

REVIEWERS: (RK) RAMSEY KANAAN, (STM) SAMMY THE MICK, (JC) JIMI CHEETAH, (RVH) RAY VAN HORN JR, (TS) TRISTAN STADDON, (MWB) MATT "WINDBREAKER" COTE, (MR) MIKE RODRIGUEZ, (NN) NICK NORTON, (WMJ) WILLIAM JONES, (JBM) JOHN MOORE, (JCC) JEN CONRAD, (JK) JIM KAZ, JOHN JOH (JJ)

AIDEN**"Conviction" CD**

Aiden gets a lot of crap for their style and mannerisms, and while a lot of the negativity can be attributed to their mascara-wearing and punk posturing, the band's Him meets The Used version of punk rock, while far from groundbreaking, does give the teeny boppers a soundtrack to hang their pinups and put on their black nail polish to. Tracks like "Moment" bust through the gates with a slight Goth rock pomp and a huge arena rock chorus, while "Teenage Queen" sounds off like the countless power punk bands currently saturating the Hot Topic shelves. While Aiden's popularity rises, their musical offerings sadly have a hard time keeping up, as odds are this band will be out of favor as soon as this year's 10th graders move on to the bigger and better things that MTV feeds their young. (Mike SOS)
(www.victoryrecords.com)



in 2006. They were Nashville teens who played sloppy punk and fuzzed out indie rock like early 90's college rockers... big deal, so did every other band from Brooklyn. The release was decent, but hardly worth all the ink that was sacrificed to announce their coronation. With "Get Awkward," their follow up, I can finally say "I Get It." Smart, tight brat pop reminiscent of everything from The Runaways to Lookout-era Green Day, the follow up is leaps and bounds above BYOP.

Songs like "Heart Throb" and "Bitches Leave" still find Jemina Pearl singing about high school crushes and BFF's who have done her wrong, appropriately fodder for the teen band. But the group seems more cohesive and a bit more confident this time around. That's not to say they've polished their sound, it's just as fuzzed out as before. They are just a much better band this time around. (JBM)
(www.myspace.com/beyourownpetmusic)

ATTICA! ATTICA!**"Dead Skin/Dried Blood" CD**

There are three or four standout tracks, including the last, "Flamethrower," that keep tricking me into thinking I absolutely love this album. And if every track were the quality of these, I would. "Way Down In Gitmo" is full of solid, sarcastic politically driven lines like, "If I don't have my barbeque, the terrorists have won ... this war on terror's going so great because all the Muslims have been kind enough to give up all their rights." And shouts of "God bless Gitmo, bless Guantanamo bay" reminds of Rise Against. Aaron Scott, formerly of Marathon and De La Hoya, doesn't keep up the wit throughout, however, and some of the piano-driven melodies get tiresome by the end. Still, for the good tracks, *Dead Skin/Dried Blood* is worth more than one listen. (WMJ)
(Red Leader / www.redleaderrecords.com)

BE YOUR OWN PET**"Get Awkward" CD**

I have to admit up front that I didn't buy into the Be Your Own Pet hype when they released their self-titled record

BILLY TALENT**"666 LIVE" CD/DVD**

Canadian quartet Billy Talent is an international smash, yet success in the United States has eluded this outfit somewhat. 666 LIVE is a CD/DVD combo of the band during their 18-month tour and covers three of their bigger European appearances, all to rabid approval of audiences in attendance. Mixing up their supercharged energetic performances with an edgy concoction of punk, rock, indie, and emo, Billy Talent fans will want to grab this one, as it captures the band at their most explosive and genuine, especially on tracks like "Try Honesty", "Red Flag" and "Standing in the Rain". (Mike SOS)
(www.billytalent.com)

BLEED THE DREAM**"Killer Inside" CD**

Trying to be open-minded while listening to this I found elements of MY CHEMICAL ROMANCE, MUSE, and OURS. While those bands all displayed at least something I found musically interesting over time, I gotta say, BLEED

