

INITONIT #21

50P



INITONIT 21

Well here we are again, another year, another zine, more punk bands and a load of moaning shite. It seems to get harder and harder to put these things out. Not, that I don't enjoy it, but now with computers offering smaller font sizes there seems to be more space to fill and you get more for your hard-stolen punk rock cash – you lucky cunts!!! So, don't feel ripped off if you've been to my Myspace page and seen a few rants as blogs! I'm trying to keep the two separate, but I liked some of the blogs so much I had to use them in the zine!! Also, two of the articles are stolen, but as I wanted to get the zine out as soon as possible (I'm already a month over the deadline I set myself) I've presented them as they are – rather than initonitifying them and filling them with random fucks and cunts. Besides, I need to have a life outside of the zine and work, otherwise I wouldn't fucking have anything to rant about!! The cover was sent to me over Myspace by The Suffragets zine who, in turn, found it on the web. So if you drew it – it's ace get in touch so you can be credited properly. Fuck, I sound like a thieving fucking cunt this time – but why the fuck not – if something's good and punk fucking rock then it should be shared – that's what a 'scene' is all about! The back cover is by a Peterborough artist I met on Myspace. Kaine Kulczak, his Myspace page is at www.myspace.com/kulczak – it's well worth a visit! As ever, the zine was printed by Footprinter Workers Co-op, because they're cheap, ethical and they do a good job! Visit www.footprinters.co.uk

Recently, initonit was proud to be a part of the A Network Of Friends zine project. Put together by Steve of Ripping Thrash fame, it was an omnibus zine featuring initonit, Headwound, Ripping Thrash, Gadgie, Agitat, Attitude Problem, Born Caught, DOMD, Toilet Paper Bible and Why. With a print run of 1,000 copies, it shows what can be achieved by one man's ambition and the uniting of several punk minds. And, I for one, was proud to be part of something which also included several of my favourite zines and some great friends too! If you want a copy send me a quid and an A5 SAE – it's a thick fucker!!

I have to say that the Boston scene is as strong as ever with some cracking gigs at the IQ, Patient Zero are back together and The Last Day are sounding pretty fucking good! Here in Peterborough The Ruined are a great horror punk band and The Black Marias give some good sing-along street punk tunes. They also try to battle the Midlands apathy by putting on a monthly punk club in a totally DIY fashion – anything like that should be applauded. Destructors 666 are also going strong. Now all we need is a good hardcore pub venue to get some thrashtastic moshpits going. A few vegan eateries in the city wouldn't go amiss either – but hey, it wouldn't be initonit without a moan or two would it?

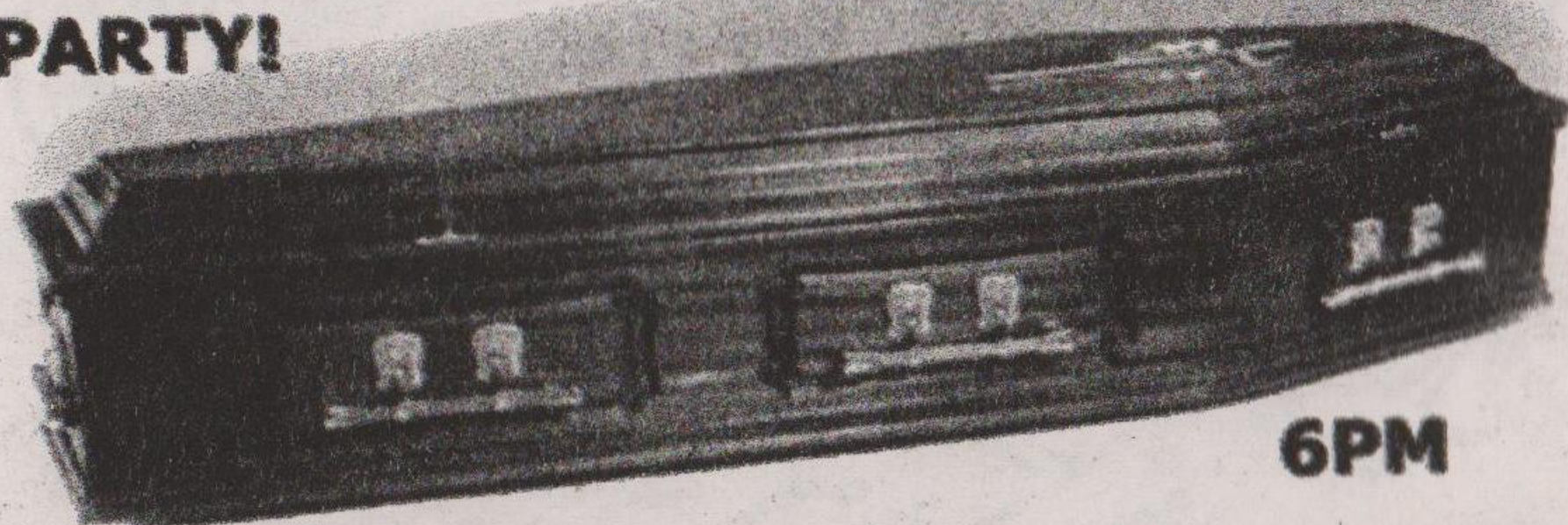
I'm still travelling to as many gigs as I can – Nottingham, Lincoln and Boston seem to be popular destinations at the moment, but Leicester and Northampton are both within easy reach – and London is just a train ride away. I love going to Leeds when I get the chance too, dunno if Leeds loves me going there tho!!

I've also got a few books to recommend to you this time. Ian Bone's *Bash The Rich* is a riot good laugh. It's by the bloke who formed Class War and it's basically his story and the story of Class War. This is real politics, street level working class politics we can all understand without eating a whole fucking library washed down with a glass of Open University. *The Day The Country Died* by Ian Gasper is the man's follow-up to *Burning Britain*. And he does exactly the same thing as his first book, only this time he does it for the eighties anarcho bands. So we get loadsa interesting info on Conflict and the like split into different areas of the country – and very readable it is too – I'm gonna start it very soon! There's also a comprehensive book about Crass out, it's called *The Story Of Crass* and is written by George Berger, I've heard loads of good things about it, but I've yet to start reading it – I'm too busy writing this for you fuckers not to read! Does anybody bother with these intros? Am I wasting my time – please let me know if you've read this – you can even write and tell me if you haven't – if you're that way inclined!

Anyways, to get in touch with me write to Paul, 10 Regents Court, Princes Street, Peterborough, PE1 2QR, email paul@paulinitonit.plus.com, or visit my Myspace at www.myspace.com/paulinitonit

Trafalgar Square – I'll Be There!

PARTY!



A hitch in time

I have noticed over the last couple of years that there is an alarming shortage of hitchhikers on our roads. Now, I don't need to tell you that if you're a driver picking hitchers up is mandatory – do it!

There are many advantages to hitchhiking, there's the obvious car sharing aspect, each hitcher means one less car on the road (although hitching in groups of 10 isn't always a good idea). Plus, you get to meet new and interesting people. Some of them will actually ask a hitcher outright if they're a psycho. I have been tempted to answer yes to this but didn't fancy being kicked out of the car at 60mph – because that might hurt! Hitchers can even attempt to turn racist drivers into anti-fascists, meat-eating drivers into veggies and Tories into anarchist. But this is an unlikely scenario, and, if you make a driver angry and they lose concentration you have to remember that you are also in the car when they leave the road, drive through a fence, across a field, down a hill, across a farmyard and into a barn where they store millions of chemical that can painfully dissolve your skin in an instant.

It's well know that we hardly ever talk to anyone on a bus, plane or train. Have you been on the tube? Every fucking person on there that doesn't spend the entire journey looking at the tube map trying to work out where they are, spends it admiring their shoes. I'm sure that every time I visit London I do so on national shoe buying day. But point is, when you're one on one in a car conversation is more likely, so hitching and picking up hitchers is a very sociable thing to do.

It's been a few years since I've hitched. I generally used to do it over short distances. I'm shit at directions and being lost when you are hitchhiking is a recipe for disaster. Although when we were kids we used to go on bike rides where we'd toss a coin at each junction to decide whether we would turn left or right – imagine the adventures you could have just deciding which road to wander down on a whim. But don't let on to people that pick you up that you are vulnerable, alone and nobody knows where you are. Staying safe is the most important thing. If you're hitching and don't feel safe getting into a car don't get in. The same if you're a driver and you don't feel right about a hitcher. Trusting your instincts can save your life. Hitchers can ask to leave a vehicle at any point too, it might piss the driver off, but if you feel uncomfortable get the fuck out of there. Drivers will almost certainly oblige, if it turns really nasty threaten to pull the handbrake on, and tell them they are as likely to die as you, and their car will be wrecked. This should persuade them. But the chance of any of this happening is minute.

I never had any bad hitchhiking experiences. There were a few times when I didn't get a lift. Tired and confused, my friends and I once tried to hitch a ride on a milkfloat, when even that failed we gave up! When I had long hair, a couple of guys picked me up at night and said they'd only stopped because they thought I was a girl, but they gave me a lift anyway. And, a little old lady picked me up hitching to college once. She said if I stayed in the car while she went through the car wash she'd take me right to the college gates. She was scared to go through the car was on her own. I was glad to be of service.

But the point is, I was never harassed by weirdos, arrested or anything else bad. The media paints our world as being filled with evil scary people, so I guess people are scared to hitch or pick up hitchers. Don't be, just be careful

ARMING THE WORLD

There are about 640 million small arms in the world. Another eight million are added each year. The killing industry is big. It's going well, death is good for the economy. Every minute a person is killed with small arms. This means guns, add knives and we have a world-wide epidemic of death on our hands – but it's good for business, so who gives a fuck. Well, nobody until a child has its brains blown out up the road from you! Guns are a badge of honour on the street – if these guns didn't exist then they wouldn't be used. How obvious is that. Apart from killing things what use is a gun? You can't eat it, you can't use it in the bath. But the UK arms industry is worth billions – what happens to these guns isn't generally cared about. Sure, we can't export to this country or that country – but arms dealers are experts on loopholes. And arms embargos have more loopholes than the hunting act. The scumbags who profit from this murderous industry spot loopholes like you play spot the difference in your morning newspaper to win free Tesco vouchers. Except their prize is a multi-million deal that could wipe out hundreds of lives – even Tesco's baked beans aren't quite that bad yet!

A wild guess says there are an estimated 300,000 child soldiers playing a role in international conflicts. Excuse me, these are fucking children, isn't sending a child into the line of fire child abuse? Children are taught to kill, they are sent out to face bombs and bullets – can you imagine how terrifying that must be? How much of an evil cunt do you have to be to inflict that on a child? Tell me that isn't wrong and I'll tell you you're a heartless cunt – fact!

Your taxes are putting these guns into circulation, the government has no control where they end up – your taxes could be paying to arm child soldiers – doesn't that make you angry? Maybe they're paying to arm terrorists – does that make you angry? Or, possibly the guns fall into the hands of criminal gangs, you could be helping to provide drug gangs an British city streets with weapons that have killed children and teenagers – surly that must piss you off? The UK is the second biggest arms dealer in the world, does that not concern you? That industry wipes out scores of civilians, of protesters and of soldiers, of children, of animals, and, yeah, it fucks up the planet. If you don't think this sucks, then you don't have a fucking heart!

