I'm sure this record will make its next owner very happy. I am not that owner. Goodbye. BEST SONG: "Occupy Earth" BEST SONG TITLE: "Bomb Threat Checklist" FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: This is challenging, but I'll say "Did you know the label for the b-side is solid black?" —Rev. Nørb (Dead Broke, deadbrokerecords.com / Money Fire, moneyfirerecords.com)

### **ECHOES: *The Pursuit*: CD**

Musically, this is heavy on the atmospherics—lots of echo, howling feedback, and the like. All well and good until the singer chimes in with guttural hollering that sounds about as fitting with the music as a fluffy meringue pie with bitumen. I'm all for experimentation and playing mix-and-match with different genres, but this is proof that not all such efforts bear edible fruit. —Jimmy Alvarado (Universal Warning, universalwarningrecords.com)

### **EL CAMINO CAR CRASH: *Routine*: 12" EP**

From Austria, El Camino Car Crash (ECCC)'s lineup includes former members of Within Walls and Unveil, though, thankfully, their new project is much less mosh-metal sounding than either of those bands. Instead, they draw their sound from '90s and early '00s hardcore influences. It's a vein mined heavily by a number of popular current American bands (of which I am not a fan), but ECCC's sound digs deeper and wider, producing something that sounds more original than their American contemporaries. While it's possible to recognize ECCC's influences, they are not a carbon copy of any past band. They get heavy, they get soft—bordering on melodic—but their music always

feels uniquely their own. If there's any place where ECCC feels a tad generic, it's lyrically. They cover the sort of positive, inspirational themes I would expect from a band on *Take It Back*, but there was nothing that I found particularly memorable. –Paul J. Comeau (Take It Back, [takeitbackrecords@googlemail.com](mailto:takeitbackrecords@googlemail.com), [elcaminocarcash@gmx.at](mailto:elcaminocarcash@gmx.at))

**ESCAPIST, THE: Self-titled: 7"**

How jangly do you like your anarcho punk? The jangleometer reading on this one is pretty high. Not quite in the red, but pretty high. The jangling is an interesting counterpoint to all the talk-yelling about how power corrupts and other punk rock 101 concepts. It gives everything a disjointed feel. This whole affair is a rickety wooden wagon rolling down a hill carrying angry people with megaphones, and it's pretty wild that the wheels seem to stay on. –MP Johnson ([escapistfin.bandcamp.com](http://escapistfin.bandcamp.com))

**ETTES: Cry on My Shoulder: 7"**

For whatever reason, I have not spent a whole lot of time with this band, outside of that LP by the Parting Gifts that a few members did with the illustrious Greg Cartwright a few years back. I have seen probably a dozen releases by The Ettes over the years and just have not ever picked one up. This single, on the fantastic D.C. label Windian Records, is a very cool slice of girl group pop and garage vibe. Both songs are excellent and show that this band has some real songwriting chops. I will have to finally get around to checking out more by this long-running band. –Mike Frame (Windian)

**EUREKA CALIFORNIA: Crunch: LP**

Pleasant pop offerings from Happy Happy Birthday To Me are not unusual, and Eureka California (no comma, and from Athens, GA, not Eureka, CA) is no exception. This platter offers eleven fun scrappy pop songs with a punk bent from a two-piece on guitar, vocals, and drums. The songs range from happy, to smartass (see "I Bet You Like Julian Cope," which uses its title as half the lyrical content), to introspective. The music has variety, but comes together cohesively as a singular piece, and the vocals are a nice snotty whine that has an underlying sense of urgency that give the songs a sense of honesty. Eureka California might have been more appropriately called Sacramento California, given the semblance they have to bands from that fair city (that's a really good thing). –Vincent (HHBTM)

**EVEN HAND: Self-titled: LP**

Wow, didn't know that people were still into that late '90s Jade Tree/early '00s Vagrant sound, let alone bands that wanted to sound like that. Coulda spent the rest of my days not knowing nothing about this stuff and I woulda been just fine. –Vincent (Mandible, [mandiblerecords.com](http://mandiblerecords.com))

**EWA BRAUN: Love Peace Noise: CD**

*Love Peace Noise* was originally released in '94. Ewa Braun was an anarcho punk band from Poland who played the sort of mathy post-hardcore that was really popular in the Midwest at the same time. However, these guys are passionate about revolution and sticking it to The Man and won't be content with the art school banality of bands playing in the same style. There's a raw quality to Ewa Braun making it almost seem like they came up with this sound independently of the similar things going on in the States. –Craven Rock (Nikt Nic Nie Wie, [nnnw.pl](http://nnnw.pl))

**EXTENDED SUICIDE: Self-titled: MLP**

Charred, fast hardcore punk from Denmark. They nail the prerequisite speedy blastbeat parts, but are still able to keep in interesting with pummeling slowdowns and feedback-infested intros. This isn't Ktown HC; Extended Suicide hail from Odense and play a style that would feel more at home on Kangaroo than Hjernesvind. Blunt and visceral, this band plays from their guts. When these eight songs are over, you'll be saying two things to yourself: "Well, that was badass," and "Holy shit, did I just drink that entire six pack?!" –Daryl (Putojefe, [putojeferecs@gmail.com](mailto:putojeferecs@gmail.com))

**EXTERNAL MENACE: Coalition Blues: LP**

Scotland's External Menace were an almost perfect distillation of the best of the whole UK82 head trip—they don't go for the full-on thrash-o-rama of, say, the Exploited or Disorder, but the same fury that charged those bands is very much in evidence behind most of their repertoire here, as are bits that recall the Partisans, Abrasive Wheels, One Way System, and others. Not that they sound wholly derivative, 'cause they handily eked their own niche within that well-worn terra, as evidenced on this collection of assorted singles and comp tracks. They swing for the fences throughout, seemingly hell bent that every track that bore their name would be an anthem, and they largely succeed, so much so that one can't help but wonder why they ain't on the

backs of more jackets. Nice addition to the collection any punk aficionado who manages to pick up one of the five hundred copies floating around. Also includes a bonus 7" with four tracks. –Jimmy Alvarado (Loud Punk)

#### **FAILURES' UNION: *Tethering*: LP**

Can I just end this review saying that they name drop both the Gin Blossoms and Goo Goo Dolls? No? (Audible sigh.) This record features of a bunch of songs that sound like they could have been written by '90s C-list guitar pop bands, mainly because the band was inspired by '90s B-list guitar pop bands. It's as predictable and dull the first time the late '90s rolled around, and I frankly am none too keen to revisit this era in music history. Grade: C-. –Bryan Static (Dead Broke, deadbrokerecords.com)

#### **FIFTEEN DEAD / POPULATION ZERO: *Split*: LP**

Fifteen Dead from Scotland crush three tracks of black metal-infused crust. Decent enough, but doesn't commit enough to either genre for my tastes. I dig both styles, but this is in some middle ground I can't totally jive with. Population Zero from Philly are way more my speed, playing a more traditional metallic d-beat with some of the most frenzied vocals I've heard since the high-pitched bloke in Extreme Noise Terror. Not the most crucial release, but the Population Zero side is worth a listen. –Tim Brooks (Suburban White Trash, suburbanwhitetrashrecords.com)

#### **FLESH LIGHTS: *"No Longer" b/w "You Don't Know": 7"***

This band is called Flesh Lights. Let's just get that out of the way. At least three people (or two, if this band runs by majority rule) thought that over, decided it was a good idea, and went for it. Okay. Anyway, what came forth when I threw this record on was not the obnoxious shock rock the name suggested, but some perfectly reasonable, jangly, poppy garage punk. "You Don't Know" is decent, but "No Longer" clearly deserves its A-side status; it's as catchy as a cleaned-up Future Virgins single, and there's this endearingly goofy guitar lead between the verses that I just can't get over. It's the kind of thing you might put on in the car with your dad to keep him reasonably happy while you listen to something you're into. –Indiana Laub (Twistworthy, twistworthyrecords@gmail.com, twistworthy.com)

#### **FLESH WOUNDS: *Self-titled*: LP**

One of those records you know is going to be good, just from looking at the cover (this one being a line drawing of a left hand with an eye in the middle, goop, or something of that nature flying off, and then there are these things at the bottom like... I have no clue, but they're tube-like and dangling there with drops of either blood, or water, or both around them). Sure enough, as soon as the needle glides into the groove some urgent and revved-up punk rock comes blasting out of the speakers. Belligerent, rabid dog style vocals, spitting out the words in rapid fire with slobber all over the mic and surrounding area. Then there's the vile-sounding guitar scratching out chords and putridity over the bass and drums that sound like they're hanging on by a thread. I'm liking the insolent attitude of "Kennel Cough," the wound-up energy of "Smokin' Crack with Jeff," and the fact that after listening to "Bushwick Boomerang," complete with its Dick Dale style surf guitar solo kind of thing in the middle, I go around singing, "Like a boomerang! Like a boomerang!" doing my best impersonation of the vocals, while those around me look at me as though I'm some sort of dipshit. But who cares, this is rock'n'roll babs. So much good stuff on this album. –M.Avrq (Snot Releases, snotreleases.com)

#### **FOR SERIOUS THIS TIME: *Weird Life: 12" EP***

Ninth Grade me is sitting under the smoker's tree on lunch break plaintively scratching my favorite bands' logos into the cover of my AP English notebook. My best, and only, friend is next to me, noodling single note tunes from the unplugged guitar he "borrowed" from the jazz band practice room. I'm pondering why the guy in Joyce Manor has to yell so much and when the new Algernon Cadwallader tape will be out, when my bud asks me if I've ever heard For Serious This Time because they're playing someone's living room this Friday night. "Oh yeah, man... I'm totally down." –Matt Seward (Life On An Island, lifeonanisland.org / Dead Broke, deadbrokerecords.com)

#### **FORN: *The Departure of Consciousness*: LP**

Forn have one purpose to exist: to create slow, crushing, plodding metal. The songs lumber along with dense walls of distortion arising in their wake. Percussion keeps time and doles out a slow, methodic pummel. The music is pretty good. There are layers upon layers to get lost in. Check out "Gates of the Astral Plane," with

the distortion that rises and hangs in the air, and drums that come and swat it back down to earth here and there. My only complaint is the vocals. Both singers sound like they do nothing but clear their throat with a low and high “rehhhhhh” and “ruhhhhhhh” in place of communicating any sort of message. It’s common for the genre, but after a while it gets tiresome and pretty much pointless. Still, the music is good. –M.Avrq (Vendetta, vendettarecords.wordpress.com)

**FREEZE, THE: *Undercover*: CDEP**

New stuff from The Freeze? Bring it on! A furious blast of in-your-face punk. Covers of The Dead Boys, Nervous Eaters, and The Germs. All played with polish and precision by Cape Cod’s finest. One original rounds out the set. Yes, this one is short. But you still need it. I guarantee it. –Sean Koepenick (bhjrecords.com, bhjrecords@gmail.com)

**FREEZE, THE: *Universal Punishment*: CDEP**

From the vaults comes this rare record from the band, given the re-issue makeover. First half is a great sounding radio session from 1988, recorded in Boston. Second half is virtually all the same songs (minus one) given the live treatment. The vintage of the live songs is not documented. But it’s a cool idea and there is no drop-off in quality from end to end. I wonder who did the cover art, since it rules. –Sean Koepenick (bhjrecords.com, bhjrecords@gmail.com)

**FUCKED UP: *Year of the Dragon*: 12”EP**

The first song is the right amount of gritty with a nice combination of guitar riffs and the bass having enough space to stand out before throwing it all in a Fucked Up blender. Serve iced and prepare for brain freeze. The second song’s ironically titled “Disorder,” but is exactly two minutes long and just a tad bit too simple and cookie cutter for me to get that into, but I can’t resist bobbing along to a well-played punk track. Then you flip the record and everything just goes wrong. It’s a different RPM so I’m already annoyed and is seventeen minutes long—further annoyed as I realize it’s just a bunch of dumb noise. Imagine if Pink Floyd songs never got to the good part and they just kept fucking around forever. This reminds me of how and why Fucked Up let me down by selling out and making crappy albums. You might want this, but probably not, if you already have *Hidden World*. –Rene Navarro (Tankcrimes)

**FUNS, THE: *Self-titled*: 7”EP**

This is hot-boxing shit, my friends. With their stoney lo-fi psych garage sound, the A-side features “Concrete,” which is anything but. These dudes remind me of White Fang slow jams and Memories. Definitely something that Burger Records might put out. –Camylle Reynolds (Maximum Pelt)

**GAGGERS, THE: *Sharp Lies*: 7”**

Very average NYC/U.K. ‘77-style music featuring an incredibly uninteresting vocalist with a two-note range. Who does this appeal to? GG Allin fans and the like? For all I know, this band is at the top of some kinda heap, but it’s one that I’ll be avoiding. –Dave Williams (Damaged Goods)

**GASCHAMBER: *Kairos Will Erase*: Cassette**

First of all, I’ve got to say this packaging is gorgeous. Hand screened image of a bird, on cardstock that’s been origami-ed around this cassette case. The sounds inside though, are absolutely eerie and terrifying for ninety percent of the release. Gas Chamber is super creepy, yet makes tranquil and atmospheric noise collages. It emits a feeling of wandering around the woods near the water with faint reminders of a highway in the distance. A few minutes in sounds of wind, chills, creaking wood, and rippling water creep in. Then gradually sounds of shouting come in like a residual memory of domestic violence hidden in nature. In their insert they describe the release as “a gash into their home life.” Ambient, yet frightening and sorrowful. Sporadically, they crash into instruments with a full band that sounds like Nux Vomica. This record could easily be the soundtrack to a Silent Hill game; this stuff gets right under your skin. I listened to this as autumn weather slowly crept in and it gave me chills. –Kayla Greet (Peterwalkee, peterwalkeerecords.com)

**GBH: *Dover Showplace 1983*: CD**

A live recording of twelve tunes culled from the band’s most fruitful period, namely the early 1980s, before they and punk in general decided metal was not the devil after all. Sound quality is of the variety one used to find in the best tape-trader fare, meaning it’s either from a really fuggin’ clear audience recording or a really raw board recording. Tacked on at the end are demos of “Drugs Party in 526” and “Vietnamese Blues,” which, like this whole endeavor, will likely be of interest to completists and überfans who have to have everything a band puts out, and few others. –Jimmy Alvarado (Cleopatra)

**GERBIA: *Lâche L'école*: LP**

About ten years ago I clamored loudly and repeatedly for French-speaking folks to give up the crackpot quest of singing *en anglais*, as French was a perfectly serviceable rock language and they couldn't sound any stupider singing in French than they already did singing in English. I stand by said clamor to this day, although I never banked on the fact that a full album of Francophonía would send me scuttling off to Google® Translate quite the way it does ((for the record, the album title apparently means "Loose School," and the band name is either Lithuanian for "respect," or the name of a mythical kingdom peopled by large members of the rodent family)) ((also, for what it's worth, the band are hardy Quebecois fur trappers, not silly French kniggits)). That largely irrelevant linguistic note aside, this record sounds kinda like what hardcore records started sounding like thirty years or so ago—where, instead of trying to compress itself into a violent new pocket dimension of anger and energy, things started stretching out, with longer songs, and an emphasis on musicianship and getting a good recording. This, to me, was a pretty dopey way to go, since the whole hardcore paradigm was created by and for people who didn't really give a shit about musicianship or getting a good recording in the first place. Oh well, *toute m'énarve!* BEST SONG: "Tirez le messenger." BEST SONG TITLE: "Médiocrité sans frontières." FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: Although I'm all for Francophones singing in French, this business with the space between the end of the word and the colon and the not capitalizing all the words in the song titles has really got to go. —Rev. Nørb (Corps et records)

**GET HUMAN: *Garden Leave*: CD**

Bright poppy punk from England, with big choruses and lots of dynamic changes. Just found out that Garden Leave is a form of severance when you get laid off, but paid for a couple weeks. Anyway, this CD has four well-crafted songs, furthering my Snuff Theory, which states that there's something endearingly quirky and possibly superior about English pop punk. —Chris Terry (gethuman.bandcamp.com)

**GHOST KNIFE: *Garrote Guarantee*: 7"**

The Ghost Knife is one of the coolest and weirdest freshwater fish in the world, and apparently it is also one of the year's better efforts in power pop punk. This band features members of J Church, Riverboat

Gamblers, High Tension Wires, and so on—everyone punk already knows this by now, but I've been ignoring the hype because, honestly, I don't know; people make mistakes. Now I know that *Garrote Guarantee* offers a little bit of everything (within the scope of the aforementioned power pop punk sphere). "R.C. Cola" kicks off into an irresistible chorus reminiscent of Alkaline Trio at their most gleefully poppy, and closer "I Know I Know" finishes off with equal firepower. In between, the band ventures into some swaggering garage rock and dancey indie pop, and pulls all of it off. Just weird enough to stay exciting, but infectious enough to win over devotees from nearly any scene. This is stellar. —Indiana Laub (Twistworthy, twistworthyrecords@gmail.com, twistworthy.com)

**GLASS HITS / ACCORDION CRIMES: *Split EP*: 7"**

Glass Hits play monotonous post-hardcore that is too lacking in anything interesting. "Action Potential" is the same riff for two minutes straight and the monotone vocals do not vary between the two songs. But, at the very least, it's polite. "Dying on the Vine" ends by thanking you for listening. You're welcome. There is no realm in which I could mistake Accordion Crimes for "Jackson Pollock." Atonal, disjointed, dissonant, and repetitive. As stated repeatedly in the lyrics, "new technique" is desperately necessary. The screen-printed, woodblock cover art is gorgeous though. —Ashley Ravelo (Snappy Little Numbers, snappylittlenumbers.blogspot.com, snappylittlenumbers.ent@gmail.com)

**GLASSES: *Homage*: Cassette**

Tape from Huntington, NY pop punkers featuring six emo-esque anthems that all sound the same. While that is not always a bad thing, these odes to shitty neighbors and nostalgia start off strong (the first line is "Time sure flies when you're young and jerkin' off") before quickly growing tired. Should've cut the fat and just released a 7" with "Ginger Ale" and "Disenchanted." —Alanna Why (Self-released, glassespunk.bandcamp.com)

**GODSTOMPER / TERLARANG: *Split*: LP**

The Bay Area's longest-running powerviolence duo Godstomper add another drop to the proverbial bucket of seemingly endless releases that date back to the early '90s. Evidently not much has changed with these guys since then. There's very little transition from the *Saturday Morning Powerviolence EP* to the *Heavy*

*Metal Vomit Party* LP to this record. They still sound like a boombox with a cassette of Napalm Death's *Scum* thrown into a tumbling laundry dryer. Terlarang from Malaysia's offerings are more varied in style, alternating between spastic grindcore and straight-forward thrash. ACXDC fans would probably foam at the mouth over Terlarang's side of the split. –Juan Espinosa (Suburban White Trash / Grind Father / Riotous Outburst / Nuclear Alcoholocaust / Beat The Meat / Dog Down / Active Rebellion / Distrozione / No Bread / Placenta)

### **GOING TO HELL: *Lick Your Wounds: 7"***

The world needs opening bands. Somebody needs to take the stage an hour after doors open and play to the handful of dorks who showed up early as they grab their drinks and wander around awkwardly wondering when their friends are going to show up. And, shit, the band might as well have fun with it. No need to reinvent the wheel. Just play some generic punk rock, but play it with energy. Going To Hell is sure to get the crowd nodding their heads as they start working their way through the evening's ration of beer money. –MP Johnson (goingtohell.bandcamp.com)

### **GOLDEN PELICANS: *Self-titled: 12" EP***

Loud and brash punk rock that puts heavy emphasis on the rock and the roll. "New Jersey" is an absolute killer, with how it instantly gets down to business with a relentless tempo. It's catchier than hell. The vocalist growls and yowls like a mad dog, and it's one of those songs you have to listen to immediately again. The whole damn record is a monster: "White on a Friday Night," "Chad & Stacie," "Hard to Swallow," fuck, the whole damn record. The energy is high, the attitude is unapologetic, and the guitars are loud and noisy. I've heard some really good records lately, and this one is definitely in my top ten of this year. –M.Avrq (Total Punk, floridasdying.com)

### **GOLDEN PELICANS: *Self-titled: LP***

This might be the most satisfying record, from start to finish, that I've bought in a long time. It's mastered loud as fuck (and I swear it gets louder somewhere on the second side). I could be confusing this with the feeling I had eating the best burrito I've had in a long time while I was listening to this album. As a matter of fact, this album is the perfect length to eat a giant-ass, messy burrito to. I was able to finish said burrito and wash my hands just in time for the last song to finish.