THE DREAM did not. They seem like kids who grew up idolizing the above bands, were honestly inspired and wanted to form their own band in a similar style, but once they did found they had no real heartfelt conviction. The music is competently played with slick production, but to me it sounded like they were just going through the motions of some "Emo Rock Formula". I try to listen to every CD a minimum of two times and must say that I was dreading the second go around on this one. As a bonus this CD comes enhanced with a full documentary of the making of the album. I'm sure these guys have all the high school girls in their hometown creaming in their jeans, but this disc left me completely un-moistened. To be fair, I might be a little "snippy" because this CD was reviewed on Valentine's Day, but I can't imagine liking it any better on Memorial Day, Christmas, or Chinese New Year. (RK)
(WARCON Enterprises, LLC/www.warconrecords.com)

BLOODJINN**"This Machine Runs on Empty" CD**

Bloodjinn has the death metal screams down to live up to its name, but not the music to back it up. It's riff-laden and technical, but delivers no real punch and fails to mix well with the vocals. Production is part of the problem, but it's not much of a brutal performance either. (Bad pun alert!) It appears as though the band may be running on empty. Yuk! Yuk! Yuk! But seriously, *Machines* is a pretty lackluster album. (WMJ)
(Pluto / www.plutorecords.com)

BLOODSIMPLE**"Red Harvest" CD**

There's definitely some heavy talent in the Sanders Family. Bloodsimple features bassist Kyle Sanders (brother of Troy Sanders of Mastodon), as well as hardcore rockers like Tim Williams, Mike Kennedy and Nick Rowe. There's a lot of death-metal screams, but there's also a technical aspect to Bloodsimple that makes the band a bit more interesting. A few of the songs are movers and some of the guitar work reminds of Metallica. *Red Harvest* is definitely worth a listen for fans of heavy music. (WMJ)
(Warner Bros. Records / www.wbr.com)

BROADWAY CALLS**"Broadway Calls" CD**

Broadway Calls is a goldmine of pop-punk influences. The driving drums, songwriting and vocals remind of early Green Day while some of the catchy

hooks recall early New Found Glory. To take some of that polish off that combination, the band sometimes brings forth a raw energy akin to The Lawrence Arms or Dillinger Four. Not sold yet? Each of the fourteen tracks is equally as solid as the one before it while offering enough variation to keep things interesting over the 40 minute self-titled effort. The lyrics are socially aware without shoving anything in the listener's face and the artwork is pretty cool. Pop-punk fans should eat this stuff up. Go. Buy. Now. (WMJ) (Adeline Records)

"Bruce Springsteen: Under Review 1978-1982 Tales of the Working Man" DVD

Sexy Intellectual could have taken a few hints from Springsteen's storytelling style for this documentary. Fans of The Boss will like the wealth of information and insight on the *Darkness-River-Nebraska* portion of his career, but, in presentation, this piece of the Under Review series does a sub-par job of making this an entertaining experience. It moves right into 1978 and right out of 1982 with very little buffer. Definitely one of the lesser efforts of this series. (WMJ) (MVD Visual / www.mvdb2b.com)

CASHMERE JUNGLE LORDS "Bloodstone Follies" CD

Eclectic and quirky indie rock is what the Richmond, VA trio Cashmere Jungle Lords deliver on the 15-track BLOODSTONE FOLLIES. Sounding like Beck as channeled through Tom Petty, this act's mix of Americana, Brit-pop, and southern fried surf rock lays down a subdued soundtrack for lounging in the hammock at home on a lazy afternoon on cuts like "Only Friend" and "Boilermaker". Add in some '60s pop-rock flare and a penchant for embracing melody as displayed on the Roy Orbison-esque darkening of "Killing Floor", the Who-esque regalia on "Summer Horoscope" and the Beatles-like jangle of "Everything Revolves Around You" and you can get an idea of what kind of aural treat you're in for when popping this versatile band's disc for a spin. (Mike SOS) (www.cashmerejunglelords.com)

THE CASUAL LEAN "Swears" CD

The Casual Lean's debut full-length, Swears, is full of catchy hooks, but damn! The lyrics (which are prominently featured) are downright terrible. "When they tell us, 'save a little face,' we tell 'em, 'that's why The Casual Lean don't shave.'" Some of these lyrics may be tongue-in-cheek, but plenty of the songs seem to take themselves seriously. Odd

tempos and phrasings become more of a distraction than interesting. Overall, The Casual Lean seems like another band writing catchy music without a clear vision of their songs or the album as a whole. (WMJ) (Orange Peel Records / www.orangepeal.com)

CITY AND COLOUR "Bring Me Your Love"