PLASTIC LUNCH

How fucking lazy do you need to be to actually pay for pre-packed sandwiches? Is your life so busy that you don't have time to butter two slices of bread and stick a chopped tomato between them? Fucking hell, £1 for two sarnies, and they're wrapped up nicely in some totally unnecessary packaging – just to add to landfill. But the businessman has worked hard, he's above eating homemade sandwiches, he has no time for the small folk on the street who make their own packup – that's for the working class – pah they're nothing. What a fuckwittednobrainedpillcock! Convenience food tastes like rubber – it isn't real food, it's what the chemical industry thrives on – artificial, soulless, earth-destroying crap. Do you really know what you're putting in your mouth? Do you really care? Do you take time out to read the list of chemicals and of additives? Do you take the time to look into why they're there, what they do and where they come from? After all, it's your body and your right to know what goes into it. So next time you get tempted to pay a quid for a sarnie that's worth 20p, just look at what's really inside it!

I saw Dogsflesh a few times in 2006 and liked what I heard. They come from the same ferocious punk stable as Discharge and GBH. In other words old school punk with bite. They originally formed in 1982 in Yorkshire. Then they got back together in 2005 - as seems to be the way of things these days - and released the Bloody Road To Death EP and a rather excellent live CD. In the band now are Jon Mac on vocals, Tim on bass, Rob on guitar and Richie on drums. Rob answered the questions for me.



Dogsflesh

What prompted Dogsflesh to get back into action?

Three of us went to Leeds to see GBH, Broken Bones and a number of other bands most of who were crap back in November 2004 and we realised that there was still a niche for our brand of music, so we decided to give it another shot.

How are things different this time round?

We are more professional in our approach to gigs, back in 82 we were either out of our heads or pissed, but this time around it's different, as people pay to watch our show and they don't want to see four arseholes up on stage, they want to be entertained and enjoy the music. We are travelling further afield this time also, covering the UK, Europe and in January, USA.

One of your songs is about borstal - what do you think of ASBOS - are they a better alternative?

You mean XBB (Ex Borstal Boy), the thing with ASBO'S, is that they are a waste of time, you can get an Asbo for playing music to loud, which to many of the little arsehole has become a badge of honour and not a deterrent, where as if you went to borstal you had committed something far more serious and in certain cases, not all was fare more of a deterrent to yesterday's youth!

What are your views on events such as Wasted - are they purely a nostalgia fest or an excuse to have a bloody good time?

That is an easy question, it is neither of the above it is a time for pure greed and exploitation, by the promoters and the bands, I really hate Wasted and all that it stands for, we were told that last year would be the last one ever, WHY, because it was all a ploy to get more people there, that's why, furthermore you have bands singing, that they will never sell out and claim to be anarchist bands who are getting five figure sums just to play at Wasted, now you tell me that, that is what punk rock was about. Do you ever see any of the so called big bands ever doing a door taking gig, again no, because greed has taken over punk rock in the UK.

You've shared stages with the likes of GBH, The Exploited and Discharge - who are your favourites? What is the all time classic Dogsflesh gig that sticks in your memory?

All 3 of the above are our favourites and also our biggest influences along with The English Dogs and looking back it seems strange that we are now friends with those bands.

I think the gig that stands out most with any of the above bands was probably at The Beer Keller in Leeds with The Exploited in about 83, but the most memorable of all was in a place called Spennymoor in the North East and to this day people still talk about it. After the gig there was literally an all out riot with

punks and skinheads fighting pit workers, we had the van smashed up, people taken to hospital, we were on the local news and in the press. We returned there in October and people were still talking about that gig. Gladly things have moved on a lot since those days.

Mad punks and Psycho Skins is a bit of an anthem for you - Do you think the scene is more united now than it used to be?

We were always united with Punks and Skinheads from day one, we had both who came to our shows, which is what we wanted from the start. We played music which appealed to both. Looking at the crowds who go to gigs now then yes I would have to admit that there is not the rivalry now that there used to be.

Coming from up North, I guess you're natural Thatcher haters - How will you celebrate her demise?

Ha, don't get me into politics as it does not interest us at all they are all out for themselves and fuck everybody else. As for Maggie, we never sang any song that slagged her off personally back in her day, but we did sing about the dole, poverty and the rest of the topical shite that was around then, but what I will say is that this wanker Blair is far worse than Maggie ever was and so is his government, who are literally taxing us up to the hilt and screwing us for every penny they can. The bloke is from the North East like us and he has done nothing for the area, he is one of the worst PM's this country has ever had, he is an American Puppet and Bush is pulling the strings, Maggie for all her faults would not have let that happen in fact she was pulling Regan's strings.

You played with Conflict earlier this year - what are your views on animal rights? Can punk rock ever be too political?

We have no views on animal rights, we are neither for, or against it.

Punk has always had an element of political views, due to the way the country is being run, after all politicians are always in the news, so they are a good target to write about, although I must admit that listening to the bands around now, not many songs are political, so maybe they are moving away from that.

Punk seems to have bastardised itself into crust/emo/ska-punk etc - Are you proud just to be pure-straight-ahead punk rock? Are you amazed at what passes for 'punk' these days?

We are a UK82 Punk rock band, end of story.

Many styles of music are classed as punk now as media i think are trying to make it fashionable again, that's why labelling bands such as Blink 182, Good Charlotte, My Chemical Romance, Green Day and even Rancid as punk makes me sick, they are just using that tag to launch themselves onto a higher plain. In my opinion there is old school 77 punk and UK82 styles of Punk and that is it.

What's next for Dogsflesh?

We are releasing a new album in USA called Edge Of Oblivion, then a 3 week tour over there to promote the album, then more UK, European and more US dates provisionally booked for 2007.



The vampire clinic

I had to go to the local hospital for a blood test recently. That was the first problem. I'm a useless twat when it comes to navigation, I have trouble finding my way out of car parks for fucks sake. When I was younger I couldn't find a shop's exit and set off all the fire alarms bugging off down the fire escape doors. But losing the local hospital having just driven 170 miles to a house I'd never been to before and finding it straight away takes some beating! When I did find it and get sorted with 2.2 seconds to spare I could have sworn that the nurse had sprouted fangs. The got the needle out with zeal and seemed to take, in the words of Tony Hancock, an armful.

And, when the red stuff continued to leak out she said "you're a bleeder", thanks for the free insult. Don't think much to you either now! And I'm sure she licked her lips at this point too! I could imagine all the nurses salivating over the syringes in the back room. Getting their fill of my life's essence! And it hurt like fuck afterwards, there's a big bruise there now, and I'm sure the hole resembles a bite mark, so maybe I did pass out, maybe a flock of vampire nurses had their fill of my blood. Fuck. I'm sure, as I drove away, I noticed a big black cloud appear over the hospital and a fork of lightening shoot out across the roof! As I took a wrong turn at the first fucking roundabout I came to!

The power of words

Like my last blog, this one may end up in a zine. I'm trying to write enough to keep this blog thing here going and give the zine readers something too, I'm sorry if you read both - but that's the way it goes.

If you walk down the street and call a stranger a cunt then, quite often, they take offence - especially if it's a deeply religious policeman with an allergy to swear words! But why do some words - cunt in particular hold more weight than other words? You can call people a bum and nobody gives a flying cumcunt fuck, but use the 'c word' (what a dumb fucking phrase, and one that takes longer to say than the word cunt itself) and people gasp in horror, aeroplanes fall from the sky and giant worms devour every fisherman in a 50 miles radius. (some good comes of it then!). Fuck is quite powerful, shit and bastard have lost their power, bollocks is fairly standard now - so when we need to really sting someone we need a cunt. Prick, knob or bollock-brain aren't enough sometimes. You can combine them I guess to create new swear words - you bollocking cuntfuck of a twat - just for example.

We were discussing creating new swear words at work, none of the people I was talking with found cunt offensive. I said I found the song Mustang Sally offensive. I mean come on - "Ride Sally Ride" it's saying Sally's a slut - Sally must be well fucked off with the fucking fucker who wrote that piece of shit! Also, every fucking pub which employs second rate rock/blues cover bands to 'entertain' the punters on a Friday or Saturday night can guarantee that Mustang fucking Sally will be played at least once, and I will run screaming in terror in search of the local Napalm Death covers band. The music of Mustang Sally, the song itself and people who like the song are 10 times more offensive than the word cunt could ever be!

On a serious point, some words - nigger, paki, poof etc still have too much power, these are words that even I find offensive, they are just another weapon in the armoury of the bigot. The attempt by rappers to take back the word nigger was laudable. I mean if a word loses its power to shock then using it in an offensive manner becomes redundant and the racist cunts lose a weapon - that must be a good thing.

And, of course, we all know that sometimes words mean nothing, we all say things we don't mean, we use words to hurt people and we use words so people will not be hurt - but only our minds know the truth! Fuck the truth is scary sometimes!

Pacifism and La La Land

Now most of us punks are peaceful folk. I've never thrown a punch in anger in my life. Most of us don't deck someone for spilling their pint or glancing at their girlfriend's breasts. Although, if someone grabbed said girl's breasts she has a perfect right to knee the cunt in the bollocks, kick the fucker in the face and then punch the useless twat through the fucking window!

Most of our aggression comes out by listening to music that lets you shout out loud, toss ya body around the dancefloor like a demented zombie on speed or that just grinds ya fucking face in. We are not the type of people who get beered up, take on the world and smash up our ex's car!

However, the idea that change, real change in the world can be won through pacifism is fucking bollocks. I'm sorry, but do you really think that governments and armies with guns, tanks, missiles and mindless followers are going to lay down their arms at the sight of a peaceful rally?

They want to keep power, they want to keep control, and the mindless moronic fuckwit that do their dirty work know how to keep the boss sweet. Because, if they follow orders then life is sooooo much easier. Sure, one or two may gain a moral conscience when they see a baby's head blown off, but within a group of such thoughtless bastards who group up in the me, me, me generation, they are sadly in the minority!

Get fucking real! The arms industry is huge, the people behind it are unscrupulous, and there's a lot of money involved - that's all they care about - looking after number one! So why should such people suddenly grow a heart after receiving a few letters and stop supplying murderous regimes with the tools of their trade? In short, as long as governments have weapons, then the unarmed masses are fucked!

So, when it comes down to it, the fight will not be peaceful, there will be casualties, but that's the price of real revolution and change.

On a more realistic level, if you see a racist kicking the fuck out of a guy in the street, do you say "Oi you, would you mind not hurting that innocent man?" Or do you grab the attacker by the throat and actually help his victim? When a pig's baton wacks you on the head, do you cowl under the force, or try and grab your attacker's weapon from him?

Direct action gets results. An animal rights march may get zero publicity on the news - but set fire to a lab and you're the lead story - FACT! The same goes for anti-cruise missile marches and trespassing on MOD land - land we pay taxes to provide, so land that is our land anyway! I'm not saying that peaceful protest and letter writing etc is redundant - it's my preferred method of activism, but there needs to be thousands on a march for it to get recognised, one punch, one fire or one theft and the media's ears stand to attention immediately. Sometimes you have to fight fire with fire!

Train in vain

Over the years I have visited train and bus stations the length and breadth of the country, but still I'm amazed at the treatment of passengers. My return to Leeds one weekend cost me £45 - how many punk rock records could I have bought for that? But for the return journey every single seat on the train was reserved. Every seat had a poxy card on it which read "I'm a boring, over-organized twat with no life, and if you sit here I will set the conductor on you, he will make you feel about two foot tall (no offence to any two-foot-tall people reading this) and belittle you in front of the whole train before he gleefully goose steps back to his little whole to drink coffee and wank non-stop until the next stop." Well something similar anyway.