What perfect timing! Was some kind of science or hoodoo involved? I don't know! I do know that Golden Pelicans are as good on record as they are live. They have a song about escaping New Jersey. It must have been written for me, because I escaped New Jersey! Actually, I talked to singer King G once and he said it's about his ex-wife. Good enough! Also, there's a song called "Pissing in a Puddle of Puke," which has gotta be the best song title ever, or at least since the last time I made that proclamation. If I have to complain about something, and I do, it's that all the songs on this record aren't called "Pissing in a Puddle of Puke." –Sal Lucci (Total Punk)

### **GOTOBEDS, THE: *Poor People are Revolting: LP***

This is the sound of tinkering. Songs being played by those who have dug deep into the vaults and emerged knowing that there's more to the tired routines that get played out again and again. It's a hard one to pin down. Feeling very familiar, yet equally unruly and unconventional. Undertones of straight-forwardness, buried by squirmy guitars. Two of these people were in Kim Phuc and there are similarities in approach. You can be artful and creative without losing the aggression and impulsiveness of punk and hardcore. The Gotobeds effectively expand the sound without over-extending it. The meat is still there, and it's ready to eat. Are you a pathological smart-ass who daydreams of weirdo punk records that take the genre and wring it out like a pair of wet undies? Pick this up. –Daryl (12XU)

### **GRADE ONE: *The Porcelain Doll Collection: CD***

The Porcelain Doll Collection consists of four songs. Imagine the more recent Brody Dalle style vocals set to alternative '90s power chord music while you're shopping for something black at Hot Topic. The lyrics have a lot of girl power themes laced with plenty of "F" bombs (Don't worry, there is a Parental Advisory label on the front). If you're a female catholic school dropout, this EP will probably make you feel less alone. –Ryan Nichols (Self-released, no address listed)

### **GRAND COLLAPSE: *Far from the Callous Ground: LP***

I didn't quite know what to expect from this, a band featuring the progeny of one of the more respected U.K. punk bands of the early '80s on vocals and who cite Propagandhi as a major influence. Lo and behold, this translates into astute U.K. hardcore with its abundant metal influence wielded as a potent augmentation to

their sound. Echoes of Slayer's, um, mellower moments come to the fore when they ratchet the tempos down, and the soothing sounds of Broken Bones' "metalcore" approach when they don't. Shit's tight, pissed, and comes off sincere, making this a definite winner. – Jimmy Alvarado (1859, 1859records.bandcamp.com)

**GREAT DISMAL SWAMIS, THE: *Phantom Tollbooth: 7"***

As far as garage punk stuff goes, this is as close to "up my alley" as it gets. Great minor melodies, often reminiscent of The Hex Dispensers, with a Dead Boys-esque snottiness and a production style that harkens the heyday of Gearhead Records. I'll definitely be checking out more from these cats. Great stuff. – Dave Williams (RZO, rzorex.bandcamp.com)

**GREAT SABATINI, THE: *Dog Years: LP***

The record cover of the month award goes to The Great Sabatini. There's a photograph of what looks like a Sesame Street reject, the poor loner who smoked some pot and was completely disowned by everyone. This poor character had to move to Ghetto Street and lives a hard life. So that brings us to the actual music. This record is heavy as hell. I think these guys could be human versions of the cover star; this is metal with brains, heart, and experience. I have a hard time describing this type of metal and hardcore hybrid music. But the part of me that loves bands like Tomahawk, Mastodon, and Queens Of The Stone Age is completely amped on this record. – Ryan Nichols (Solar Flare, solarflarerds@gmail.com)

**GUERRILLA MONSOON: *Big City Plans: 10" EP***

To coincide with a trip across the Atlantic to play at The Fest, the U.K.'s Guerrilla Monsoon offered up a 10" featuring eight tracks—half new and half versions of older songs. All carry on in the same vein as the band's recent split with Game Day Regulars, with an upbeat tempo providing the backbone to quite a perky set of songs. The majority of hooks are supplied by some well-placed guitar leads, whilst the vocal performances from within the band are suitably melodic although with a gruff quality. However, for me the main impetus behind these songs comes from the drums—it's a highly technical delivery, making good use of the full kit—and, unusually, that's what I look forward to hearing the most on each play. The closest I can come to a comparison would be The Movielife, from its *Has a Gambling Problem* EP era which saw the band take

a poppier approach to that previously favored, and one much in line with Guerrilla Monsoon's buoyant style. – Rich Cocksedge (Paper + Plastick, paperandplastick.com/Beach Community, lovefrombeachcommunity@gmail.com, lovefrombeachcommunity.com)

**GUN CLUB: *Destroy the Country: CD***

**GUN CLUB: *Moonlight Motel: CD***

From what I'm able to glean, these are "official" releases of a couple of bootlegs originally making the scene in 1984-85. Included are tracks culled from four different performances—the earliest from April 1983 and the latest from October 1984—in three countries, two of which are taken from appearances on a Dutch television program and on *The Tube* television program in the U.K. Bootlegs are often a total crapshoot in terms of the quality of both sound and performance, but in this case both are actually better than expected. The band is caught both during and immediately after the lineup that produced their celebrated *Las Vegas Story* album, resulting in markedly different takes on the band's sound and even certain songs that overlap—one may sound more laid back and experimental, the other louder, driving, and more "punk." Sound-wise, we're talking stuff that sounds like it's either straight off the board or pulled from a television recording within the first few generations so that it isn't the usual sonic mess one ends up with on bootlegs. Add on some brief but comprehensive liner notes and you have yourselves a party, kids. Fans are gonna eat this up, and rightly so, but for the rest of the punters, this will likely either be the gateway into a band they'd never heard or the perplexing, ramshackle ramblings of a band that played by their own set of rules. Being a fan of discerning tastes, I'm pleasantly surprised at how good these are. – Jimmy Alvarado (Cleopatra)

**GUN CLUB: *Destroy the Country: LP***

*Destroy the Country* is a legitimate reissue of a hard-to-find Gun Club live bootleg, originally released in 1984. The album's recording quality is on the good side—not amazing, but likely clean enough for even the most casual Gun Club fan. *Destroy the Country* pulls tracks from an Italian *Las Vegas Story* tour show (November 26, 1983); it comes on green vinyl and Gun Club aficionado Gene Temesy provides some quality liner notes. The set list is understandably heavy on *Las Vegas Story* songs, although "Brother and Sister"—a standout *Miami* track—and "Sex Beat" and "For the

**HALFWAY TO HELL CLUB: *Bridges, Matches & Gasoline*: CD**

Holy hell, where has this CD been for the past five years? Recorded in 2009, I am a little mystified where this nugget of melodic, post-hardcore goodness has been hiding for so long. Swallowed by the Razorcake HQ couch? I dunno, but this is some pretty potent stuff; reminds me at times of Small Brown Bike. Band features members of Sister Kissers if that means anything to you. Grab this, if you still can. –Garrett Barnwell (Dead Broke)

**HARABALL: *Half Tux*: LP**

Straight-forward, no-frills hardcore punk out of Norway. The songs are a perfect mix of mid and fast tempos with interesting time changes to keep you attentive and along for the ride. The opener, “The House That Builds Itself,” is a cranker that sets the pace for the rest of the record. The speed is high and the riffs are catchier than hell. I really like the title track, with its catchy and simple riff—a build up in the middle that gives way to a more aggressive and speedier ending. The lumbering instrumental, “Drug Tunnel Collapse,” that follows, really stands out. This song, with its slow tempo, has a dark atmosphere that takes over the room, holding your attention until the end (plus that short bit of piano that comes in at the very end—perfect!), as it gives way to the ender “N.D.O.,” that opens with a cool bass-driven groove before cranking the speed up. Fast and catchy! What more could you want? Features members from Fairfuck. –M.Avrq (Fysisk Format, fysiskformat.no)

**HARD ONS: *Peel Me like an Egg*: LP/CD**

I’ve got some great memories of The Hard Ons, primarily from the mid- to late-1980s when the band released some rip snorting records and blazed a frantic trail across the U.K. whenever it came up from Australia to tour. These memories are based around a manic sound that was refreshing and invigorating, the key traits of what I enjoyed so much about the band. In the intervening years the band has dropped off my radar somewhat so I was intrigued when a new album dropped through my letterbox—would it rekindle the feelings that I’d had a quarter of a century ago? The simple answer is, unfortunately, no. The reasons are varied but on the whole the songs do very little to move me, physically or mentally, and I’m left with a sense of wanting to get on with something else and find myself eager to reach the end of the album—never a good sign.

Love of Ivy” also appear. The Gun Club played a good set that night and this *Las Vegas Story* lineup (Jeffrey Lee Pierce, Kid Congo, Pat Bag, and Terry Graham) remains highly regarded by Gun Club fans for good reason. I go through waves with the Gun Club. I either regard them as one of the best groups of their era or simply *the best* group of their era. I’m currently leaning toward the latter and I’m not fighting it. –Ryan Leach (Cleopatra, cleorecs.com)

**GUTTERS, THE: *Self-titled*: LP**

Billy Childish apparently spread his seed in Portland where the two young ragamuffins recycled dad’s empties to purchase drums, guitar, and an amp. Garage trash to annoy dogs and your significant other. It might even kill your lawn and will definitely stain your carpet. Grammatically incorrect Brit-articulation buried under a Gonerfest patron’s sex dream of distorted energy. What has two thumbs and woke up in a garbage can because of The Gutters? THIS GUY. –Matt Seward (Gutt, thegutters.bigcartel.com)

**H.D.Q.: *“When Worlds Collide” b/w “Dismantled”*: 7”**

This release has thrown me slightly due to it possibly being the best recordings I’ve ever heard from H.D.Q. Bearing in mind that the band is not short of songs for these to be compared to that is quite some achievement. H.D.Q. has never really moved away from the U.S.-influenced melodic punk rock sound it had back in 1987 and continues down that route to this day. What makes this stand out is that everything comes together so well, something that I guess all musicians must hope for when entering a studio. This has two extremely well written songs that have the ability to soar majestically when in full flight, both benefiting from a production that gives them more life than that heard on last year’s album *Lost in Translation*. Of course with Dave Gollidge’s raspy, impassioned vocals and Dickie Hammond’s guitar work—which has oft been copied—H.D.Q. already has an advantage over many bands in terms of its starting point. To me, “Dismantled” is the highlight of the pair with its slightly punchier quality and faster pace that expertly propels the song along from start to finish. Apparently the band is working on a new album due to see the light of day in 2015, so bring it on! –Rich Cocksedge (Boss Tuneage, bosstuneage.com)

It's not a case of *Peel Me Like an Egg* lacking variation but even with the band mixing up the style of songs, especially in terms of pace, this just fails to engage me. I get that bands move on but this is a progression I'll leave well alone. –Rich Cocksedge (Boss Tuneage, bosstuneage.com)

### **HARD-ONS, THE: *Peel Me like an Egg*: CD**

Thirty years and several albums on, the Hard-Ons continue their schizophrenic approach to songwriting—one minute you're listening to a hook-laden pop punk tune, the next it's full-bore thrash, the next some noise workout, and the next something that could've easily found a home on a Slayer album—that has been their trademark. It's likely an acquired taste for some, I reckon, but I really can't think of another band that can deliver releases wherein fans of the Ramones, Descendents, Sodom, and straight-up hardcore can find something to tickle their fancy. The formula remains unchanged, the songs remain rock-solid with lyrics vacillating between puerile and poignant, and I remain a fan. –Jimmy Alvarado (Boss Tuneage, bosstuneage.com)

### **HI HO SILVER, AWAY!: *Chore*: CD**

“Holes in the wall from where the telephone was thrown. Kids in their bedrooms learning how to cope. There's beer in the fridge and blood in the sink.” Whoa, do you really think you're ready for this? I sure as hell wasn't. What you get from *Chore* is a whole bunch of seemingly interwoven songs about regret and damage, delivered with an intense amount of emotion. Sonically, it owes a lot to Rites Of Spring and post-hardcore bands of that sort. In theme, it brings to mind the survivor epics of Mountain Goats. What I love about *Chore*, though, is the author's objectivity in telling these stories. For instance, the quote above is from the song “Split Shift”, it's told in the voice of a parent, one who regrets the way they've completely fucked up in making a family. It continues like this, “I did my best with the options given to me. So I sit by their beds, watching them sleep, and I feel ashamed I brought them into this mess.” This kind of storytelling, as it weaves it's way through *Chore*, switching characters and narrators seamlessly, is something I'm not as familiar with in punk. Sure, storytelling happens but I feel punk doesn't dare think outside of the subjective box as much it could. Like Alan Vega said at the end of Suicide's “Frankie Teardrop”, a song about a desperate, poverty-stricken man shooting his family and himself, “we're all Frankie's.” So let's

tell these stories. I don't mean to get off on a tangent, I'm just glad HHSA! can do that and do it with such prestige. If I don't stop now I'm just going to start spouting more lyrics at you, just do whatever you have to do to get this! –Craven Rock (It's Alive)

### **HI HO SILVER, AWAY!: *Chore*: LP**

I'll say it: *Chore* surpasses everything this band has done previously, absolutely demolishes it, and that's coming from a guy who likes them. Lyrically, they're tilling some rough-shod ground regarding the daily, hands-on struggles around poverty, busted relationships, abuse, fear, and forgiveness. Each song is its own little short story, but done in such a way that it all seems concurrent, one song threaded to the next. (I'd kick around the idea of calling it a concept album, but that leaves the idea leaves a bad taste in my mouth.) Musically, it's pushing the boundaries of pop punk in a way that's confident and measured while still being catchy and muscular; each of the three instruments bend and flex in a way that deftly avoids the pitfalls of the genre and yet each song sounds anthemic as hell. It's a smart, compassionate punk record, and songs like “LeSabre” and “Power Dynamics” still give me the chills months after I first heard them. It's so easy, after hearing thousands of records and writing hundreds of reviews, to feel burnt out on this stuff, on *music*, so when a record comes along that's just this wonderful blend of empathy and frustration and catchiness, I take notice and grab on. *Chore*'s definitely that record. They'll be hard-pressed to top this one, and I'm betting it'll wind up being my favorite album of the year. –Keith Rosson (It's Alive)

### **HIP PRIESTS, THE: *Black Denim Blitz*: CD**

You know that protest sign—commonly seen at protests of killer cops and outdated reproductive health policies—that says, “I can't believe I still have to protest this shit!” You know where I'm going with this. The Hip Priests describe themselves as, “The inbred, oversexed, white trash bastard sons of Iggy (Pop), Johnny (Thunders), Lemmy (no last name needed) and Handsome Dick (Manitoba).” While those godfathers are all respectable influences, this album comes off as just boring parody and “boys will be boys” nonsense. For example, “my cocaine cock” and “my girl you're a cunt” are two lyrics from this album, and I didn't have to look hard to find them. Really? Punk can do better. Punk has done better. Time to move on. I can't believe we still have to listen to this shit. Good luck doing pay-to-play for the '80s

burnouts on the Sunset Strip, Hip Priests. –John Mule (Self Destructo, selfdestructorecords.com)

### **HOBOCOP: *Half Man, Half Cop*: LP**

I'd put this as a cross between The Barbaras and The Spits. Sound odd? It is a little. But it's enjoyable. The vocals have that weird "drowning in the sink" sound while the pop sensibilities are a little more on the broken party bus. The cover sticker compares this record to The Screamers. I like it, but it lacks the fascism necessary to be compared to The Screamers. It's a band with a keyboard, not a keyboard band. I'm not trying to be a dick, but the consumer needs to know. Fans of Hunxisms and San Francisco would be way into this. I like it. –Billups Allen (Slovenly)

### **HOLY: *Seclusion MMMIV: 12"* EP**

Holy, from Italy, play d-beat that is a rage-filled imitation of His Hero Is Gone and Hellshock. They've nailed the brooding aesthetic in spades with a ghostly cover photograph nearly lost in black. The music and lyrics are equally as typical. For example, the barfed vocals are blown out beyond coherency, the guitars are cut-and-paste hardcore riffage, and the lyrics are—to put it lightly—on the nose: "We're the weeping middle-class herd. Ruled by the hypocrites, abused by the mediocre." It's not that I don't enjoy Holy's impeccably tight assault, agree with the sentiments, or appreciate the anguish, but if you must, call me jaded. I simply expect a bit more nuance in my hardcore nowadays. Dangers, from SoCal, are a prime example of how to tackle difficult lyrical subjects without having to cherry-pick the punk word bank. –Sean Arenas (Adagio830, adagio830.de / Vitriol, vitriolrecords.com)

### **HOUSE SOUNDS: *Interrobang*: Cassette**

Heavy on the drum'n'bass haze to match the weirdness of your mind. Build it and build it into a whole mess of muddy feels punk—not as in "Cops SUCK!" but more like "I'm FUCKED!" This would be good hella live. –Alanna Why (Maximum Pelt, maxpeltrex@gmail.com, maximumpelt.blogspot.ca)

### **HUMAN THERAPY: *American Dream: 7"* EP**

Nice to see a repress of this band's first EP, in this case included with the latest issue of the ever-awesome *Artcore* fanzine. Originally released by Dr. Dream Records in 1983, this is one of those obscure gems from a band that likewise gets lost in the shuffle

with many of their Inland Empire peers when folks get to talking about L.A./Southern California punk. The sound is a bit quirkiest than one might expect given its origins, a sorta cross between suburb-core and artier new wave, which puts a pleasant kink in their 'core, and in the case of "No More," a tune that should've gotten more radio play than it did. Tacked on for good measure is their track from the *Barricaded Suspects* comp and the A-side of their second seven-inch, and Welly has been gracious enough to include some pics and additional information in the packaging to give the release and the band some historical perspective. Nice to see this is available again. –Jimmy Alvarado (Artcore, artcorefanzine.co.uk)

### **IMPO & THE TENTS: *Peek after a Poke*: LP**

Imagine, if you will, the Dickies skip past the whole punk thing and follow their buddies the Quick straight into the power pop trip. This release embodies that proposed alternate reality hypothesis so much that it's a bit unnerving. You get airtight, no-frills pop tunes stuffed to the bursting point with devastatingly catchy hooks infused with the same Saturday-morning-cartoon-damaged sensibilities and Leonard's heretofore inimitable warbling... only the band's from Sweden, Leonard ain't singing, and there isn't a Dickie within several thousand miles. As an old L.A. punk kid, one can't help but find the whole thing seriously appealing, and it comes wholly recommended, but damn if it ain't a little creepy as well. –Jimmy Alvarado (Alien Snatch, aliensnatch.com)

### **INDONESIAN JUNK: *Demo*: CD**

This demo contains four songs with a '77 New York feel. The songs are solid with a thoughtful change in tempo and beat. The pop hits Dead Boys speeds with "Shelly, Shelly (Don't Break My Heart)" [Have you noticed a drop in parentheses in pop music lately? With a consequent drop in the use of brackets in pop music writing.] This influence seems evident to me particularly in the guitars. There are some great Cheetah Chrome-esque guitar runs that really drive the songs. The demo is proclaimed to be free on the Internet, so it's worth checking out for fans of the New York crowd. –Billups Allen (indonesianjunkpunk.com)

### **INTELLIGENCE: *Boredom and Terror/Let's Toil: 2 x LP***

This double Intelligence album is a reissue of their 2004 Narnack/Omnibus debut. Upon its original release,