City and Colour is Alexisonfire's singer Dallas Green's solo side project; just Green and his guitar. His voice is near flawless, sure to impress any listener upon the first few seconds of hearing it. There is a slight subtlety in Green's voice that seems to make it allergic to annoyance, and above all, packed with honesty. He seems extremely trapped and without answers. In the track Constant Knot, Green sings on how he wishes he "could just disappear and run away from all of [his] fears." The want to abandon everything is not the only self-deprecating constraint that grips Green. Alas, it appears that Green's main enigma is sleep. He passionately sings about how he can't help but lie awake at night; a reoccurring theme on the album that truly captures the alienation that Green is dealing with during the entire album. Green spends the majority of the album with an existential outlook on life, declaring that "we're all just waiting to die." on the track Waiting... "Bring Me Your Love" is an elegant, brutally honest depiction of an alienated artist on a soap box reminding us that we are not alone in our feelings of alienation. (A. Scozia) (www.vagrant.com)



THE DANGEROUS SUMMER "If You Could Only Keep Me Alive" CD EP

The Dangerous Summer is one of the better additions to Hopeless in the last few years and the band's label EP debut provides seven solid melodic alt-rock tracks. The lyrics and music are both straightforward and well structured. The band takes its time working through each tune, so it's not a very energetic album, but the production is tight and

the band creates a thoroughly enjoyable sound. (WMJ) (Hopeless / www.hopelessrecords.com)

DANGER RADIO "Punch Your Lights Out" CD

Danger Radio sure knows how to combine a driving beat with catchy vocal hooks and memorable backup chants. If you're a fan of dance rock, these five tracks will definitely get the party started for 18 minutes. If not, they might seem like an atrocity of sugar-coated bullshit. It's all a matter of taste. (WMJ) (Photo Finish / www.photofinishrecords.com)

DEAD ON FRIDAY "Hope It Was Worth It"

Somehow Dead on a Friday have transported the West Coast punk sound across the Northern Boulevard on this Queens, NY trio's 13-track disc "Hope It Was Worth It". Subtle and bright, this group takes the bouncy basslines of MxPx and the vocal melodies of Bouncing Souls for a spin on tracks such as "Didn't You Know" and "You're Killing Me" while the spirit of Mike Ness weaves in and out of songs like "What Do You Have Now" and "The Man Who Refused to Die". Taking the fast melodic approach to punk rock sans any tough guy posturing or whiny vocals, Dead on a Friday's contagious hooks and genuine punk rock stance will definitely impact fans of Bad Religion, Guttermouth, and the like. (Mike SOS) (www.deadonafriday.com)

DEAR TONIGHT "We're Not Men" CD

There is something subtly captivating about the seemingly simple cover art of "We're Not Men," and the same could be said for the twelve tracks found on the album. Dear Tonight mixes thrash and hardcore and magnificently pulls a veil over the subtle work that makes the sound so engaging. The vocals yell (with urgency) well-crafted, socially conscious lyrics that seem as self-examining as they are pointing fingers. The music creates a perfect stage and sets an honest tone that complements the vocals perfectly. *We're Not Men* is an album that can only be truly understood by just sitting back and giving it a listen. (WMJ) (Red Leader / www.redleaderrecords.com)

DETROIT COBRAS
"Tied & True" CD

I rather liked earlier recordings of The DETROIT COBRAS so I was looking forward to reviewing this CD. I hadn't heard anything from them since their 2001 release "Life Love and Leaving" on SFTRI. This release still has plenty of obscure rock and soul covers but they seem much more placid (flaccid?).

Rachel Nagy's voice still sounds sweet although a very clean and smooth production has left the band without any of the real

grit that I previously enjoyed. There are some decent songs on here but many sound as if they were being performed by BONNIE RAITT or someone. Not bad, but way too middle-aged or FM radio for me. (RK)
(Bloodshot Records, www.bloodshotrecords.com)

