



MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL REVIEWS #517

JUNE 2026

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MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL

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This issue contains 78 reviews, contributed by:

João Seixas
Matt Casteel
Jake Joyce
D. Gregory
Nick Odorizzi
Tony Party
Luke Henley
Jason Harding
Biff Bifaro
Jeff Cost
Katy Otto
Robert Collins
Sir Bobos
Eric Anderson
Seth McBurney
Erika Elizabeth
Mama Goblin
Romain Basset
Willis Schenk
Kenny Kaos
Tim Janchar

THE COUNTERFORCE

This zine digest was compiled and laid out by The Counterforce.

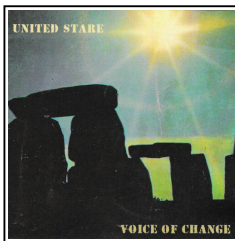
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UNITED STARE – Voice of Change EP

I'd never heard this band, and the first track blew me away. It's a killer slab of UK-style punk brewed in Pittsburgh, PA. It's gritty, the chorus is a crusher, and the vocals have a real Oil quality to them. You could have probably convinced me this was a 7" lost to time, discovered in the attic 30 years after the band broke up. That is, until I got to track two and the band switched gears into DINOSAUR JR. riffage complete with slacker/loser vocals. Not nearly as cool and memorable as the first track, but will scratch the itch of anyone into the mid-'80s SST releases. I was starting to wonder if maybe the band has two principle songwriters who each brought a track to the table, but any interest I had in exploring that further was over as soon as I started the B-side. It's one seven-minute instrumental track that isn't worth the time it takes to flip the record. Shoulda kept it lean and mean. The title track is a goddamn banger, though.

Reviewer: Sir Bobos
Label: Kill Enemy



V/A – Punx Against Ice CD

A commendable anti-ICE benefit comp with proceeds going to Border Kindness, "a charity that provides asylum-seekers, migrants, and refugees with things such as food, shelter, clothing, medical care and legal services." The music here doesn't really hit for me personally, ranging from street punk to crust to powerviolence and lots of other styles in between. Mileage will vary, and you should check it out for yourself, but regardless of your taste, this is for a worthy cause and what punk subculture is all about.

Reviewer: Eric Anderson
Label: Hey Fuck You / Rejected Youth



V/A – Who Won? A Tribute to Urban Waste CD

OK, so, a tribute to the hardcore band URBAN WASTE. I would much rather this be a fresh comp with these bands doing originals. That being said, here you have fourteen tracks of some hardcore bands covering a hardcore band in their particular styles of hardcore, accentuating their personal interpretations of another hardcore band that these hardcore bands seem to like as a hardcore band that influenced them within the spectrum of hardcore. I don't think my usual meter for judging a comp can apply here. Dig in, and maybe one of these bands will turn you on to a hardcore band.

Reviewer: Tony Party
Label: Rejected Youth



VITAMIN X – Ride the Apocalypse CD

Hardcore thrash titans VITAMIN X have been around the block, and it shows on their seventh album, *Ride the Apocalypse*. A pristine display of experience and skill, these seventeen tracks show a band who can seemingly write ripper after ripper in their sleep. Melding hardcore punk with metallic crossover, the formula works and sounds classic right out of the gate with riffs on riffs, a rock-solid rhythm section, and vocals that call back to classic NYHC. I have no more notes, this is the top of the pile for this style, made all the more legit with Andrei Bouzikov's killer artwork and Joel Grind's beefy mastering.

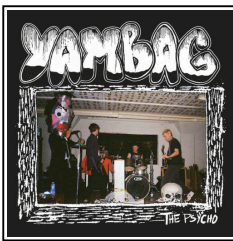
Reviewer: Eric Anderson
Label: Svart



YAMBAG – The Psycho EP

There are few things as exhausting (in a good way) as listening to Cleveland's YAMBAG. On *The Psycho*, as with each of their previous releases, every track is wound up tight and bursting at the seams as each member plays as hard and fast as possible. Tempo and rhythm changes happen at the drop of a hat, building up a pressure that culminates in the brutal blastbeats acting as a sort of release valve. If you haven't heard YAMBAG before, don't let that fool you—this isn't a powerviolence record, but more in line with earlier hardcore punk bands like ASSOCIAL, SIEGE, and D.R.I. who utilized the blastbeat to maximum head-splitting effect. Highly recommended, check out '#1 Fucker'.

Reviewer: Eric Anderson
Label: Convulse



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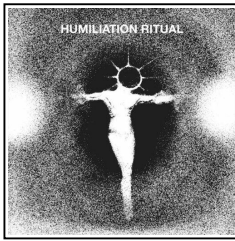
RADIO STATIONS

- **CJSF**, 90.1FM in Burnaby, BC, Canada Fridays at 5:00 am and Wednesday nights (Thursday morning) at 1:00 am
- **CKDU**, 88.1 FM in Halifax, NS, Canada Sundays at 3:00 am
- **Free Radio Santa Cruz**, 101.3 FM in Santa Cruz, CA Mondays at 1:30 pm and Fridays 10:00 am – noon
- **Freies Sender Kombinat (FSK)**, 93.0 FM / 101.4 Cable in Hamburg, Germany and streamed online Monday nights (Tuesday morning) at 12:00 am
- **KBGA-FM**, 89.9 FM in Missoula, MT Fridays at 11:00 pm
- **KCSB-FM**, 91.9 FM in Santa Barbara, CA Fridays at 5:00 am
- **KZUM-FM**, 89.3 FM in Lincoln, NE Sunday nights (Monday morning) at 1:00 am Airing MRR Radio in Lincoln since 1983! Cheers to Rich D.
- **KBOG**, 97.9 FM in Bandon, OR Saturday nights (Sunday morning) at 1:00 am
- **KFCF**, 88.1FM from Merced to Delano Monday at 1:00 am and streamed online
- **KRAK-FM**, 91.3 in Kansas City Thursday at 10:00 pm and streamed online
- **Política y Rockanroll Radio**, 106.7 FM in Sonora, Mexico Wednesday at 11:00pm (Pacific and Mountain Time)
- **Radio Almaina**, 107.1 FM in Granada, Spain Mondays at 11:00 pm and Thursdays at 3:00 am
- **Radio Blau**, 99.2 FM in Leipzig, Germany and streamed online Friday at 11:00 pm (CET)
- **Radio Mutation** Garage Punk Pirate Radio Podcast Network
- **Radio Valencia** Sunday nights (Monday morning) at 2:00 am
- **Resonance Extra** via DAB+ in the UK to Brighton, Bristol, Cambridge, London and Norwich, and worldwide online Wednesdays at 1:00 am BST/GMT
- **Space FM**, 101.1 in Seattle, WA Friday nights at 10:00pm
- **UMFM (CJUM)**, 101.5 FM in Winnipeg, MB, Canada Fridays at 6:30 am (Good morning, Winnipeg!)

ALL BEAT UP / COCKRING – Humiliation Ritual split LP

Humiliation Ritual shifts between noise-soaked hardcore and ugly, angular punk without ever losing momentum or sense of purpose. COCKRING leans into groovier and unhinged hardcore, channeling the “damaged” repetition of GAG and HOAX. ALL BEAT UP brings the curvballs to the table with tracks that land some-where between the savagery of CONVERGE and the harsher, dissonant edges of BOTCH. What ties the split together is the forward momentum itself. Everything sounds fresh and original. Both bands do genuinely honest takes on hardcore, and both sound very, very different from each other. Sometimes that’s just what a good split is.

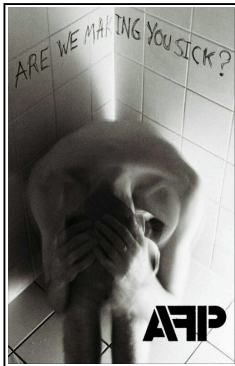
Reviewer: João Seixas
Label: Human Future



ANOTHER FUCKING PROBLEM – Are We Making You Sick? cassette

Classic pissed-off hardcore from New Zealand. ANOTHER FUCKING PROBLEM pulls from the same fast and emotionally overloaded space as early CEREMONY and PUNCH, but with an angrier edge that pushes everything into new territory. Very political and very hostile. Short blasts of power and riffs sharpened down to splinters that stab at the eardrum. Even when the band gets technically tight, the recording keeps things raw and furious. It has that real DIY hardcore energy where the urgency matters more than precision. The whole EP sounds anxious, over caffeinated, and ready to crack. I wonder if they lifted their band name from the COKE BUST song? I bet they did!

Reviewer: João Seixas
Label: Noise Merchant



ATTACK SS – Land of Slaughter LP

Prepare to have your eardrums decimated by the punishing noise of Japanese stalwart punk ATTACK SS. Back with their first release since 2019, *Land of Slaughter* features seven new songs and four re-recorded cuts from their *Mask of Those EP*. No big deviation from their previous output; what follows is top-tier crasher crust pushed well beyond the limits of acceptable listenability. Blazingly fast drums and razor-thin guitars bolstered by a burly bass fuzz lead the full-on aural assault. Layers of distortion crush the notion of fidelity, leaving behind a series of vignettes that champion freedom in the face of monstrous tyranny. Punk-addled chaos, on the level with FRAMTID, ZYANOSE, CONTRAST ATTITUDE, etc. If your constitution allows for imbibing noise–destroyed raw D-beat punk, then this will go down a fuckin’ treat.