*Boredom and Terror/Let's Toil* was a joint LP/CD package—buy the vinyl album, get the CD one with it. Now you can get both on vinyl. Full disclosure: the Intelligence never did it for me. A live set I caught by them opening up for the Oblivians last year was totally underwhelming. A left-handed compliment at best, I only say that to underscore how surprised I was by this reissue. I had no expectations for it and it *fucking slays*. While not nearly as aggressive as The Screamers, fans of synth punk and *Live at the Witch Trials*-era Fall should own this double record. I missed the boat on this double album the first time around. If every Intelligence album sounded as compelling as this double LP—something I don't recall them doing—I'd be one of their biggest fans. I can't praise this record enough and it's a strong contender for reissue of the year. Truly stunning. —Ryan Leach (In The Red, [intherecords.com](http://intherecords.com))

#### **INVERSION: *Basement Demo: Cassette***

This semi-crusty demo from Portland features seven excellent tracks in the vein of Dis Sucks or early emo hardcore like Heroin. The vocals are too low in the mix for my taste, but that's likely more a byproduct of the lo-fi nature of the recording and less of an intentional act. Surprising tempo changes and polished musicianship separate this demo from most other bands' early recordings. I look forward to hearing future releases from Inversion. Even their logo rules, and what band couldn't use a slick logo? —Art Ettinger (Self-released, [inversionpunks.bandcamp.com](http://inversionpunks.bandcamp.com))

#### **ITCHY-O: *Burn the Navigator: CD***

Itchy-O is a really unique band. They're a thirty piece group that is primarily drum corps including odaiko and chudaiko drums from Japan and roto toms, but which also incorporates synth, vocoder, theremin, samples, guitar, and bass. There are many other instruments as well. Not all thirty pieces play at the same time and there is a chart on the CD booklet that shows who plays on what tracks. Also included are weird samples such as chimpanzees, cows, and birds. If you're a big fan of percussion (as I am) some of this can be really hypnotic and catchy. I went online to watch some video of how this works live. They dress up like a mariachi band and the members playing non-percussion instruments carry their amps on their backs. It is an impressive thing to watch them come out and take over a stage (as they did playing with David Byrne), but as is often the case, it's hard to translate the uniqueness and excitement to

a recorded performance. If you think this sounds like something you'd be into, then by all means check out this album, otherwise you're probably just as well off catching these folks live (especially in the Denver area since they don't seem to play too often outside their hometown. Hey, have you ever tried to coordinate thirty people's schedules? Exactly.) —Kurt Morris (Alternative Tentacles)

#### **IVY: *Self-titled: LP***

This is totally unhinged. The drumming is like a power drill going straight into your skull, while the guitar sounds like roman candles unloading towers of sparks in celebration of your brand new DIY lobotomy. It's fucking awesome. The vocalist's (ex-Brown Sugar) rapid enunciation is almost as percussive as the drumming, adding to its magnetic pull. Sitting listening to this record begs the question: is it possible for a human to pogo this fast? The label is offering a free download of this record; down be a fool, check it out. —Daryl (Katorga Works, [katorgaworks.bigcartel.com](http://katorgaworks.bigcartel.com))

#### **JLK: *Babysitter: Cassette***

I can't blame a band for allowing a label to release what basically amounts to a tape of its formless practice/"abandoned building jam" recordings—why not, right? And I can't blame you for being curious and checking it out. But don't blame me if, afterwards, you just want the time back. I know the feeling. —Michael T. Fournier (Resurrection, [getresurrected.com](http://getresurrected.com))

#### **JOHN WESLEY COLEMAN, III: *The Love That You Own: LP***

Trash poet and Timmy Vulgar tag-team partner John Wesley Coleman is back with a new LP, *The Love That You Own*. It's no secret that I'm a JWC fan. His debut record, *Steal My Mind*, still ranks as one of my favorite LPs of recent years, and his two Goner albums were both excellent. *The Love That You Own* is more of the Wes you hopefully know and love: weird and stylistically varied (a little punk, a little country—all rock 'n' roll). Although firmly established, his newish band is solid. Geena Spigarelli can really hold down the low end and sax man Mark Tonucci gives Wes a chance to play Bryan Ferry on the album. While I'm not one to praise added instrumentation for the sake of inclusion, there's some old analog synth on this record—y'know, the kind with patch cables that only universities and affluent West Germans could afford

back in the early '70s—that really makes one of these tracks click (“Love Drinks”). (If I recall correctly, Wes told me that was producer Louie Lino on the synth.) *The Love That You Own* is slightly more hi-fi than most of JWC’s previous records, and that’s certainly not a bad thing. Overall, it’s an outstanding effort. —Ryan Leach (Burger, burgerrecords.org)

### **JOLTS, THE: *Hammer Every Nail: 7”***

This a record for people who don’t have enough John Reis in their life. Maybe you wished you still lived in the heyday of Rocket From The Crypt? Or maybe you forgot there was a Night Marchers record last year already? Well, the Jolts are here to deliver their comparable brand of punk and roll. Sometimes it sounds too much like Kiss for my liking, but overall it’s pretty okay. This 7” is pretty weak, all told, especially the title track, but I had to make sure and checked out their LP, which had more impressive songwriting than this release. Grade: C+. —Bryan Static (Shake!, experienceshake.com)

### **KAM KAMA: *Shift: LP***

I was pretty excited for a full 12” of this band since I’d enjoyed their first few releases, but I just have to admit this lacks the slight urgency and tight timing which won me over in the first place. I won’t say this isn’t enjoyable—you can still groove along to it—but it’s just a slight bit too spacey for me to really want to keep it in rotation. If you don’t have their first two releases, track them down. I might like this more if those weren’t so damn good. —Rene Navarro (Sister Cylinder)

### **KGB, THE: *Self-titled: 7”EP***

Funny what celebrity will getcha. Here we have a decent but otherwise nondescript hardcore band from the '80s with members of Reagan Youth and Nausea among its ranks. The selling point here, though, is that their drummer was none other than *Saturday Night Live/Portlandia* celeb Fred Armisen. Sound is garage demo quality, dropouts and all. The songs aren’t bad and hint that the band might’ve turned into something a bit more head-turning in its own right had it survived a bit longer, but this is otherwise wholly unremarkable. —Jimmy Alvarado (Cleopatra)

### **KOOL STUFF KATIE: *Self-titled: CD***

A Portland two-piece mix equal parts power pop, new wave, and indie rock and come up with a batch of tunes that hint at all three without fully committing to any of

‘em. while the sound does suffer from the “two-member band” sonic void that too often makes such endeavors sound like demo recordings, the songs themselves are quite catchy and manage to sound familiar without coming off as straight-up bites off of other, better known songs. —Jimmy Alvarado (Kool Stuff Katie, koolstuffkatie.com)

### **KRANG: *Bad Moon: LP***

Krang return from their adventures among the outer wasteland with eight new songs that expand greatly on the sound they had on their previous LP, *Sounds of Death*. There’s a bit more of the metal flowing here than before, but they still have that raw crust punk base. “Mirror Puncher” may be their best song yet. From the guitars on to the catchy-as-hell rhythm, and through it all, they still keep it urgent and nasty sounding. The follow up, “Replacer,” keeps the fire burning. They shift down a couple gears during the intro to “Fall of the Dove” on the second side. It’s not a bad song. It just stops the quick flow that ended on the first side, though it’s picked back up with “Burn Now or Die Living,” which has a great sort of NWOBHM guitar riff with a filthy tone. Pretty strong second LP from these guys, making me think Krang are turning into a force to reckon with. —M.Avrq (Profane Existence, profaneexistence.com / Sacred Plague, sacredplague.com)

### **LANSBURY: *Everything Went Static: LP***

Lansbury play ugly ‘n’ angry metal punk, like Poison Idea. The riffs are catchy as hell, hitting that Motörhead balance of thrash and blues, and the musicianship is tight, allowing the band to transition into breakdowns and well-planned solos without sounding like a punk band with one metalhead member who whines if he doesn’t get a chance to shred. Ten songs on one side, the other side being dedicated to anti-TV silkscreening. I’d get in the pit for this. —Chris Terry (lansburypgh@gmail.com)

### **LEECHES: *Lords of Dullsville: LP***

I heard a rumor that this band was formed in Los Angeles in the early '80s and hung out with Black Flag in the Keith Morris days. The singer’s dad was an experimental physicist who invented a time machine powered by, coincidentally, wild sounds. They used this machine to blast out of the early L.A. punk scene thinking their music was too futuristic and landed in current day Australia, only to find that their music is

now sort of retro. But they're still filled with rage, and they're using modern tricks to make sure their records pack the appropriate punch. By the sound of *Lords of Dullsville*, they're quite successful. This is all just a rumor, of course. –MP Johnson (Bridge Sounds)

### **LEMONS, THE: *Hello, We're the Lemons: Cassette***

It's a little disarming to listen to a tape which sounds so earnest and cute, but, here are The Lemons. Fans of Guided By Voices will be stoked, as The Lemons adhere to GBV's all killer, no filler formula, cutting things like bridges and verses out of the equation in favor of big hooks. And not just hooks, mind you, but the kind sung with soaring harmonies akin to the Mamas And The Papas and/or the Association. The recording here is lo-fi, which adds to the overall effect, like stumbling on a box of old singles at a yard sale and taking them home to discover they've been played almost (but not quite) to death by loving fans over the years. All that in something like fifteen minutes, which means, of course, that you'll listen to this one again and again and again. –Michael T. Fournier (Burger)

### **LENGUAS LARGAS: *Come On In: Cassette***

Lenguas Largas play sexy music. The kind that is unafraid to admit, "I've been thinking with the wrong head." The freak in me comes out in full bloom whenever their sensuous melodies drip out of my speakers and into my ears. In my car I feel my gluteus maximus begin to twitch then involuntarily undulate to the hypnotic rhythms. It takes only moments before I begin to brazenly head bang, singing sloppy Spanish in an awkward falsetto. Genre? Good vibes. They multiply the weirdness of Shark Pants and Swing Ding Amigos tenfold into a kaleidoscopic hallucination. The vocals confidently croon while the guitars wail Space Age art rock. The blankets of reverb will warm any icy disposition. I heard that these folks electrify the room with their performances, filling the stage with several guitarists and multiple drummers. It's remarkable that Lenguas Largas are able to circumnavigate the too-many-cooks-in-the-kitchen dilemma and simply belt out soulfully. If they're half as spellbinding live as they are recorded, then I imagine that they leave the whole room possessed. –Sean Arenas (Burger / Recess)

### **LENGUAS LARGAS: *Come On In: LP***

My first time hearing Lenguas Largas was live at Awesome Fest a couple of years ago. It was pretty

amazing and I was pretty wasted. I picked up their self-titled record a while later and just couldn't wrap my head around it no matter how hard I tried. Something about it just kind of put me off. My wife Elise, on the other hand, became obsessed with the record. It was out of this obsession that I decided to order a copy of their new LP for her. I am sure glad I did, because it is *so fucking great!* Whatever I was missing on the last record suddenly clicked for me on this one. It is so weird, yet so endearing. It makes me feel like doing hallucinogens in the desert (in a good way). Layers upon layers of seemingly unrelated sounds coming together to lustily mess with my eardrums in not entirely appropriate ways. I can't get enough. I'm going back to take another crack at that other album. –Ty Stranglehold (Recess)

### **LENGUAS LARGAS: *Come On In: LP***

There's a line toward the beginning of *The House on Mango St.* where Sandra Cisneros is describing her father shaving in the morning, listening to records by dramatic singers who make "music like hiccupping." Isaac Reyes has one of those reeling, all-in voices, which makes even the strangest Lenguas Largas songs (for instance, the ultra-catchy "Ese Culito," which my shitty Spanish has me thinking is about wedgies) sound rooted in time-tested traditions. For their second LP, this Tucson band has streamlined their approach, taking the sprawling and flailing impulses that put their first album all over the map, and averaging them into a hit-after-hit rock'n'roll LP that maintains the cinematic scope, desert-fried weirdness, and classic melody that makes them such a fascinating band. This may be my favorite rock album of the year. PS: These guys slay live. I saw them in L.A. this summer and they had three drummers and four guitarists. I danced sexy when they played, "I Feel." –Chris Terry (Recess)

### **LIBERATED SQUID: *Double EP: CD***

I don't know a lot of punk bands from New Zealand. This disc intrigues me. The songs have a mid-tempo sing along feel with an almost dreamy, ethereal feeling throughout. Can you imagine Menace songs being played by Jesus And Mary Chain? Neither could I until I heard Liberated Squid. I wouldn't have expected myself to like this all that much, but here I am listening to it again and singing along. Nice work. –Ty Stranglehold (facebook.com/liberatedsquid)

**LICKERS, THE: *Get Licker'd*: CD**

How can you not dig a band whose online description is “we are six tits and a dick!” But the music is top shelf too. “Cougar,” “I’d Rather Die,” and “Whiskey/Beer” tear it up with reckless abandon. If L7 had Philthy Animal on drums, they would get a sound that was comparable to this band. Here’s hoping they play outside of Indy sometime soon. –Sean Koepenick (thelickerband.com, press@thelickersband.com)

**LINE TRAPS: *Demo 1*: Cassette**

Perfectly reasonable garage punk from Victoria, B.C. that isn’t bad, yet, I’ve been rocked harder. Too many recycled riffs and dumb lyrics like “she’s electric” and what sounds to me like “are you a square...are you a nerd/or a punk rock turd” give the band a disposable blandness. Good rock has often been dumb, but at this point in rock ‘n’ roll history it’s just regressive. I want more. –Craven Rock (Shake!)

**LIVING ALONE: *Self-titled*: 12” EP**

The packaging had me fooled into thinking I would be diving into another indie rock bedroom tape introspection that got pressed to vinyl. Screen printed letting and a photo (actual photo) scrapbook cornered onto the cover. Man, I love creative, well executed packaging and I love good surprises. Living Alone blast out a slightly rougher Iron Chic sound, complete with shout-a-longs and hooky leads, but with less production sheen and more punk bombast. Very limited first press (one hundred), so get on it. –Matt Seward (Sonic Mystics)

**LOW CULTURE / NEEDLES//PINS: *Split*: 7”**

Dirtnap has pulled off a masterstroke in combining Low Culture and Needles//Pins on this split. Both bands are similar yet dissimilar enough in their respective sounds to allow for two distinctive, and thoroughly enjoyable, sides. The similarity is provided via a quality which flirts with lo-fi without losing too much of the high fidelity that makes the fuzzed-up guitar a key element for each band. Low Culture offers a slightly more atmospheric pair of songs with the echoic vocals sitting back in the mix and aiding a nippy surf feel to the tracks. Needles//Pins is a bit more to the point and in your face using a snottiness that wouldn’t be out of place on early Screeching Weasel releases. Both bands produce one track verging on the realms of genius with Low Culture’s “Revolutions” equaling anything from

its album *Screens*—one of my favorite records of the last five years—with Needles//Pins supplying a magical riff and lyric combo on “Bored” that gets me all revved up and ready to go. –Rich Cocksedge (Dirtnap, mail@dirtnaprecs.com, dirtnaprecs.com)

**LUUM: *Self-titled*: 7”**

Spazzoid depresso punk. That part in the second song where the singer just growls wordlessly and belligerently for twenty seconds over a funky bass line? I’m pretty sure that is the chorus. The guitar sounds like outer space noises and the singer probably pulled a muscle in his throat when recording this. With this type of band, you probably should buy their record just to keep them from throwing a waffle iron through the windshield of your car. –MP Johnson (luuum.blogspot.com)

**MAD CADDIES: *Dirty Rice*: CD**

I had to go back into the archives to confirm that I really hadn’t liked their *Live in Toronto* record. This band is probably the reason that Fat Mike plays too many ska-rock tunes in NOFX’s set now. It’s hard for me to tell if I dislike these guys more than Less Than Jake, but maybe I’m going a bit off point. I didn’t like them in 2004 and ten years later, nothing has changed. Who would have thunk it? –Sean Koepenick (Fat, fatwreck.com)

**MAIMED FOR LIFE: *Self-titled*: LP**

This is a re-release of a somewhat obscure 1985 hardcore EP, along with six additional, unreleased songs. Aldine Strychnine, who went on to play in Poison Idea, is the vocalist. Not just a record for collectors or historians, Maimed For Life represents the best of a tumultuous time in the history of punk rock, when hardcore thought it was waning and crossover was seemingly about to destroy it. The fact that a record this lovably corny can still pack a punch is a testament to the timelessness of songs about war, being an outsider, and hanging out. Major kudos is in order to National Dust for dusting off this classic material. –Art Ettinger (National Dust)

**MAKE IT PLAIN / DEEP POCKETS: *Split*: 7”**

This split sounds like it was plucked directly from the *Empire Records* back catalogue. Deep Pockets captures disillusioned attitude of ‘90s-era youth with lines like, “Staring at the floor is our favorite show” and “I seriously considered going back to get my associate’s degree.” They use the same speak-singing and minimal guitar

that is reminiscent of Sebadoh. Where Deep Pockets is a rad '90s record store, Make It Plain is the small coffee shop you go to down the street for poetry readings and in house performances. The music is catchy; you'll be singing "I need a fresh start" softly to yourself after just one listen. "ICU" is moodier and reminded me of The Cranberries. Recommended for the nostalgia factor. –Ashley Ravelo (Dead Broke, deadbrokerecords.com, deadbokerec@gmail.com)

### **MAN, THE: Self-titled: 7"EP**

Take heed, label reads 45 RPM, but it's 33 1/3. Took some fumbling to find this out, so save yourself sometime and stick with 33. With their blown-out garage punk sound, Reatards, Useless Eaters, and Tyrades come to mind. A strange comparison to a slowed-down Gag as well, which is weird, but somehow apt. Speaking of gags, they are somewhat elusive online, linking you to a fake site that propagates what exactly "the man" is, containing pseudo business jargon about synergy and bullshit like that. It's all fine and dandy if you don't care about actually learning anything about the band. One special tidbit I found snooping though: in Chicago they opened for the band called Death, which I thought was pretty rad. Don't let the Man fool you. Bullshit aside, this EP is solid...when played at the right speed. –Camylle Reynolds (TallPat, tallpatrecords.com)

### **MANDATES: "Suspicion" b/w "Wastin' Time": 7"**

Here comes a brand new single from Calgary's pop rockers. I can't get enough of these guys and these two tracks just keep bringing the hits. Fans of Bad Sports (and any of the stuff coming out on Dirtnap, for that matter) would do well to take note. My only complaint is that it is all over too fast. Off to flip the record again. –Ty Stranglehold (Teenage Rampage, teenagerampagerecords.com)

### **MANTS, THE: Destroyed by Fuzz: 7"**

Once upon a time in the mid-1990s, garage punk ruled the land. Labels like Crypt, Estrus, and Lance Rock put out the raw sound that was the antithesis of the "big rock" sound that was gaining traction in the mainstream. That is when I first heard The Mants. From Planet X (via Calgary, Alberta), The Mants were half man, half ant, and all action! Their 7" singles brought the primal stomp that they knew we filthy primates wanted to hear. Songs about enslaving humanity and/or getting in your pants were the order of the day... Then

they disappeared. Some claimed the government finally caught them, and some said that they finally headed back to their own galaxy, but the bottom line was that our insectoid rock overlords had left us. Flash forward a couple of decades. After being dormant for so long, The Mants reappeared (and in my town no less!). Shows were played and primates were enslaved once more in the fuzz trap from Planet X. Now they have unleashed their latest vinyl weapon upon us. Four quick blasts of the stuff of legend. Fuzz guitar with vocals to match, and a back end that will make you shake yours like a mating ritual with the queen of the colony. Hide your women and your sugar supply because The Mants are coming for you! –Ty Stranglehold (Manglor)