**EDISON GLASS**
"Time is Fiction" CD

Edison Glass's name represents "the hypothetical collaboration of Thomas Alva Edison and Philip Glass." So, imagine the merger between an inventor with over a thousand patents under his belt and a musical composer often revered for his "minimalist" tendencies, and deemed by many as one of the most influential composers of the 20th century. The result paints an aspiration for a band that seems to know what it is determined to accomplish; creative, intuitive music that pushes the mundane boundaries of mass media. "Time is Fiction" does exactly that. Edison Glass's sophomore album features many aspects of music that haven't yet been popularized but still resonate true and smooth. One of these interesting aspects is the complexity of having two singers in full voice on the album. This ground breaking revelation is rarely heard, or attempted by most bands. "Time is Fiction" is an album that strives to push the limit concerning creativity and experimentation. This is done while stylistically wrapping the music in a very beautiful package that illustrates perseverance, disbelief and fantasy; all the while keeping the listener bewildered by the innocence of it all. (A. Scozia)
(www.credentialrecordings.com/)

EISLEY
"Combinations" CD

The title of this Texas quintet's sophomore album says a lot about the mash-up of sound this indie-pop rock band produces. With a vocal style and songwriting akin to that of Fleetwood Mac-era Stevie Nicks, the band creates some songs with a tone reminiscent of R.E.M. and college rock, while most others lean towards the folk and indie realm. Eisley presents interesting song structure that is deceptively simple, but the lyrics really do seem dumb. The words fit the songs, but are of little interest otherwise. Fans of Eisley should be happy; the band is at the top of its game with

Combinations. But for those that have looked upon Eisley with indifference, the top of their game isn't going to win them over. (WMJ)
(Reprise / www.repriserecords.com)

GATSBYS AMERICAN DREAM
"You All Everybody" CD

Their fourth full length, apparently. I missed the first three, which is an unexpected blessing, judging by this one. They play a mish mash of indie rock styles that I guess are currently popular in the mainstream world. The band calls it punk. I would beg to disagree. Though, apparently, the new generation of kids are on their side. They lose. (RK)
(Fearless Records)

HEARTFELT
"Take It Or Leave It" CD

A solid hardcore release from this outfit from the Netherlands. Classic NYHC feel to this one mixed with more recent influences. Think YOUTH OF TODAY and GORILLA BISCUITS crossed with earlier COMEBACK KID and The NERVE AGENTS. Fairly typical socio-political lyrics but that does not mean they aren't good. I particularly enjoyed "Supermarket", "Point Taken" and "Deceased" but this CD (the band's first full-length) was solid throughout. (RK)
(Shield Recordings/www.theshieldhardcore.com)

HOGAN BREACH
"Bleed Sadness" CD

Attempted melodic punk with honest personal lyrics and nice packaging with a cartoon cover of the band which looks like it could be a Fat Wreck Chords release. Kevin Hogan (singer/bass)

seems to have written pretty much everything on this CD. Unfortunately, his vocals are devoid of confidence, anger, etc. and contain barely any emotion at all. There is a hesitancy in his voice which makes it seem like while he was singing these parts he was trying not to disturb the neighbors or wake their kids. Melodically it almost sounds as if he had the music written out and was making up the vocal parts as he was recording. They try to mix things up a bit as far as the chord changes one might expect in punk/pop but it just doesn't work too well. "Those Sweaty Dollars" sounded best to me but even that had an annoying change in the chorus. Again, the lyrics seem honest and straightforward and music is just another means of expressing oneself, so it's great the band could use the medium to that end. But as far as listenability goes, for me, it just doesn't work. (RK)
(self released CD/possible contact thru www.lonelyrecords.com)

THE HONORARY TITLE
"Scream & Light Up the Day" CD

The Honorary Title offers fans some relaxing rock with the band's sophomore full length. Seriously though, the band has some pretty steady rock beats, the voice of Jarrod Gorbel is smooth and soothing throughout. More for indie fans than punks, The Honorary Title mixes in just enough pop to keep things catchy with plenty of good songwriting to make it interesting. Scream is a big step forward for The Honorary Title. (WMJ)
(Reprise / www.warnerbrosrecords.com)

I AM THE PILOT
"Crashing Into Consciousness" CD

I Am The Pilot blends pop and fast rock without totally crossing over into Fall Out Boy territory. Solid guitar works keeps this above the average radio-rock mediocrity, but just barely. All-in-all, *Crashing Into Consciousness* is a pretty smooth landing, but also very low on excitement and originality. (WMJ)
(Broken English / www.brokenenglishrecords.com)