So we huddled in the cramped spaces between carriages - I say huddled, but nobody once to get too close to a stranger, so we avoided eye, body and verbal contact - because that's what British people do - right? I was stood near the toilet, so by the time I reached Peterborough I had become immune to the stench of stale piss (you get quite used to it after visiting certain punk venues anyway) and the most boring mobile phone conversations in history. Now if you must use the phone on a bus or train - or anywhere in public for that matter, you have to realise that every single person (and a few married people too) around you will be listening in - so make it fucking interesting. We want gossip, scandal, we want sexual problems, emotional problems, we want to know who has a fetish for people in nurses's uniforms clad in a gimp mask and armed with the Monster Anal Intruder. We have a right to know - we have a right to listen in, otherwise shut the fuck up and wait until you get home to have that essential conversation about how you got "so pissed last night I threw up all over the vicar I passed studying the art of necrophilia in the graveyard." That just isn't scandalous enough for me I'm afraid! But the point is, if you spent 45 bastardcuntingfucking quid on a train journey the least they can do is make you comfortable - put on another fucking coach, another train, or let us use First Class for free.

Following the announcement that a motorway toll was under consideration, an opposition MP voiced concerns about the plan because it would "force people on to an already over-crowded railway." Good. More people should take the train, cars fuck up our planet, kill kids and animals and cost a huge amount of money. So if the railways are overcrowded build more railways - they cause less damage to the environment and can carry more traffic. Put on more trains (double deckers anyone?) and add more coaches - but don't let paying customers spend their entire journeys breathing in stale piss - I could go to Glastonbury if I wanted to do that!

The only experience I have of trains abroad is in Holland - they were nice, clean, and there was plenty of room - I have seen the pictures of the trains in India with people hanging off, but they don't pay £45 a ticket! (in fact train travel is very cheap in India I hear) However, with 63,000km of rail and 6,800 stations you can go anywhere by train there. But there are different class of travel there as well from what I understand - second class suburban trains are the ones we've seen photos of with people on the roof - but if you're in the fresh air at least you can't smell the bogs I suppose!

And, don't forget that some British stations are unmanned now - so you have a limited choice of tickets which you can actually get - because you have to buy them on the frigging train. And many of these 19th century relics are dark, intimidating buildings that stink as bad as the bogs on the train. They are not nice places to be at night. When are the powers that be gonna get their act together and jolt the public transport into the 21st century? If they're serious about the environment now might be a good time!

DESTROY ALL JUDGE



DESTROY ALL POLITICIAN

**NO WAR BUT
THE CLASS WAR**

Hate

Sometimes it's hard not to hate.

There is so much wrong in the world, abuse, 'isms', war, poverty, greed and power-hungry scum who will walk over the most vulnerable for a few extra pence or an addiction to power and control. They jack up on it like junkies filling their veins with a serum that will bump up their social standing or help them keep ahead of the Jones. They even get one over on their neighbour by getting boasting of how much cash they spent on their family over the festive period. Yep, money sure is a drug.

So money is worth hating. War is worth hating too - that goes without saying. As for racism, sexism and all the other isms? Well they are bullying and bullies are scum, worthless, lowlife specks of dirt under the microscope of Dr Headmaster, and Dr Headmaster ain't got a fucking clue how to deal with them. Another ASBO on the fire Sir?

But hate, pointless hate is a wasted energy. Why waste your energy? All that hot air is probably adding to global warming, and we can't have that can we? Just because some cunt cut you up in the car park, or some mindless moron misdirected your post by accident - well it's not use losing an hour's sleep over really is it?

But what of the people who do us wrong? Well if they destroy your family, take your son or punch your mum for no reason, I guess they are worth hating. But sometimes we all get so wound up over the little things we stop hating the situations that are truly worthy of our hate. Sleep loss, stressed out drinking sessions, lonely tears and frustrated punching of walls - for what?

Punk rock and the so-called the alternative lifestyle are about hating abusive systems and abusive people, not about hating some bloke who pissed you off in a pub, a friend or partner who did you wrong or a stranger who bumped into you on the pavement.

I think it's time to learn where to direct our hatred - only then can we rise up as a powerful force for change and take on this whole stinking system. Are you with me brothers and sisters?

You're fur-king joking

Fur is making a comeback in the fashion industry - note that last word - industry. An industry of death, an industry of rich scum, an industry where health, state of mind and life come secondary to profit. An industry which flourishes of making Joe Public feel inferior because they are not wearing this month's must have. Bollocks. Fashion is a con, fashion is for rich fucks who only care about one-upmanship. "Oooh I've got a dead animal around my neck aren't I cool" You'd be cooler with a fucking noose around your neck you vacant cunt. Top designers say they won't be 'bullied' by the animal rights 'brigade'. They'd be shitting themselves if the workers in sweatshops all over the world said they wouldn't be bullied by the companies producing their shitty products. They'd be terrified if their models rebelled and said they were not gonna parade up and down the catwalk in a murder victim. But most of them haven't got the guts to do that. The only time they become ethical is where the press are located conveniently nearby. Naomi Campbell posed for a Peta campaign in 1994 - but was pictured in fur in 2004. She is fucking scum - a liar, a fucking disgrace. In 2004 the sales of fur globally brought in \$11.7bn. That's a lot of murdered animals to make a few fucking awful singers and actors look even worse that they already do.

I have mixed feelings about Peta, naked stunts and the over-use of celebrities trouble me. Do we really listen to someone because she stared in a few dodgy TV series or sang a fucking atrocious song? Well, it seems the answer is yes. People do seem to care more about the cult of personality than they do real people who have actually done something special with their lives (anti-fascists, animal rights heroes, single mums). I don't need to tell you how fucking cruel fur farms are. I don't need to tell you that wearing fur is wrong - end of. But we do need to tell a few fucking idiots in one of the most despicable industries on earth and help it become a tiny little bit less evil. Look at that figure again - \$11.7bn, all we need to do is hit them in the fucking pocket - that's all they understand. When they walk down the catwalk there should be an elite guard hidden in the rafters to blast the fuck out of the expensive garments with paint filled high-powered water pistols - let's make fashion shows colourful and fun, let's cost the fuckers money - lots of money! All that really needs to happen is there to be a global boycott of fur, spreading the message is fucking important - go into shops that sell it and tell the manager what a scumbag they are for selling this shit. Write to companies and tell them. Or take the more direct approach (use your imagination). Stop people wearing fur (make sure it isn't fake - you don't wan to call somebody a cunt when they're not a cunt at all). Point out how real fake fur looks. And that being a fashion victim is really sad anyway. But, of course, the real fashion victims are the animals.

Zine reviews

Anarchoi 19 £1 and A4 SAE, James Gemmell, 3 Hazel Grove, Kilwinning, Ayrshire, KA13 7JH, Scotland. I love the chaotic layout of this zine. It's even handwritten in places! Great interviews with Lost Cherrees and Sned, plus a few others from bands local to James. I'd stil like to see a few rants tho!

Barbies dead 20 50p and SAE, Alex Woodhouse, The Square, Gunnislake, Cornwall, PL18 9BW, UK. This zine's arrival proved to me that the new postal charges had arrived - an A4 zine folded to fit in an A5 envelope to make postage cheaper. It's the usual cut 'n' paste fare from Alex with rants about the future of our postal service, and very interesting chats with Welly of Artcore/Four Letter Word, the Fanzine Archive and MDM. Actually, this is the best BD I've seen so far.

Blackpool Rox II issue 9 £2 and A4 SAE, c/o PO Box 1025, Blackpool, FY3 OFA, UK. www.jsntgm.com This comes with the Ugly Truth About Blackpool Volume 2 CD. There's 26 tracks on that of all kinds of musical style, as you'd expect from a compilation covering a whole town. Sick56 are as good as ever and The Tommys stand out as powerful girl-fronted punk rock, poppy, but not overly so. Elsewhere there's some horrible goth-like stuff and the ace thrash of When People Become Numbers. Plus there's One Way System and the fantastically named Walter and the Knobheads. The zine contains a great interview with Steve Lake (Zounds) and an interesting one with Jennie Russell from HITS. There are loadsa reviews and a good lond Andy Higgins-penned article, it all looks ver professional.

Blitzkrieg Bop 14 £1 and A4 SAE, 23 Monsal Drive, South Normanton, Alferton, Derbyshire, DE55 2BG, UK. This is the Apocalypse Babys guy - that's where I got the contact address from - because it ain't in the fucking zine! - Why do people do that? Still the reviews take no prisoners as usual - which makes a refreshing change. But, for me, what makes this interesting is an interview with my mates The Black Marias, some old school punk rock layabouts from here in Peterborough - Good stuff!

Cream Of The Crop Issue too long away £1 and A5 SAE, 89 Pinecrest Drive, Thornhill, Cardiff, CF14 9DU, Wales. There are more reviews in here than you can shake a stick at. Some indie, some punk, and the intro is a good read about how paper zines are better than the internet. There's also a very interesting interview with Sean from Overground Records, who puts out the Anarcho punk compilations that are doing the rounds at the moment. The article about Alternative is good stuff too.

Fuck Shit Up Free with SAE, Emma T, 193 Sandford Grove Road, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S7 1RS, UK. This has even got reviews of Sheffield's supermarket bins in - so if you live there and need to liberate leftovers!!! There's a HP Lovecraft story and a true pirate one, an ace little booklet, Emma does a great zine distro too, with loadsa interesting stuff - so get in touch!

Haggard Zine 1 50p and A5 SAE or £1 postpaid, Ian Capleton, 125 Meersbrook, Park Road, Sheffield, S8 9FP, UK. Wow, a new zine. Ace! Old school cut 'n' paste layouts rule here, and there's a chat with Stu No Rules and a great piece on libraries. This is what we want - come on support new zines!

Headwound 18 £1 and A4 SAE, c/o Punktured, 145-149 Cardigan Road, Leeds, LS6 1LJ, UK. It's fucking back - about time too. Headwound is the daddy of zines! Chip and Rachel tell it how it is, so you can like it or fuck off. There is so much to read that i've not finished it yet - but I wanted the review to go in this issue - so there! There are interesting interviews with Filthpact and Kismet HC, plus Whole In The Head and The Bayonets. Plus some ace rants and stuff on myspace, Leeds ABC and Ebay. The reviews are worth a look too - if ya shit they call ya shit - only not in such a nice way!

Memories Of Crazy Neighbours email axelwlk@hotmail.com This is interesting, it's the last issue and there's a great Eastfield interview and loadsa non-punk bits and bobs, including interviews with Joolie Wood and Carter Tutti. Oh yeah, it's A4 and from Belgium. I first met this guy on the Conflict forum and he has a lot of interesting things to say - even if I don't really get the pagan side of things. Worth checking out!

Morgenmuffel 15 60p and A5 SAE, Isy, PO Box 74, Brighton, BN1 4ZQ, UK. Just as the winter nights draw in, what can be better than reading Isy's uplifting cartoons about travelling, activism and having fun. All done with the sense of humour that is finally clawing its way back into the punk scene. I've praised this zine enough in the past, so all I'll say is check it out if you haven't done already!

Negative Reaction 6 £1.50 post paid from 20 New Front Street, T/Lea, Stanley, Co.Durham, DH9 9LY,

England. More oi and street punk from Trev and Dawn. There's a Wasted report (the event, not a report on someone getting wasted - although the two often go hand-in-hand) and a funny bit about chavs. Interviews come from Holy Racket, The Fallout and The Skeptix. And there's loads of reviews too! **Ploppy Pants 5** 50p and A5 SAE, Roddy, Pillars Organic Farm, Falkland, KY15 7AD, Scotland. Yay more chaotic, handwritten fun. This is all punk rock and shitting yourself! Theses chats with Step On It, Steve Ripping Thrash and Kamikazee and even a few recipes thrown in. Top stuff!