### **MARDOU: You're Not Going to Live Forever: Cassette**

Really interesting, grungy post-punk, that, despite combining two of my most loathed "revival" subgenres, I am really digging. Combining melodic, jangly guitar lines over early New Order-esque dancey rhythms and more straightforward Milk Music-style heavy-but-catchy noise, Mardou comes across as sincerely emotive rather than simply faux-nostalgic rehashers. Recommended. –Dave Williams (Let's Pretend)

### **MARGY PEPPER: Deep Water Dark Water: Cassette**

Some sweet indie alternative pop punk coming from Margy Pepper. With their harmonized female vocals, distorted bass and clean melodic guitar, and drums that stumble along, there are elements of influences like Grass Widow, Hole (minus Love), and even Potty Mouth, but the closest I can compare them to is the band Susan out of L.A. Songs don't vary widely from one song to the next, not to say they are a one-trick pony, but the progression of their songs seems to stay pretty linear. Still charming. –Camylle Reynolds (Nervous Nelly / Queer Punx Nashville, nervousnelly.storenvy.com)

### **MARK PLASMA: Embrace Technology: Cassette**

Another interesting release from tape-centric label Social Cancer. It makes sense that a label based in the Steel City of the South would find space for Mark Plasma on their roster. Distorted noise, electric beats, and surf music blended into a listenable audio two-minute Pollock painting. *Embrace Technology* would have sat nicely next to those weird projects Vermiform released in the mid-'90s (think Worst Case Scenario). –Matt Seward (Social Cancer, socialcancer.net)

**MARY MONDAY: "I Gave My Punk Jacket to Rickie" b/w "Popgun": 7"**

HoZac digs deep and pulls another gem from the punk rock ether. Originally released in 1977, "Punk Cabaret" musician Mary Monday's sole official recorded output is comprised of two puissant punk barnstormers that pummel and swagger with the best of that mythical year's more revered releases. Buzzsaw guitars, hooks, and attitude to spare, it's all here, and you don't have to shell out the monetary equivalent of a car down payment to procure a copy. High fives all 'round. – Jimmy Alvarado (HoZac, hozacrecords.com)

**MEATBODIES / WAND: Split: 7"**

Split 7" centering around the theme of the void, AKA nothing. Meatbodies' "Feed the Void" is a psychy, drawn-out, echo-heavy pulse of drums and bass. Wand's "Take Me Back to the Void" is a guitar-heavy space panic that moves in and between time itself. Mash your head into the speakers and die. Now *this* is what music sounds like! –Alanna Why (In The Red, info@intheredrecords.com, intheredrecords.com)

**MEATBODIES: Mud Gals: 7"**

Sort of a hard rock, sludgy garage hybrid. While still firmly in the here-and-now of 2014, ITR's been sounding a little '70ish lately. That's not a slight at all: "Mud Gals" is a solid 7". –Ryan Leach (In The Red, intheredrecords.com)

**MIDWEST BEAT, THE: Free of Being: CD**

Part of me wants these guys to pick a side: are you power poppers or hippies? They go back and forth between the suburbs and the woods. But then also: they seem to be aiming at cool eleven-year-olds, the ones who read *Calvin & Hobbes* and watched *Pete & Pete* and never forgot that Polaris song. I'm not saying this is alt psych pop for tweens, but I mean it's close. Makes me want to have misfit pre-angst kids and take them to a museum. Everyone get in the Forrester. –Matt Werts (Waterslide, watersliderecords.com)

**MINUS WORLD: Eat Sleep Die: CD**

This one's a grower. Sometimes I come across albums like this. Upon the first few listens, I am almost immediately turned off for whatever reason. In this case, it was that the vocals didn't seem to mesh well with the sound. They seemed a bit too clean. But after a number of listens I couldn't help but realize that some

of these songs are catchy and found myself singing bits throughout the day. The Fugazi influence is by far the most prevalent on their sound, but they can slip into some more 1990s indie rock stylings here and there, too. They certainly don't match the intensity and emotional connection of Fugazi, but that's pretty impossible for the vast majority of bands to do. However, the guitar and bass are real ringers for the sound. Everyone likes Fugazi, though, so it's not a bad group to emulate. Although only five songs, almost all of them are strong. The second track, "Absolute Zero," works well with its hypnotic guitars and vocals that don't overpower the music. The fourth song, "Battery Acid," has vocals that matched the sound well, and helped me start to change my mind about their connection. By the last track, "Answer the Question," Minus World is really hitting their stride, with some passion matched with good guitar work. I always appreciate and respect bands that can change my opinion on their sound, and Minus World definitely did so over twenty-five minutes. Good work, guys. I'm a tough nut to crack. –Kurt Morris (Self-released, minusworldbloomington.bandcamp.com)

**MISCONDUCTERS: Hypnopædia: CD**

Sludgy, mid-tempo hardcore punk (sneaking into metal country at times). It's not outright bad or anything, it's just not keeping my attention. –Ty Stranglehold (Denfire, mspace.com/denfire)

**MORTALS: Cursed to See the Future: CD**

A nice combination of fast, heavy, and crushing. There are also some catchy elements in the songs that work themselves into your brain. The song structures are complex with time changes galore, and yet it's never overwrought or boring. The vocals are long, drawn-out, anguished bellows of self reflection and defiance. I hear traces of black metal—from the days of Venom to the present—in the guitar tone. The bass tone on here is near perfect. Just the right amount of distortion. The notes cut through razor sharp. Then you have the drumming of Caryn Havlik. She brings in the heaviness with each thunderous strike and avalanche roll, and that's what really hooks me into these songs. The songs are paced where there are no moments of quiet. Instead, they are strung together one after the other, creating this impenetrable wall of sound that envelopes the room. This is an album that requires repeated listening to discover and explore the many layers within. –M.Avrq (Relapse)

**MVPS, THEE: *Oh Sally: 7"***

Boy, the folks at Slovenly are sure putting together a hell of a discography of solid garage punk releases. This single is yet another good one in the long line from the last several years. Mid-tempo garage stuff that is not too noisy or too slick and sounds a whole lot like a bunch of the great stuff that came out in the early to mid-'90s. The band are from the U.K. and this looks to be their debut release. Good stuff. I'm interested to see how it translates to a full length at some point. –Mike Frame (Slovenly)

**NASTY, THE: *Primitive Motive: LP***

No-frills hardcore punk that looks back to the past, but sounds very much in the present. The songs range from fast to mid-tempo, with time changes throughout, as well as being catchy on top of it all, without being wimpy. Part of the appeal of this record is how the vocalist's voice cracks in the songs. He's shouting along and here and there his voice cracks and sounds worn out. The drums hit hard and direct, and the guitar has a nice thick and heavy sound that fills the room. They appropriate the Black Flag logo on their lyric sheet, which looks more corny than "cool." Aim higher! Other than that, not a bad record. –M.Avrq (Star Of David, thenasty.bigcartel.com)

**NATURAL CHILD: *Dancin' with Wolves: CD***

As a person who still doesn't quite know how he feels about country music, this record sure gave me some confusion. I absolutely hated it for the first few tracks, but around track six or seven I started to soften. I began to drift off to the melodies and lose myself to the music. Personally, I couldn't quite separate the context of country from the work itself. My personal relationship to country is soured due to oversaturation, but was this album bad because I just didn't like the genre? I'm not allowed to be mad just because it's not a punk record. You can't judge a fish for its time in a hundred yard dash, you know? There are county records I enjoy, but when a drum set comes into the picture my brain just automatically wants to hate it. I'm a Luddite when it comes to folk music, I suppose. But Natural Child play with heart and conviction, and you can't call their music bad or ill conceived. There's a gap between my tastes and what this record tries to accomplish, and I understand and respect that. Recommended if you have a soft spot for late-'70s country/rock fusion records. Grade: B-. –Bryan Static (Burger, burgerrecords.org)

**NEARLY DEAD: *Self-titled: LP***

Captain Beefheart, who's apparently developed an obsession with feces, medical procedures, and deviant behavior since his demise, lords over a Flipper/Butthole Surfers/Brainbombs tag-team assault on the senses, and they've brought along a brass section heavily influenced by Tibetan Buddhist horn players as backup. Calling this "not for the musically timid" might be a bit of an understatement. –Jimmy Alvarado (Nearly Dead, nearlydead.bandcamp.com)

**NEGATIVE STANDARDS: *VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, XI: LP***

Incredibly boring. The singer lethargically burps and growls along to some of the most dull metal you will ever hear. There's no life at all in these songs. Maybe that's the point; to illustrate how dull and fucked up the world is, dude! Whatever the case, this is incredibly boring. I'm repeating myself, but that's all you can really say about this record. –M.Avrq (Vendetta, vendettarecords.de)

**NEW JUNK CITY: *Self-titled: Cassette***

Here's an unassuming debut from four Atlanta guys who seem to have a perfect handle on snappy, melodic songwriting. No kidding, this is the home run, slam dunk, whatever-soccer-metaphor of rough-around-the-edges pop punk. Maybe some of the magic comes from that streak of rugged heartland rock that's been showing up for years in the scruffier, flannel-shirtier punk bands of the States. In fact, there's almost an alt-country sensibility to the rolling leads and just-right grit of the vocals. But the heart of this is raw punk rock. Think Iron Chic's catchy sincerity, and maybe some of The Thermals' self-aware nerdiness. Seven songs wind down too soon with the coolest (only cool) fucking use of whistling I've ever heard from a band. Whoever's idea was the whistling, high-five. I expect to hear a lot more out of this outfit in the near future. Don't let me down, dudes! –Indiana Laub (Muckman, themuckman@disposable.com, muckmanrecords.storenvy.com)

**NEW SWEARS: *Junkfood Forever, Bedtime Whatever: LP***

The epic return of Canada's one true physical incarnations of partying, New Swears swings wildly back into action with ten brand-spanking-new songs about refusing to become an adult and throwing caution to the wind. You'd think at this point songs about

partying would be so dime-a-dozen that it would be impossible to write any more, but you'd be wrong, you uncultured swine! Shove this LP into your earholes! Bring it up as a counterpoint when people start playing club rap! Play it at discothèques, raves or just about anywhere, really! Eventually, you won't have any friends left, but you'll still have the fun sugary party punk that is the New Swears. Grade: A-. –Bryan Static (Bachelor, bachelorrecords.com)

### **NO SIR, I WON'T: *Shit!*: LP**

I don't think it's doing No Sir, I Won't a disservice by saying that without Crass the band would probably not have existed in this form, given that the influences are not just worn on sleeves but made into huge flags too. The evidence is all there from the use of a statement linked to Crass as its name through to the music which has the same militaristic drums, sinister, plodding bass lines, male/female vocals barking out angry anti-establishment lyrics, and a guitar shrieking away like a Bonfire Night firework. Crass was one of the first punk bands to really help me have a broader world view and via its lyrics I was set on the path of questioning rather than accepting what I was told. No Sir, I Won't is clearly intent on doing likewise all these years later and this is an outstanding record where rage, bile, and vitriol is at the forefront of what the band does. This isn't just a full-on Crass homage either as No Sir, I Won't adds its own identify into the mix with vocals that are less harsh than those of Steve Ignorant, Eve Libertine, and Joy De Vivre whilst also taking a more melodious route at times than Crass ever journeyed along. This is quite the fist-shaking ruckus. –Rich Cocksedge (Drunken Sailor, drunkensailorrecords.co.uk)

### **NOTHING: *Guilty of Everything*: CD**

Shoegaze core that lulls more than it invigorates. Merchandise and My Bloody Valentine gone heavy but with less sexy results. The worst songs are the ones that evoke horrible memories of '90s alternative garbage like Collective Soul. Not even Kyle Kimball of the almighty Salvation, whose drumming prowess seems wasted here, could salvage a single track on this disc. –Juan Espinosa (Relapse)

### **O INIMIGO: *Personalidades Plásticas*: LP**

Heavily influenced by late '80s DC hardcore, Government Issue in particular (when they were putting out albums like You and Crash), and a touch

of Dag Nasty. But they do have enough of their own personality to be their own band, as you can readily hear in songs like "Abandonado Pelos Anjos," and the title track, which has more of a contemporary sound. I must admit, it took me a couple listens to warm to the vocals. They're a little too high pitched for the music and seem to really be straining at being urgent, when he needs to dial it back a bit and go with the flow of the already strong music. I really like the guitars on this record. They have that attention-grabbing crunch, and can slip into a melodic break with ease (check out the closer, "Racional Incerto"). It's nice—and somewhat encouraging—to hear current bands look to a period of transition in punk that started to go deeper than the prevailing louder faster mentality, and bring in the politics and ideals to complement the change. Hopefully, today's generation will do the same and take it further. On the whole, this is pretty nice record, and one that bears repeated listening. –M.Avrq (Amendment, amendment-records.com, amendmentRecords@gmail.com)

### **OGRE: *Bastards of Death*: CD**

"Brain driller, erectile thriller, gurgling screams, insane killer." Supposedly, Ogre is one of the first Irish death metal bands. I can't think of any other Irish death metal bands, but I'm no expert on the genre. Nonetheless, they deliver a performance that fulfills all the prerequisites, from the gore-filled lyrics about brain drillers, leathery wombs and rotting corpses, to the singer's guttural throat-barfs. There's no tomfoolery here, no nutty drum triggers or elaborate guitar layers, nothing that could be described as technical. It's just pure, blood-slathered, old school death metal just like your parents used to love. –MP Johnson (ogre.ie)

### **OLD MAN STRENGTH: *Woke up Swinging*: 7"**

Paging Kangaroo Records, there is a band you need to snap up for an album immediately! Right out of the gate I am hearing some serious Negative Approach/Out Cold vibes from this band and that is usually the only thing I wanna hear where hardcore punk is concerned. Hailing from Vancouver B.C., where they know a thing or two about killer hardcore, Old Man Strength drop four mid-tempo, pissed-off HC killers on this single. "Conversations with a Jackass" is my pick to click here, but all four songs are great, pissed-off, basic hardcore. Cannot wait to hear a full length from this band. –Mike Frame (Pankratium, oldmanstrength1.bandcamp.com)

**ORDEN MUNDIAL: *Obediencia Debida*: LP**

The opening chords on Orden Mundial's second album are enough to make the dead sit up and wonder "What the fuck?" The tone of the guitar is instantly invasive and at times the six strings feature a similar quality, both in sound and in some of the solos, as was heard on GBH's first two albums—a sound that I love. Those chords herald the beginning of a seventeen minute onslaught from this Mallorcan band, an attack that is akin to standing in front of a light heavyweight boxer, with each of the ten tracks representing the rounds of a championship bout. The mid-paced tracks are when the pugilist tries to weaken the opponent using stiff body shots that cause the guard to be dropped. The more blitzkrieg style songs are the knock out punches, directed straight for the head with an intensity that seems never-ending—allowing for no effective defense to be deployed in response—thus resulting in either submission or a bloodied ending. Lyrics are in Castilian but I'm betting they're full of anti-authority/anti-establishment sentiment given the hardcore maelstrom bursting out of my speakers. There's some great live footage of this band on the internet, too, if you're interested in seeing Orden Mundial in action. —Rich Cocksedge (La Vida Es Un Mus, [lavidaesunmus.com](http://lavidaesunmus.com))

**OUTRAGEOUS CHERRY: *The Digital Age*: CD**

Outrageous Cherry have this sort of mellow sound that really isn't when you listen to it. They're rock'n'roll, to be sure, but this record has some slower, hypnotic hooks to it that I really enjoyed. They remind me a lot of the Lovin' Spoonful sans the bluesy numbers (there was more to that band than their Monkeys-esque hits). Hey, to indulge once more in over-wrought comparisons that potentially no one will understand except me, how about this: imagine the Lovin' Spoonful—blues and Monkeys songs excised—meet Sonic Youth without all the noisy shit. Works for me! —The Lord Kveldulfr (Burger)

**PATHETIC HUMAN: *Public Disgrace*: EP**

This could have been a decent record. Musically, Pathetic Human crank out some pretty good and abrasive hardcore that is chaotic as hell. Somewhere between Capitalist Casualties and Dystopia. However, the whole affair is bogged down by the dual vocals; one being insane hardcore singer style, the other constipated grindcore burp and holler. Lose the grind crap, keep the hardcore, and you'd have a pretty damn good band.

—M.Avrq (Helta Skelta, [heltaskeltarecords.bigcartel.com](http://heltaskeltarecords.bigcartel.com))

**PEARS: *Go to Prison*: LP/CD**

Have you spent time imagining what a mix of Circle Jerks' *Group Sex* and Descendents' *Milo Goes to College* would sound like? No, nor me. However, the possible result of such an experiment dropped into my lap recently in the guise of the debut album by Pears. The majority of the ten songs are made up of that kind of hybrid sound, taking the short, sharp approach of the former and blending it with the more melodic style of the latter. The Keith Morris influence is also to be heard on the track "Forever Sad," a song which sounds a hell of a lot like OFF! via the Morris-like vocals and a similar guitar sound/style. There is also a decent Ramones cover, "Judy Is a Punk," which doesn't veer too far from the original whilst at the end of "Grimespree," the epic—it accounts for almost of quarter of the album's running time of twenty one minutes—there is the briefest Descendents cover used as part of the finale. The CD is self-released and the LP is out on Ryan Young's (Off With Their Heads) own label. Stuff like this excites me. —Rich Cocksedge (Self-released, [pearstheband.com](http://pearstheband.com) / Anxious & Angry, [anxiousandangry.com](http://anxiousandangry.com))

**PENETRATORS: "Shopping Bag" b/w "Everybody Needs Loving": 7"**

I am really digging this trend of putting together a single out of songs that were never released as a single originally. Recent singles by the Incredible Kidda Band and others have made for great listening by putting two great tunes on one 7". In the case of the Penetrators classic "Shopping Bag," this was slated to be released as a single in 1981 but the band decided to make a video for the song instead. The video was, of course, rejected by MTV but finally, over thirty years later, I finally have the "Shopping Bag" b/w "Everybody Needs Loving" single in hand and it sounds great. This is one of my all time favorite bands and "Shopping Bag" is one of their very best songs. A real wiseass dig at consumerism that is also catchy as hell, "Live your life in a shopping bag" has never been timelier than in our current culture. This band manages to avoid being too goofy and just flat-out rock like no other that I can think of. There is a big difference between being a fun band and being a funny band. The Penetrators are in the fun camp. Another great release to wear out the grooves on. Long live "The Kings of Basement Rock!" —Mike Frame (Windian)

**PETER STAMPFEL AND THE BROOKLYN & LOWER MANHATTAN BANJO SQUADRON: *Better Than Expected*: CD**

An experimental half-finished banjo album with crowd-sourced lyrics. The instrumental numbers provide good background music, but I just can't get over how strange it all is. Case in point: Stampfel is still accepting lyrics for the unfinished songs. What a post-modern world we live in! –Alanna Why (Don Giovanni, dongiovannirecords.com)

**PHENOMENAUTS: *Escape Velocity*: CD**

Wow, the Phenomenauts have been cranking out the gold for over ten years now and this very well may be the band's finest hour. I am personally very glad the band shows no sign of letting up and would like to take this opportunity to thank them for continuing to keep the earth safe from uninteresting, un-fun music. This is so recommended it isn't even funny. If the Moxies make your feet tap, this is for you. –Garrett Barnwell (Silver Sprocket, silversprocket.net)

**PIZZA TIME: *U Wanna Pizza Me?*: Cassette**

This particular pie falls into the category of split toppings: side A is entirely in Spanish and carries with it all the hallmarks of a one-man band: canned drums, bleeps n' bleeps, keyboards. In a live band setting, this stuff might work better than it does here, despite some catchy riffs (which, as in, "Tu Muchacho," sound Lou Reed-y. What is it with pizza bands and the Velvet Underground?). It's all pretty twee until side B, which steps on the effects pedals and rocks way harder (though not without the aforementioned one-man-band signifiers getting distracting, and not without occasionally sounding like *The Pod*). Tasty enough, but I'm still hungry. –Michael T. Fournier (Burger)