ION DISSONANCE
"Minus the Herd" CD

RWAAAAAAAAAGHHH! *Minus the Herd*, the third full-length by Ion Dissonance, is simply brutal...and little more. There is very little in the way of phrasings and general song construction here, just screaming and "riffs." Pretty bland. (WMJ)
(Abacus / www.abacusrecordings.com)

IVORYLINE
"There Came A Lion"
"There Came a Lion" is an album that

shows a distinct style of energetic, reflective rock. Jerry, the front-man, passionately shares his stories of anguish through his vibrant singing. His openness to the listener surely isn't meant to be fashionable, but rather a way to cope with life's hardships. The



appropriately positioned and named last song on the album, *The Last Words* vividly reveals Jeremy's pain of losing his father; quoting his father's last words to him, "love me, let me sleep." Don't get the wrong idea though, this is anything but a depressing album. Crunching guitars and rock anthems immediately shoot the listener with a heavy dosage of euphoria that doesn't seem to wear off. In between the plethora of anthems, we are reminded of the joys that melodic vocal and instrumental expressiveness does to music. In this case, it truly helps to define the mood that Ivoryline is trying to convey to us. "There Came a Lion" is a highly reflective album that really seems to put a lot in perspective as well as providing songs that prove to be addicting. (A. Scozia) (www.toothandnail.com)

JENA BERLIN "Quo Vadimus" CD

Philadelphia's Jena Berlin offers 11 tracks of no-frills post-hardcore with its latest offering, *Quo Vadimus*. The second full-length offers heavy rhythms, duel guitar work that has a number of memorable moments, and gruff vocals ready to burst at the seams. It's definitely not pretty, but there are always interesting sounds swirling around in the album that is *Quo Vadimus*. (WMJ) ([Jump Start / www.jumpstartrecords.com](http://www.jumpstartrecords.com))

"Keith Richards: Under Review" DVD

The "Under Review" series by Sexy Intellectual has its ups and its downs, but the look at iconic guitar rocker Keith Richards is a new peak for the series. Clocking it at almost 2 hours, the depiction



of Richards from the silent force behind The Rolling Stones to his rise in recognition is not only a great story, but the film looks better, is edited better and has better interviews than any of the previous iterations. For Richards fans, this film is a must. And for anyone with an interest in good documentaries about rock 'n' roll, regardless of affection for the Stones, there are few as insightful.

(WMJ)
(MVD Visual / www.mvdb2b.com)

LA PLEBE "Hasta La Muerte!" CD

I hadn't heard anything from LA PLEBE for awhile and while I remember them being good, I don't remember them being THIS good. "Hasta la Muerte" is a great CD. LA PLEBE plays fast-paced catchy punk (bordering on melodic hardcore) with the addition of horns. And, yeah, although I said "punk with horns" this is NOT ska-punk. The horns are used with much more of a Latin flair. Not just filling out and supporting the guitar chords but often weaving in and around them. The vocals are bi-lingual with the majority being sung in Spanish. Don't fret, the lyric sheet has both English and Spanish translations. The sing-along street punk quality of "Plebe Por Vida" is my favorite track but this disc smokes from beginning to end. Ya know, if ADRENALIN O.D. had a Latino horn section, sung in Spanish, and replaced their zaniness with a frustrated and angry passion they might've sounded like LA PLEBE...or not. (RK)

(Red Scare Records www.redscare.net)

THE LOVED ONES "Build & Burn" CD

This CD, their second for Fat Wreck Chords, is a prize. Featuring ex-members of PAINT IT BLACK, THE EXPLOSION, THE CURSE, and TRIAL BY FIRE this CD is like none of those. It has some very catchy and melodic tunes which seem to be influenced by the FM "Quality Rock" I hear from time to time. While this sounds like a knock against the band it really is not. This disc also has

gloriously poppy but still rockin' punk gems such as "The Inquirer" (which has a well placed heartfelt towards the end that I just love). Great vocals throughout that range from the plaintive to triumphant, rough and emotive and at times similar to Jason from SAMIAM. Other stand outs for me were "Selfish Masquerade" with its' wonderful chiming piano parts, and the confusion of self-inflicted disillusionment found in "Sarah's Game". Somehow managing to still fall within the overall parameters of the Fat Wreck Chords label this CD stands alone and is unlike anything else on their roster. (RK)

(Fat Wreck Chords / www.fatwreck.com)