Reviewer: Matt Casteel
Label: Distort Reality



AXEFEAR / TERMINAL FILTH – split 12”

You know when you see two people getting into a relationship together and you just think that they fit perfectly together and it makes sense that they end up sharing the same bed? Well, TERMINAL FILTH and AXEFEAR are exactly like that: their union was meant to happen, and they may not share the same bed but they share the same crust. With both their names heavily (and rather unsubtly, it has to be said) nodding to the stench-core of yore, they are the perfect crust tag-team. If you are not familiar with the bands, TERMINAL FILTH is from Berlin, this split LP is their third record, and they have consistently improved since their inception. The four songs they offer (one of which is a delightful synth interlude that brings to mind the mighty AXEGRINDER) are incredible and cement them as one of the best current bands in the stenchcore division. Heavy, dark, anguished, rotten, metallic crust not unlike CANCER SPREADING or LAST LEGION ALIVE. As a bonus, Janick from AFTER THE BOMBS takes care of the vocals on “The Last Journey”—this is the icing on the cake, and a time machine to 2006. On the other side, you will find three songs (one of them being a REPULSION

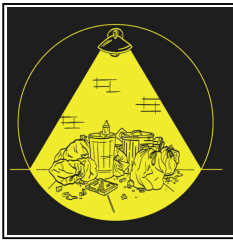


cover) from Seattle’s AXEFEAR, and although TERMINAL FILTH is a tough act to follow, they deliver their own brand of stenchcore well, reminding me of HELLSHOCK or SANCTUM with the required intensity and a great, filthy sound to convince the punters to grab this album that is bound to become something of a crust classic and a high point of the ‘20s for this peculiar subgenre. It is a definite win.

Reviewer: Romain Basset
Label: Agjipunk / Archaic

BACKROAD BURNERS – Trash Night EP

Aww yeah, this is the kind of shit you blast while running moonshine during the wee hours of the morning in an El Camino through the mountains of Pennsylvania. This is the pop punk equivalent of Barq’s Root Beer, because it’s both sugary-sweet but also has bite! The lyrics are relatable for all of us aging punkers who wrestle with our basic chores (“Trash Night”) and our unwillingness to move on from our favorite hobbies of our youth



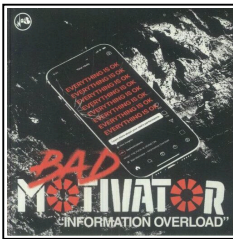
(“Banned From the Board”), and it makes me feel less bad about getting old. Imagine that! This might not strike a chord with everyone, but it really put a little pep in my step, and I’d recommend it to any of us who are coming face-to-face with middle-age.

Reviewer: Jake Joyce
Label: Blind Pigean

BAD MOTIVATOR / WOOLLY BANDITS – split 7”

This is a two-song split with each band leaning in with their best. BAD MOTIVATOR’s is a jerky ‘70s punk tune that lyrically pulls you into themes of “turn on, tune in, drop out.” “Information Overload” is budding with nervous energy that keeps you learning forward anxiously for the entire song. The flip with WOOLLY BANDITS caught me completely off guard. With an aural garage attack that blends the fierce lyrics of Christa Collins and the raw guitar energy of Rik Collins, “AI, Must Die” balances between unharnessed Paisley Underground, a wall of ‘60s proto-punk, and a ‘70s punk sound, while managing to be on-topic and present. It takes guts to do a two-sider split but this wins. I’m gonna go check their other offerings.

Reviewer: Tony Party
Label: Wolf on a Bridge



BURGERS GONE WILD – Mystery Meat cassette

When cars drive by blaring music, it’s usually bad music. But what if everyone chose good music instead? Well, if they chose good music, then I’d hear a lot more BURGERS GONE WILD as I walk my dog around town. This sounds like if RETAIL SIMPS could somehow be more loose. Impossible? The burgers have gone wild after all. These songs blasting from a set of blown-out speakers in an F-150 could probably magically fix all the potholes; don’t ask me how, it’s just a feeling. Maybe we need to mandate tape decks come standard in everyone’s dumb truck once again?

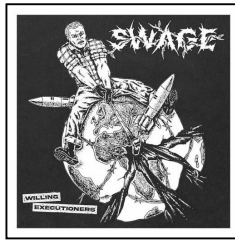
Reviewer: D. Gregory
Label: Knuckles on Stun



SWAGE – Willing Executioners cassette

SWAGE hits that sweet spot between traditional hardcore boldness and pit-soaked abrasion—old regional demos-style, where the recording sounds like it was made because it had to exist. They go from slam-inducing hardcore to heavy metallic riffage that almost crosses over into death metal territory, with the occasional blastbeat for good measure. They carry the same raspiness as SHEER TERROR. There’s also some of that straightforward, anthemic Oil quality in some parts. What makes this is how unpretentious it feels—songs like “Flint and Steel” lock into these blunt, driving patterns. Most importantly, this second release by the Ohio band carries conviction without sounding preachy.

Reviewer: João Seixas
Label: self-released



TASTE TESTORS – Come Back! LP

The second record from Seattle’s TASTE TESTORS, *Come Back!* is a smooth blast of four-chord style. These guys are super dialed-in, with a sound that applies lounge act levels of class to their O.G. pop punk spirit. Delivered with complete control, these eleven tight tunes stick closely to the tried and true RAMONES rock’n’roll formula. Just when you think they might let loose, they show you the impeccable shine of their pristine leather jackets once again. Highly polished and perfectly composed, the songs aren’t angry, but assured, reading something like DARK THOUGHTS with post-n’ clarity.

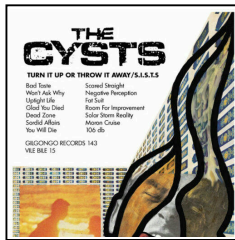
Reviewer: Jason Harding
Label: Moodkiller



THE CYSTS – Turn It Up or Throw It Away / S.I.S.T.S LP

At the time of this writing, this record is not available to be streamed, which is oddly fitting given the content. THE CYSTS were active in the late ‘00s, and everything about this album feels like it’s of that era. Not to say that what they produced doesn’t hold up—to the contrary, their style of angular hardcore seems to be experiencing a bit of a resurgence as of late. The gritty production and personal/political lyrical approach jets me back to Richmond, Virginia in the early ‘00s. I’m thinking specifically of CITY OF CATERPILLAR, ULTRA DOLPHINS, LIGHT THE FUSE AND RUN, and FLESH EATING CREEPS. THE CYSTS were from Portland and skew more towards punk than screamo (on whatever nexus is that broadly encompassing), but I’m not sure RVA and PDX were as far apart spiritually at that time as geography might imply. Anger, charm, and urgency are present in equal measure on this one. DIY punk forever!

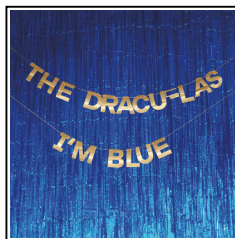
Reviewer: Matt Casteel
Label: Gilgongo / Vile Bile



THE DRACU-LAS – I’m Blue (The Gong-Gong Song) / Time is a Maze 7”

Mixing up a retro surf vibe with a girl group soul sound of the ‘50s and ‘60s, Jersey City’s DRACU-LAS pack a lot into these two tracks. It kicks off with a cover of the IKETTES’ “I’m Blue,” with vocalist Kyna Darnewood channeling Rachel Nagy of the DETROIT COBRAS, and the second track, “Time is a Maze,” takes more of a punk-a-go-go approach. The two additional digital-only songs accompanying the single have a spirit reminiscent of the COATHANGERS and SUICIDE NOTES.

Reviewer: Tim Janchar
Label: Outro



THE HIVEMINDS – The Restless Park LP

Norwegians bring their own distinct take on the genre with a brooding post-punk aesthetic a la the BIRTHDAY PARTY and fuzzed-out guitar tones reminiscent of the GUN CLUB. Tracks like “All in My Head” reverberate with a darker, more theatrical tone like the DAMNED post-Phantasmagoria, and there’s plenty of Nuggets-era hooks like those of the ELECTRIC PRUNES.

Reviewer: Tim Janchar
Label: Back to Beat



THE POX – All Together Now! cassette

Seven minutes of perfect garage punk coming out of Montreal, recorded in glorious mono and self-released. This rules. The production is as dirty as the music is. The vocals are snotty, pissed, and scummy. At times, you can barely hear the guitar through the cymbal hiss, but you don’t need to. You still feel the anger, you still feel the intensity, and sometimes, if you listen closely, you can hear a synth buried in the madness. The last track (“BBITAI/ Don’t Wanna Die”) is oddball, but it ended up being my favorite out of the bunch. It sounds like punks playing a spaghetti western song. Midway through, you hear “Every time I log on / I see another baby take its last breath / Free Palestine,” followed by a synth lead akin to a funeral procession before they kick back into familiar territory for the last 30 seconds. It’s rare that a recording leaves me wanting more. I’d recommend this to anyone who is a fan of scummy, lo-fi garage punk.