**PLOW UNITED: *Goodnight Sellout!*: LP**

Plow United's *Marching Band* is one of my favorite records of the last few years. It's exuberant, smart, hopeful, sarcastic, and catchy as living shit and they make that shit look ridiculously easy and, yeah, you should consider getting it if you don't already. *Goodnight Sellout!*, their sophomore record from 1996, has gotten the reissue treatment from Dead Broke. 1996 was a crazy time for punk in general and pop punk specifically, and this LP was, according to the band, written as a way to distinctly try something new. To step out of the confines of the pop punk genre. Test themselves. It's a frantic,

almost hardcore-sounding record at times, with a lot of textures and varying parts. There are a lot of chances being taken here and, no, they don't always succeed. Mostly, I feel like it's a collection of songs that are slippery, disjointed, and hard to get a handle on. (Hell, that may have even been intentional.) As a document of an era and product of a particular scene, it's probably a pretty integral record to folks who were there. But as someone who's hearing *Goodnight Sellout!* for the first time, without that historical context, I can't help but feel that the band's continuing to get better and better, that their best work may be before them, and that I can't wait to hear what they do next. –Keith Rosson (Dead Broke)

**POW!: *One Eyed Scorpion*: 7"**

This sucker is sexy coming out of the sleeve: sky blue clear vinyl with an almost shockingly contrasting red-orange label. Really nice layout of the cover art as well. "One Eyed Scorpion" is the first track and, after a quick simple guitar intro, I got excited. I heard what made me think of The Observers for a couple of seconds and then came the droning vocals. They lost me that quick. The vocals really took the wind out of my sails as it sucked all of the energy from the music. I'm not a huge fan of synth either. And it happened the same way for remaining three songs, glimmer of hope... lethargic vocals, synth. They definitely have their sound, I am just not in their particular demographic. –Jackie Rusted (Grazer Records, grazerrecords.bigcartel.com)

**PREGNANCY SCARES: *Mind Control*: 7" EP**

Raw, angry, mid-tempo hardcore of the ilk that sounds like it could've made its way 'round the "mix tape" circuit in the early '80s. The recording doesn't have quite the punch one might hope for, but it is otherwise clear and appropriately frazzled, and the tunes are nice 'n' pissed. –Jimmy Alvarado (Deranged)

**PRIESTS: *Bodies and Control and Money and Power*: CD**

Priests toured with one of my favorite bands, Good Throb, so my interest was piqued when this CD came my way. Interesting choice for a tour buddy. Everything that I love and expect from Good Throb (gnarly, distorted, unpolished and unapologetically so), is the exact opposite of Priests. Not that this is necessarily a bad thing. Hailing from DC, Priests are a no-frills minimalist post-punk band. It's got a retro vibe, but still

remains fresh, potent. Sonic comparisons like tinges of Breeders, Bikini Kill, and even the Cramps work, but really they have a sound all their own. Politically driven lyrics—"Obama killed something in me" strike a chord. Something that all of us hopefuls felt as we once stood at the precipice, but now find ourselves flattened at bottom with doubt and disillusionment. *Bodies and Control and Money and Power* is a worthy album, there just seems something missing to really put this one over the top. I'll be watching for what's next. —Camylle Reynolds (Don Giovanni)

### **PRIMITIVE MAN / HEXIS: Split: 10" EP**

Here's a couple bands taking sludge and mixing it with some black metal style guitar work. Primitive Man are slow and punishing in their assault. The music pours out in a thick ooze, with some cold black metal guitar parts here and there to provide a little extra despair. The bass and drums act as a slow motion demolition crew, while the guitar saws and sways under the force. Hexis mix black metal with sludge elements in their song "Excrucio." The black metal comes in the cold swarm of bees guitar sound, which has a hypnotic element that is offset by the thud of the drums. It all eventually washes into feedback and heavier, more deliberate thud. —M.Avrq (Halo Of Flies, halooffliesrecords.com)

### **PROTESTANT: In Thy Name: LP**

Milwaukee hardcore, but hardcore in spirit only. This is metal. Or at least a mix of crust, grindcore, and primitive black metal. Blast beats drive the record, with guitar leads more Immortal than Amebix and screamed vocals that would fit comfortably in either genre. None of this is a deterrent, just a grim warning. With music and lyrics as dark and apocalyptic as the record cover would indicate, this is not for the faint of heart. For those who dig Discharge and Napalm Death alike, this will work for you. As is often the case with filthy shit like this, some of the most compelling moments are those that slow down, hit a groove—if you can call it that—and let the riff become the focus, forcing a slow head bang before returning you to your previously pummeling program, already in progress. Brutal, bleak, and bloody good. —Chad Williams (Halo Of Flies, halooffliesrecords.com)

### **PYRRHON: The Mother of Virtues: CD**

Technical death metal? Sure, why not? *The Mother of Virtues* at times is reminiscent of Dead To Fall, with

a slightly less technical version of Dillinger Escape Plan mixed in. With nine songs clocking in at fifty-five minutes, it seems like it would be a lengthy ride, but the songs move along surprisingly well. Unfortunately, with few exceptions ("The Oracle of Nassau," "Balkanized"), the songs don't do much to distinguish themselves. None of this is to say the band isn't talented—they're good at what they do and their diversity is appreciated, but what they're doing on *The Mother of Virtues* didn't catch me and make me want more. On a totally unrelated note, the opening few seconds of drumming on "White Flag" was incredibly reminiscent of Fleetwood Mac's "What Makes You Think You're the One" off their *Tusk* album. If you can find a way to incorporate Fleetwood Mac with your technical death metal sound, then I *definitely* want to hear your next album. That would be bizarrely amazing. —Kurt Morris (Relapse)

### **QUAALUDES: Nothing New: 7" EP**

Quaaludes are addictive. Fact. I've been seriously hooked since I first saw them last year. Quaaludes is a force of nature in SF. They are one of those rare all XX bands that fit on any punk bill, a loved local to the SF scene, adored by guys and grrrls alike. This is their first EP, and just like every performance I've seen of them, it does not disappoint. Well recorded, with crisp melodic bass and drums, even more euphonically distorted guitar, with Aimee's straight up unapologetic, bratty riot grrrl vocals at the forefront. Best song on here is "Stiff Little Single." This song is fucking genius with a perfect bass rift and unmistakably rad lyrics "I'm going to take you to a place where I can fuck you." Instant classic. The only thing that's missing on this EP is the pogoing girl-friendly pit and Aimee's crazy stage antics. Buy it before it sells out. —Camylle Reynolds (Thrillhouse / Dollskin)

### **RAF: Come On!: 10"**

The cover of *Come On!* has Mod targets where the Os are supposed to be. There is no question what this band is going for. They have a song called "(It's a) Modern World" and a song called "We Are the Mods." The band logo is filled with British flag stripes. They are trying awfully hard to be extras in *Quadrophenia* for a band from Portland. The good news is they are good at what they do. The band crams fast-paced, jangly Rickenbacker-inspired riffs into two-minute, Jam-style songs. The record contains six upbeat tunes in the framework of skinny ties and tight trousers. The title

track is a standout. See them in the winter so you can wear your parka. –Billups Allen (Time For Action)

**RAMMA LAMMA: *Ice Cream*: LP**

Work sucks. The school I work at is having a real tough time. Seismologists told us that nearly half of the campus was built on a fault line. Now that portion of the school, which includes a dozen classrooms, is off-limits. On top of that, the after-school program’s budget got slashed to practically nil. As a result, I’ve been heading home partially deflated, embittered. Today, I slump into my chair and see Ramma Lamma’s *Ice Cream* on my desk. It beckons me with its garish, crude cover art, like an animation cell from *The Nine Lives of Fritz the Cat*. I give it a spin and, god almighty, it’s just what I need. I’m talking pure id power pop, mining the brains most impulsive (repulsive?) regions, and kick-starting serotonin production. These are the type of songs that just might make you blush: “Baby I’m a monster, come from outer space. If the girls don’t like it they can sit on my face.” Ramma Lamma is therapeutic. They extinguish my frustrations with whip cream. After a handful of songs, I’m completely decompressed. This is the type of record that reminds you that there’s still stupid fun to be had in the world. –Sean Arenas (Certified PR, certifiedprrecords.com)

**RANCID VAT: *We’re Still Better Than You*: CD**

The insanely prolific Rancid Vat formed in Portland on New Year’s Eve, 1981. Since then, they’ve churned out over sixty releases, constantly experimenting with new bizarre things. The band’s current lineup is based out of Texas and includes two of the original founding members, Phil “The Whiskey Rebel” Irwin and Marla Vee. Intentionally inaccessible at times, Rancid Vat mixes a broad range of musical influences into a punk framework, although they’re still probably at their best on their catchier songs like the title track. It’s a pleasure hearing new material from this one-of-a-kind band. The opposite of uncool, Rancid Vat will continue alarming those with conventional tastes with their abnormal approach to songwriting. –Art Ettinger (Brilliancy Prize)

**RATOS DE PORAO: *Seculo Sinestro*: CD**

One can’t help but be impressed when a band in its thirty-third year of existence can still manage to crank out an album as consistently strong, relevant, and unrelenting as this one. This latest release sees the band

seesaw a bit more back towards the “thrash metal” side of their dual existence but while there may be a bit more chugga-chugga to the guitars, they approach things with the same level of political astuteness and ferocity that has made them one of Brazil’s most formidable and better-known hardcore bands to the outside world. Ten originals, an Anti Cimex cover, and not a second wasted. Fuuuuuck yeah, this’ll definitely blow your doors off. –Jimmy Alvarado (Alternative Tentacles)

**RAY CREATURE: *Self-titled*: LP**

I am a huge new wave fan and love all kinds of dark shit like Sisters Of Mercy, Christian Death, and Bauhaus. I also worked at Hot Topic for half a decade. I am fully aware of what those bands unwittingly spawned. I listened to this quite a bit before reading the press sheet and must admit to not being surprised that these recordings are essentially just mash-ups of old recordings. You know “liberally adding synths and sequencers” does not make a good record. This is like people who actually think anyone who learns simple punk chords should record a punk album. “Could” and “should” are different things. I actually find this stuff insulting. I want Nick Cave to punch this band in the face. –Rene Navarro (Sister Cylinder, sistercylinder.bigcartel.com)

**RAZORHEADS: *Self-titled*: Cassette**

Black metally, gruff, and fast with some powerviolence tendencies. Just three tracks on this release and they go by quick. But don’t worry because the same three appear on the b-side as well. Seems like a bit of wasted tape to me. The artwork rocks; the band is not really my thing. –Kayla Greet (Self-released)

**REAGAN’S POLYP: *America Needs More Ass*: CD**

Art-damaged synth noise experimentation whackery. These guys must really like Men’s Recovery Project, but are nowhere near as clever or interesting. More simulacra and bargain basement juvenilia. Bleh. If you need a shim for an uneven chair or table, this would suit just fine. –M.Avrq (Vetoxa, vetoxa.com)

**REAGAN’S**

**POLYP:**

***Facefuckingbatspermantidotepudding*: CD**

Do you like to challenge yourself when you listen to music? Are you a fan of potty mouth lyrics and absurdities? If you answered yes to either of these questions then I have the CD for you. There are

thirty quirky songs on here with titles like, “Fuck Mommy,” “They Installed Teeth in My Ass,” and “1-900-Monkeybutt.” Smell my feces and enjoy. –Ryan Nichols (Vetoxa, vetoxarecords@gmail.com)

**RED KATE: *When the Troubles Come*: LP**

The woodblock print cover looks like a folk punk record, the music’s in that grey area where power pop begins veering into cock rock, and the vocalists sound like Muppets. I could see this being fun after a couple beers at a bar, but it wasn’t really doing it for me on wax at home. –Chris Terry (replayrecordsusa.com)

**RED TAPE: *Bless Me Father, For I Have Sinned*: LP**

If the singer’s Boston accent didn’t creep in every now and then (“Teah down the walls”), I’d swear this was a lost SoCal band from the early ‘80s. These twelve songs are anthemic like Agent Orange, with a heavy black cloud of guitars that got my fist in the air. All the songs are on one side, and the flip has an etching of the cover art, a drawing of a ball-gagged priest getting whipped by a nun. –Chris Terry (pinehillrecords.bigcartel.com)

**REPELLERS / DEAD HAND: *Split*: 7”**

Okay, metal... I kind of understand metal, I guess? Repellers is like a mix of crust and death metal. Dead Hand is some kind of doom/sludge thing. It is listenable. If you do not obsessively listen to metal already then I don’t think this will make anybody a convert. But the art on the cover is pretty neat! Grade: C+. –Bryan Static (Divine Mother, divinemotherrecordings.blogspot.com)

**REPLICA: *Beasts*: 7” EP**

An unrelenting barrage of sonic virulence comes crashing down upon your melon, thrashes its way into your auditory canals, and infects your being until you find yourself unable to stop your body from rhythmically spasming along to its demon-beat. Yeah, I’ve been reading old Pushead and, yes, as a matter of fact, this release is aces, and the cover art is fuggin’ gorgeous. –Jimmy Alvarado (Prank, prankrecords.com)

**RESIST CONTROL: *Cessation*: LP**

Resist Control—who feature former and current members of NY mainstays such as Running For Cover, John Brown’s Army, and Gas Chamber—play a frantically paced interpretation of the fastcore genre with the absence of the prototypical screaming

pterodactyl or gurgling cookie monster vocals in favor of a confrontational-styled shouting. First impressions bring to mind powerviolence revivalists Burn Your Bridges or Low Threat Profile, but a closer look under the hood reveals manic, shredding guitar parts a la Sticky sans the humor. The guitar notes are a lot more melodic than what is customary for this genre, but they work surprisingly well here. Glad I kicked the tires on this one. –Juan Espinosa (Feral Kid / Peterwalkee, no address listed)

**REXX: *Death, and Other Ways to be Artsy*: Cassette**

Emo/indie for the sad boys with the feelings and so on. Home-recorded, Pacific Northwest vibes kind of save it from just being wimpy white noise. The first time I listened to it, I was scrolling through Tumblr and a picture of the cast of *The O.C.* came up and I was like, “Ah, okay. This makes sense. I like this. Seth Cohen and nostalgia and stuff.” Then a couple days later I was listening with my girlfriend and I said, “This isn’t bad. But I wouldn’t want to be the person he’s singing about” and she said “Oh *god* no” and then we watched *Foyle’s War*, but really REXX is all right, for the young people with hearts, not just the sad boy people. –Matt Werts (Burger, burgerrecords.org)

**RHYTHM OF CRUELTY: *Dysphoria*: LP**

Shades of early Cocteau Twins and Xmal Deutschland are in evidence in the music here, which also throws in hypnotic hints of industrial minimalism and drone to draw you in and keep you mesmerized. It’s not really uncharted waters they’re delving into here, but they do so with talent and a palpable sense of purpose. I’m listening to this during the dog days of summer, but I can totally see it making its way into heavy rotation as soon as the days get cooler and grayer. –Jimmy Alvarado (Crude City, crudacityrecords@hotmail.ca)

**RICH HANDS, THE: *Out of My Head*: Cassette**

I like it when new releases sound like stuff I was into twenty-five years ago and still listen to despite the nagging suspicions meandering in my head that I’m just a nostalgic old fool. The Rich Hands have a sound similar to stuff coming out of Minneapolis in the mid- to late-’80s (I keep going back to *Made to Be Broken*-era Soul Asylum on this one, but that’s not quite right...), but with a bit more of a rock’n’roll roots feel to it. I liked it a bunch. –The Lord Kveldulfr (Burger / Fountain)

**RIDGELANDS, THE: *Daggers Down*: LP**

On first listen, I would describe this as Midwestern, Johnny Cougar pop punk. That's not a dig. I like pop punk. I like the Midwest. John Cougar Mellencamp's "Hurt So Good" is a fucking solid ode to kinky sex. The video is a goddamn masterpiece. Why not? In the gatefold, the trio sits clothed in a bathtub, pouring clear liquid from gasoline canisters over themselves. Crazy kids. I see a skateboard deck, a half-gnawed chicken wing, a G.G. Allin shirt, and cans upon empty cans of Midwestern beer. I bet this band is the life of the house party, frat party, and skate park. If you find yourself headed into any of these situations, consider taking a copy of *Daggers Down* with you. The packaging is beautiful (colored vinyl, etc.) and it's impolite to show up empty-handed, you filthy cheapskate! —John Mule (Sexy Baby, [sexybabyrecords.com](http://sexybabyrecords.com))

**ROCHELLE ROCHELLE: *Self-titled*: Cassette**

If we lived in a reality where children, instead of becoming adults as they aged, became, say, furry green multi-headed antelopes that shit out, like, gems and miniature cities instead of poop, and everyone talked out of their eyes, and rubbing the soles of one's foot with someone else's foot was considered the most intimate form of human contact, then Rochelle Rochelle would be the biggest house band in the universe. But since we live here, in this reality, this tape sounds like the droll, trying soundtrack to a demented kids' show, full of reverb and no information besides song titles and, honestly, I just don't have the patience for it. —Keith Rosson (Muckman)

**ROMAN CANDLES: "*Yorba Linda*" b/w "*Crystal Cathedral*": 7"**

Chris Gordon is not simply an angry punk who writes about what he sees on the news. This two-song seven inch is a testament to that. The short essay on the insert makes all the difference by not simply throwing music into the world expecting the listeners to interpret it correctly, but rather putting the effort to explain, "This is *why* I made this." Gordon is honest; he pulls from his life experience admitting his disappointments with his hometown as well as the reluctance with which he leaves it. While the lyrics themselves—sung in strained pleads that were too lacking in definitive melody—did not stir radical feelings of rebellion in my chest, the context they were presented in won me over. —Ashley Ravelo (Self-released, [fuckthestowaways.blogspot.com](http://fuckthestowaways.blogspot.com), [romancandlesmusic@gmail.com](mailto:romancandlesmusic@gmail.com))

**ROYAL PINES: *Three Sheets*: LP**

Interesting collusion of Fall-esque post punk and maybe some odd rock stuff that would not have been out of place on Am Rep or Alternative Tentacles back in the day. If this were the 1980s (and *Three Sheets* has that quality about it: it could just as easily have been recorded then as now), you'd just call this stuff "college rock" and be good to go. Slightly droning and very layered and braced by challenging rhythms and tempos, it's a record that seethes along pretty decently. A far cry from my usual fare, but convincing enough. —Keith Rosson (Grey Chord)

**RUINED FAMILIES: *Blank Language*: LP**

Tearing through nine songs of chunky, angular riffs and staccato yells, Ruined Families, from Athens, Greece, play evolved hardcore with post-screamo, post-punk, post-*whatever* flourishes. They make an impact immediately. The arrangements aren't the derivative loud-quiet-loud formula that is the go-to for current emotive hardcore bands. Instead, the aural assault begins with "Only Need Is Real" and continues through to the last song, "Pedestal." The subtle tonal shifts make for an engaging listen. From metallic assault, like Florida's Ex-Breathers, to the shoegaze-lite of "Easy Living," Ruined Families stretch their legs in a genre sadly synonymous with uniformity. Also, the lyrics are divisive with plenty of food for thought, criticizing capitalist parenting and punk stereotypes: "We were born inside a trap. The punks want their money back." Thoughtful stuff. —Sean Arenas (Adagio830, [adagio830.de](http://adagio830.de))

**RUINS / USNEA: *Split*: EP**

An exercise in the dark and heavy. One song from each band, and I would definitely like to hear more from Ruins. They walk in the Tragedy realm, though they have a slightly catchier and melodic side that helps propel them far ahead of others who tread the same ground. The song, "Only the End of the World" begins with an apocalyptic tone then kicks into a full-on attack that is as rocking as it is heavy. Time changes throughout to keep the listener interested as well as adding more depth to the music. Usnea slow things down considerably with their contemplative sludge that's slightly marred by the higher range vocal growling that comes in towards the end. Should have left that out and just let the music do the talking. —M.AvrG (Halo Of Flies, [halooffliesrecords.com](http://halooffliesrecords.com) / Twisted Chords, [twisted-chords.de](http://twisted-chords.de))

