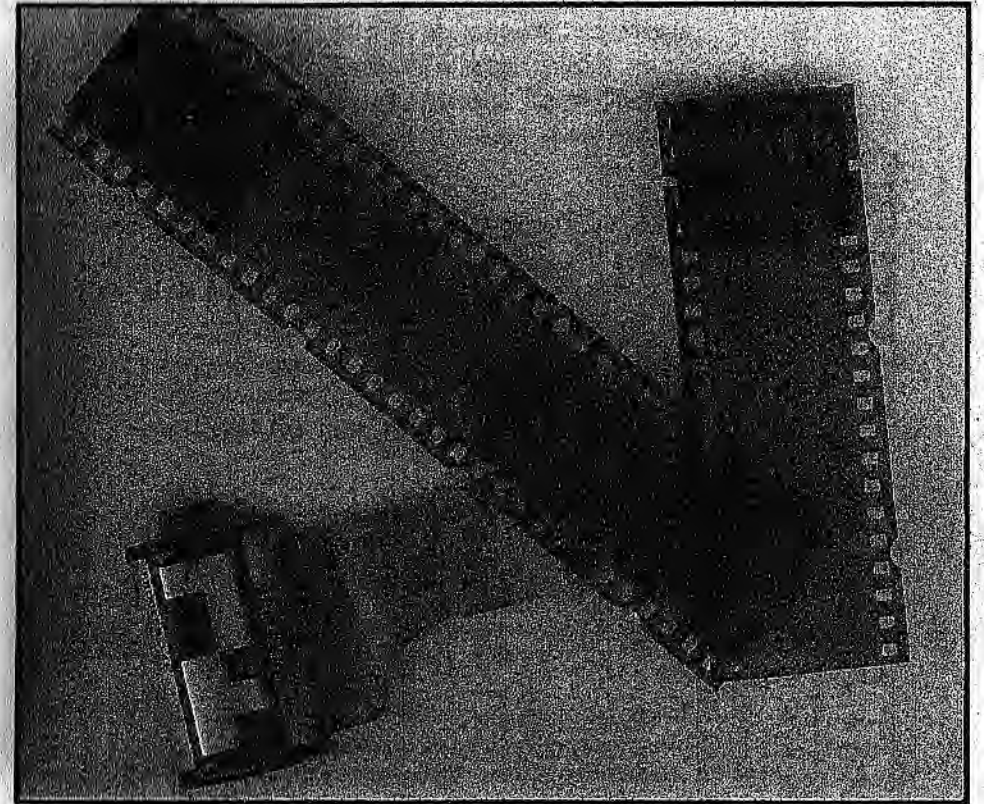


# Re-assess



# Your Weapons





apathy is this generation's angst

## Apathy is this generation's angst

By Neil

I'm really fucking sick of this barrage of films about people being dissatisfied with their lives: Ghost World, The Royal Tenenbaums and so on, just people talking in monotone about existence and passing it off as comedy. Honestly, I FUCKING HATE IT and I fucking hate everyone who buys into it.

This generation is too passive for my liking, no one gets involved with anything anymore and if they do it's with nostalgia like the eighties or kitsch camp ironic bollocks. What is the point in putting so much effort into something so wasteful? People all around me are frightened to be actually moved by something, so they invest in kitsch music or watch trashy shows all day instead of finding something that makes them bleed inside because it's so beautiful and want to talk about it and share it with everyone. I imagine people are scared of how "uncool" they could REALLY be.

People are so determined to be "uncool" these days; wearing thick glasses and being vegan and all that emo elitist shite. All this stuff is just to disassociate with the rest of society so you don't have to make the effort to make a difference. I hate it. It's just a massive competition to see who can be the most numb about everything.

I've probably got it all wrong, but I don't care, because I'm at least talking about it. I write a fanzine and I will happily get things wrong in the persuerment of getting my passions across, because even now fanzines are more about information than being a genuine fan. I have so much passion for the world and I let everyone know, in hope I can inspire other people to not feel so dead inside. On the other hand I have so much hate in my body too, and I like to think that feels good too because I do something about the things that piss me off instead of just letting Michael Moore make my mind up for me or by psuedo intellectually wanking about it as though I'm the only one who thinks like that in the world.

Granted, there are those that have difficulty in feeling anything and granted there are people who like emo bands or like Ghost World who aren't being influenced by them, but

apathy is this generation's angst

these are just some examples of the generation we are living in. I take into the account that people like these things because they already related to them, which is great, but as you can predict "what came first, the misery or the music?" (sic)

Wow, remember the early nineties when everyone felt angry and angsty and got in bands and riot grrrl happened. People like Kurt Cobain were challenging the eighties machismo and holding it up for ridicule so we realised how we had changed as a generation and there was no need for that shit anymore? That was awesome. But now everyone loves Guns 'N' Roses and Iron Maiden again for some fucking stupid reason as though the early nineties never happened, fair enough if you think they're rocking but I question it when you can buy t-shirts with these types of bands on in TopShop and never have to question if you even know who the band is. Maybe it's a reflection on our society that has made people distrust in anything and therefore invest in detached icons of the past and the cheesy, but I don't find that a valid excuse, there has always been distrustful horrible shit going on.