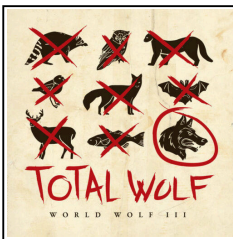
Reviewer: Sir Bobos
Label: self-released



TOTAL WOLF – World Wolf III / Defcon 4 LP

The *Wolf World III* side was released in 2022, while the Defcon 4 side just popped out in 2026. TOTAL WOLF has gotten tighter in the four year gap between releases, but their message of being mad picks up perfectly from where it stopped in 2022. TOTAL WOLF has grunts-loads of punk’n’roll melody with “shut the fuck up” shouted gang vocals that inspire you to not “shut the fuck up.” Imagine tough-guy melody with guitar solos and driving rock’n’roll punk, like if NASHVILLE PUSSY’s ask-kicking fast pace and relentlessness were bottled and corked. They like to get fucked up, as they said in one of their songs from 2022. They curse a lot and probably do some high kicks and bring it hard to every show. In a 2026 song, they are still committed to getting fucked up. Live, I’m nearly almost maybe certain that they are possibly unhinged. One thing is undoubtedly certain, TOTAL WOLF brings the party. Man, two records on one record is a great savings too, and also shows their attention to budget-conscious punks. Thanks, TOTAL WOLF.

Reviewer: Tony Party
Label: Sketchy



TWENTY ONE CHILDREN – After the Storm LP

Emerging from South Africa soaked in distortion and steeped in skate punk tradition, the trio of youngsters who comprise TWENTY ONE CHILDREN stand proudly on the cover of their first LP. This Soweto group’s charm lies in their rough authenticity, and here it’s on full display. These simple, bashed-out songs are interspersed with soundbites of the band members earnestly expressing their gratitude, adding a particularly unique touch to the album. From the harsh BLACK FLAG vibes of “Life Thing,” to the Eric Andre-inspired lyrics of “Fine Wine,” it’s an interesting glimpse into world youth culture as it relates to the borderless, enduring allure of punk spirit.

Reviewer: Jason Harding
Label: Slovenly



SNAILGUN – Glass Walls CD

Compelling mix of vocal-shredding post-hardcore and syncopated noise rock on this Australian band's debut. There is a noticeable rawness to the bass tone that recalls Bob Weston's work in SHELLAC, but also the textured guitar approach of bands like LUNGFISH and SELF DEFENSE FAMILY. SNAILGUN uses these dynamics to skillfully shift from pummeling noise punk tracks like "Straight Ahead" to looping, cinematic expansion on songs like the seven-minute "Shadow Operator." Standout "Labyrinth" details the speaker's unsettling plans to build a labyrinth in his basement, while threatening neighbors that he will have the last laugh. It's creepy, but it also features a sax-driven, ecstatic, full-band meltdown that rules in its bombastic audacity. The album's final track, "Screamy Cat," churns with a driving bass/drum rhythm and catchy vocal melody that sounds like a classic alt/rock radio ballad. Then it keeps going for eight minutes of high-energy jamming that never loses steam.



Reviewer: Nick Odorizzi
Label: Undunn

SONIC YOUTH OF TODAY – AKA SYT cassette

Spain's SONIC YOUTH OF TODAY gathered all the synthesizers they could find and made some of the catchiest "straight to Gameboy Color" music you could think of. Layers and layers of synthesizers, captivatingly haunting vocals, and pounding drum machine beats create this warm on the outside, cold at heart, slightly unsettling but primordially familiar sound. I not only enjoyed this album, but also connected with it deeply.



Reviewer: Mama Goblin
Label: Knuckles on Skin

SPEC REALISTS – On a Frolic of Our Own cassette

Another rag-tag collective of oddballs from the current craze of Canadian art-punk (that would be Calgary), SPEC REALISTS inhabit a dream world where *Mess-thetics* CD-Rs never degrade, where SWELL MAPS' trip to Marineville de-toured through Alberta's prairies, and where TELEVISION PERSONALITIES actually were bigger than the BEATLES. The collapsing, willfully lo-fi post-FALL/WIRE damage of "On a Frolic of Your Own," "Little Dive Bar," and the highly self-aware "We Aren't Punks" We're Art Punks" lands just over the northern side of the border from early TVVEK, while "Malcolm Tinsley (What's Going On)" appropriates the tumbling, wide-eyed melody of the CLEAN's "Thumbs Off" with a major Dan Treacy twist for the most convincing "I can't believe it's not UK DIY" invisible hit since we last heard from FAMOUS MAMMALS (who should be nervously watching their backs right now). People might laugh at them (coz they like weird music), but I'm right there with SPEC REALISTS.



Reviewer: Erika Elizabeth
Label: Neon Taste

SPONT AR STAD – Spont Ar Stad 12"

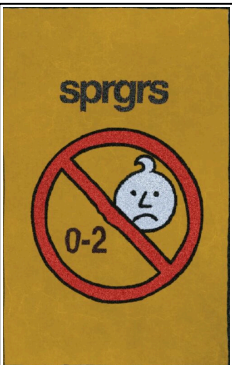
SPONT AR STAD is Breton for "state terror", Breton being one of the six extant Celtic languages, used in Northwestern France. SPONT AR STAD plays anarcho-punk with Breton forming the lyrical content. Their recent self-titled 12" draws heavy influence from '80s peace and anarcho-punk. Raucous punk formed from atypical instrumentation and rhythmic experimentation, spontaneous shifts in timing resulting in multiple movements, and often blending with soundbites to create immediate social commentary. Authentic dissent in musical form.



Reviewer: Seth McBurney
Label: Arejle / Discos Enfermos / Grow Your Own / Senseless Acts of Anger / Stonehenge / Tranzophobia

SPRGRS – EP2 cassette

SPRGRS from Granada, Spain are a mid-tempo, drum-machine-driven egg-punk band, heavy on the catchy bass lines and repetitive grooves. Despite having succumbed to the SNOOPER virus and doing Jazzerise throughout their entire live sets, this band is an all-around good time. I played with them in the summer of 2024 when they toured the States and absolutely loved it. Hell, I even picked up this cassette from them when they were here! A year-and-a-half later, and XTRO has reissued this cassette in a limited run of 25 copies. Hope you packed your Dramamine, fellow voyagers, as these are some of the most warby guitars I have ever heard! On top of that, the flutter and tape fluctuation warble on the dubbing of this tape has me feeling incredibly lost at sea. There are five songs total, three with emoji titles, all of which sound incredibly similar and kind of blur together. There are some cool licks for sure, but ultimately this cassette ends up feeling like one long, disjointed, herky-jerky track. All in all, SPRGRS is a killer band with solid songwriting and a ton of live energy. If you're into lo-fi egg-punk, grab a copy before it disappears.



Reviewer: Biff Barlow
Label: XTRO

STIFF MIDDLE FINGERS – Like Eroding Stone LP

TurdKing's vocals on this are driving, and while biting and sarcastic, they also have an introspection that can only come from years of being eaten away from the inside by boredom. All told, this is a great snotty hardcore punk record that reminds me of Florida's greatest, the PINK LINCOLNS, and a little bit of Canada's HEADCHEESE. It seems as though STIFF MIDDLE FINGERS have been a band for thirteen years, not carpet-bombing Lawrence, KS every three or four years with a release (maybe more like carpet-farting or cropdusting), until now. *Like Eroding Stone* has these five beautiful clowns distilling down their toilet-vinyl tunes to a fine, elegant, crisp oaky liquor with nice legs, paired well with a Molotov cocktail through your boss's window or a quiet night of self-loathing. Either way, it's a darn fine stomper.



Reviewer: Tony Party
Label: Dumb Ghost

STREETS OF SEPARATION – Faux Fur EP

Dark punk lurches from the most isolated city in the world. From the harsh, plodding "My Pleasure," with its deadly intense vocals giving way to slow and deliberate moans, to the desperate, amped-up, sub-minute-long "Motorbike," Perth's STREETS OF SEPARATION defy modern convention, channelling '90s riot grrr, primitive Australian punk, and steely determination for a modern reality. The guitar is wild, the vocals are intense, the rhythm section grooves like the Goner archives...and I've never heard anything like it.



Reviewer: Robert Collins
Label: Helta Skelta

CARDENALES – Antipunkpop cassette

Stylistically minimal feminist punk from Madrid that mixes the sounds of classic street punk anthems with indie pop melodies, like HONEY BANE meets CHIN CHIN. The Spanish lyrics poetically explore political themes via dark but hopeful personal sketches, occasionally delivered by call-and-response vocals. Moody bass lines and clean guitars on tracks like "Sangre" and "Fin del Mundo" evoke a post-punk atmosphere, but CARDENALES do fast punk just as well on "Golpe tras Golpe." Equally interesting is Uterzine, who released the tape and look like a solid resource for anarcho-feminist writing and music, particularly in Spain.