**SAM RUSSO / BRENDAN KELLY: Split: 7"**

Looks like we have another entry in the punk rock retirement acoustic solo career sweepstakes. Tim Barry and Chuck Ragan sure opened the floodgates on the “mature and pick up an acoustic guitar” trajectory. The two tunes by Sam Russo here are quite tuneful and downright strong. Not sure if he is ex any band but there are some real songwriting chops here and the British accent lends an air of sophistication to the proceedings. Brendan Kelly is the Lawrence Arms/Slapstick dude and turns in two songs as well. The songs on his side of the split are perfectly passable acoustic songs that don’t really stand out but are still good. It takes a lot to really shine with just an acoustic guitar and vocals. Not everyone can be Chad Price or Jon Snodgrass –Mike Frame (Red Scare)

**SASHCLOTH AND AXES: Zeus: LP**

If there is a soundtrack better than this for those S and M folks out there, put it up against this record. Imagine if Q Lazarus recorded more than one song and you’re half way there. Sashcloth And Axes make dark and driving dance floor music, the kind that makes you want to take your pants off before your shirt. Fans of Q Lazarus, dark-wave, and Dark Entries Records will fall in love with this record. The vocals are minimal and mostly consist of sexual moaning. If you mashed up *Thriller* and some old Clan Of Xymox, this happens. Limited copies come with a very X-rated coloring book where you can connect-the-dots to make a penis, pick different styles of breasts to put on a woman’s chest, and color an illustration of “The Hasselhoff” position next to phrases like, “Color me harder!” (Self-released, no address listed)

**SCUMRISE: Super Hits: Cassette**

With a bevy of influences on display such as hardcore, hard rock, and punk I can only assume that Scumrise is unfamiliar with bands like Cursed, Burning Love, and To Hell And Back who have proven that this style only works for a chosen few. Not awful but not spectacular and that is precisely the problem. –Juan Espinosa (Scumrise, scumrise.bandcamp.com)

**SEAGULLS: The Royal We/ All the World’s Wars: CD-R**

A spit-shined produced version of Seagulls’ live set. Equal sonic parts Florida and Fat Wreck with a heavy dose of dirty South ATL. Steve roars with a Pink Eyes

ferocity while Dom and Billy wheel and loop their guitar leads around the rhythm section like ripcord dervishes. You can see and feel the plywood stage buckle under the pressure of the band’s incessant energy. Not sure where their penchant for basketball jerseys comes from—and some songs could have had a bit of fat trimmed from their lengths—but still recommended for ratcheting up your already soaring mood. –Matt Seward (seagullsatl.bandcamp.com)

**SELF ABUSE: Teenage: LP**

A vinyl pressing of what was originally a cassette-only release originally making the rounds in 1983 from a now lesser-known Bournemouth UK82 band. The tunes are very much of that time and genre, but they also manage to sneak in a bit of the kind of post-punk influence popular with that era’s anarcho-punk cabal of bands as well. The tunes are strong individually, but I gotta say, taken one after the other the sameness of much of what here starts to blend together into once long mush of a tune. This is a recommended purchase, with the caveat that it might be best to drop it into your greater playlist and hit random for maximum effect. –Jimmy Alvarado (Loud Punk)

**SERIOUS SAM BARRETT: Any Road: LP**

It’s interesting how it seems that if done genuinely, any genre of music can become punk music if played by punks. The genre at hand is rootsy, acoustic, country, folk stuff. When executed with this much energy and passion, Sam could be playing a goddamn slide whistle and it would still sound like distorted guitar in my brain. It should be no surprise that Mr. Barrett’s previous LP was released on Arkam Records, and he has toured with the Pine Hill Haints. Both he and they do an exceptional job of staying true to a lifetime’s worth of punk music while still playing something totally different. Having a song about touring with Kid Little doesn’t hurt either. –Daryl (YaDig?, serioussam13@hotmail.co.uk)

**SERPENTINE PATH: Emanations: CD**

When I had to look inside the liner notes to read the band’s name because the front was indecipherable, I knew I was in trouble. Dull, plodding music with painfully unmelodic vocals. Sounds like grindcore? You are correct! I can’t stomach this but the cover of a woman turning into a snake was titillating for a second. –Sean Koepenick (relapse.com)

**SETE STAR SEPT / NEW YORK AGAINST THE BELZEBU:****Spilt: EP**

Dull and pointless noisecore from both bands. If you want to see the negative effects of the “anyone can do it” mentality championed by punk rock, then look no further than the cynical crap of the contemporary noisecore scene. Sure, anyone can do it, but that does not mean that they should. –M.Avrq (SPHC, sphc.bigcartel.com)

**SHANKS, THE: *Surfing the Lexicon*: LP**

Sometimes I think I listen to music wrong. Take this record, for example. When I listen to it, I hear absolutely perfect indie rock with a mid-'90s vibe. It sounds like music by guys who've listened to Bob Mould's solo album guitar work (not just Hüsker Dü). It sounds like music by guys who understand what makes Guided By Voices tick. The first side ends with some slower stuff. “Miss Virginia” is the kind of patient, fuzzy tune that gives me the spine chills. None of the tunes move faster than a solid gallop. I wouldn't describe any of this as snarling or metal. Yet the sticker on the cover of the record compares this band to the Dead Boys and (huh?) Big Business. Is someone really getting that vibe from this record? Maybe I'm wrong. Surely the record label knows what the band sounds like. Still, I like listening to this band my way better. –MP Johnson (Phratry)

**SIAMESE TWINS: *Still Corner*: LP**

The cover art looks like something straight outta the 1990s catalog of either Amphetamine Reptile or Touch And Go, but the music is reverb-laden, occasionally gloomy post-punk with maybe a nod or two to the dream pop end of the sandbox. Though I do wish the results were just a smidge catchier, they do it well, keeping the instrumentation to a minimum, effectively setting appropriate mood and not dipping too far in the direction of any particular subgenre. Definitely a band to keep an eye on. –Jimmy Alvarado (Eunuch, eunuchrecords.storenvy.com)

**SIGHTLINES / CRYSTAL SWELLS: Split: 7”**

The mauve/gray-colored vinyl is reminiscent of the gray matter and blood missing from the exposed cranial cavities of the two figures depicted in the cover art. I like that, a lot. Both bands are out of Vancouver, BC. Sightlines blends power pop and pop punk into this weird, anxiety-inducing sound that makes me want to pace the floor like I'm making awkward small talk on the

telephone, in a good way. Crystal Swells put out some noisy punk. Bass, drums, and guitar come together like a beast with three backs, only to burst apart thrashing and wailing while subtle vocals weave through the madness. All hell's broken loose and there is no caging this beast. –Jackie Rusted (Self-released, sightlines.bandcamp.com / crystalswells.bandcamp.com)

**SISTERKISSER / RUMSPRINGER: Split: 7” EP**

Sister Kisser: Gruff and/or flat-vocaled indie pop punk with hooks aplenty. The songs are innocuous enough, and are sugar-sticky and simple without being lug-headed, but on the whole they don't really stand out from the umpteen other bands populating the pack. Rumspringer: Sure, there's some musical DNA overlap in evidence here that is shared with their record-mates, but Rumspringer's working on a whole other level of hooks and sonic sophistication, and they do so with a deceptive ease in delivery that make the results all the more impressive. As a result, it's about as unfair to compare the two as it is to put a bonobo in a cage with a nine hundred pound silverback and expect it to hold its own. –Jimmy Alvarado (Dead Broke)

**SLOW SCIENCE / THE DAUNTLESS ELITE: Split: 12”**

My first exposure to Slow Science was two and a half years ago with the band being sandwiched between Crazy Arm and Muncie Girls on a low key, midweek gig here in Plymouth (U.K.). I was highly impressed with the performance of the quartet and later that week picked up a download of the band's demo EP which indicated that it was as good in a studio as it was live. With its members being involved in other musical endeavors, this 12” is the first proper release for Slow Science and just as is heard on the demo, there is a “kitchen sink” approach to song writing/structure, with a plethora of influences being applied throughout. The two tracks here are intricate and suitably diverse, with a sound created by easing an indie rock basis down a number of tangents to reach a beautifully lush outcome that although complex is never confused or overstated. The Dauntless Elite has been around the block quite a few more times than Slow Science and adopts a much more straightforward style in its presentation. The band dishes up a pair of songs full of melodies ingrained with enough Yorkshire grit to add a few rough edges here and there. It's a good effort from the Elite but for me this split belongs to Slow Science, a band who by the time you've read this, will unfortunately have ceased to be. –Rich Cocksedge (Bombed Out, bombedout.com)

**SLUTS: 12" of Sluts: LP**

I have a good friend who probably owns most of G.G. Allin's records (although I think he feels some shame that his friends know this.) When I excitedly asked him if he was going to buy a record called *12" of Sluts*, he told me he would pass, that he thinks he heard a bootleg of it years ago and didn't care for it. Why old punx gotta be jaded? With a band name and a record name like these, you can't help but be interested. I have a hard time making out the words, but with song titles like "Fuck You," "Cunning Linguist," and "Mom's Cunt" you can kinda fill in the blanks. Makes me think of the "cursing club" I had with some friends when I was a kid. Our goal was to say as many bad words as often as possible. –Sal Lucci (Jeth-Row, jethrowrecords.bigcartel.com)

**SMOOTH BRAIN: One of Them: 7"**

Smooth Brain play aggressive garage punk that is more like adrenaline-pumping street racing, not beach balls, pastel sunglasses, and jean jackets. Each song is a tasty morsel of shouted melodies—albeit indecipherable lyrics—with the type of fuzzy production values that enhance the attitude instead of solely disguising the flubs. I find myself satisfied, nothing less, nothing more. Big bonus: Nathan Ward's cover and insert art is killer. It reminds me of Gary Panter in the best possible way. –Sean Arenas (Dead Broke, deadbrokerec@gmail.com / Lost Cat, lostcatrecords.org / Root Of Evil, rootofevilcollective.com)

**SNAKE HANDLER: Enjoy the View: 7"**

Yes. Now we're talking. Furious, dark hardcore in the Poison Idea vein with a slightly more chaotic slant, made all the more aggressive and frenzied by Orchid/Ampere wizard Will Killingsworth's ultraviolet mix. Killer cover art to boot. Awesome. –Dave Williams (Victimized, snakehandler.bandcamp.com)

**SNIFFS, THE: A Bad Time: Cassette**

This is a high quality, five-song catchy demo from D.C. The Spits probably were the main influence on The Sniffs, or at least the main recent influence. That's not a bad thing at all. I like the vocalist's snotty tone and the lyrics are great, especially on the song "Prosecutor," which is an indictment of those who indict. I'll be sniffing out future releases from The Sniffs for sure. –Art Ettinger (Self-released, thesniffs.bandcamp.com)

**SNOOKYS, THE: Steroids: 7" EP**

High-octane garage punk. The production is remarkably clean compared to, say, the Mummies or even Teengenerate, which adds a bit more intensity and a sense of tightness to their delivery. Not bad at all. –Jimmy Alvarado (Bedo, bedorecords.bigcartel.com)

**SOFTLINES: Self-titled: Cassette**

There is nothing soft about this band. Linear, yeah okay. But soft? No way. There are parts that are fuzzy but in the same vein that the scrubby part of a sponge is fuzzy. I'd certainly describe them as abrasive, cutting, and piercing. Their guitar work is bright and warm, the drums are fierce, the bass is deep and poppy. Vocal stylings are slowed down, drawn-out melodies that pair more with the bass in tempo than anything else. Reminds me a bit like the vocals in Big Eyes. This recording is only two people in a practice space in Buffalo, NY. It's mixed really well and has a full, robust, and complex sound. Lots of nice nuances in this band. My only diss is the unlabeled cassette. For real guys, at least write your band name on it. I got two unmarked tapes both from your practice space and the only distinction is color. My only hope is they find a third member and take this out of the studio. –Kayla Greet (Self-released)

**SONIC CHICKEN 4: Self-titled: LP**

Second self-titled LP from this French outfit of garage-stompin' freaks. It's ruckusy and hooky, and full of hootin' and hollerin'. Filled to the fucking gills with fuzzy, twanged-out guitars! The squares might think it's cluttery, but SC4 pull it off! Instead of sounding like a mess, it just sounds like a crowded, fun party full of your rowdiest friends. Recorded by King Khan in Valencia, Spain so you know it's the real deal. –Daryl (Bachelor / Dusty Medical)

**SONNY VINCENT: Cyanide Consommé: CD**

I listened to this latest dose of black leather trad-sleaze/straight-up nihilism at work, over the tiny speakers on our crappy, non-internet-enabled computer, dutifully noting how the lead guitar would poke its head out of the rock'n'roll Sarlacc Pit during vocal pauses, spit a little venom, and duck back down when the vocals came back in, just like the Dead Boys. I also noted how key phrases would be forcefully re-bludgeoned again and again, like the Action Swingers. I even noticed the occasional X-Ray Spexish sax solo, and the squawky distorto-effect on the vocals that was popular twenty

years ago when the Dummies were at their prime. Then “Suck My Snot” hit, and it’s like “SUCK IT UP! FUCK IT UP!” or something like that, and I’m all like “HOLY SHIT!!!”, and I stopped taking notes—but, right on cue, the plant manager started coming over by me because he wanted a pair of latex gloves, so I immediately and instinctively killed the volume. It’s got to be complete rock instinct, when you’re listening to something as fucking great as “Suck My Snot,” and some grownup starts coming over to where you’re at, you kill the volume. THIS ISN’T FOR YOU TO HEAR, SQUARE! YOU GO ON ABOUT YOUR BUSINESS! It’s like, not only do I not want a grownup to HEAR my music, I don’t even want them to observe ME hearing it. THEY CANNOT COMPREHEND THE GOINGS-ON! It’s best to keep it shrouded in mystery, let their feeble imaginations attempt to fill in the blanks as best they can. Real rock’n’roll engenders a sense of territorial possession: THIS IS MINE, YOU CAN’T HAVE THIS, AND, IN POINT OF FACT, YOU CAN’T EVEN WATCH ME HAVING IT! Such was, indeed, the case here. So, yeah, eventually he walked back into the din of the pressroom and the six boomboxes trying to blast Styx or whatever over the noise, and I went back to blasting “Suck My Snot” on these tiny little speakers, alone and unwitnessed. I can not and need not provide further testimony to this record’s worth. BEST SONG: “Suck My Snot.” BEST SONG TITLE: I do like “Suck My Snot” just fine, but I’m going to go with “Part 2 Screw You” just to break it up. FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: Spine is printed upside down. –Rev. Nørb (Big Neck, bigneckrecords.com)

### **SONNY VINCENT: *Cyanide Consommé*: LP**

This record fucking kills! From song to song, I’m consistently blown away. It’s unbelievable how great this album is. Not one stinker in the entire bunch. The guitar work recalls Scott Ashton, with it’s heavy sound that could shred thick sheets of steel on contact, and Sonny’s vocals are convincingly urgent and tough. The songs are perfect blend of the Dead Boys with the hard punch of the Stooges. The guitar tone on this album is vicious, topped with vocals that cut. Then there’s the sax on the opener, “James Brown’s Evil Son,” that slays! I really like the mid-tempo late night burner of “Part 2 Screw You,” bringing to mind nights that run too long for one’s own good. The title track kicks off with a gnashing guitar riff that grabs your attention and does not let up. A good amount of low end sends this

fucker over the edge. I will go on record stating this is one of my all-time favorite albums. One of those “desert island” discs, if you must go there. –M.Avrq (Big Neck, bigneckrecords.com)

### **SONNY VINCENT: *Cyanide Consommé*: LP**

What we have here is some hard-rockin’ big guitar from some guy that I guess has been around for a while. I ain’t never heard of him (and I’m guessing that he ain’t heard of me neither). Although this guy mighta done something remotely punk at one point (don’t know and don’t care enough to find out), this album sounds like somebody’s out of touch dad who worships at the altar of the Stones wanting to appeal to punks to show how wild and crazy he still is. Can’t imagine this tickling the fancy of anyone, except some aging party rockers. –Vincent (Big Neck)

### **SPEEDWELL: *Start to Finish*: CD**

As the title suggests, this is a complete discography of this Virginia band that existed in the late ‘90s/early ‘00s. The songs veer from introspective leanings to more straight-ahead rockers. But melody is always at the forefront here, even when a distorted guitar rears its warm and inviting head. Dinosaur Jr meets Catherine Wheel for a drink? That may throw the common listener for a loop but I’m standing strong. Well played songs, tuneful guitars, and rock solid drums make this one that you need to check out. –Sean Koepenick (Coolidge)

### **SPERM: *Yahweh Brings Us to This Hell*: Cassette**

Noisy, reverb-heavy hardcore that slowly turns into noisy reverb-heavy alternative rock. It’s impressive for the slow change over the course of the record if nothing else. The songwriting is okay, but there’s very little meat to actually sink your teeth into. Or maybe just not enough catchiness to leave a lasting impression. Either way, that’s a bit of a problem. Grade: B-. –Bryan Static (Self-released, no address listed)

### **STAPLES IN CARPET: *Self-titled*: CD**

They call their music “old school crossover” and, when I listen to Staples In Carpet, I imagine that early ‘90s, power-riff, white-Nike-wearing metalhead with a Black Flag shirt on. –John Mule (Self-released)

### **STE MCCABE: *Brains of Britain*: CD**

Singer/songwriter, one man band kind of stuff from the U.K. Using the term “queercore” might be misleading,

as Mr. McCabe employs elements of electronica and '80s-styled alt-rock to great effect. McCabe does seem to possess a particularly endearing snotty vocal and lyrical quality that actually keeps things interesting though, making this one a keeper. –Garrett Barnwell (Maneki-Neko, ste-mccabe.co.uk)

#### **STERILE JETS: *Liquor Store*: CD**

Looking at the cover art, I certainly wasn't expecting this batch of edgy, Minutemen-meets-Flipper tracks. There is a certain tension running through these tracks that keeps me coming back. Also, I'm a sucker for blown-out, turn-it-up-to-twelve recordings, which this thing delivers in spades. –Garrett Barnwell (Yesca Rock)

#### **STONECHAT: *Bacco*: CD**

On their Bandcamp page, Stonechat advertises that this CD comes with five mini-comics that illustrate the lyrical content of the album. That sounds rad, but I didn't get a copy. I wish I had. –John Mule (Float Away, Dangling, floatawaydangling.bandcamp.com)

#### **STREET SHARK: *Heart Age*: Cassette**

Tapes aren't my bag. But when they're documents of "the marginalized, the peripheral, and the isolated" as Social Cancer from Birmingham, AL is releasing, the format can be overlooked. When that document sounds like is Ian Curtis fronting a current shoegaze band turning up to eleven in your basement, I'm ready for repeat listenings. –Matt Seward (Social Cancer, socialcancer.net)

#### **SUFFERING MIND / GUANTANAMO PARTY PROGRAM: *Split*: EP**

Suffering Mind churn out heavy, heavy apocalyptic doom-style metal with grind-style vocals. The music is definitely energetic, but they stick pretty close to the formula and don't do a whole lot at establishing their own identity. Guantanamo Party Program mix it up a bit with interesting results, and it's their side of the record that I listen to most. The guitar tone is atypical of the genre. It sounds more like 1990s indie rock with heavy percussion and a gloomy bass underneath. Before you skip down to the next review, believe me, this style is a plus, as it helps differentiate them from the pack. It somehow works for these guys. The music is certainly heavy and packed with a solid thud. It's the guitar and its tone, though, that gives this song character and depth. The guitar breaks create this mood that's effective at

holding your attention for the duration, while the rest of the instruments and vocals do their thing. It could be interesting to hear how this band progresses. –M.Avrq (Halo Of Flies, halooffliesrecords.com)