Rum Lad 1/Scared Of Bees 1 50p and A5 SAE, Steve, 8 Henry Street, Lincoln, LN5 7XF. There isn't enough atr zines around these days, and Rum Lad fills the gap nicely thankverymuch. And the written stuff is hand written - I though the 'kids' had forgotten how to write in these days of computers (I'm an old cunt). And Steve's rambling about life as a hospital porter are well worth a look. Holly writes pretty well in Scared too - personal observation type things - I want more!

South Coast Vegan Cooking Zine 5 £1 and A5 SAE, Hannah, PO Box 1398, Southampton, Hampshire, SO16 9WX, UK www.myspace.com/littlehannahx I'm a huge fan of this zine. Most of the recipes are pretty easy and tasty, and it's a fantastic way to share meal ideas cheaply. It looks good too and is written in a nice happy, light-hearted manner too, which gives it a real personality of its own. I can't recommend this enough.

Toilet Paper 13 Details from Alva Dittrich, Johann-Kohlmann-Str.8, 53913 Swisttal, Germany. There's some strange poetry in this A5 zine - which was a bad sign, and the bands aren't really my cup of tea, but the article on rape and one on the working class are spot on. Written with a directness and honesty which is painful to read at times. Well worth checking out.

I BELIEVE...

We've all heard it religion is bad, religion starts wars, religion brainwashes people etc etc etc.

Islamic fundamentalists, the Christian right, Satanic murders - the list goes on. And we can't forget dangerous religious cults who have murdered thousands and destroyed the lives of even more across the world.

But, recently a petrol station attendant told me it wasn't religion that started war - then another customer arrived. What a cunt - how dare someone try and buy petrol at a petrol station while I'm discussing politics? But he was right. The cunts behind the wars want land, resources and control. They just use religion to hide behind - they are cowards. And, more sinisterly, they use religion as a recruiting tool, a way to brain wash soldiers and terrorists in the name of their fake god. Religion is all about control, and what more control can you have over someone than convincing them that their eternal life (or eternal pain) is in your hands? When brought down to these basic levels we can see how sick and disgusting these leaders actually are. There is no eternal paradise for suicide bombers, no glorious afterlife for soldiers who die for an oilfield, and no grateful higher being blessing soldiers for murdering civilians and enemy soldiers.

And it's not a new thing - the Crusades are a prime example of this. And much of that used religion as a veil for battles over territory.

An evangelical group called the Jesus Army keep visiting Peterborough in what they call their 'battle bus' - does that mean it's a legitimate target for me to blow the fuck out of with stink bomb? Jesus fucking army - what they gonna do shoot us with bibles? They seem to have permanent smiles tattooed across their slimy gobs too - it's just not right.

And, of course, religious divisions amongst the poor, generally, mean that people are too busy hating each other to hate the government. But, of course, if these division are left to grow and grow for too long the government loses control and they end up with a divided land to rule over. So what do they do? Usually they're cunts, so they choose sides and murder everybody who don't agree with them.

And throughout history missionaries, who were at best misguided and at worst evil, have tried to ram religion down the throats of the poor and working class. As Marx pointed out, the promise of an afterlife makes the shit life of the working class in this one worthwhile. Thank fuck people aren't willing to accept this as much now.

Of course we have to respect other people's beliefs, as long as they go quietly about their business without trying to convert everyone and their dog to their belief system. - and as long as they respect other people's beliefs - ie muslims must respect jews, Christians must respect muslims and they all must respect atheists. The Holocaust, the destruction of Palestine, the hastling of women outside abortion clinics, suicide bombers, threats against satirists, burning down places of worship, attempts to convert all 'non-belivers' and using religion as an army recruitment tool are all fucking wrong - the religious leaders know it, governments know it and you fucking know it. Convincing people who have been brought up with these lies, people whose parents and parents' parents have these beliefs drilled into them of this is a little more difficult.

And, we must never confuse ant-religious beliefs we racism, by all means hate islam - but do not hate muslims, scum such as the BNP use it as an excuse to turn on all Asians - this makes them as bad as the suicide bombers, because they've been brainwashed too - by a different belief system - but one that's just as dangerous.

Music reviews

Astrophil & Stella CD Contact www.astrolounge.de Got sent this with Germany's Toilet Paper zine. This is not the usual initonit fare. It's kin of indie space rock. It's laid-back Sunday morning, drifting to sleep Friday night music. And, I have to admit, I like it. It's not punk rock. But if you're in a chilled out mood it's perfect. Warm vocals, lush tunes and nice keyboards.

Dik Guru Urban Folk CD visit www.punkshitrecords.stigon.com, email punkshitrecords@hotmail.com. I love bands like Levellers, New Model Army and The Pogues, I'm a huge Billy Bragg fan, but this, like Paul Carter, leaves me could. The talent is there, no doubt, but this punk rock troubadours seem to try to hard, it seems forced. The swearing seems like token swearing, the pandering to the anti-pc brigade is too obvious, and he sounds like Jasper Carrot. For some reason that doesn't endear this to me!

Dirty Love Trashed CD PO Box 54610, London, UK, N16 8XW. www.dirtylove.me.uk, email clara@dirtylove.me.uk £8 via any of those - postal cheques to Dirty Love. This is fucking fantastic, I love it. Lizzie Love and Clara Zero take no prisoners with their brand of sleezy punk 'n' roll. It oozes positivity and no-holds-barred sexual politics. The tunes wedge themselves into ya skull for weeks, this is real good time music, Friday night music if you like - and I like very much!

Filthpact/Atomgeovitter split LP Contact FCR, PO Box 152, Stoke-On-Trent, UK. Now you know this is going to be good. Two of Scotland's finest rage against the machine and thrash shit up like there's no tomorrow. This is in-ya-face, unrelenting mayhem of the best kind. Fucking ace lyrics too - including Dulce Et Decorum Est put to punk - how good is that?

Filthy Habits No Sympathy CD www.filthyhabits.tk www.myspace.com/filthyhabitspunkrock Punk rock should be dirty and lo-fi, this scores on both counts. And the cover has got skulls on it. There's a track called New Labour (Go To Hell) - and there's a Discharge cover - so they should go down well in Boston. Actually, musically they're not a million miles away from Discharge - but they don't sound like all the other D-beat bands out there - this is punk rock pure and simple, spat out with the venom and attitude we've all come to expect from good bands.

Foreign Legion Live at Wasted Blackpool 2006 DVD Contact www.myspace.com/foreignlegionpunk or www.myspace.com/creamofthecropfanzine I am so the wrong person to review this. You see I'd never heard Foreign Legion before I saw this (after mistaking it for a CD at first and getting really confused - duh). But this is a bootleg quality no-frills recording of a band on stage. The sound is OK, but I'm guessing it's the sort of thing fans will love. For me, it's OK sounding street punk with great melodies, and the band give it their all on stage. So if you're a fan get it.

Fucked Up Triumph Of Life 7"/MCD, cheques to C Ellison, Peter Bower Records, , C/O 10 Somerdale Walk, Bramley, Leeds, LS13 4SF, UK, www.peterbowerrecordss.kk5.org Saw these at the IQ in Boston and thought they were OK, they reminded me of Sick Of It All, but no one seems to agree with me - so that's OK! This comes in a lavish sleeve and there's a ballet dancer on the cover, which is different! This is well-structured, melodic hardcore with shouty vocals which sound nothing like Sick Of It All - there's far too many complicated lyrics for that (tee hee). A nice positive blast when you want something that's not quite as in-yer-face as most of the stuff on here. I'm not always in the mood for this stuff - when I am I like it though!

The Great St Louis Forever Now CD www.jsntgm.com, JSNTGM Towers, PO Box 1025, Blackpool, FY3 0FA, UK. When something's described as 'Social Distortion meets Leatherface' I'm bound to be interested. And the cover looks like a Social Distortion cover, and the lyrics read like SD lyrics. Plus the singer sounds like the bloke from Leatherface. And musically it sounds like Leatherface with a bit of SD thrown in. But that's OK, I like it - it isn't a rip off, and there's a fantastic cover of Levellers' Robbie Jones on here, actually it's the best cover i've heard since the Man In Black took NIN's Hurt and turned it into a fantastic song. This Cd has heart and soul - plus more than a few singable hooks along the way. I like!

Judder And The Jack Rabbits CD-r Look at www.myspace.com/judderandthejackrabbits I love the Donnie Darko style logo this band has. They come from Norfolk and have a very psychobilly sound - but they inject enough punk rock rawness into it to make it interesting. Besides they sing about zombie -

which is OK by me. But they keep enough of the rock 'n' roll swagger to carry the tunes above the shouts and punk noise. The sound here isn't perfect, but on a decently produced records these should sound ace. **Krupskaya Clouds Over Pripyat CD** www.krupskaya.bloodspitstudios.com, email alexhfp@ntlworld.com or contact Ripping Thrash, PO Box 152, Burton-On-Trent, Staffs, DE14 1xx, England. This is political grind that really fucking grinds. There are no lyrics as such, just mad, manic screams from Alex FHP/Eggraid over the top of the tightest thrash ever. The photos and samples get the message across and allows the music to just blow you away! This is really powerful stuff indeed. When you're in a pissed off mood there can be nothing better to listen to!

Napalm Death Smear Campaign Widely available. ND are a punk band. They have the attitude, the lyrics and they are, in the main, totally uncompromising. I don't like the fact that this comes in a digi-pack with two extra tracks as well as a cheaper regular CD. Especially when the lyrics to the 'bonus' tracks are the best ones on the album. Musically it kicks off with the face-shredding Sink Fast, Let Go after an intro thingy. It unmistakably Napalm Death, their trademark sound is still there, the speed and anger are back with a vengeance, and the cover looks like something from the From Enslavement days. I like.

Oi Polloi Ar Ceol Ar Canan Ar A-Mach CD Oi Polloi, Anti-Fascist Action, Bosca a Phuist, Dun Eideann, EH11 1JD, or go to their myspace page! I've loved Oi Polloi for years, and the fact that they've released this album in Gaelic should come as no surprise - but those without a computer can't download the translations from their myspace page - which is a shame! The colourful booklet is all in their native tongue too! Musically it's the best thing they've ever done! This is tight and in your face punk rock fury, with great melodies. And even, if like me, you can't understand the language you can get a good idea what they're going on about. I can't recommend this enough!

Pilger Beging For a Silver Lining CD Pilger, PO Box 295, Southampton, SO17 1LW, www.pilger-punk.co.uk, or £7 from Peter Bower, also available on vinyl, cheques to C Ellison, Peter Bower Records, C/O 10 Somerdale Walk, Bramley, Leeds, LS13 4SF, UK, www.peterbowerrecordss.kk5.org This is a compilation of various 7"s, and clocks in at 30 tracks of in your face melodic hardcore with thought-provoking lyrics. You really should check Pilger out. They rock, they're fantastic live and they're talented musicians to boot. I can't recommend this enough.

Sick 56 Punishment CD Visit www.jsntgm.com or write to JSNTGM Records, PO Box 1025, Blackpool, UK, FY3 OEB. This is great stuff - straight ahead street punk with attitude. There seems to be an underlying energy that carries effortlessly from track to track. This is much better than the band's first album. The attitude and the tunes raise this well above the 'just another punk album' level. Top stuff.