Reviewer: Nick Odorizzi
Label: Uterzine

CHERRY DROP – Evil With Imperfections cassette

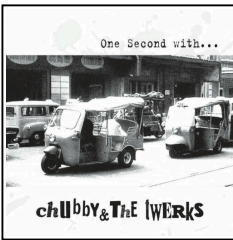
Rock'n'roll in the punk style that put Detroit, Michigan on the map. CHERRY DROP probably always smells like last night's show regardless of whether they had a show last night or not, but that's OK, it's what makes you tune in to this lawless Michigan rock. If this were to come from anywhere else, you'd question the authenticity, but goddamn if this doesn't just reek of the Mitten State. *Evil With Imperfections* is relentless, and just when you think you're going to get a chance to catch your breath, you get another punch to the chest. I betcha they play a lot of places that still allow people to smoke cigarettes inside. I'm mean, they just sound like a fire hazard, and I mean that in the best possible way.



Reviewer: Tony Party
Label: Remove

CHUBBY & THE TWERKS – One Second With... 7"

Lovely little handful of some bitter-sweet power pop bangers. Catchy hooks prominent in both the vocals and the guitar leads; really embraces that classic '70s pub rock sound. The title is apt—this really does feel like only a couple seconds. It goes by fast! Just means you gotta keep flipping it from now 'til eternity. This is a fantastic two-song slab and will go great on anyone's summer playlist.



Reviewer: Jake Joyce
Label: Veni3

CRASH OUTFIT – Crash Outfit CD

The spirit of '90s indie may never fully dissipate, at least not for a few more decades. It makes sense, as it was the last time it felt like nearly anyone could be plucked from the toil of a gigging band and end up on *120 Minutes* with an advance and a record deal (that likely wouldn't be seen to completion). But the music itself left a lasting impression, despite the disillusionment that followed, and bands like CRASH OUTFIT are testament to that. Here's a blend of something akin to the overlap between SLEATER-KINNEY, SUPERHUNK, and SLINT (perhaps they should have picked an "S" name). All that to say, this band is a perfectly convincing rock band in that mode. It doesn't blow me away with its originality, but it's damn earnest. Some of the vocal vibrato is honestly a bit much, but otherwise, far be it from me to dissuade anyone from continuing to follow the dream of showing up and laying it down. What else is there to do?



Reviewer: Luke Henley
Label: self-released

CROCODILES – Greetings From Hell LP

CROCODILES have been making music for almost two decades, which is always impressive. Their latest offering kicks off with a really solid opening track and ends with an equally intriguing number, with everything in the middle varying from fine to pretty good. And that construction is always a bit tough. You drop the needle and immediately think it might be a fun ride, but then a lot of the ensuing numbers just feel a little too plodding, a little too polished. But I do think they nail those opening and closing moments. Perhaps the most interesting point on the album for me was "I Dream of Genet," which plays out like a gender-swapped version of KISS's "Nothin' to Lose"—not something I ever really expected to hear, let alone a sentence I ever really expected to write.



Reviewer: D. Gregory
Label: Invisible Hits / Wild Honey

CRYING FORM / REGULATOR – split cassette

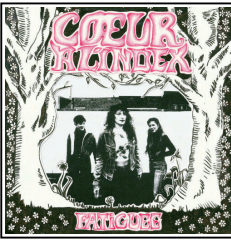
Some new slammers out of Athens. REGULATOR comes in on some smooth, "slow nod" hardcore with a damaged sound and hip hop edge. Their second song is a speedier number that reveals a bit of the BAD BRAINS influence you might expect from the band's name. Then, CRYING FORM comes in and just melts the skin off your face. Good tape.



Reviewer: Jason Harding
Label: Drunken Butterfly

CCEUR À L'INDEX – Fatigué / Mes Héros 7"

There is something special about a great band offering a release and letting everyone know it will be their last; it can make the consumption of said music be accompanied by a little something extra that is more felt than described. That feeling is felt hard with these last two poppy gems courtesy of CCEUR À L'INDEX. The A-side feels like a whimsical French DOLLY MIXTURE, while the flip is a breezy and upbeat number that could stand side by side with your favorite singles from Sarah Records. Each year's impending solitude gets me wondering what the soundtrack of summer might be, and looks like that question was just answered.



Reviewer: D. Gregory
Label: La Vida Es Un Mus

DAMAGE – Modern Times LP

Which DAMAGE is this going to be? Will this record be hardcore from '80s NYC or Finland, '90s Japan, '00s Massachusetts, '80s heavy metal from Norway, or '80s rock'n'roll from Reno? It is none of those! To my absolute surprise, it is synth hardcore ridiculousness from Orlando, Florida. I absolutely love their '84 EP and '85 LP of crazy thrash synth punk played with two actual keytars alongside a drummer. This *Modern Times* LP doesn't maintain the same punk and thrash pace as their earlier records. However, this has all of the elements of a very memorable synthwave record with a definite '80s feel. This LP could almost be an undiscovered record by ART INTERFACE, or fit into any of the many *Killed by Synth* comps that have hit stores in the past five to ten years. I'm not exactly sure where this fits into my record collection, but I'm certain I should have it in there somewhere.



Reviewer: Tony Party
Label: Space Fish

DEAD STAR BOYS – Rats CD

One of the latest transmissions from Medway, Kent, the DEAD STAR BOYS' sophomore album offers a set of smart and progressive tunes surrounded in a 1970s haze. Rooted in old school British rock and new wave, the songs' pop sensibilities are wired to an underlying anxiety and set in classic understated style. Standout tracks include the anthemic, BOWIE-esque "The Soldiers are All Broken" and the sickly-sweet "Don't Turn Off the Light," but this will appeal to those who dig the later BUZZCOCKS and bands like the CHORDS.

Reviewer: Jason Harding
Label: self-released

DRU THE DRIFTER – The Atomizer & The Plumber cassette

With upwards of 70 digital releases since 2021, I can say with complete certainty that DRU THE DRIFTER is hands-down the most overwhelming project I have been challenged to make sense of and review. This tape is one release in what seems like a musical assembly line, with albums being churned out once a month. From what I can gather, DRU THE DRIFTER is primarily a solo recording project that performs live with the help of backing band the BACK ALLEY HOOKERS. This cassette compiles two previously released digital full-lengths from November 2025 and January 2026, resulting in over an hour of material. Across that span, there are some dingy garage punk tracks that stand out. Unfortunately, they are surrounded by a much wider sprawl of ideas, including sloppy punk rock, synth-pop experimentation, and acoustic folk tracks. The sheer volume is impressive, but also exhausting. My biggest issue with this project is its seeming lack of restraint. I am not sure what is driving this sense of urgency to keep cranking out release after release on such a tight timeline, unless there is a real life *Speed* situation where dropping below a certain number of monthly releases triggers dire consequences. If that is the case, someone should probably check on DRU. After listening to this double full-length release, I would say there are maybe five tracks here strong enough to make a pretty killer EP. Sometimes less truly is more.

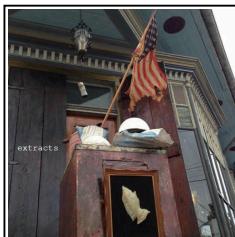
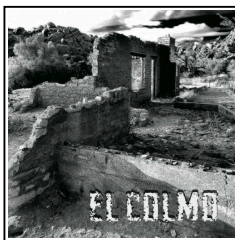
Reviewer: Biff Bifaro
Label: Tennessee Cold Cuts

EL COLMO – La Casa Invisible / I Hear Voices 7"

A two-song 7" and the first physical release from this Los Angeles band, only available at shows and on Bandcamp. Both tracks live in the same haunted space: the title track, sung in Spanish, creeps through what might be a literal haunted house or something more allegorical, while the flip is a cover of SCREAMIN' JAY HAWKINS' "I Hear Voices," channeling the original's uninged menace through a thick coat of reverb. The whole thing has a '60s garage feel with an early psych edge, moody and atmospheric without ever dragging. They released a full-length 12" just a couple months back, and this 7" works as a nice entry point if you haven't caught up yet.
Reviewer: Jeff Cost
Label: Slouch

EXTRACTS – Extracts cassette

Oh my holy mother of HOT SNAKES, did I enjoy this EXTRACTS release from the very first note strummed. Fantastic four-piece outta New Orleans, a city whose scene awesome gives us dirge-y and heavy and humid, but this self-titled recording, released February 6, 2026, is light and airy and high-flying. The album's second song, "Currency," conjures JAW-BOX in its cyclic guitar riffs and hopy-skippy drum syncopations. They sound like four guys who have played together joyously for a long time. It's nice to encounter bands with two guitars where they seem to have perfected the art of back-and-forth and sharing space. I love the decaying American flag over a doorway on the cover art, too. "Gold Plated Skeleton," the final song, has a quiet sadness woven in and shows that they know the value of bending a string here and there. I wanna go see these folks!