THE MAINE "The Way We Talk" CD

The airy melodies combined with the shallow-yet-smooth vocal performances of John O'Callaghan and Kennedy Brock do nothing to make the few good lyrics in these songs stand out. The Maine is a run-of-the-mill Myspace-generation Fearless band with little more than mediocre 90s rock mashups to offer. There is nothing dynamic or passionate to be found in the five tracks found on the debut EP, *The Way We Talk*, just slickly produced radio friendly rock that's guaranteed to make some money in the current scene. (WMJ)

(Fearless / www.fearlessrecords.com)

THE METHADONES "This Won't Hurt..." CD

Let me start off by saying that I love the METHADONES. I think their past couple of albums were brilliant and they helped ease me through some rough times. While "This Won't Hurt..." has some great songs many of them are marred by annoying vocal effects. Either intentionally or not the electronic pitch correction-like effect used ends up sounding like a frickin' vocoder. I wish I could give this release a high thumbs up (maybe these effects would be less irritating to someone less obsessive than I) but I can only say it's a good CD but a few notches below their last few efforts. The track "Starting Line" is still pure melancholy pop punk bliss in true METHADONES style. Seriously guys, please leave these effects to the CHER dance club mixes... you're breaking my fucking heart. Don't worry, I still love you. (RK)

(Red Scare Records www.redscare.net)

THE MORNING BENDERS "Talking Through Tin Cans" CD

It's been a while since I've been excited about a Bay Area band. "Talking Through Tin Cans" gives the locals a good injection of intelligently crafted

lyrics, melancholy pop tunes with stuck-in-you-head melodies. I was instantly hooked on the old time Beach Boys/Beatles-esque sound which reminded me of some contemporary favorites like The Shins, The Wrens, and The Fratellis. Songwriter Chris Chu's lyrics remind me of Jawbreaker-like wordplay, in which Blake Schwarzenbach would blend wit

with irony, and an observation of the world that's all too personal ("All it takes is a little commitment / I'm a patient patient." and "Here I am in the graveyard / Waiting for a war!"). As a debut full-length for newly minted +1 Records, both The Blenders and their new label are sure to have a bright future. (JJ) (+1 Records / www.themorningbenders.com)

Bob Mould **"District Line" CD**

Across three decades, two bands, and a slew of different genres – everything from post-punk to power pop – Bob Mould has never followed any type of predictable career path. As a veteran rock musician and long-time solo artist, Mould should be happy re-writing and recording the same types of songs into retirement (think Van Morrison or Paul McCarthy). Instead, he continues to write the type of albums he wants to hear. His latest "District Line" – Moulds debut for Anti Records – sounds nothing like his last effort "Modulator," a synth-heavy, dance punk record. The current release is probably closer in sound to "The Last Dog and Pony Show." There are some tracks that are better than others on "District" ("Again and Again," for example), but even a weak Mould song is still pretty solid. Be warned, though, with just 10 songs, the record is still frustratingly short for fans who know that Mould tends to take years off between records. (JBM) (www.myspace.com/bobmould)

THE NEW DRESS **"Where Our Failures Are" CD**

Bill Manning, Laura Fidler and one guitar need nothing else to weave beautiful and bittersweet harmonies of folk-punk akin to that of the No Idea reputation. It's simple in appearance and complex



underneath. The band describes its music as "proletariat love songs," and that sounds about right. The band's thirteen anthemic tracks are all solid, and the stripped-down nature of the album shows how much can truly be accomplished with so little. It may sound similar to band's you've heard

before, but what The New Dress does with the sound is anything but formula. (WMJ) (Red Leader / www.redleaderrecords.com)

NO HOLLYWOOD ENDING **"Everybody's Talking" CD**

NO HOLLYWOOD ENDING is for people that like to put CDs in their CD players (or listen to mp3s) but aren't really fans of good music. The band mimics a few obnoxious genres that include a lot of screaming and pop themes, without putting any real new or interesting twist on it. Um...that's all I've got. That's really all they've got, too. (WMJ) (No Milk / www.nomilkrecords.com)

THE OUT_CIRCUIT **"Pierce the Empire with a Sound" CD**

Sometimes noise can be so much more than the sum of its parts; sometimes it is just noise. The latter is the case with The Out_Circuit's latest, *Pierce the Empire with a Sound*. The sound is more about the moody atmosphere and ambiance than lyrics or melody, but the tone is so static and one-dimensional that it never really becomes something more than sound. There is a just a mood that needs more of a message, a louder cry against the empire and music worth caring about. (WMJ) (Lujo Records / www.lujorecords.com)