Silence/Burning The Prospect split 7" PO Box 93, Boston, Lincolnshire, PE21 7YB. Prospect play raging crust in true Boston style. I love it - you may hate - but then you're a cunt! Silence are alright too - crusty but more tuneful, not one to rave over - but not bad!

Skulls With Wings CD visit www.myspace.com/creamofthecropfanzine or contact the band at Joey, 86 Rice Street, Cambridge, MA 02140, USA. I love this. It's quirky and weird in a KUKL meets hardcore thrash kinda way. Plus it's an ace punk rock name. There's loadsa quirky keyboards and soaring female vocals, but they also thrash out like motherfuckers when they want to - this is good. Go on check out something different.

Sunpower Something To Say 12" £7, cheques to C Ellison, Peter Bower Records, C/O 10 Somerdale Walk, Bramley, Leeds, LS13 4SF, UK, www.peterbowerrecordss.kk5.org I've got this ace record cleaner fluid which eases the jumping madness of even the most fucked records. This 12" still likes to dance after the great rock 'n' roll intro, but it's testament to how great a record is that I persevere for a couple of tracks of jumping on each side to enter the fantastic hardcore zone that is Sunpower. It's fast, at times it reminds me of the Dead Kennedys, the hooks and melodies just draw you in - that's not to say it's a wimpy record - it oozes anger and hate in fact, there are hints of Black Flag and Minor Threat here, and straight-ahead shoutalong lyrics and Real Punkrockdude sums up modern attitudes to record buying perfectly. Anyway this Belgian band are great - so check them out!

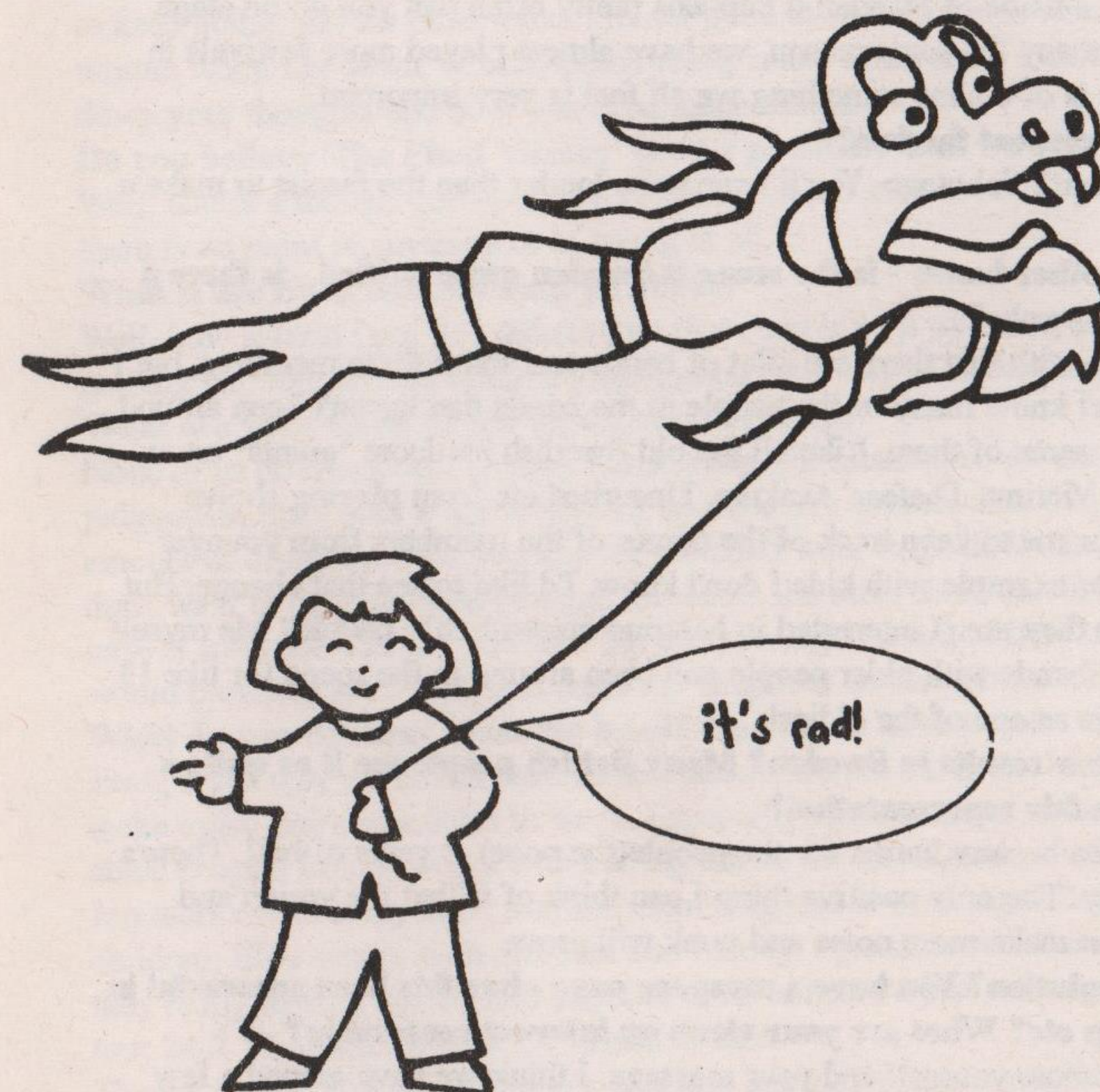
Swellbellys/The Vendetta split 7" £3, cheques to C Ellison, Peter Bower Records, C/O 10 Somerdale Walk, Bramley, Leeds, LS13 4SF, UK, www.peterbowerrecordss.kk5.org If you've heard Swellbellys before you'll know what to expect - tough - in your face, straight-ahead metallic hardcore - it's OK, but this isn't their best stuff. Don't know anything about The Vendetta, but I let the music do the talking - and I must say I was impressed! They've got an old school heavy metal edge to them that makes me nostalgic

rather than embarrassed, but they do it with a punk attitude, and they make it sound very cool. Dunno why, but I like it a lot - it's even got guitar solos for Iron Maiden's sake! It's on a cool green/black type vinyl that Peter Bower like to spoil us with too.

Ultimatum Chicos De Calle CD www.geocities.com/ultimatumpunk www.myspace.com/creamofthecrop-fanzine www.myspace.com/ultimatumoi This is well played melodic punk. They support SHARP too..So that's good. It's not spectacular, there are quite a few bands doing this type of music in a more memorable way, but it's not bad either. They're one of them bands that are worth keeping an eye on. They're from Columbia, by the way.

Zeeb Mockcockscockshockrock CD www.myspace.com/zeeb fiddlercrabmusic.co.uk Not sure beginning your band name with a Z is always a good idea - in record shops people have usually spent all their money when they get past the S section. Apparently they like anal probes and dressing up like twats. They also have an obsession with aliens. And sounding fucking awful! Think Babylon Zoo going metal - think they meant to send it to that inferior zine - onitint. Anyone want this?

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Scratching the surface

TO WHAT END?

I first encountered To What End at an anti-fascist festival in Stuttgart during the summer of 2006. They were a band I'd never heard of, let alone seen. But they just blew me away.

Hailing from Sweden with a Tragedy-esq thrash attack infused with a fantastic sense of melody and wicked male/female vocals their Concealed Below The Surface LP is pure genius! You can check out www.myspace.com/towhatend to hear/find out more. Dadde the drummer answered my questions. Also in the band are vocalists Jon and Elenor, guitarists Jocke and Elias and bass player Martin. They also have a split EP with WitchHunt out now.

Tell us more about the new split ep with Witchhunt. How did it come about? Did you choose them to share a record, or was it offered to you?

Well, we know Witchhunt since our US tour in 2005 and the idea of a split has been brought up after that. I saw you play in Stuttgart in the summer - are you used to playing at one in the morning? Do you play at many festivals? Is anti-fascism a cause close to your hearts?

Haha, No not really, but when you play outside of Sweden it happens pretty often that you go on stage pretty late. We play allot of fests in Germany for some reason, we have almost played more festivals in Germany than in Sweden. Anti Fascism is of course something we all feel is very important.

What do you think is the best way to combat fascism?

To get out there and make your voice heard. Sabotage. You'll have to be louder than the fascist to make a difference.

Many of your members have been in other bands - is the scene in Sweden quite unified - is there a strong sense of community among the punks?

Though question. To some extent yes, as with that there are allot of bands and some share members, but I see a pretty big gap between ages. I don't know many of the people in the bands that haven't been around in the scene as long as we have. I know some of them. Like all the old Swedish hardcore "giants" know each other like Meanwhile, Skitsystem, Victims, Disfear, Avskum, Uncurbed etc from playing shows together over the years, but it's harder for me to keep track of the names of the members from younger bands. There's allot of bands in Umeå for example with kids I don't know. I'd like to see that change. But I guess it's an age difference too, maybe they aren't interested in hanging out with 30+ people? Me myself aren't very old but I've always played in bands with older people and been around in the scene for like 13 years now so I guess you could count me as one of the oldies!

What do you think of the recent election results in Sweden? Many British people see it as quite a liberal country - do you think this is a fair representation?

It's was a hard blow at Sweden. It's gonna be way harder for the people(the poor). 4 years of hell. There's gonna be way more racism in our society. The only positive thing I can think of is that the young and angry socialists all over Sweden is gonna make more noise and punk will grow.

What do you think of the internet revolution? You have a myspace page - has this been successful in bringing you new fans/getting you gigs etc? What are your views on internet censorship?

I like the Internet. It's a good way to promote yourself and your message. I think we have gained a few friends and made some contact we never would have if it wasn't for our Myspace account! But I think the myspace hysteria have gone a little too far, I mean every fucking shitty band in the world has a myspace site and there's so much bullshit on that site. I would love to see something similar, but not as bussines-like.

There is a strong sense of melody in your music. Are you fans of the harsher crust sound for which

the Swedish scene is so famous? What other bands would you recommend us checking out?

Yes, that's probably my favorite kind of hardcorepunk, when it's done the right way. Not too fast, good riffs and vocals, solid D-beat (the real thing! not the fake beat). Good bands from Sweden right now, not necessarily crust: Stajnas Lobos(melodic poppunk garage), Tysta Mari(swedish early punkrock), Sanctuary In Blasphemy(sludgcore), Arcatera(melodic crust), Fingerspitzengefühl(metal), Death Breath(old school death metal), Skitkids(hardcorepunk), Reign of bombs (swe hardcore), Svartenbrant (genius swedish hc/thrash), The Blinds (snotty hardcore), Nitad(old school LA punk in swedish), Fy fan!(old school swedish hardcore), Sista Sekunden (Youth crew in Swedish), Victims(you know 'em) etc... Could go on forever!

Most of your songs are sung in English. Do you feel this is a better way of getting your message across?

I don't know. I guess so seeing that not many people know swedish, but I guess that the lyrics just comes to you, and some times it feels more comfortable to write in a certain language.

The song No One Left To Praise to me reads as a harsh attack on religion and false idols - is this what it's about? Do you think the planet would be much better off without religion?

You're right. It's about talking down all the fools put on pedestals around the world, all idols. Be it gods, rockstars, popstars, politicians or punks. In the end, everything is going to get fucked anyway! It's an old cliché but the world would be much better place without religion! I can see that humans sometimes need to have faith in something when times are rough... I don't judge people who believe in religion most of them probably doesn't know better, they are born and raised to believe.

Literally, many of your songs are very bleak. What does inspire you and offer you hope for the future?