Reviewer: Katy Otto
Label: Styrofoam

EYES HAVE IT – Eyes Have It cassette

Hard to parse this cassette—some kind of unholy amalgam of black metal and discordant mathcore. Functionally very tight and well-executed, but somehow this entire release is very disjointed. The songs, even when uptempo, are plodding and anguished. I'm reminded of RASP-BERRY BULBS, though EYES HAVE IT trade away the conventions of songwriting for a busyness that makes the riffs opaque and ambiguous. This is challenging music by design and without clear signposts the listener can get lost in the sonic wilderness. The two elements that are in most direct conflict are the vocals and the drums. I'm not sure if it's a production issue with how it's mixed or something inherent to the performance, but it's as if they are both vying for the spotlight, which results in the guitar work washing out almost entirely. And my final gripe: this has very little relevance to punk. Like, I wouldn't think of this as being punk-adjacent. Maybe there's something here for the black metal crowd, but I hear many of those people are, uh, purists...so, I dunno.

Reviewer: Matt Casteel
Label: Sleeping Giant Glossolalia

EYES OF SALT – Collapse of the Infinite LP

The cover art's apocalyptic imagery matches the debut effort from Denver's EYES OF SALT perfectly. The album's themes of social collapse, class warfare, grief, and self-reckoning throw you right to the front lines of an inevitable societal demise. *Collapse of the Infinite* sits right between metallic hardcore and melodic punk. There are shades of the HOPE CONSPIRACY in the darker metallic passages and echoes of COMEBACK KID in the anthemic choruses. Tracks like "No Greater Truth" and "The People Are Hungry" go for the conviction of classic political hardcore, while "Flower of Pain" and "Don't Shed Your Tears" reveal a more vulnerable side without ever sacrificing intensity. The blend of melody and heaviness also recalls mid-'00s melodic hardcore, with touches of RUINER or even a heavier version of DEAD HEARTS. A furiously thoughtful hardcore record that balances metallic weight with genuine emotional depth.

Reviewer: João Seixas
Label: War

FALSE NEGATIVE – All Over But the Shouting LP

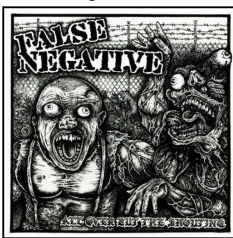
Hostile Midwestern hardcore street punk steeped in the classics. You're gonna hear '80s RAMONES ("Stuck in the Middle"), gruff Oi! ("Hostile Instincts"), pit-opening hardcore ("Broken Cross," "Cryptic Times"), and some straight sub-60-second burners ("Scenario"). Sometimes you need someone else to take a fresh crack at something you already know and love, and that's exactly what FALSE NEGATIVE has done here.

Reviewer: Robert Collins
Label: Noise Grade Standard

FILTH HOUNDS – 1st cassette

The cover reminds me of an old ZZ Top logo, so they get points for that right off the bat. FILTH HOUNDS are based out of Oklahoma City, and their tunes are riff-heavy with a heavy classic rock vibe. The opening track "They Live" had me drumming on the steering wheel with its driving rhythm and '70s-esque riffage. In fact, these dudes can lay down a groove and they know a good riff, but the vocals really killed this for me. The fourth track, "Bubba Hotep," was the final nail in the coffin. The vocals seem effortless and silly. Ironically, my favorite part of the entire cassette is when the singer operatically yells "peanut butter banana sandwich" at the end of the song. Whether it was intentional or not, it made me chuckle. At least it's got that going for it.

Reviewer: Sir Bobos
Label: self-released



ROSIE – Rosie demo cassette

Five-song debut demo of sleazy, nasty, riff-heavy rock'n'roll from Barcelona, Spain. This appears to be a recording project of sorts, with only two people credited. The songwriter handles all the guitars as well as vocals, while the other person is responsible for the entire rhythm section. The guitars on this recording are sharp and discernible, but they're paired with muffled vocals and a drum sound that feels like it was recorded in a closet using a single microphone. Somehow, the result is both crystal clear and completely blown-out at the same time. Most importantly, the songs are there. These tracks are so immediately catchy that you'll find yourself nodding along on first listen, convinced you've heard them somewhere before. With a whole lotta riffs and hopefully a whole lot more forthcoming, it's safe to say this reviewer wouldn't turn down a heaping portion of a whole lotta ROSIE.

Reviewer: Biff Bifaro
Label: Society Suckers



RUDE TELEVISION – Disconnect cassette

West Palm Beach, Florida egg-punkers RUDE TELEVISION return with another release on the format they're becoming known for. This is the band's seventh cassette EP, if you include their split tapes. The length kinda works perfectly for a band like this—it's short enough that as soon as the songs are over, you're inclined to flip the tape for another listen, especially with the first track being as much of a powerhouse as "Digital Frustration." Its infectious hooks will certainly demand more listens. *Disconnect* is Tascam-recorded, lo-fi, synth-drenched garage punk, each track as catchy as the last. RUDE TELEVISION has clearly figured out their lane and continues to crank out consistently strong releases within it. At only four songs, it's over almost as soon as it begins. Thankfully, I'd be willing to bet RUDE TELEVISION already has another cassette EP that isn't far behind.

Reviewer: Biff Bifaro
Label: XTRO



SCREAMING FIST – Santa Plaga EP

The first offering in several years from Oakland's SCREAMING FIST. They play the kind of ripping hardcore punk that you'd expect from a band composed of members of several veteran bands. *Santa Plaga* translates to "Holy Plague," and most of the lyrics here are political in nature. It's got killer riffs, Spanish vocals that command your attention, and a drummer who is hellbent on stealing all of that attention! I just love it when a drummer just dominates a record, and that's precisely what we have here. Take the second track "Gotas," for example: it's one-and-a-half minutes of fury led off with a repeating snare drum roll that morphs over time into precision drum fills and cymbal crashes. It all happens so fast that it's almost over before you can wrap your head around it. Production-wise, it's more polished than their 2019 debut, and the fidelity serves as a vehicle to deliver a sonic ass-beating. I'd like to hear these songs a little less polished, but that's more of a curiosity than a criticism. It's not easy to come off this aggressive while being so melodic, but they do it very well. I bet they rip live.

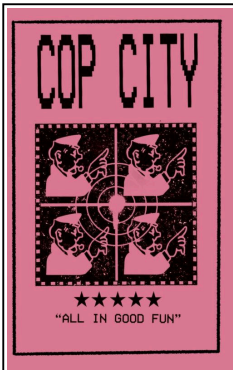
Reviewer: Sir Bobos
Label: Convulse



SCREEN STAR – Cop City cassette

Second run of SCREEN STAR's Cop City cassette, originally released October, 2025. This is the solo project of Matthew Campbell, formerly(?) of Nashville's SNOOPER. These four tracks are best played loud to hear the snotty vocals and garage-y, punneling rock'n'roll rhythms—if something in your house isn't rattling, turn it up. While SNOOPER is an obvious comparison, I also hear something akin to the greasy SICK THOUGHTS sound. Knuckles on Stun only released 25 cassettes for this run in the US, so by the time you're reading this, they'll probably be gone. Great EP/demo, whatever this is, and hopefully he's got more coming our way.

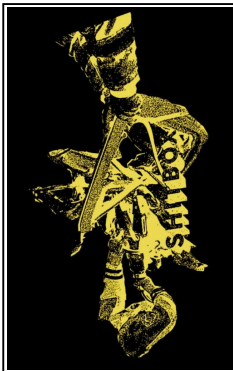
Reviewer: Willis Schenk
Label: Idiotape / Knuckles on Stun



SHITBOX – камри флэйм cassette

Russia's SHITBOX gives us a batch of noisy hardcore tracks that are, I'm supposing, related to cars. My evidence for this is admittedly thin, but the translation of the release's title is "Camry Flame." There's also a song called "Nissan Patrol," and perhaps most compellingly, the band's called SHITBOX. What do I spy in a background image on the lyric sheet? You guessed it—another car. What does any of this have to do with the music? Fuck if I know. The intrigue goes tooth to an otherwise standard set of modern hardcore tunes with a metallic bent. GEL and GULCH fans might find something here of interest, but only if they drive shitty cars.

Reviewer: Matt Casteel
Label: Noise Merchant



SICK SHOOTERS – Super Sonic Rock Saga LP

Another excellent record. Three for three this month. This is fairly straightforward melodic punk rock that is very good. It's mid-tempo and catchy. With most of the songs clocking in at right around two minutes, this is right up my alley. Get in. Get out. Get the job done. If I didn't use the term "power pop" in this review, I'd have done you a disservice. Really nicely done. Reminds me of later BUZZCOCKS stuff at times.