PINK SPIDERS **"Teenage Graffiti" CD**

2nd full length. Snotty, bratty major-label punk/glam wannabes. They really wish they were bubble gum ROLLING STONES. At their best, approximate to a distinctly second rate RED CROSS. Slick garage rock without a vehicle, not terrible, but fucking close. (RK) (Suretone/Geffen)

RISE AGAINST **"The Sufferer And The Witness" CD/LP**

4th full length from these Chicago chappies. It's certainly a well tuned, and immaculately produced, further exploration of that whole BAD RELIGION/GOOD RIDDANCE/FACE TO FACE melodic hardcore angle. They throw in a few spoken word tists, and a ballad with strings, just touch it up a little (and demonstrate they're 'progressing'), but it's actually pretty decent. Well worth investing in. (RK) (Geffen)

SCENES FROM A MOVIE **"The Pulse"**

Scenes from a Movie creates a bridge of a sound from the old pop-punk stylings of New Found Glory to the more modern rhythms of bands likes Fall Out Boy and Panic at the Disco. Sound like a disaster? For punk purists, the songs on *The Pulse* will likely be grating, despite the band's claimed influences of acts like Black Flag, NOFX and Green Day. Still, for everyone else, Scenes from a Movie brings better lyrics, songwriting, hooks and a more stomach-able sound than Fall Out Boy et al. For the younger crowd and those open to the new pop-punk, *The Pulse* is a solid effort all the way through. (WMJ) (One Big Spark / www.onebigspark.com)

BETTINA SCHELKER **"The Honeymoon Is Over" CD**

BS is a bit of a phenomenon. World class boxer, music and sports school founder and director. And an accomplished singer/songwriter in three languages. This is her 4th release, with a preponderance of the songs in English. It's a folk record, in terms of instrumentation, and style (primarily acoustic guitar and voice), with CHUMBAWAMBA producing and adding, at times, further layers of sound. Bettina is openly gay and a strong anti-homophobia message runs throughout this disc,

but there's passion, tenderness, compassion, and righteous anger in equal measure. Like ANI DIFRANCO, Schelker has her own label (Foundagirl - which means the catalog numbers are, of course, FAG 001 etc!). The songwriting, and performance on this are immaculate, and a fragile beauty is underscored with an undeniable power and strength. Not whiny. Not petulant. Pure class. (RK) (www.foundagirl.com)

THE SIDEKICKS

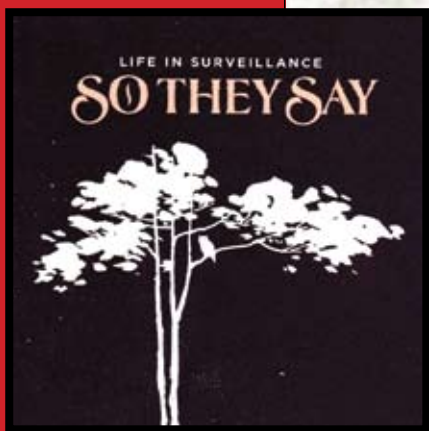
"So Long, Soggy Dog" CD

Not being familiar with The SIDEKICKS I really enjoyed discovering this Ohio quartet's CD. Great sandpaper vocals singing heartfelt lines, nice guitar work and unusual song structures. Think JAWBREAKER, think AMERICAN STEEL, think LAWRENCE ARMS. Think none of these, because while being reminiscent of those bands The SIDEKICKS still manage to create a distinctly moving sound and feel of their own. The two tracks that lead off the album are absolutely stellar. While those two are my favorite this CD stays pretty solid to the end. Recommended. (RK) (Red Scare Records www.redscare.net)

SO THEY SAY

"Life in Surveillance" CD

So They Say is noticeably less annoying than much of the Fearless roster, but that's not saying much. The band's sophomore full-length, *Life in Surveillance*, sticks to a straight rock sound and brings its flair in the form of dual vocalists and spastic signature changes. The band performs it well, but the formula is not that exciting. (WMJ) (Fearless / www.fearlessrecords.com)



