



Is it me, or does a lot of the (relatively) recent metal bands sound like a cross twix Andrew WK and Three Days Grace, such as the song "Long Ride Home" by **DOWN THEORY**, on their "Invisible Empire" ([spectrarecords.com](http://spectrarecords.com)) CD. Perhaps it's the technology, like the echo drum sounds of the '80s? These guys are good in the genre, that's not the issue, just that it's a bit cliché. Tatt sleeves?

Check. Goatees (both with and without moustaches)? Check. Shaved heads? Check.

Yeah, I know, "don't judge a book..." Okay, the music IS the crux. The musicianship is great, the vocals by Nick Lee are gratefully front and center, but the studio ravages his intensity by burying it in gloss and overdubs. Very radio friendly, though. I'd like to hear them be as fierce as they look, such as on the grinding opening of "Someday." Hey, that they cover the Cure's "Fascination Street" speaks volumes, even if they "hard" it up a bit. Songs are about being "Defiant," "Over It" (one of the best cuts), and "Pushing Back Tomorrow," among others, which are actually quite sound underneath the technique. While there isn't really a bad song here, the treatment of them is, well... Bet they're awesome live, dude.