Reviewer: Kenny Kaos
Label: Wap Shoo Wap



SMALLSPEAKER – 2 One-Chord Bullets 7"

2 One-Chord Bullets, the latest dispatch from REGISTRATORS mastering Hiroshi Otsuki and co., is a potent little slab of punk purity. With one song on each side, this 7" showcases two tunes that are both structured around a single chord in the spirit of '70s Dutch prodigies IVY GREEN's "I'm Sure We're Gonna Make It." It opens with "Beat Beat Beat," an unstoppable noise attack of the "bet you can't play it just once" variety, offering a scullful hook entrenched in Hiroshi's glorious trademark damage. While this A-side is closer in resemblance to the tune that likely helped inspire it, the reverberating ring of "Borderline" on the flip pushes the concept into unique new territory. With its scant press run outfitted in modest stamped sleeves, it's equal parts elusive artifact and rocking art piece. If you're lucky enough to get your hands across a copy of this, crank it up and congratulate yourself five times.

Reviewer: Jason Harding
Label: Smallspeaker Recordings



NIGHT PUNCH – GODISNOWHERE EP

Mysterious "dark" punk that has a fair bit of novelty (including members keeping their identity secret), but they pull it off exceptionally well. NIGHT PUNCH has essentially produced a solid set of straightforward hardcore songs and gave them a goth makeover. Theatrical intros/outros, clinical, phased guitar leads, and some of the most over-the-top, warbly vocals I've heard since ELECTRIC CHAIRS' last LP take these tracks to a much moodier place, and it really works. I'm typically a "less-is-more" kind of guy, but in this instance, I'll take the extra bells and whistles. Recommended.

Reviewer: Eric Anderson
Label: It's Eleven



NO PEELING – EP2 EP

Nottingham's NO PEELING hits the ground running with their aptly-titled second EP, EP2. This thing has all the fun you can fit inside nine minutes...and then some more. Guitars are stepping in and out of post-punk and, dare I say, twinkleclore territory, while the bass is working its groovy magic with outstanding riffs and licks. Synth parts add some gorgeous sparkle and depth to this already very eight-dimensional music, and the vocals complement the music perfectly with their effortlessly cool delivery. So, what about drums? Well, they are the best drums one could ever drum for this. It's one of those records that you can feel how locked-in the band is by the way every part of it works like clockwork. If I'm being honest, it feels like a breath of fresh air in the world of egg-punk, which tends to get a bit too same-y—I know, pot calling the kettle black, something about glass houses and stones, so on and so forth. But after listening to this record over and over, I'm a firm believer that NO PEELING should be the next big thing. Whatever that might entail for you, they absolutely deserve it.

Reviewer: Mama Goblin
Label: Feel It / Wrong Speed



ORAL – Slagen I Blod LP

ORAL. What a weird name for a band. Not really a shirt you would wear comfortably in 2026. To my great shame, I only discovered the band a couple of years ago when FOAD Records reissued an early discography of this Swedish band, *Dystopisk Framtid*. To be fair, I was a little upset that I didn't know this mid/late '80s band before, as they played a cracking style of raw and absolutely furious abrasive kang reminiscent of CRUDE SS or AVSKUM, but with a more pronounced metallic thrash influence at times. The dog's bollocks. ORAL's only proper recording came out in 1994 and included nine songs originally written during their first run between 1984 and 1989 (I assume they were no longer active by then) and recorded with a heavier, not to mention more metal-oriented, production. Seeing the prices of the CD-only release, *Slagen I Blod* must have been considered as something of an obscure classic that was difficult to acquire, so the reissue on De:Nihil Records (a label that was kind enough to reissue CRUDITY last year) is welcome indeed. The basis of the songs are still to be found in the second part of the '80s, back when primitive brands of hardcore and metal started dating for real. *Slagen I Blod* sounds like a bridge between the aggression of Swedish extreme metal of the '90s and the brutality of the D-beat hardcore of Distortion Records from the same time, and it is quite excellent. Many current bands try hard to pull this "metal kang" style, and very few succeed like ORAL did. But then, guitar player Alf also played in AT THE GATES, so clearly he knew what he was doing. An essential reissue in my opinion.

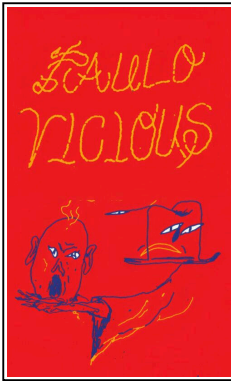
Reviewer: Romain Basset
Label: De:Nihil



PAULO VICIOUS – Ansiedade e Guerra cassette

Mysterious egg-punk project that mixes rudimentary keyboard beats with fuzz guitar and insect-effect vocals. The tape opens with an irritating Casio "Rock Beat 2" drum preset with chirpy keys and the voice buzzing something unintelligible. I was ready to push pause and write the review, but the next few tracks were pleasantly surprising. "Cinema City" features guitar fuzz so blown-out that it sounds like the circuitry has been destroyed, which, ironically, gives the track warmth and provides counterpoint to the simple electronic beats. "Acorda Bebê 2" has a crude punk riff that expands into a similarly crunchy, catchy chorus that brought me back in. Closer "Reverendedor Olomey Bye Bye" is much like the opening track, but it makes more sense after listening to the whole tape. Information on PAULO VICIOUS is scant: this tape was previously released on an Israeli label, the song titles are in Portuguese, and this edition is from the reliably great Florida label, Xtro. Maybe this is ushering in a new era of Mysterious Guy International Casio Beat Broken Fuzz Pedal Egg-Punk? If you're a true egg freako, you'll dig it.

Reviewer: Nick Odorizzi
Label: XTRO



POSITRONIX – Miss Universe 12"

The 12" EP continues its victory lap as the coolest format going now in punk. This is a tight handful of throbby, synthpunk with vocals that absolutely send it to the balcony of the theater. It's hip, it's referential, it bounces—there's really not a hair out of place here. "Ascension Day" really stands out, with a chilly moodiness and great harmonies, but every track here is a winner. The guitar shines here too, with leads that veer away from the usual minimal, motorized appeal of synthpunk and bring plenty of arpeggiated melody to add another layer to the overall sound. Stack all that up against the rousing lyrics hollered against a looming dystopia, and you've got a foolproof formula. Rage against the dying light and all that.

Reviewer: Luke Henley
Label: Abandon Everything



PRETTY BABY – Layaway Plot LP

You know what the toughest thing a punk band can do in 2026, a year dominated by horrible people doing and saying horrible things to each other? Be radically vulnerable; emotionally transparent and available. Charlotte, NC, post-hardcore band PRETTY BABY purges stories of grief, loss, and hope on their gorgeous debut LP that sounds like amplified heartbreak. Buffered by lush instrumental interstitial tracks, the songs ride quiet/loud dynamics that move from hushed, finger-picked passages to propulsive post-punk bass grooves to full-chested emoviolence screaming, all while remaining tonally consistent and affecting. "Ghost Teller" opens with a melodic guitar hook that sounds like TITLE FIGHT at their shouty best before erupting into blast-beat hardcore by the end. "Hector's Loop" goes from a filthy noise rock riff into textural indie punk like a PISSED JEANS/JAWBOX best friend handshake. There are raw moments too, like the ripping chaotic violence of "Gripped and Poisoned," but even then, shards of layered beauty shine through in the form of melancholy piano and reverse reverbed synth. It's a complex and rewarding listen and totally recommended.

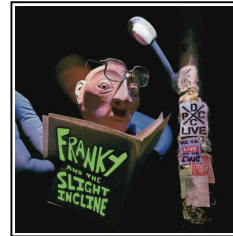
Reviewer: Nick Odorizzi
Label: Expert Work



FRANKY AND THE SLIGHT INCLINE – DCxPC Live, Vol. 46: Live at the Cave LP

Another DCxPC live release lands in the pile, and this is a pretty good one. FRANKY AND THE SLIGHT INCLINE career through fifteen tracks recorded at Chapel Hill's The Cave in 2024, and the sound quality is rough, but let's be honest, nobody's buying DCxPC recordings to pamper their precious audiophile ears. What you get is sloppy, zippy punk rock with lyrics that are mostly idiotic until they aren't, the kind of dumb that occasionally winks at you and reveals that maybe there's something sharper underneath. One minute they're dropping a pretty, surfy instrumental interlude like they got confused about what's happening, and the next they're ripping through "Entfremdung," an anti-consumerist rant, "Aus-coent," a gleeful hack job on Australian accents, or "Death Row Americano," where it sounds like the singer (or singers?) got possessed by a committee of demons who can't agree on whose voice is next. Spiritual descendants of the DIESEL QUEENS, maybe, with the same gift for making a mess sound like a party. The vocals are strong, the energy never dips, and the whole thing is a pretty good time.