SO THEY SAY

"Life In Surveillance" CD

So They Say's latest endeavor firmly plants a foot into the hard rock realm, thanks to the production efforts of Matt Hyde (Slayer, Monster Magnet). "Life In Surveillance" is the St. Louis quintet's latest 11-track affair, and it finds the band baring more teeth in between the sugary sweet choruses of "Wake Me Up" and "I Won't Tell". While on a whole,

the moniker of alternative rock still fits the band pretty well, yet tracks like "You're Welcome", "Nuclear Sunrise" and "Close Range" find the group injecting their power pop wares with a bold dash of metallic guitars and attitude, automatically giving the band a bit more room to expand and grow. If you liked the recent direction Sum 41 took or dig bands like Trust Company and 10 Years, So They Say's most recent release should be something you'll be spinning again and again. (Mike SOS) (www.fearlessrecords.com)

TEENAGE BOTTLEROCKET

"Warning Device" CD

Great stuff here from Kody of The LILLINGTONS and crew. Kody and TEENAGE BOTTLEROCKET are to The LILLINGTONS what Vapid and The METHADONES are to SCREECHING WEASEL (What is this... a CD review or the answer to a friggin' SAT question?). Super catchy pop punk/RAMONES-core/whatever you wanna call it throughout. I've always liked Kody's distinctive vocal delivery, quite original for the genre. The title track along with "She's Not The One" and "Wasting Time" have already dug deep into my brain after only two listens. Another winner from Red Scare. (RK) (Red Scare Records www.redscare.net)

TOASTERS

"Live June 28, 2002 - The Bowery Collection" CD

MVD Audio and CBGB's are finally releasing a stellar collection of live shows covering everything from hardcore to ska. Among the best in the collection is this amazing set from two tone legends The Toasters. Recorded nearly six years ago, the only disappointing thing about the album is the length, coming in at only 11 songs. With plenty of banter between the

band, the record includes some of The Toaster's best songs including "Mona," "Shebeen" and "I'm Running Right Through the World." Although there is no substitute for seeing the band live, this record does a pretty damn good job of capturing some of the excitement and energy of their show. (JBM) (www.toasters.org)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Take Action! Volume 7" CD/DVD

Volume 7 of the anti-suicide compilation seems to have more bands with names related to death than ever—

weird. Anyhow, it's the usual mix of a few decent songs and a lot of crap, depending on the listener's tastes. The recent trend of failing to include much or anything previously unreleased continues, and it gets worse when it's noticeable that there are overlaps from Sub City's last comp, *Change!* It leaves one wondering what the purpose of these compilations is. Why don't I just donate the "portion of proceeds" to a worthy cause and Hopeless can skip the half-hearted effort at giving something in return for it. (WMJ) (Hopeless / www.hopelessrecords.com)

X Saves the World: How Generation X Got the Shaft But Can Still Keep Everything From Sucking

By Jeff Gordinier

Book

If anyone knows what its like to be the middle child it's the members of Gen X (I say this as a card carrying member of that generation, though we're far too cynical to actual have cards). The only thing the Baby Boomer like more than talking about how phenomenal their generation was, touting everything from dreadful bad acid-inspired music to "ending the War" is reading about themselves in just about every other cover story in Time and Newsweek and in libraries filled with self-congratulating books. Most accounts however fail to talk about the other wars they started, the environment the former hippies have trashed and the unbelievable depth of materialism they subscribe to that has led to countless examples of corporate greed. Yeah, we remember Woodstock, because you won't shut up about it. And let's not get started on their spawn, the overly-coddled, millennials, who have been burdened with an over-inflated sense of self-importance and entitlement ("Here's another trophy for being able to tie your shoes Conner!"). The good news is I can stop there, because Jeff Gordinier does a remarkable job of tackling both generations, in *X Saves the World*, while pointing out how those sandwiched between the two can ultimately right the ship. Gordinier, a former Entertainment Weekly writer, does an excellent job at using humor to pen his generational manifesto. He also does a solid job of pointing out just how many great innovations have come from the "slacker generation." Despite, or more likely because of his deft sense of wit, Gordinier also manages to offer some strong arguments for just how Gen X can save us, or at the very least keep everything from sucking too bad. I'll take Nirvana over the Eagles or Miley Cyrus any day of the week. (JBM) (www.jeffgordinier.com)