#### **TANGO VIOLENZO: *The Submission EP*: 7"**

You think the guy with wobbly arms who just robot danced his way out of that dark alley is funny at first, until he is suddenly in your face, choking you with sandpaper hands, laughing and jumping up and down, getting louder and crazier, and you don't know how you're even breathing through all of this. –MP Johnson (Luftslott)

#### **TEARGAS ROCK: *Self-titled*: 12" EP**

The (Young) Pioneers started in Richmond, Virginia in 1994, shortly after the breakup of singer/guitarist Adam Nathanson's art-damaged hardcore band Born Against. They started playing trebly, acoustic folk and recorded prolifically, evolving through cryptic blasts of punked-up soul and finally landing on the loose rock'n'roll of their final LP, 1999's *Free the (Young) Pioneers Now!* After the (Young) Pioneers broke up, they had a short-lived band called Teargas Rock. Hissy dubs of a demo were passed around Richmond, but never saw official release until now. These seven songs were tracked in late '99, and are the only Teargas Rock recordings. Songwriting-wise, they're the logical continuation of the (Y)Ps' sound, the band (Nathanson, long-time bassist Marty Key, and new drummer Randy Davis) a bit less hectic, more comfortable with melody, and delving deeper into '60s soul. A big change is the lyrics. The (Y)Ps' lyrics spoke about social injustice in Richmond and were peppered with references to the radical politics of previous generations, while Teargas Rock's lyrics were written at the height of anti-globalization activism, and work perfectly as protest anthems for Battle in Seattle-era politics. The (Young) Pioneers gained popularity posthumously, and were often cited as an influence on the folk punk scene of the '00s. Against Me! even name-check them in a song. For me, the (Y)Ps were the ripshit trio who opened for Kill Rock Stars bands, and made something click inside of this new-to-the-south, half-black punk rocker who was trying to make sense of his identity and his father's hometown. They made me feel okay with having one foot in black life and one foot in white music, and I'll always associate the (Y)Ps with discovery of self and of Richmond. It's super exciting to get more songs by these musicians, and to

hear it sound so vital so long after the fact. —Chris Terry (littleblackcloudrecords.com)

### **TEE PEES, THEE: Self-titled: LP**

Wait-wait-wait a second—I can hear all the instruments! Can it be Los Angeles’s finest purveyors of shit-fi have—GASP!—sold their souls and gone mainstream? What’s next—duets with Nicki Minaj in plastic see-through hot pants? Guest appearances on *Ellen*? Hipsters wearing Thee Tee Pees half-shirts bought at Urban Outfitters for thrice the price? Oh, the fuggin’ humanity! Sure, their habit of plundering the depths of the nether-area where hardcore and trashy garage intersect is largely intact and no less potent, and they still come on with the subtlety of a rhino dancing ballet, but for chrissakes, aren’t there some sorta rules about avoiding sonic coherence? Next thing you know, the Mummies will be releasing CDs or something.... —Jimmy Alvarado (Manglor)

### **TESTORS: Complete Recordings 1976-1979: 2 x LP**

Do you want to be cool? Badass? Totally irresistible? Of course you do, Poindexter! I confess that before I held this held this double LP in my hands, I was a drooling, slack-jawed Cro-Magnon incapable of anything remotely hip. Now I preach the gospel of Sonny Vincent atop a soap box and swing a tuna can from my neck like the miscreant that I am. If this sounds rad (which I *know* it does) just follow these four easy rules. Rule one: Give zero fucks. Rule two: A fuck-all attitude will take you to most any place. Rule three: Your fashion accessories can never—I repeat—*never* be too ridiculous. Rule four: If you’re actually following these rules, then you’re doing it all wrong, ding-dong. In all seriousness, Todd Killings, from his introduction, puts it best: “For a band that was left out of almost all of the history books on New York Punk in the 1970s, these guys really recorded a lot of material...” No kidding. Testors don’t slack off. I suspect that Sonny Vincent is a vampire as each song hasn’t aged a day, much like his jet-black, razor straight hair. Every tune is a garage punk, power pop behemoth of confident rock’n’roll melodies and gleeful degeneration. I would be shocked if after listening to all thirty-seven songs you are unwilling to convert to The Cult of Sonny Vincent. —Sean Arenas (Alien Snatch, aliensnatch.com)

### **THERE MUST BE A HOLE IN YOUR MEMORY: A Tribute to Adrian Borland and The Sound: CD**

I’ll start off by stating that I’m a huge fan of Adrian

Borland. I feel like he is one of—if not the—most underrated artists of the eighties post-punk scene. The Sound started up in the late seventies and made music similar to the Chameleons UK and Joy Division, but all their own. If you know either of those two bands but have never heard the Sound, you’re in for a treat. I saw the title of this CD and it immediately caught my attention. I previously hadn’t heard of a single band on this compilation, which I found kind of strange. But, strangely enough, everyone’s covers impressed me. The songs go through the whole Sound catalog and even into some of Borland’s solo material. The insert mentions a documentary that is coming out on Borland. In the meantime, if you want to hear some new takes on some of the best post-punk songs ever written, check this comp out. —Ryan Nichols (The Beautiful Music, admin@thebeautifulmusic.com)

### **THINGZ, THE: Red Future: LP**

A screen printed cover sleeve, good or bad, is always a way to grab attention. One depicting a crab with cryptic militaristic flourishes and a vague communist feel will definitely beckon a listener to ponder its insides. So you show up at the bar they’re playing this weekend, order two fists of tall boys, and start to have a great evening since you don’t really get to go out very much anymore. The Thingz take the stage, looking not quite rockabilly, but projecting a definite sense of style. They plug in and proceed to sweat out catchy, over-driven Chuck Berry guitar trash rock. You move to the front of the stage, excitedly raising your beers in the air and proceed to have the best Cramps, B-52’s, Southern Culture On The Skids-influenced bar rock night of your life. You wake up the next morning wearing the wrong sized Thingz T-shirt, late night BBQ burrito breath, and this LP on your turntable. Your hangover wants the listening to validate last night’s grandiosity, but instead leaves you with the fuzziness of questionable decisions. Fun, if not a necessity. —Matt Seward (C.A.R., thethingz.bandcamp.com)

### **THREE ROUNDS/ JUNKIE FIGHT SPLIT: Split: 7”EP**

Split with Three Rounds and Junkie Fight. I started with Junkie Fight, a band out of Oakland, and was amused by their first song... all twenty seconds of it. Junkie Fight is harsh, with methodic metal guitar, lo-fi recordings, and growling-gargling-nails vocals which reminds me of the band Strange Matter. They mix it up though with songs that teeter more in to a garage

sound to oi at times. On the other side, Three Rounds is a completely different vibe. Very Ramones and Queers inspired. Keeping it clean and playing it safe... not exactly my favorite thing, but it's well executed. Some people really dig that shit. I say go for it. –Camille Reynolds (Self-released, joey\_836@hotmail.com)

### **TIMEKILLER: *Bleed Out: 7" EP***

The sound is blown out a bit, and there's some reverb pumped in, but what this Rio de Janeiro crust-flaked hardcore unit puts down is rendered all the more bleak as a result. Judging from what's here, they're not on a speed kick like many of the other hardcore bands that come outta Brazil, but prefer rather to let the venom burn and seethe—and then when you least expect it, they hit you with “Sinking in Shit,” which recalls, well, vintage Venom. Not bad at all. –Jimmy Alvarado (Timekiller, timekillerpunch.bandcamp.com)

### **TIMMY VULGAR: *Timmy 45: 7"***

Dear Timmy Vulgar: You sure are twisted. One side of this 7" is an improvised country-punk number where even you admit to not know what the hell you're singing about. It seems to be centered around wanting to drink whiskey and growing a palm/weed tree garden (I think...?) The other side, at least on my friend's turntable, is silence. I don't understand, but I don't think you want me to. Keep up the good work. –Alanna Why (Terror Trash)

### **TOY STORE RIOT: *Viva Chile: 7"***

I will never understand pressing a 7" single with five songs and making it play at 33 RPM. Why not just pony up an extra few bucks and press a 12" that plays at 45 RPM and get a better record to have for posterity? Especially now that a single costs five to seven dollars, it seems like having a 12" to sell for eight to ten dollars makes more sense for all involved. At any rate, the 33 RPM pressing makes these songs sound very tinny and compressed, though the songs themselves aren't bad. Mid-tempo pop punk with some of that Mike Dirnt kinda bass playing in parts. Music sound a lot like the mid-'90s stuff I remember though, thankfully, there is none of that fake snotty Screeching Weasel crap in the vocals. Tenement seems to have made it cool to actually kinda sing in pop punk these days, and I'm quite happy about that. Band is from D.C. and will appeal to fans of the aforementioned Midwestern titans, as well as The Figgs, Yesterdays Kids/Oboletes and other tuneful,

not-quite-punk sounds. –Mike Frame (Self-released, toystoreriot.bandcamp.com)

### **TRACY BRYANT / BILLY CHANGER: *2 in 1: Split: Cassette***

The tunes by these two dudes work very well together; on the whole, this record is kind of like ultra lo-fi sixties garage rock like you would find on Crypt compilations in the '90s ramming up against '80s synth-pop sensibilities. Tracy Bryant is more of the former, and Billy Changer is more of the latter. For full flavor spectra, pair Tracy Bryant with the Cramps and Billy Changer with Ryan Adams. Enjoy! –The Lord Kveldulfr (Lollipop / Burger)

### **TRASH AXIS: *Grotesque: LP***

Immediately Bad Acid Trip springs to mind, though I think Trash Axis take their grindcore further into the outer reaches and become less conventional in return. I would go as far to say that the saxophone, accordion, and glockenspiel dominate their sound more than distorted guitars. You still get the strangulated vocals this genre is known for, though you can figure out what the singer is saying—err uhh—growling, here and there. The keyboard tends to give this a carnival feel at times, and the glockenspiel makes some songs more whimsical than “brutal.” The lyrics are equally out there, with songs like “Poop Bomb” detailing how “poop fills up the internet.” Okay... So, if you're a fan of grindcore, but sick of the same ol' same ol', then give this a listen. I doubt you've heard any other band of the genre like this. –M.Avrq (Trash Axis, trashaxis.bandcamp.com)

### **UGLY PARTS: *Wet: Cassette***

I had my suspicions within minutes of putting this one in the ol' boombox, and was happy to confirm them by playing this one against some old favorites: Ugly Parts play the particular variety of hardcore that was specific to Boston in the early '80s. The tempos, tone, and, most importantly, urgency found in *Wet* easily rubs elbows with the F.U.'s *My America* and Jerry's Kids' *Is This My World*: raw, ugly, and pissed. It's a joy to have something this realized and vital land in my mailbox. –Michael T. Fournier (uglyparts.bandcamp.com)

### **ULTRAMANTIS: *Black: CD***

A wrestler decides he can sing and entices a punk band (Pissed Jeans) to head into the studio to make a record.

Is this better than Hulk Hogan and the Wrestling Boot Band's output? By a very slim margin. If only The Iron Sheik had been able to produce this, there might have been some potential here. The cover would probably make a good video. –Sean Koepenick (relapse.com)

#### **UNFUN: *Caroline: 7"***

Melodic and mellow meets fun and fast in Unfun's fifth 7", *Caroline*. Side A (reading, "Yo, Play This Shit Fucking Loud...") is packed with distorted, low vocals and an intense feeling of desperation struggling to stay afloat with a sea of emotional regrets. Kicking off with the titular line of this record, "Caroline," we're faced with an outpour of heartbreak, anger, and the often overwhelming feeling of everything being completely, utterly, and hopelessly fucked up for eight minutes before flipping over to side B, (continued with, "Or... Get The Fuck Out"). Immediately introduced to louder vocals blaring through speakers, this trio rapidly picks up their paces up for two more tracks before slowing back down with the fourth and final track, "Unglued." Themed with deteriorating mental health and emotional breakdowns, this neatly pressed vinyl makes punk a threat again. –Genevieve Armstrong (Shallow Graves, shallowgravesrecords.com)

#### **UNFUN: *Shores of Lake Erie: 12" EP***

With *Shores of Lake Erie*, the band continues their grand tradition of heartbreak, fuckery, and ruination. I loved *Pain Prescription* and *Sick Outside View* and I was definitely looking forward to this one; Unfun's combo of pop punk, sludge, and abject desperation all duct-taped together totally works for 'em. The bummer is—and, listen, I know these guys aren't exactly renowned for their great recordings, and they don't need to be—but the sound quality on this record is so bad that the music itself loses almost all meaning for me. It's distracting as hell. The drums and vocals are super buried, and the guitars are so hot and bright they almost sound like radio static. The whole thing is just *rough*. I didn't *think* I was a snob that got all up in arms about recording quality, but sheesh. Anyway, if you're one of those folks who can look past that (hear past that?), Unfun's still doing what they do, and there's a lot to like on this one-sided, seven-song 12". –Keith Rosson (Dead Broke)

#### **UNKNOWN COMPONENT: *Arbitrary Ambiguity: CD***

A one-man endeavor from conception to performance

to production, Unknown Component is synth/program-heavy, reverb-saturated mellow rock. Calming and a bit soporific, but it is well executed and would've fit in nicely in 4AD's stable of bands during that label's heyday. –Jimmy Alvarado (Unknown Component, unknowncomponent.com)

#### **UNRESTRAINED: *Forward onto Death: LP***

Unrestrained have been kicking around the hardcore underworld for some time now, churning out near-perfect '90s-style heavy hardcore over a slew of 7"s and comp tracks, and finally just recently dropped its first LP. It was well worth the wait. To my ears, the most obvious influence here is Harvest: the vocal style, the open chugs, the dissonant chords and melodic flourishes, all of it is reminiscent of Minneapolis's finest (including the extended Harvest family—Threadbare, Krakatoa). Unrestrained isn't a straight-up clone though. I'm hearing elements of Torn Apart, Kiss It Goodbye (whose frontman, the inimitable Tim Singer, guests on the track "Framework"), Trial, Strain, For The Love Of, One King Down, and plenty more of the somewhat less celebrated heroes of the era. That said, *Forward onto Death* doesn't sound like a stale throwback either. The organic but clear production helps keep the record true to the band's influences while avoiding the occasionally thin and tinny trappings of yesteryear's more affordable technology. Honestly, I could go on about this record for a solid hour or so (for one thing, I haven't even touched on the terrific, insightful lyrics) but I think I've done enough fawning for now. If the above name drops intrigue you at all, check this out as soon as you can. It's phenomenal. –Dave Williams (Trip Machine Laboratories, tripmachinelabs.com)

#### **UNWED: *"Made Of" b/w "Pope": 7"***

I wasn't sure what I was expecting when I first put on Unwed, but it was not what I thought it would be. To say I was blown away would be like describing a Cat 5 hurricane as a slight breeze. The two tracks on this 7" are dark, brooding, but also insanely damn catchy. After listening to both sides of this over a dozen times, I still wanted more. Each song is built on prominent bass lines, surrounded by layer upon layer of textured guitar riffs, including lots of reverb. It's a perfect home for Neltie Penman's simultaneously beautiful and creepy vocals. At times, Penman sounds like a possessed Debbie Harry haunting the building that used to be CBGB's. It's a dichotomy that perfectly fits the

band's sound. The rest of Unwed's lineup includes Hot Water Music's Jason Black, Arty Shepherd of Primitive Weapons, Jeff Gensterblum of Small Brown Bike, and guitarist Matt Kane. Unwed more than lives up to their collective pedigree, with tunes that I found both more nuanced and more enjoyable than many of the members' established projects. –Paul J. Comeau (No Idea)

**VAMPIRES: *Every Kind of Light EP: Cassette***

Vampires wrench out a racket which hits the ethereal/atmospheric heights of Juno, the creepy yowling of David Thomas, the jagged guitar counterpoint of the Measure [S.A.], and the anthemic release of Hot Water Music, all without sounding like anyone but themselves. All this despite being a two-piece: guitarist David Dobbs has chops enough to pull off all of the above idioms and drummer Matthew Powers is aptly named. These guys slay. Release of the issue for me (and in an issue full of strong competition). Oh jeez, I'm gushing. You know what? Who cares? They rule. More, please! –Michael T. Fournier (vampiresband.bandcamp.com)

**VAN BURENS, THE: *Presidential Lovefest: CDEP***

More horns? Is Blood Sweat And Tears making a comeback? What the hell is happening here? I do think the "presidential" concept is clever. I did crack a smile at the heads of state plastered on various bodies in dubious situations within the CD artwork. However—the slithering funk is slowly wrapping around my neck like a riled up anaconda trying to slowly squeeze the life out of me. Look, you guys look like you are hard workers. But I don't think *Razorcake* should have been on your distribution list. Just sayin'. –Sean Koepenick (vanburenmusic.com, vanburenmusic@gmail.com)

**VARIOUS ARTISTS: *4-Way Split: 7" EP***

As suggested by the title, a track or two each from Urban Waste, Notox, The Nasty, and Red Tape rounds out this platter. Thrash and hardcore of various hues rule the roost here, with each band putting in some fine work. I was especially chuffed to hear new music from the vets on this release, Urban Waste. If you're a fan of the genre, this should do ye right nicely. –Jimmy Alvarado (Pine Hill, pinehillrecords.bigcartel.com)

**VARIOUS ARTISTS: *A Fist Full of Singles: 7"***

Four-song compilation record of Portland, Oregon punk rock. Stumblebum kicks this sucker off with a killer tune in the early Vandals/T.S.O.L. vein. The

Mormon Trannys are a little more hardcore skate punk a la Agression or The Faction. 42 Ford Prefect crank things up further with some high velocity punk rock'n'roll more akin to New Bomb Turks. Dartgun and the Vignettes close things out with a more mid-tempo rock'n'roll stomper with female backup vox. Love the four-song scene sampler 7" format, and at least the first two bands here are worth checking out further. –Chad Williams (Volume Bomb, volumebombrecords.wordpress.com)

**VARIOUS ARTISTS: *Bloodstains across Buffalo: LP***

Wow, been a while since I've seen one of these. As with other volumes in this long-running series of bootlegs, the sonic emphasis here is on the "rock" end of the punk rock spectrum (though there are a couple of power pop/new wave stabs thrown in for good measure), this time from a cluster of now-obscure bands (only one I've ever heard previously is the Vores' "Love Canal") that apparently called the titular city home. The fifteen songs included in this volume—courtesy of Aunt Helen, The Jumpers, Secret Saviour, Pauline & the Perils, Lip Service, and the aforementioned Vores, as well as others—stick well to the series' conventions, yet the compiler is wise to push to both ends within its parameters, balancing crude, simple thud-punkery with more sophisticated and nuanced fare. Hell, there are even synths being used non-facetiously buried in some o' the tunes. In all, this is a nice addition to the series. –Jimmy Alvarado (Extra-Evidence Productions, no address listed)

**VARIOUS ARTISTS: *Captcha Records: CD***

"One of the finest experimental/psych labels around..." Punk rock this is not. Pass. –Chad Williams (Captcha, captcha-records.com, hbsp2x@gmail.com)