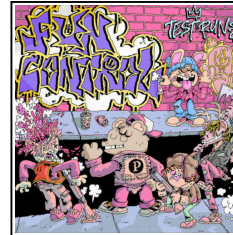
Reviewer: Jeff Cost
Label: DCxPC



FUN CONTROL – Test Run LP

FUN CONTROL is as strange as it gets. Imagine mixing NO TREND and BLACK FLAG with the blasting of INFEST. Doesn't make much sense on paper, but it sounds great. Everything is realigned, but underneath all the abrasion, there's real control. The riffs lock into these ugly little loops hammered into weird places through repetition. At moments, the tape saturation and damaged-mix aesthetic drift toward the harsh minimalism of FLIPPER, where fidelity itself becomes part of the aggression. The sense of versatility and lack of care for following the canons of punk is what makes *Test Run* a very enjoyable experience.

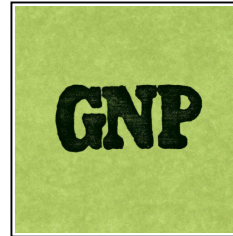
Reviewer: João Seixas
Label: Lower Echelon



GNP – 1985 Demo LP

Formed in Birmingham in 1982, GROSSEST NATIONAL PRODUCT (GNP) was one of Alabama's first hardcore bands. These gootball thrashers cut this sixteen-song tape in 1985, preserving songs with titles like "Teenage Abortion," "Rabid Lassie," and "I Married an Astro Zombie" for posterity. It's wacky old school stuff with remastered sound that cuts some of the dirt of the demo. If your collection includes the fine works of the ANGRY SAMOANS, DAYGLO ABORTIONS, and ADRENALIN O.D., you may want to slap this in there, too.

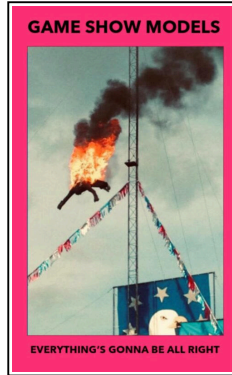
Reviewer: Jason Harding
Label: Prank



GAME SHOW MODELS – Everything's Gonna Be All Right cassette

Fuzzed-out pop punk with drums so tight they sound like a machine. The melody lurks just beneath the surface and is intertwined with both vocals and beautifully foolish guitar. Don't let the simplicity deceive you, as these songs were perfectly crafted through a grey and sorrowful Midwest winter and lead toward a budding green spring. I remember in 1987, Vanna White, at the time the most popular game show model, was blurbled about in *Newsweek* for her *Playboy* feature. I wanted to catch up on world events in the library, and found that all of the copies were missing their last two pages. Later at lunch, a kid named Kevin opened his wallet and next to a condom was Vanna's *Newsweek* photo, folded to fit the small plastic picture pocket. For me, this four-song cassette made me think of Vanna White, *Newsweek*, the library, Kevin, and condoms. I'm not sure what the intent was, but none of this would have happened without the upbeat, infectious, fuzzy pop punk sensation of GAME SHOW MODELS. Great tape.

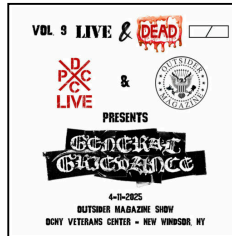
Reviewer: Tony Party
Label: Knuckles on Stun



GENERAL GRIEVANCE – DCxPC Live & Outsider Magazine Presents: Live & Dead, Vol. 9 LP

Newburgh's GENERAL GRIEVANCE comes flying out of the pit with a record that understands one of hardcore's oldest truths: songs don't need to be long to hit hard. Part bootleg document, part scene artifact, the album is split between a live set on Side A and studio recordings on Side B, offering a before-and-after snapshot of the band. The live tracks are loose and propelled by pure energy, while the studio versions have the screws a bit more tightened. They employ the speed and brevity of classic early hardcore bands like MINOR THEAT and CIRCLE JERKS, but with a sneer that recalls POISON IDEA. The gravel-throated vocals add a dose of MOTORHEAD-style grime, which is never a bad thing. Fast, pissed, catchy.

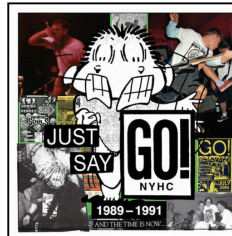
Reviewer: João Seixas
Label: DCxPC / Outsider Magazine



GO! – Just Say Go: 1989–1991 and The Time is Now LP

GO! may just be the perfect example of when a band is more than just a band. They represent something far beyond the music they created. Vocalist Mike BS had an influential zine called *Bullshit Monthly* and founded ABC No Rio, an iconic, long-running DIY venue that offered a more inclusive alternative to the notoriously violent CBGBs hardcore matees. GO! was an integral part of a scene that broadened what NYHC encompassed, with a blatantly anti-racist, anti-sexist, pro-queer message. Their brand of hardcore subverted the tough-guy machismo while delivering speedy, youth-crew-style tunes with sarcasm and wit to boot. GO! was a unifying force in a genre that talked outwardly about unity but has traditionally had a narrow scope for who that ideal could apply to. Their first gig was with NAUSEA! In the sixteen-page booklet that accompanies this record, you'll find many fliers from when they shared bills with bands like BORN AGAINST, CITIZEN'S ARREST, and RORSCHACH. In 2026, mixed-genre shows are anomalous, but in GO!'s heyday, this formula made unity something more than an empty slogan. The period of the band collected here may have been brief, but they were prolific. This album contains just shy of sixty songs, with a gatefold cover and aforementioned booklet, courtesy of ever-reliable Refuse Records. This is essential listening for anyone with even a passing interest in this style of hardcore, and it lands at a moment when violence at shows is a pressing topic yet again.

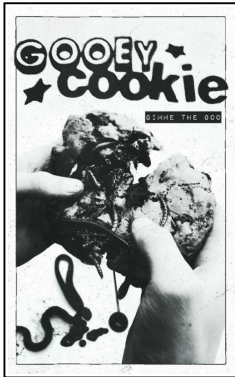
Reviewer: Matt Casteel
Label: Refuse



GOOEY COOKIE – Gimme the Goo cassette

This is one of the more convincing power pop EPs in years, very much in the '90s style of the genre. I won't name the references as they're self-evident, but needless to say, this three-piece from Denver (a city that seems to know its power pop in recent years) knows what they're doing and oozes with confidence. The melodies are soaring and the sound has a lot of weight to it, bringing plenty in the grit department. I was always a huge fan of the singular BUGG full-length, and this scratches a similar itch. It's cool and good. What else is there to say?

Reviewer: Luke Henley
Label: Manic Mantra



HARD PASS – Distorted Eyes LP

New-ish band, veteran players that have paid their dues in such diverse bands as PYRAMIDO, SATANIC SURFERS, BURST, and ANCHOR. Since their debut *Hardcore 2024*, the Malmbö band has been in constant forward movement. *Distorted Eyes* is their first full statement, or as the official line puts it, "ten tracks of unremitting hardcore punk." No exaggeration there. The opener "Lies" sets the picture of systems failing, truth being commodified, and everyone's complicity in it. Lyrics read like headlines chewed up and spit back out through a punk filter. The message is consistent: distrust power, reject passivity, and call out the machinery. Sonically, it's classic hardcore chassis, but not stuck in time. What makes *Distorted Eyes* stick is conviction. This is hardcore as a delivery system for change.

Reviewer: João Seixas
Label: DeNihil



HERE'S YOUR WARNING – Here's Your Warning LP

This record took one hell of a trip to reach its final destination, i.e. completion. With the writing and recording beginning all the way back in 2019, this slab would go on to be re-recorded each time there was a lineup change, totaling five different recording sessions. Holy smokes, talk about a passion project. The end result? Your standard West Coast punk rock affair; skate punk with a bit of thrash and Oi! influences, almost like a less-melodic BAD RELIGION meshed with MDC and BLITZ. Tackling topics such as the coronavirus and our current political climate, this album is certainly the soundtrack of our times, even if it sounds like it came straight from the '80s. If you're a fan of ditional punk, then you'll love this one—classic "fuck you" energy melded with that sloppy chaos you only get from the veterans of the scene.

Reviewer: Jake Joyce
Label: Retreat to Nowhere



INSIDE JOB – 6 Track Demo EP

Totally crushing hardcore punk from Haarlem, home of fellow D-beaters ANGSTÄLTER and TRAUMATIZER, the latter whose guitarist did the artwork here. INSIDE JOB has a metallic element to their sound—Sorry State drew a comparison to PUBLIC ACID, which is very accurate. Fried vocals accompany frenzied riffs and guitar leads, with a tough rhythm section holding everything together. I'm glad they decided to do a 7" pressing; a wise decision based on the strength of this material.

Reviewer: Eric Anderson
Label: Autoreverse



IN THE KEY OF K – Out of Time Out of Tune CD

Have you ever walked into a room and felt like you interrupted something that wasn't meant for you? Or accidentally opened a notebook and saw someone's personal writing? That is kind of the situation here. *Out of Time Out of Tune* is a CD reissue of a cassette released in 1998, and it is so off-the-wall and not punk that honestly reviewing would just come across as mean spirited. IN THE KEY OF K seems to be the output of one guy who, looking at his blog, is very earnest about his music and life (and likes using AI for album covers). The music on this album is primitive bedroom grunge with jazz and funk influences, interspersed with classical fingerpicking. That's all I'm going to say. I don't see the audience for this beyond the artist's friends and family, but best of luck to him.