It's actually coming out of those bleak periods. That's what inspires me the most, when I wake up and realise that life isn't half-bad. and also I get inspired by people, music and experiences. That inspires me to keep going. On the other hand, I'm not good at writing songs when I'm happy. So most of my songs are written when I'm down, which doesn't really make sense since I should be inspired! But it helps to write down your thoughts and how you experience things.

Do you believe 'The Final Victory' is ever possible? Can we ever achieve true equality?

Well, that is a tough question. The pessimist in me says no, but I guess you have to believe in change or there is no point in anything or in trying at all.

What is the track Stolen Grace all about?

Well, how should I put it. I didn't write that song but I'll try to explain. I guess the expression "there is nothing bad that doesn't bring anything good" is a way of describing the lyric.

What are your views on the legalisation of drugs?

None of us do drugs on a regular basis except for alcohol, so we are not maybe the best people to do this judgement, but I tend to think that it's up to every person what they want to do. I have done a fair amount of drugs over the years, and I wouldn't want to go down as an addict, I've seen what it can do. I don't want to be judgmental though. Since on the other hand alcohol is just as bad, if not worse if you look at statistics. I'm not sure that I'm all for a legalisation of hard drugs, but in a yes or no situation I would probably say "yes", and cross my fingers it doesn't get out of hand.

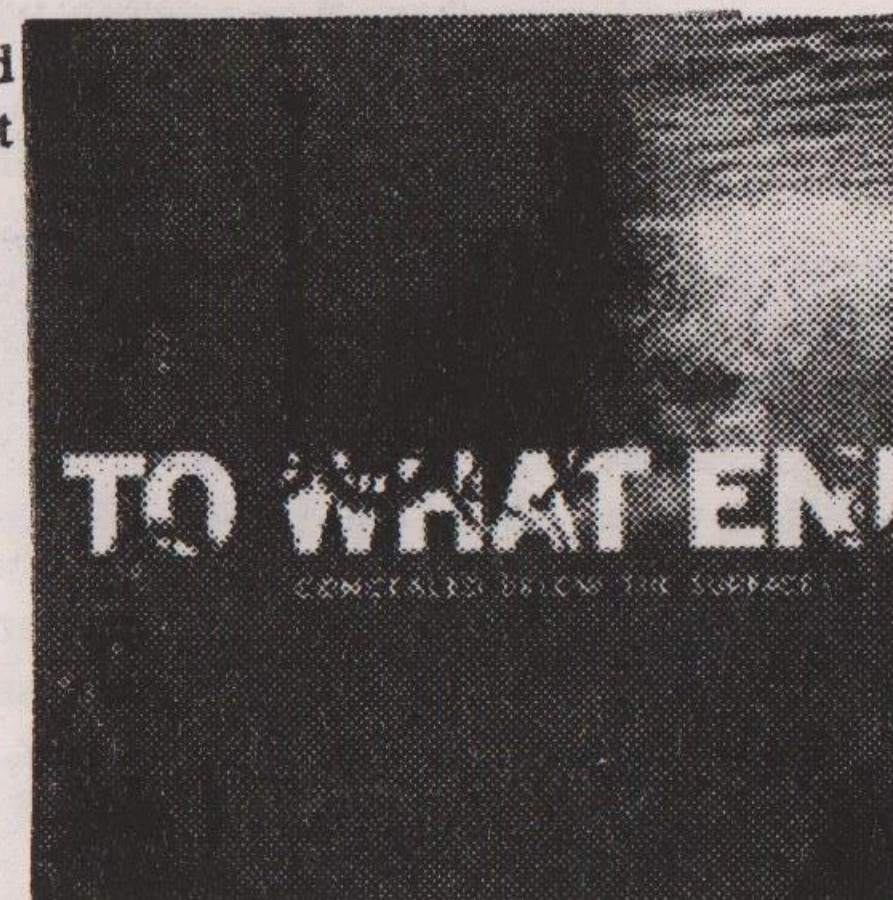
What do you do away from the band? Do you all have to take time off work to go on tour?

Yeah, that's why we haven't toured that much. We are six in the band, that all work or study, it's tough to make every one's schedules to work. Especially since some of us have other bands! Jocke works with disabled people, Elenor works with editing shows for an educational channel, Jon works with computers, Martin is studying and is working with disabled children, Elias works with disabled and I study. I guess some of us do what they really love in life as their jobs but to be honest I'd just rather go on tour 24-7 12 months a year. Or almost at least.

Thanks for the interview! It was a pleasure answering some questions that haven't been asked before! Cheers

Dadde (drums, backing vocals) on the behalf of To What End?

www.towhatend.se www.myspace.com/towhatend



My life as a horror fanatic

My lust for all things, gory, scary and bloody horrible began when I was young. I think my parents used to worry about the types of books I was buying at second hand shops. Maybe they thought I'd turn into some weird punk rocker who can't stop swearing or something. No fucking chance! The first book I got was Interview With A Vampire – before all that Anne Rice stuff was cool – I still haven't read it. Read the first chapter, and one of the sequels a few years ago, but once you've seen the film it kind of spoils it, even though ALWAYS, without fail, no fucking exceptions, the book is always a thousand times better than the book.

The ace thing was, during the 1970s and 80s the covers of horror books actually looked like horror books. There was the fantastic Pan Collections of horror stories – they had ace garish covers – the 11th had a skeleton wedding cake type thing going on, the first just a dead bloke's head, another one had a werewolf, my dad though the stories in the 8th one were just sick. Ace. Of course, Stephen King was really coming into his own at the time. Salem's Lot was truly fantastic. The TV version was ace too – it was shown in two hour and a half parts and the bit with the vampire kid at the widow freaked the fuck outta me. But the cunts would cut it down to two hours or even a one hour and a half film for the repeats – it lost all its spooky goodness needless to say. Carrie was also one of the early films I saw. I didn't get it at the time – I wanted blood, gore, blood, brains, blood, blood, blood – not a proper fucking story. A mate had shown me the clip from City Of The Living Dead where a girl pukes her insides up (she'd been drinking White Lightning and Special Brew snakebites I think) I wanted more of that! The first film was allowed to stay up and watch was the TV premier of Jaws – that bit where the head pops up is still funny as fuck. I was impressed – until the sequels came along, apart from Aliens, Dawn Of The Dead and Bride Of Frankenstein no sequel has ever matched the original – it a horror movie rule! The first film I stayed up alone to watch was The Mummy's Hand. This is an old black and white classic, it began my love affair with the Universal classics, and was about a mummy (fucking surprising that) But a mummy who could only move one hand. I loved it – but how crap a monster is that – a slow moving dead guy with one hand – Barney the fucking Dinosaur could do you more damage (he scares the fuck outta me anyway, anyone who wants to dress up as a purple dinosaur and sing songs with spoilt kids who are permanently happy is just wrong!). A Frankenstein and Dracula double bill soon followed – rad as fuck. Then I saw Alien, I'd never even heard of it when I first saw it, so the chest-buster scene took me by surprise – how good is that?

Of course, now I look for something more than gallons of blood, and I did see some shit. The Giant Spider Invasions has creatures that are about as realistic as Keanu Reeves' English accent and Zoltan Hound Of Dracula is just funny. Having run out of children and wives to make films about they make one about the old vamp's pet fucking dog. The 'shock' ending sees a vampire puppy emerging to take on the world. Bet Scrappy Doo's fucking shitting it!

One of the early TV series I watched was Day Of The Triffids, you know them giant plants that had these giant tongue-like things that came out of their heads and whipped people in the face to kill 'em? After one episode I walked through to the kitchen, there was some insulation hanging off the door frame which I didn't see – it whipped me in the face as I walked through – I nearly had a fucking heartattack!

Book wise, the Guy N' Smith books were becoming fast favourites, The Slime Beast was actually based in the Wash area where I lived. My teacher asked me to read out a scary bit from one of my favourite novels in a English lesson. So I read her a bit of The Slime Beast when the creature disembowelled someone. Ha, if she could see me now! He also wrote loadsa books about giant killer crabs coming up on various beaches and marshes and snapping people in half. The covers of the books were, again, fantastic paintings of blood-soaked pincers and angry looking beasties. Every time I walk in the marshes I picture those giant crabs tearing the fuck outta people with nostalgia and fondness. I don't buy quite as many horror books now, I don't have the time, I always seem to have so many zines to read and CDs to listen to, but you can't beat a good book when you want a little escapism. And many of the 'classic' horror films I mentioned are now available on DVD. And now there's even a horror channel on satellite, when I stayed at my mate's last week Get Naked For Satan was on – wonder what that was like?

Revolution now

There's a line in a Sick 56 song that goes "The Government should be doing time". I think it would be nice to see a few politicians experience the pain and misery caused by our prison system – that would be justice of sorts. But what I would really like to see is a giant hanging tree in the middle of London. On the top branch would be the Queen, then would come the princes and princesses. On the branch below that we'd hang the Prime Minister, followed the cabinet. On a lower branch would be all other politicians (it's a fucking big tree OK!). Then there's councillors, followed by the police and armed forces. You get the picture – a public hanging of all authority figures who make our lives a misery. How good would that be? Start planning now, let's get the revolution moving. Or you could make a cup of tea and write to your MP.

ELECTROCUTED

Hello, my name's Paul and I am an addict.

No it's not drugs, I've not be shoving needles into my arms to escape this shit world, and it's not booze, I like a drink, but I don't hide vodka in my water bottle at work, or have a stash of beer beside my bed.

No, I'm addicted to the fucking internet. I have to check my emails, my Myspace page and the message boards I frequent at every opportunity. I could be missing out on something. Some muppets can't miss an episode of Big Brother in case somebody gets a blow job while juggling oranges in the living room or something else essential to the morning conversation at work the next morning – me, I may miss vital gig information or a message of undying love, or a 'fuck off you're a cunt who knows fuck all' message. I'd be gutted if I had to wait a whole day to read that!

But why? It's a beautiful day outside, there are real people out there – people I can touch (or who I want to touch but they won't let me), people I can talk to, real fucking people – and I don't need to strain my eyes to make conversation with them.

But, of course, it's not just the internet is it? People have to check their mobile phone every two minutes in case somebody has sent a text about who kissed who last night on Eastenders or in the latest episodes of Pornstars' Week in a Monastery on Wankers Inc (it's on satellite – honest). So, of course, the unreal world is never far away. The fucking phone even tells you (if you're sad enough to want it to) when you've got an email or Myspace message. You can almost hear the 'get a life' ringtone above the latest hit from Has Been and the Nobodies on the jukebox. And, at the same time as you are talking about real life, the couple opposite you are swapping ringtones, because they've found an hilarious new tune where the electronic beats sound like swear words – and that's such an original idea that nobody in the world ever has thought of before!

What did we do before the internet – did we read books, go out or write letters? What a waste of time eh?

But, it does make things easier as far as doing zine interviews, and it is a cheap way of sending long letters to people – although I've nearly forgotten how to write now! And, of course, if you break down in a car, miss a train, get lost trying to find a friend's house or need help while out late at night – then a mobile is a godsend. However, the real danger comes from work. That cunt of a thing most of us need to do to help us with somewhere to live, something to eat and a few beers. Yes, they can email you at home, call you on holiday, they can contact you when you're travelling, get you to send in work from home, they can make people work on the train, work is every fucking where now. And, in a culture where people are pressured to work more hours to make cash for unaffordable mortgages and car repayment the bosses have got us by the bollocks/cunts. That is truly fucking terrifying.

So, let's use new technology to network, meet new people, hear new music and fuck the system – but let's have a life as well. And let's not be chained to a computer instead of a desk at work. It's so obvious that I hardly need to spell it out – but like I said before, I'm still a fucking addict!