**VARIOUS ARTISTS: *Drink, Fight, Fuck Volume 4: CD***

I don't respect G.G. Allin, nor do I hate G.G. Allin. I really don't want to critique the cultural relevance or irrelevance of G.G. I simply think G.G. is funny because he ate shit and rolled around in it while singing songs about fucking the dog. I think watching footage of him can be pretty funny, too. For instance, when he's in a flophouse beating his empty head against the wall, repeatedly chanting "I hate you motherfuckers", or the one where he's having someone piss in his mouth for his birthday (Okay, I didn't have the fortitude to watch the latter). Anyway, as evidence of how far along

punk has come, I got this G.G. Allin cover album to review. I'll get to it, but first, allow me to compare two of America's seminal musical psychopaths. The first being a rapper from New York who's name rhymes with 'lazy'. Well, this self-proclaimed, "best rapper alive" started out selling crack to his own community, then ascended to pop superstardom by simultaneously, boasting and excusing himself for this life choice. In the meantime, he stayed busy as a shrewd business entrepreneur, taking chances like designing the for-profit "Occupy Everything" t-shirts for his clothing line during the Occupy Movement and eventually made him a billionaire. Critique such behavior all you want, but why does hip-hop get such successful psychopaths for role models, while the punks adore a man who ate his own shit and did time for putting cigarettes out on his handcuffed girlfriend? The fact that someone is ignorant or misled enough to put energy into a project like *Drink, Fight, Fuck Vol. 4* is depressing. For what it's worth, it's interesting to hear bands with a lick of talent do these songs, some of them are reinterpreted as legit garage or straight up punk. But why does G.G. get a pass? Why is a fanzine with an anti-racist, pro-women policy making an exception for G.G.? Why I am I making an exception for G.G.? Do we need an archetype of extremity to keep some kind of unspoken punk rock balance? Does his art engender some kind of dialogue? No, really, I'm asking but I just fell into a two-hour G.G. YouTube hole, myself, by way of writing this review. Yep, I just lost two hours of my life watching this rock-stupid, man-child drag women around by their hair, cut himself and throw haymakers and shit at drooling scumfucs while performing talentless hack-punk. Fuck, I said I wasn't into discussing the cultural relevance of G.G. and now look at me. What you get with *Drink, Fight, Fuck Vol. 4* is a bunch of racist, homophobic, and women-hating songs reinterpreted by sympathizers of an alienated, insecure, violent, psychopath. Knock yourself out. – Craven Rock (Zodiac Killer, zodiackillerrecords.com)

#### **VARIOUS ARTISTS: GC Records 15 Year Anniversary Comp: LP**

Though I've never heard of GC Records before getting this compilation, I'm happy I have now. After fifteen years of experience, they're branching out from their typical roster of punk and hardcore bands. This compilation features two facets of local Las Vegas—one side features "punk rock in its purest form" and the other is a hodgepodge of pop, dance, folk, and

experimental music. There's a forty page zine included with each page dedicated to the bands on the record, complete with professional photos. For the most part, I enjoy the b-side of non-punk stuff but it's a bit of a gamble. There's some nice folky autumn feeling at the first half of the second side, but you also get slow tempo electro pop of Boiis, which features lines like, "With the touch of your hand / tonight I'll be your man / like scorpions in the hot desert sun." The last track leaves you with Kill The Scientist, a performance artist / sound collage one man band who talks about gamer nerds and prolapsed rectums over electronic beats. There's something for everybody! – Kayla Greet (GC, gcrecords.com / Yum Yum, yumyumvinylrecords.com)

#### **VARIOUS ARTISTS: Shake/arama '14: Cassette**

This compilation brings you the who's who in Canadian talent, ranging from synth pop to stoner psych and back again. As if that's any surprise of a tape made up of bands who played the first year of Shakearama, a new three-day festival in June put on by Shake! Records. Personal favorites include the cuts from Crosss, Hag Face, and Soupcans. Looks like I'll be heading west next year. –Alanna Why (Shake!, records@experienceshake.com, experienceshake.com)

#### **VARIOUS ARTISTS: Something to Dü: 7" EP**

Full disclosure: Hüsker Dü is one of those "this is about as close to being religious as I'm gonna get"-type of bands for me. I fuggin' adore 'em in ways previously reserved solely for tacos. With that said, this should be tailor-made for a schmuck like me, but I reckon picking this up for review was probably a mistake. On first spin, I flew into a tizzy, howling and ranting at perplexed strangers on the unforgiving streets of Alhambra about the profanities and sacrilegious cacophony contained within this record's grooves. When I'd calmed down four days later, I decided it might be best to sit on it and revisit it again in a couple of weeks. I'm a bit more clear-headed now and... I still don't like it much. No, it's not about the profaning of some choice tunes by a revered band, and some of the bands responsible—Unfun, Tenement, Crow Bait, Bent Outta Shape, Dauntless Elite, and Your Pest Band—are not known for putting out utter crap. No, it's more about execution. The first two tracks, easily the strongest overall, are completely blown out production-wise, while the remainder suffer from lackluster performance, flat vocals, or a combination of both. I cannot stress enough

how much I really wanted to dig this, and by the look of the packaging alone I've no doubt whatsoever that all involved had nothing but the best of intentions, but I just ain't feelin' it. For the inevitable collector-geeks, this is a one-time pressing of eight hundred copies on various colored vinyl, and four alternate covers. —Jimmy Alvarado (Dead Broke)

**VARIOUS ARTISTS: *Sounds of Sodium: CD***

This is a comp of bands in and around Salt Lake City in the year of our Lord 2014, and a part of me wants to move to Utah just to hear some of these guys play. Twenty-two different bands on here, plus an unnamed bonus track, and most of the tunes are really, really good. Of course, there are a few songs that trip over themselves, but that's standard fare in Compilation Land. All in all, this is one of the most solid comps I've heard in a long time, and rarely have I heard one so solid that showcases a single scene. Lots of the songs are straight-up punk rock fury, but there is some diversity along the way—some songs with more of a pure rock'n'roll feel, some that are more melodic (and remind me somehow of *Denko's*-era Dag Nasty), and even a decent ska song in the Bosstones vein. Faves on this include All Systems Fail's "Aging Anarchist," Die Monster Die's "How Many People Do I Have to Kill," and Decibel Trust's "The Longest Hallway," is easily my favorite song on the record. Salt Lake City seems to have it going on these days; I doff my cap to all of you! —The Lord Kveldulfr (Pariah Music Club)

**VARIOUS ARTISTS: *This Is West Coast, Hella Tight Fer Dayz N Shit: Cassette***

Ken Fury of F.Y.B.S. Records and lead of Rat Damage has been a bastion of DIY punk in Sacramento for more than twenty years. Sac's punk community is what it is today in part because of Ken, with bands from all around the world coming through, so I knew when I picked up this comp (one year in the making) it was not going to disappoint. Two tapes teeming with West Coast punks all up and down this side of the Pacific. So who's on here? Rad, Conquest For Death, Side Effects, Nudes, The Light, Iron Lung, Trenches, Replica, Charles Albright, Crude Studs, Bad Daddies, Ennui Trust, and Ruleta Rusa, just to name a few. Mostly concentrated in central Cali, and East Bay, but has a smattering of punks from SD all the way to Seattle as well. So look, I'm not a lover of tapes. It's not my favorite medium. Usually because the tape quality is shitty, made even shittier by

crude recordings played on a dilapidated tape player. Three wrongs don't make a right, ya know? What I can say for *This is West Coast* is that the quality is ace. The comp flows from one song to the next with surprising levelness of volume and clarity. Includes an insert with contributions with drawings and lyrics from most of the bands. —Camylle Reynolds (F.Y.B.S.)

**VEUVE SS: *O.P.L.T. & O.S.C.: EP***

I remember their 12" being okay, but this doesn't do much for me. Modern era hardcore that sounds like they ingested a steady diet of late 1990s Ebullition catalog offerings. Slightly metallic and sludgy here and there, but overall dry and dull. Topped off with pretentious cover art and design (white ink on white paper, center label without a hole; I guess there's delusions of collectability for this record). —M.Avrq (Echo Canyon / Flower Of Carnage, [veuves.bandcamp.com](http://veuves.bandcamp.com))

**VIDEO: "Cult of Video" b/w "City of Hate": 7"**

If you have their *Leather Leather* LP or 7" on Total Punk, then you're gonna buy this. Video is a band made for punk record collector nerds to go crazy over and need to own every release. The songs stomp, the guitar sears, and there's that mysterious *something* that bands from Denton, TX seem to have. Don't deny yourself, join the cult today. —Sal Lucci (No Good, [nogoodrecords.com](http://nogoodrecords.com))

**VIDEO: "Cult of Video" b/w "City of Hate": 7"**

Video is another in a long line of bands that I discovered through my review records from *Razorcake*. It would have only been a matter of time; I'm sure since the members of the band are also in a few of my other favorites. Their last 7" was my first taste, and I was hooked. I ordered this new 7" (and their amazing LP *Leather Leather*) as soon as I could. Stripped down and mean is the best way I can describe it. The title track of this record could very well be my favorite Video song. It just keeps building and building until BOOM! You almost get whiplash while rocking out and your spine feels like someone attached a set of jumper cables. You don't even get a breather before "City of Hate" kicks in on the B-Side and delivers the knockout punch. I fully submit to the Cult of Video. So should you. —Ty Stranglehold (No Good, [nogoodrecords.com](http://nogoodrecords.com))

**VIVID SEKT: *From Ruin: 7"***

Incredible, dark, melodic anarcho punk rock that just reeks of Flux Of Pink Indians, Crass, and Rudimentary

Peni, with a hearty dose of Sage-steeped melancholy Portland vibes. Some definite Antischism-isms peppered throughout as well. So, so good. —Dave Williams (Black Water)

### **WE'RE WOLVES: *Energy Crisis*: EP**

Loud and bombastic rock'n'roll that's hard charging as well as message orientated. Something you don't hear too much of these days. Check out "Screamin' Murder" with its throttling tempo, asking "where's your rage" in relation to an apathetic society. Then there's the closer, "Sinkin'" that does some self reflecting amid raging guitar solos and crushing drumming. Think of Mountain crossed with Annihilation Time. One of those records that is meant to be played at loud volume, while you rage on air guitar, with foot firmly planted on a chair—err, uhh—floor monitor. —M.Avrq (We're Wolves, werewolvesandyouaintshit@hotmail.com)

### **WHAT TYRANTS: "Hanging Out in Havana" b/w "Far Out": 7"**

It's probably got a lot to do with the shows I've been going to, but it seems like Minneapolis has had an influx of bands that want to "Be-ah your rock'n'roll savio-ah!" This MPLS three piece is no exception. I am totally bored with fuzzed-out surf guitar garage rock. When did everybody decide they wanted to be Jon Spencer or some shit?. My dislike of this particular genre aside, What Tyrants are good at what they do, and this is a well-recorded 7". If this sounds like your bag go on, check it out. —Jackie Rusted (Self-released, whattyrants.bandcamp.com)

### **WHITE WHALE: *Demo*: Cassette**

Post-punk with some slight gnarl to it that feels half out-of-date (like early '00s punks trying to be Gang Of Four), half short-burst Total Control. When they get closer to TC stylee ("Three", "Complicated Medication"), it works alright. Fine for what it is; not fresh, but decent. I'm smiling while I'm shrugging. —Matt Werts (Subject, subject1.bandcamp.com)

### **WIDE ANGLES: *Smile More*: LP**

There isn't anything discernibly *bad* about Wide Angles except that they're not particularly discernible. If faced with the challenge of picking them out of a police lineup, I would be hard-pressed to distinguish them from other gruff pop punk stalwarts like Iron Chic, Dan Padilla, Tiltwheel, or Banner Pilot. It's the type of

sound that's synonymous with PBR, the smell of stale cigarettes, and self-loathing. These are stereotypes that I'm sure Wide Angles deplore, but unfortunately, their brand of anthemic punk begs the comparisons. Here's a band that would be awash in The Fest lineup. Sure, I might just be scratching the surface of what Wide Angles is truly offering, but sometimes, surface features are too thick to get past. —Sean Arenas (Dead Broke, deadbrokerec@gmail.com / Dirt Cult, dirtcultrecords.com, dirtcultrecords@gmail.com)

### **WILD BILLY CHILDISH AND CTMF: "Punk Rock Enough for Me" b/w "Zero Emission": 7"**

On his latest single, Billy Childish stays true to the lo-fi garage aesthetic he's been rocking since the '70s in all those Thee bands. This 7" features two straightforward, plodding new tracks. On the first, Childish rattles off a few dozen things that are punk rock enough for him over three chords. So there's that, if you're interested. For the second, his wife Julie takes over lead vocals, which lends a more straight-up '77 punk feel to the whole affair. Billy Childish has more than established his sound by now, so the odds are you know what you're getting when you pick this up. By the way, Damaged Goods is what all your records are gonna be if y'all can't throw in a dang paper sleeve. —Indiana Laub (Damaged Goods, info@damagedgoods.co.uk, damagedgoods.co.uk)

### **WILD HEX: //: Cassette**

Yes! I always love the first album in a stack of reviews that brings a smile to my face and Wild Hex wins this round. Call it whatever you want—it's rock and fucking roll. The rhythm section is tight as can be and the riffs make you wanna shake it all out, all over the garage. Good, good shit here. —John Mule (Don't Touch My Records, donttouchmyrecords.bandcamp.com)

### **WILDHONEY: *Seventeen Forever*: 7"**

Loud and heavy in a dreamy, summery way. These three pop songs are driven by pedal-heavy guitar that ebbs and swells in slow, shoegazey washes. But it's the melodies that keep this from fading into the faceless background fuzz that unadulterated shoegaze can turn into (at least for those of us who don't live and die by rare My Bloody Valentine singles). Frontwoman Lauren's breathy vocals are mixed just right—buried too deep to be fully intelligible, but somehow still soaring over the instrumentals. Everything about this release is elegant,

from the clean production to the minimalist labels. I could see this on a soundtrack for an indie movie with a lot of lens flares. –Indiana Laub (Photobooth, photoboothrecordz@gmail.com, photoboothrecords.com)

#### **WRECKED LEXUS: Demo: Cassette**

Six tracks of straightforward power-chord punk rock from what sounds like a pretty new trio. These guys aren't lacking in energy, but the flat vocals take some air out of what might have been catchy melodies. Even the gang vocals sound like everyone's sitting down and kind of tired. But the instruments are tight, the production quality is solid, and it is a demo tape, after all. –Indiana Laub (Self-released)

#### **XETAS: "The Silence" b/w "The Knife": 7"**

Two-song 7" about suicide. Side A, "The Silence," is a melodic post-punk jam with hardcore group vocals. Side B, "The Knife," has even more melody and group singalongs. Standard "punk" sound, but they've got good energy. I liked this a lot more than I thought I would. –Alanna Why (12xu, info@12xu.net, 12xu.net)

#### **X-RAYS!: Jameson Shot: 7"**

Fast, unremarkable pop punk. Each song follows the formula of indecipherable lyrics about drinking followed by a metal-tinged solo. There's a member of this band named "G-Man." Of course there is. –Alanna Why (Big Neck, bart@bigneckrecords.com, bigneckrecords.com)

#### **YOUR PEST BAND: Smash Hits!!: 2008-2011: LP**

Given that this is a collection, we're granted a glimpse of Japan's Your Pest Band's evolution across four years, a handful of records, and twenty-six songs. Side A collects much of their early releases which are short, fast, and on the verge of total collapse, featuring slurred vocals that wouldn't be out of place at a drunken night of karaoke. These early endeavors feel like Tokyo's answer to Hickey. This begs the question: How does Your Pest Band persevere to the end of a song when they sound so close to ruin? I want to believe that it was as much of a struggle as it sounds. Side B is more my cup of tea as they transition comfortably from thrashy melodic punk towards Teengenerate-style pop mania. The guitars begin to intermingle power chords with swirling rock'n'roll leads while never softening Fumito's harsh, animalistic vocals. It's as if Your Pest Band are

parodying pop standards yet simultaneously crafting music that is distorted and electrified. Recommended. –Sean Arenas (Dead Broke, deadbrokerec@gmail.com / Snuffy Smiles)

#### **YOUR PEST BAND: Ya Ya Ya: Cassette**

Standard rock run through the American blues and Ripoff Records ringer via Japan. YPB is fun, if not ultimately forgettable. When the most memorable tunes are a cover of "Communication Breakdown" or when the harmonica comes out for a few brief moments, one might be more grateful the cassette is ten tracks less than the *Smash Hits* LP. "You Hate My Sound"... I don't, I just don't remember it. –Matt Seward (Dead Broke, deadbrokerecords.com)

#### **ZENTRALHEIZUNG OF DEATH: Would You Rather...?: LP**

Known more informally as "ZHOD," or less informally as "ZentralHeizung of Death (des Todes)" ((any way you slice it, it winds up meaning "Central Heating of Death," so clearly we've done business with some of the same landlords)), these nutty Erfurters come off as sounding like a much less precious version of latter-day punk-pop-psych-garage vendors like the Bare Wires ((("Artificial Clouds" in particular)), but doled out in a much more stumpy and gaily festooned package ((although I guess one can't get much more gaily festooned than the *Seeking Love* album cover, so I quickly retract that allegation)). The longer songs have a nice, Mo Tucker-esque, pounding chug to them; the faster songs come off almost like a less-hyper version of Sweet Baby. I don't know what kind of drugs they've been putting in my girlie drink, but I, for one, welcome our new insect overlords. BEST SONG: "Jodie's Car." BEST SONG TITLE: "Pressure Leak." FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: Record spine reads down-to-up and I hate that. –Rev. Nørb (Alien Snatch, aliensnatch.com)

#### **ZERO BOYS, THE: Monkey: CD**

First full length from this band in decades shows that they haven't lost a step. I was lucky enough to finally get to see them live—and they deliver the goods. Longtime members Paul Z and Mark Cutsinger are joined by Scott Kellogg and Dave Lawson. There are fifteen songs inside, so you will need to find your own anthem here. There's plenty to choose from on *Monkey*. My only gripe is that the songs from last year's *Pro-Dirt* EP

are also included here for some reason. But who cares since the Boys are back in town! –Sean Koeppenick (Z-Disk, zeroboys.com)

**ZIELONE ŻABKI: *Zgorzelec 1988*: LP**

The documenting of a scene's history and the bands involved is an incredibly important one to me. Although they existed for a little more than a year, Zielone Żabki is a band credited with hugely influencing the Polish punk scene. With any physical copies of the band's original recordings lost to the decay of time, this live recording from 1988 marks the first time Zielone Żabki's music has appeared in print in over twenty-five years. The recording quality is a bit uneven, with the vocals slightly overwhelming the rest of the band. Overall though, the recording is clear enough to give the listener a taste of Zielone Żabki's sound. It's a sound which draws on '70s and early '80s punk, but not quite hardcore punk influences. It's good, but is more important for influencing future generations of Polish punks than for being particularly ground-breaking sonically. The historic element of the band is intriguing to me, even if their music didn't bowl me over. I think anyone with an interest in punk history in Europe will want to check this out. –Paul J. Comeau (Pasazer, pasazer@pasazer.pl)

**ZIG ZAGS: Self-titled: CD**

Dirty punk rock'n'roll with the occasional Black Sabbath style riff popping up here and there to add to the miscreant sound. The songs are catchy and simultaneously aggressive (and at times sinister-sounding). At times they remind me of Turbonegro, only rawer and less self-conscious. I like the scratchy distortion on the guitar here, reminding me of the early Black Flag recordings; where if you're not careful, the guitar would administer a jagged cut and give you tetanus. Some of the songs on here could have been left off, like "Psychomania," and "I Am the Weekend." Especially when on the same album as songs like "Magic," "Randy," "No Blade of Grass," the opener "Braindead Warrior," or the perfect "Soul Sound," bring to mind early Alice Cooper (musically and vocally). I imagine this stuff sounds even better live. –M.Avrq (In The Red, intheredrecords.com)

**ZIPLOCK: Self-titled: LP**

Dreadful run-of-the-mill streetpunk from the arse end of nowhere England. Crap three chord riffs, dumb

lyrics, and sounding like it was recorded in a bucket. There's so much great music out there, this has no place in the world. –Tim Brooks (Suburban White Trash, suburbanwhitetrash.com)

**ZOLTARS, THE: *Walking through the Dark*: Cassette**

Eerie pianos and slackertastic hooks have me hearing some Sebadoh and some Zombies in The Zoltars' melancholy, lo-fi psyche rock. If you're looking for this on the cassette rack at your local record store (which I suggest you do), keep in mind that the title is misspelled on the j-card's spine. The album's not really called "Walking Trough the Dark." –Chris Terry (Burger)