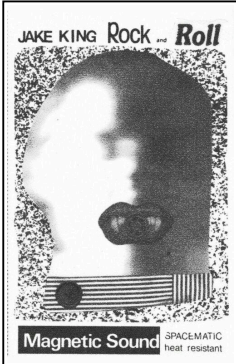
Reviewer: Nick Odorizzi
Label: self-released



JAKE KING – Rock and Roll cassette

Bringing a big boom out of Buffalo, JAKE KING gives you exactly what the name of the tape claims. In the spirit of the '90s revival à la Estrus Records, these five catchy little tunes are painted in a primitive garage sound that's caked in its own weight. With melodies like a punk rock MONKEES and way-out guitar solos, Jake serves up a version of '60s-inspired swagger that rings damn fresh and ends too soon. Unless something better comes along to overtake its throne, "2026" is the anthem of the year for all intents and purposes. Promising stuff here; hopefully he's just warming up.

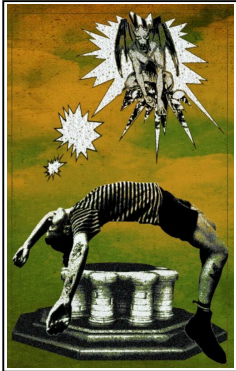
Reviewer: Jason Harding
Label: The New Disposable



KNIFEMARE – Knifemare cassette

Catchy, high-intensity hardcore from Cologne in the same vein as DRY SOCKET and SNUFFED. There's a good mix of breakneck speed and mid-tempo stomp on these tracks, with plenty of head-banging riffage to be found alongside beefy drums. KNIFEMARE does occasionally lock into a certain kind of groove that gives credence to their "garage punk" label; at times I was reminded of bands like THEE OH SEES. It's a nice change of pace and something that helps them stick out a bit from the crowd.

Reviewer: Eric Anderson
Label: Noise Merchant



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LAMENTO – Handala cassette

LAMENTO, a fresh hardcore punk band out of São Paulo, Brazil, is offering the five-song *Handala* cassette through Falling Apart Records, and it's worth trying to get ahold of. Espousing international hardcore and blending elements from Latin American hardcore, LAMENTO creates a sound that is simultaneously rage-fueled, melancholic, and indignant.

Reviewer: Seth McBurney
Label: Falling Apart



LAUGHING TORSO – Dead Homies EP

Humid and dense, like their hometown of New Orleans. Their suffocating sound is hard to map clearly as it leaves a swampy trail. The whole record just runs on hatred and forward motion with the deadliest of insistence. Repetition becomes erosion with every riff, feeling like it's sanding another layer off the original idea. They sound like the '00s hardcore bands that sprinkled a little crustiness in their punk—CATHARSIS comes to mind, especially because of the smothering, screeched vocals. Overall, a great EP for those who like dangerous music. Plus, the cover has a flair that is also a skull. How could you go wrong?

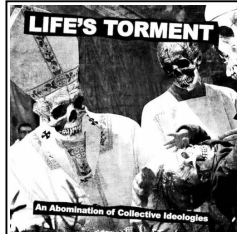
Reviewer: João Seixas
Label: Raw Sugar



LIFE'S TORMENT – An Abomination of Collective Ideologies EP

Lots going on here with LIFE'S TORMENT, a self-described "grind-punk/sk8 violence/fastcore" unit from Vegas. Dual vocals belt out anti-facist lyrics amidst buzzing riffs, blastbeats, and breakdowns. I don't really have any complaints—on paper this all sounds pretty good, and in practice, it does, too. That said, by the end I felt exhausted by this EP; maybe best served in smaller doses.

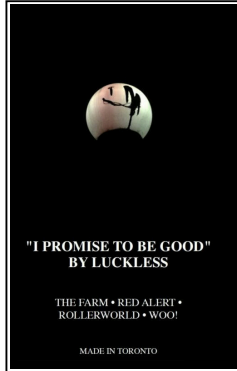
Reviewer: Eric Anderson
Label: Alder / Asteroid M / Goat Power Recreation / Her Dog Spot / Hey Fuck You / Intoxicating Force / Panic Inc. / Phage / Rotten to the Core / Throne of Lies



LUCKLESS – I Promise to Be Good cassette

A little blown-out? Check! Driving? Check! Buried weird synth? Check! Impassioned? Check! Do I like it? Fuck yarp! I literally had to stop the review and buy one of these cassettes for myself. The biggest problem for me is that there are only four songs. These tunes by LUCKLESS have a little bit of SPRAY PAINT, MANATEES, Pelican Pow Wow, and Goner Records feel, but bringing in melody that is sometimes lacking with those labels. This is a solid release and I kinda hope they break up because, for me, they might have set the expectation too high for whatever's next. Well done.

Reviewer: Tony Party
Label: self-released



M.A.C.E. / TRASH DIVA – DCxPC Live, Vol. 44 split LP

If you read my reviews regularly, then you know exactly what I'm going to say next: the DCxPC live albums have quickly become one of the greatest institutions in modern punk. I absolutely love these archives, and if you haven't checked them out yet, this would be a great place to start. Both of these bands are so tight that had to check the liner notes to make sure these were live recordings. Seriously, they both sound fantastic! M.A.C.E. and TRASH DIVA both play a similar flavor of hardcore that incorporates blood-curdling screams and elements you'd typically hear in more power/violence-adjacent bands. My favorite thing about these releases is listening to the performers win the crowd over throughout their set. The crowd is roaring for both at the conclusion of each. Fantastic piece of wax and well worth several spins. Side note: M.A.C.E.'s set was recorded at Uncle Lou's in Orlando. I'd like to take this time to point out that, as of this writing, Uncle Lou is in ICE custody awaiting trial. There is a GoFundMe set up for Lou's defense fund which can be easily found by searching for "Uncle Lou GoFundMe." If you have the means, please consider donating! Fuck ICE!

Reviewer: Jake Joyce
Label: DCxPC



MACROPLASTICS – Macroplastics demo cassette

Gotta love some big plastics. This ill-noise-based rough and ragged hardcore punk act blasts out five explosive tunes that are shock-full of volatility. Tackling the discomforts of modern living with a sneer, MACROPLASTICS couple introspective, claustrophobic lyrics with a stereo-smashing propulsion. I dig the tension this dichotomy creates, where the lyrics are riddled with doubt and anxiety but the delivery is unbridled and assertive. Saturated, percussive, and concussive. This would sit nicely alongside your favorite JUDY AND THE JERKS and VANILLA POPPERS releases. This rips!

Reviewer: Matt Casteel
Label: self-released



MAN&ERROR – 2025 cassette

Three friends from Berlin (Lianne, Arndt, and Clara) started a "summer band" last year, wrote and recorded a handful of songs over the course of three weeks, then committed them to tape for permanence. The music that I most often connect with is clearly the product of people in community with one another deciding that being in a band is the natural and obvious extension of the connections that they share—without knowing anyone in MAN&ERROR personally, I can just imagine the project first taking shape after, say, meeting two other people who also had their entire creative worldview turned upside down the first time that they heard the RAINCOATS, or being given a mixtape that included the same KICKING GIANT and SLANT 6 songs that the recipient had obsessed over in private for half a lifetime (2025's "Away with Fairies" is total Billotte-core, and I'm here for it). Spartan post-punk with an off-kilter melodic heart, singularly focused but shambling in spirit, very much recalling early 2010s bands like GRASS WIDOW and HOUSEHOLD and TRASH KIT who were sowing similar seeds from late '70s/early '80s femme-centered Rough Trade and the early '90s International Pop Underground. And a PETTICOATS cover to boot? Summer needs to last forever.

Reviewer: Erika Elizabeth
Label: self-released



MAN WITH ROPE / MINDCLOT – split cassette

Only a label like Noise Merchant could bring a split where both bands are deviously raw and equally heavy. MINDCLOT and MAN WITH ROPE are both out of St. Louis, Missouri. They each have two tracks on this split, with MINDCLOT playing their D-beat-infused hardcore and MAN WITH ROPE offering their crust-blended hardcore. If you're curious about the punk scene in the Show Me State, then check out this split.
Reviewer: Seth McBurney
Label: Noise Merchant



MARIA TAREY – Route Tarey cassette

Originally released a few years ago, MARIA TAREY's *Route Tarey* cassette has been re-released by XTRO for better international distribution. If you're unfamiliar with MARIA TAREY, well, it's French hardcore punk that sounds like merging EDITH NYLON with WALLS OF JERICHO. Brutally intense vocals deliver searing lyrical rebukes in French, Italian, and English over lo-fi but masterful punk. Brilliant. Go get yourself a copy.

Reviewer: Seth McBurney
Label: XTRO