How the other half live

Tom Cruise and Katie Holmes' wedding 'spectacular' was an abomination. Most 'celebrity' weddings are. You could feed a family of four for a week on the amount spent on flowers alone. This isn't jealousy, it's a fact. As they pump enough fireworks into the environment to annihilate an unarmed third world country, people starve, people struggle and children die. And don't give me that "but they work hard" bollocks. Doing fucking what exactly? Trying to brainwash the world into accepting some money-grabbing mythological religion? I thought religion was all about giving – so give all your wealth to fucking charity Mr Cruise – and then fuck off and make a decent film for once in your pathetic egocentric lifetime! What a cunt! All these fucking stars manage to support charity and 'good causes' when there's a camera around, when Pudsey fucking bear's there to help their career they'll gladly take him over the BBC's best table. But when it comes down to it, these fickle fuckers won't give up their easily-earned fame and fortune – not to save a child's life or help a starving nation – not unless there's an Oscar in it for them!

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My ideals are better than your ideals

All I want is world peace, an end to animal and human exploitation and an end to capitalism. The nutters condemn people like me and call us nutters. Hippies, punks, folk fans, anarchists, we all get tarred with the same idealist brush. We're all a bit loopy, and ultimately harmless. Well harmless until we twat a copper, cost a multi-national a few quid or get one over on the police at a demo (poor loves). Then we suddenly become 'dangerous terrorists', when most of us are about as dangerous as a straight edger in a brewery. Besides, what's wrong with having big ideals. I think my ideals are pretty sound ones to hold, to strive for - they mean I'll never stop fighting - even if you ask me to in your sweetest voice and offer me a year's supply of strawberry soy milk! When your ideals are so big, so humungous, so fucking massively brilliant its so fucking unbelievable you can never stop fighting, you can never stop striving for something better, even after the small victories.

And that's the point. If you aim low and have 'reasonable' ideals then when you achieve those goals you lie back with a smug smile, go to sleep and retire to your room with a cup of tea and watch *Gone With The Wind* over and over and over and over and over, If I get to that stage you have my full permission to shoot me with a poison dart, hit me over the head with a car and strangle me with an Arsenal scarf!

So these are my easily ridiculed ideals, the ideals the rest of society have are even more fucked I'm afraid. TV stars, catalogue models and adverts full of girls with perfect tits, tight arses and perfectly sized stomachs. Men with six packs and perfect skin. Perfect men and women who help to push beauty product after beauty product into our face until our wallet screams "stop no more, I'm fucking empty." Soap opera relationships and the perfect shag, as seen on *Nympho Natalie* in *Cock Heaven XI*. If these are your ideals you can fucking keep them. Paranoia, self-doubt and financial ruin is where that leads.

What are the other 'acceptable' ideals? A big car - tick, your own home - tick, the perfect job - tick, a big TV - tick and a nice holiday in the sun - tick. What a load of soulless bollocks. Where are people, relationships, where is the fun in these ideals? There's no sense of community, no sense of cooperation, no sense of just going out and having fun. "We need to save for the MOT, we can't afford to go out on Saturday night." Why do you need money? Go for a walk in the woods - or take your lover for a shag on the beach, or in the woods, or in an alley or in a quarry, or by a river - or all of them in one night if you so wish - just do something special, raise your ambitions and ideals to encompass something a little more exciting than paying your mortgage every month.

To sleep or to scream

Just one look at the news, just one night in the pub, or just one short car journey. That's all it takes for me to be surrounded by petty rows, irrelevant arguments, misplaced fists and words that burn for no reason. I get overwhelmed by the number of cuntin' fuckwit knobheads intruding on my headspace without permission. How dare some fucker start a fight in a pub and disrupt my night because someone looked at his 'bird'? How dare you fucking make me feel uneasy in my car because somebody cut you up? Forget it, move on, worry about the homeless guy you passed who could die tonight. Worry about the kids living with a drug dealer up the road. Worry about the animals tortured daily in the name of a fake 'medical science' that puts the cures for many diseases back by 10 fucking years.

Yeah fucking think you cunts, put your fucking mind in gear. For fucking fucks sake fucking think before engaging your mouth and misfiring a tirade of ill-aimed hatred at a target that deserves your vitriol like George Bush deserves the fucking Nobel Peace Prize! This is my scream against pointlessness, my tirade against petty fuckholes with nothing better to do than gossip, point fingers and upset friends, neighbours, lovers, family and that bastard down the road for no fucking reason on this or any other cuntin' planet in the fucking universe! My alternative is to shut it all out. Yeah, I can say 'fuck it I give up too'. yeah I can sleep for hours filling my mind with nothing except cuddly bunnies and vegan chocolate! I can empty my mind of the bullshit, watch *Big Brother* and fall asleep, because the world doesn't matter, and I only want to worry about me! Except I can't. I sometimes wish I could. If my mind hasn't got something to worry about, something to get angry about, something to get passionate about then its because I'm dancing around the room to Carter USM or cooking my tea. I can't just sleep the world away. If you can I fucking envy you in some ways, but there's a fucked up part of my fucked up mind that won't fucking let go. I have to think, I have to care, I have to fucking scream. You hear that, I have to fucking scream? Whether or not you, or your friends, or any cunt at all wants to listen, is up to you, them and cunts everywhere!

So what are you - a sleeper or a screamer? I want to know, because it really bothers me that, if you are a screamer, you are going to scream about something worthwhile. Otherwise you may as well be a sleeper.

A lesson in culture

I'm not a racist but.. How do you answer that, apart from yes you fucking are you cunt - go stick your cock in one of those hoovers with rotating blades!

These people are often not full on Nazis, but slight racists, as in *The Sun* is slightly right wing ie fence sitters with splinters from the rightwing side of the fence jammed so far up their arse that it'd make your eyes water. These are the fuckers who sprout crap like "I don't mind foreigners but (there's always a 'but' - I like you BUT I'm gonna ram your head through that barbed wire fence anyway) when they come over here they have to fit in - when in Rome do as the Romans do Bollocks!

Why do you go on holiday? To experience culture - unless you're one of the fuckers who demands egg and chips in Spain, then you're more stupid and annoying than Barney the fucking Dinosaur. So why can't you experience a different culture or two on your doorstep? Or are you one of the dumbasses who turns off the nature documentary on BBC2 to get your nightly fix of *Neighbours* or *Eastenders*. Because your life wouldn't be worth living unless you find out who's been sticking their knob in who, or who's been punching the fuck out of who's brother.

These bastards believe the rightwing press who use words such as a 'flood' of immigrants - a fucking flood my arse. This language has eradicated a sense of decency from many people - people who don't give a fuck about homeless, penniless, exploited immigrant - because they're immigrants. These fuckers read the *Daily Mail* and it creeps inside their brain and turns it into a middle class racist mush - the acceptable face of fascism. If they're so fucking terrified by the scare stories that rag prints why don't they do us all a favour and throw themselves out of the office window. Maybe they could land on another *Daily Mail* reader and create a kind of *Splattered Daily Mail Readers* piece of modern art on the pavement, then at least they would have achieved something with their pathetic fucking lives.

No, we're too closed minded, instead of saying fit the fuck in, why don't we say "I'm interested in your life, how you do things, I'd love to learn a new language, teach me?" Every country in the fucking world is made up of different people, so why force people to conform? "But the East Europeans drive around in uninsured cars", more fool you for insuring yours then - it's not uninsured drivers that push your premiums up, it's the fucking global companies that insure you you twat, you think they do it out of the goodness of your heart. Besides, they don't all drive around uninsured - you just read a couple of court cases in your local paper and your prejudiced mind now thinks they do.

So why don't you accept their culture, are you scared of them? How many times have you heard "it's spot the Englishman down there", is it really? Are the non-Englishmen gonna fucking bite? Or are you going to continue to make them feel alienated. "But they don't wanna fit in," How the fuck do you know, have you tried to help them fit in?" Fucking hell, if a foreign accent scares you, you must run down the street screaming at the sight of an Indian takeaway - but you don't, because that's acceptable in your tiny little world, they give you something to throw up when you've been down the pub. But, in your tiny, capitalism-infested brain the family on the corner of your road have done nothing for you, so you don't like them. The fact that they could become friends, teach you something you don't know, or open your fucking eyes to the real world if you'd only talk to them escapes your notice. There's room for us all, or would you like to eradicate regional accents as well?

Or maybe it's you who has an identity crisis. You're scared if you let 'foreign thoughts' into your head you won't be so 'English' any more. Your mates will go 'ooh he thinks like one of them' and you won't be a total England fan any more. You fucking moron, if you can't accept outside influences into your safe little world, if you can't break free and truly live your life, if you can't learn, mature and grow in life you're suffering a huge fucking identity crisis. You are, basically, a twat!

Besides, being born somewhere doesn't give you any rights over land. Maybe you rent/have purchased a tiny corner of England - the rest of your town is open to anyone my friend, and anyone in the world has a right to purchase/rent a small piece of that town. Where that person comes from is irrelevant. Fucking hell, what gives you the right to say who can and can't inhabit your town? And what gives you the right to say which cultures are right and which cultures are wrong? How far up your own arse can you be?

But all Asians are suicide bombers. Yeah, cause all Muslims are suicide bombers, and all Asians are Muslims. I've never heard so much bollocks in all my life. People move seats, look uncomfortable on trains and complain to staff on planes - why? Because they're fucking morons. "But in this climate it's understandable..." No it's fucking not. There are Asian Christians, atheists and Hindus, and, surprise, surprise, there are Muslims who are not fucking suicide bombers. Just like there are English people walking around abroad who are not lager louts or football hooligans. So get a fucking life, get out of your tiny little bubble of safety, meet some new people and live a life free of fear - something the tabloid press, government, terrorists and police don't want you to do. Open your fucking eyes.

Upping the anti

[illegible]

But the point is we (the royal WE - well it would be but I'm anti-royalty!) can turn this around. We're pro-choice, pro-veganism, pro-equality, pro-freedom, pro-anarchy and on and on and on and on and I can't be fucking arsed to keep typing that - you get the point.

It's so easy to label us negative - it's the easy way out. Positivity is scary to those in authority. Fuck, the prospect of people having a good time while protesting terrifies them - it means we're not scared of the government, of the police, of the army - it means we're prepared to stand up to the fuckers. Besides, if you want to be truly negative all you have to do is read a copy of the Daily Mail on any given day of the week. If you can't lower yourself to doing that I'll sum the Mail up in four words - We're all gonna die!!

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The next time someone accuses you of being 'anti-everything' tell them to stop being so anti-anti, because being anti-anti is a really negative way to approach your anti ideology and it's making you anti-their anti-anti attitude. Besides their aunty's a nazi, so you're anti-aunty Nazi. If that doesn't shut them up, it'll have them running away with their hands on their head screaming "He/she's fucking mad, I don't understand, and I'm scared of what I don't understand." At which point you'll be forced to explain to them that that's a really negative attitude and you live longer if you have a positive attitude to life.

The point is, the very nature of getting of your arse and doing something, or even standing up and saying something is a positive action. Reading this is a positive action in itself. Mission accomplished!

The true story of the dairy industry

This article is nicked from PETA's animal times – because it's not copyrighted and I couldn't have put it better myself.. You can visit PETA at www.PETA.org.uk, or write to Po Box 36668, London, SE1 1WA, UK. Anyways, just read the article and let me know what you think.

While driving through Chino, California, Kathy Hanson noticed something moving near the roadside by a dairy farm. She pulled over to take a closer look and found a dying calf. The ailing animal had been discarded like a piece of garbage and left to die. Unable to stand, the calf lay on his side, flailing his legs helplessly. Blood trickled from his nose.

Kathy rushed to get help, but by the time she returned, the calf had died. A police officer told her that disposing of unwanted animals this way was a common farming practice and that nothing could be done. In fact, abandoning unwanted cattle is so common that the industry has a name for them: "Downers."

Like people, cows form strong maternal bonds with their offspring, and they can be heard lowing frantically for days after their calves are taken away. In many dairy farms around the world, male calves are usually taken from the mothers when they are not even one day old and are raised for veal. In some countries they are chained inside dark, tiny crates and are fed a liquid diet that is low in iron (to make their flesh a "desirable" white colour), which gives them anaemia, diarrhoea and pneumonia. They are killed when they are just a few months old. Their mothers and sisters don't live much longer. Most dairy cows are sent to slaughter after their milk production wanes when they are just four to six years old.

Dairy products contain no fibre and are laden with saturated fat and cholesterol – they are, after all, designed to nourish baby cows who grow to 1,000lbs. by their second birthday. Between 30 and 50 per cent of these cows suffer from mastitis, a bacterial infection that taints dairy products with blood and pus.

According to the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology, cow's milk is the number one cause of food allergies in children. The late Dr Benjamin Spock advised against feeding cow's milk to children saying that it can cause anaemia, allergies and insulin-dependent diabetes. Consumption of dairy products is also linked to constipation, obesity, heart disease, cancer and other diseases.

Procter and Gamble

The US-based firm Procter and Gamble have been subject to a consumer boycott for a while. They admit that animals are used in their unnecessary 'safety test' for products. Go to <http://www.uncaged.co.uk/pg.htm> for more details - or if you haven't got a computer write to me and I'll print it off for you. Here's a list of what they own - don't buy any of it if you care about animals.

Ace ~ laundry
Always & Alldays ~
feminine hygiene
Ariel - laundry
Aussie ~ hair care

Baldessarini ~ fragrance
Bold ~ laundry
Born Blonde ~ hair dye
Bounce ~ laundry
Bounty ~ kitchen roll
Braun ~ electric shavers etc

Camay ~ soap
Charmin ~ loo roll
Crest ~ toothpaste

Daz ~ laundry
Dreft ~ laundry
Duracell ~ batteries

Eukanuba ~ pet food

Fairy ~ various cleaning products
Febreze ~ fabric spray
Fixodent ~ denture fixer
Flash ~ cleaning product

Gillette ~ shaving products
Giorgio Beverly Hills ~ fragrance
Glide ~ dental floss

Head & Shoulders ~
shampoos
Herbal Essences ~
shampoos
Hugo Boss ~
fragrances
Hydrience ~ hair dye

IAMS ~ pet food
Infacare ~ baby wash

Jean Patou/Joy ~
fragrances

Lacoste ~ fragrance
Lasting Care ~ hair dye
Laura Biagiotti ~ fragrance
Lenor ~ fabric softener
Loving Care ~ hair dye

Max Factor ~ make up
Mum ~ deodorant

Nice n Easy ~ hair dye
Noxema ~ shaving
foam

Olay ~ skin care
Old Spice ~ fragrance
Oral B ~ dental products

Pampers ~ disposable
nappies
Pantene Pro V ~
shampoo
Pringles ~ snack food

Silvikrin ~ hair care
SK-II ~ skin care
Shockwaves ~ hair products

Tampax ~ feminine hygiene
Tempo ~ tissues

Viakal ~ bathroom
cleaner
Vortex ~ bleach

Wash n Go ~ shampoo
Wella ~ range of hair
products

Zest ~ soap

There are numerous alternatives to these products on the market. I don't know if boycotting a company makes any real difference, but, believe me – it will make you feel better. Plus, you can be sure that your money isn't helping some evil bastard from conducting totally unnecessary experiment on animals. I couldn't possibly list all the unethical companies here, but please, shop with a conscience! There are cruelty-free shopping guides available on the net and in the real world. For one you can contact Naturewatch, 122 Bath Road, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL53 7JX, UK, or visit www.naturewatch.org

A BLIP ON THE RADAR

James's last moment was fairly innocuous really. He was in a world of his own and slipped from the pavement. What followed got him noticed – well you are noticed when a lorry squashes out your insides and paints the road a whole new shade of red. People scream, people throw up and the town centre grinds to a standstill. That, at least, gets you on the front page of the local paper. Then the family's tributes fill up another page on the following day – in a slow news week the local journalists loved James. And, of course, there were all the rumours about what actually happened – Was he pushed by hoodies? Did he jump because he hadn't had a girlfriend in God knows how long? Or was he trying to save a little puppy from inevitable destruction? No, he was just thinking about what he was going to have for tea that night!

His family noticed of course, his mum, dad, brother and sister cried. His nephews were too young to understand, but his friends missed him, and after the funeral there were many a tale of James's legendary drinking skills. But how else did his death matter? The world didn't grind to a halt – although the truck did, and the driver is still having nightmares about a 30-something's insides to this very day! James's email contacts were fucking furious that he had stopped contacting them for no reason. He also had Myspace friends and loved to chat in internet forums – none of his cyber friends ever realised that the "fucking cunt" who "vanished" couldn't well contact them from a whole in the ground in the local cemetery! The puppy he was going to buy at the weekend went to a different home instead, a home which took less care of her than James would have done, a home who let her run into the road and paint another road a whole new shade of red!

Had he lived one more day, James would have posted a letter to his local MP about the state of the street he lived in. Had that letter got there then Mrs Adams might not have tripped over a in a pot hole and broke her hip – an injury which left her in agony for the rest of her life.

And James was a vegetarian, so his local health food shop and market stall missed his contribution to their struggling businesses, and who knows how many more people he could have converted to his cause had he lived a couple of more years – he could have saved animals' lives!

The Big Issue vendor he always visited on a Monday certainly missed him – that £1.40 meant the world to him, he too felt snubbed, the local paper isn't essential reading on the cold streets of a city.

The irony of this was that, despite being a technology junkie, despite having email and the internet, news of James's death still managed to fail to reach many people who cared about him and his views. James always knew his family loved him, but beyond that he thought he was irrelevant, no one is irrelevant, and there's a lot of news out there which we have yet to hear.

Animal testing alternatives

This was nicked from a Myspace bulletin from vegan earth, re-posted by someone and stolen by me – I thought I'd share it with you, because it's important, and I'm sure they wouldn't mind me spreading the word. Many scientifically reliable research methods exist which are superior to using animals to learn about human disease or predict the safety of new drugs:

Microdosing – a new method of obtaining human metabolism data, which enables potential new drugs to be tested safely in humans at an earlier stage. Microdosing relies on the ultrasensitivity of Accelerator Mass Spectrometry (AMS), one of the most sensitive measuring devices ever invented. Using AMS it is possible to conduct a full human metabolism study after administration of as little as 0.1 milligram of drug substance, measuring drug concentrations in biological fluids up to 1000 times less than the levels one would observe in a classical Phase I clinical study. This should be part of 'Phase 0' pre-clinical trials for every drug, instead of animal testing. Currently, preclinical studies take up to 18 months and cost £2.3-3.8m. Microdosing could reduce the time to four to six months and the cost to €0.26m per new molecule. Its accuracy at predicting human metabolism is unsurpassed. EU and US regulators have endorsed the use of microdosing to speed and improve the safety of drug development. See www.xceleron.co.uk, www.microdosing.co.uk

DNA chips – enable the study of pharmacogenetics, which, in turn, enables the practice of personalised medicine. This is the concept that since each person is genetically unique, medicines should be designed for individuals, rather than our current 'one drug fits all' approach. DNA chips are computer wafers with tiny wells where human genes can be exposed to a new drug, for instance. The computer then reads which genes are turned on or off (or up or down) by the experimental drug. See, for example, www.simugen.co.uk

Microfluidics chips – again just 2cm wide, have etched into them a series of tiny chambers, each containing a sample of tissue from different parts of the body. The compartments are linked by microchannels through which a blood substitute flows. The test drug is added to the blood substitute and circulates around the device; thus mimicking what goes on in the body on a micro scale. Sensors in the chip feed back information for computer analysis. Hurel (Human relevant) are pioneering this field: see www.hurelcorp.com

Human tissue – all that we know about HIV/AIDS has come from studying humans and human tissue;

particularly blood. Similarly, everything we know about Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases has been learned by studying patients and their tissues. According to Dr. John Xuereb, Director of the Cambridge Brain Bank and Wolfson Brain Imaging Centre; "Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and other neurodegenerative diseases occur in humans and it is in human tissue that we will find the answers to these diseases." New drugs can be tested in human tissues, ethically obtained with fully informed consent, before they are given to volunteers in microdose studies. Companies such as Asterand work exclusively with human tissue because it is more appropriate than animal tissue: see www.asterand.com, www.biopta.com

Computer modelling – virtual human organs and virtual metabolism programmes can now predict drug effects in humans far more accurately than animals can. Computers can be used to design the molecular structure of drugs to target specific receptors. For example, the protease inhibitors for patients with HIV were designed by computer and tested in human tissue cultures and computer models, bypassing animal tests because of the urgent need. In 1997, Roche Pharmaceuticals had a new heart drug approved on the strength of data from a virtual heart because the animal data was inconclusive. Research teams around the world are working on a 'virtual human', which is designed to predict drug metabolism and metabolite interaction with any given organ – information that animal models will never be able to provide. Scientists can simulate experiments in silico (in computer) that could take months or years to do in the lab or clinic. See www.entelos.com, www.physiome.org

Autopsies – though neglected of late for a number of reasons, post mortem studies remain the best method of studying the effects of a disease on the whole body.

Epidemiology – studies lifestyle factors in populations to find commonalities that might be significant.

Epidemiology linked smoking to cancer and high cholesterol to heart disease, folic acid deficiency in pregnancy to spina bifida and many more associations. See www.ukbiobank.ac.uk

Stem cell research – offers potential promise of treatment for a wide variety of diseases. Human stem cells have already been used successfully to treat some leukaemias, as well as improving outcomes for heart attack patients and for some patients suffering from Parkinson's disease.

New imaging technologies – such as Magnetoencephalography (MEG), magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), functional MRI (fMRI), magnetic resonance spectroscopy (MRS), positron emission tomography (PET), single-photon emission computed tomography (SPECT), event-related optical signals (EROS), transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) and others are offering a view of the human body – in particular, the brain – that cannot be gained by studying animals.

Post-Marketing Drug Surveillance – if enforced, would ensure that unexpected side effects of new drugs would be identified much sooner; thus reducing the burden of adverse drug reactions: currently our 4th leading cause of death.

Clinical research – has been and will remain the sine qua non of medical practice.

Many medical treatments have never been studied for efficacy. Large clinical studies are needed to establish whether current practice is actually the best, evidence-based option.

Prevention – is always more effective than cure. It is estimated that 80% of all cancers and heart disease – our two biggest killers – could be prevented. Funding further research into establishing preventive factors would be money well spent.

Testing drugs and chemicals on animals does not offer even a 50% likelihood of predicting their effects in humans. Likewise, researching human disease using animals is misleading and results in human harm, including death. Replacing the animal model is not about finding a one-to-one replacement for every current use of animals: that would be futile since the way animals are currently used is ineffective. We need to use research techniques that are genuinely effective; such as those described above. Only by devoting our resources to human specific research can we be confident that we are doing our utmost to ease human suffering from disease.

<http://www.curedisease.net>