Maybe in turn I'm being an elitist bastard myself, who I am to question your level of dedication to a cause, nobody has to love something with all their heart, do they? There's room for shallow levels and fun and Trisha... I suppose I know deep down what I mean, I just want people to feel, put energy into things. One of my friends is sick of people thinking she likes New Kids On The Block in an ironic way, because she loves them so much, I mean it'd be a sad waste of time if she really did like them in that way for a cheap laugh or to make people think she's weird or cool etc.

I'm sure people reading this aren't subject to this rant, being part of a riot grrrl collective must mean something, so keep it up, spread your actions, do everything that comes into your heads, dance, make wonderful things, open up, shoot the moon, bend spoons.

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Moved, energised and inspired to do more & be more by this piece? You can contribute to Neil's zine about transgender experiences, 'Isn't He Brave' by emailing: [honestrabbit@hotmail.com](mailto:honestrabbit@hotmail.com)



THE DAY I MET ALISON

So here I was blagging myself into the cockpit, posing as some sort of music journalist wannabe stuttering and stumbling all over the place, lying about actually interviewing bands before and somehow making it through to be in the same room as Alison chain smoking menthol marlboro's and engaging in conversation with little me... The day I met Alison Mosshart was a huge deal for me. I almost couldn't face it. When I was sixteen watching Discount play was a total escape for me it opened so many opportunities and made me feel more secure about my so-called weird ways. If it wasn't for women like Alison alongside Courtney, Kat and Kathleen there's no way I would be around today. Not a chance in hell. I have this really conflicting relationship with her new band the Kills I was gutted when Discount split up but excited when I heard she was in a new band and promptly went to go check them out. But it wasn't the same, it was no where near, and situated in a milieu of punk rock purists the whole 'selling out' argument was easy to digest and I saw no need to look further. But after meeting her and hearing what she had to say I am a converted Kills fan. It's the passion, the art, the love of rock n roll, the need to break the rules and question our mediocre surroundings, and the importance of inspiring each other. It's everything that keeps me on this planet. This meeting came at a crucial time for me. January had been hell. After leaving the Holy Terror I've been pretty shaken up. It's hard to leave something behind that you've invested so much in, but stranger still when you're jerked to the outside looking in at the amazement of the shit you allowed yourself to be put through and the weird habits I developed and the ways my character had become distorted by what I can see now was an oppressive context. I had allowed myself to get stuck in this weird space of being walked all over, silenced, of not being able to sleep, of putting others needs before my own mental health and wanting to numb everything out with mtv, drugs and alcohol. I was en route to a self-destructive passionless boring existence and was seething with frustration and guilt. Nobody could describe this claustrophobia I had become encased in better than Alison and encouraged me to keep creative, keep fighting back and to eventually feel a lot better... So there I was under the guise of a Leeds student paper music interviewer armed with some badly thought out questions, cynicism and a headache of nerves. I waited outside the room as the earlier interviewers, two rather slick looking dudes came out and gave me a nod. My heart is in my fucking throat I manage a quick smile and check to see if I have any shit stuck in my braces. The tour manager comes out and says okay come in you've got fifteen minutes...

I shook her hand and I professed my love for Discount and for the ways in which she inspired me when I was younger and my excitement of meeting her. Then realised I did have to actually record some kind of question - answer affair so tumbled around with the tape recorder and this is what happened...!

Me: Okay so I heard this was like your first headlining tour in the UK since 2002 just generally you seem to be touring all the time, so how's this tour going? (I took Bob's suggestion of the opening tour question cuz I was a bit of a wreck)

Alison: Good I'm not really sure this is our first headlining tour since 2002 but...

Me: Oh right my information must be wrong (damn that stupid press release and I thought I would look like I knew something!)

Alison: Right yeah but we've been touring for about two years constantly inbetween doing some recording and stuff but erm it feels really fantastic we've only played two shows on this tour and both nights have been so so amazing this is the first time that I've ever had this sense that people are coming to see us. You know we do play lots we've done lots of gigs with quite large bands in the past and been really like it's quite scary and nerve wracking to play to an audience that has no idea who you are and I kind of get off on that because it's way harder but then I don't know if I ever thought or got a sense that people were actually coming to see us before. The last two nights has just been, it's been unbelievable like the first time I'm sort of seeing the audience which I've

avoided doing for two years like you know checking them out in any way. So it's been really interesting quite invigorating.

Me: I remember seeing you at Josephs Well I don't know if you remember that show?

Alison: I think I do remember it, it's when me and Jamie were driving around ourselves yeah.

Me: So starting at the beginning how did you actually manage the transition from Discount to the Kills?

Alison: Well it was a really long transition I was in Discount for seven years and probably by year four I was becoming really this is probably like before you saw us play here. I had become really dissatisfied with the music you know it was like I was in a band with four people with very four separate opinions kind of not in the same sort of headspace about seriousness about being in a band and the type of music they wanted to do that was kind of affecting my moods more and more so I was really like working twenty-four hours a day never sleeping just so obsessed and no one else kind of had that. You know and you can't expect people some people are like that most people aren't you know but I wanted something else really badly so probably three years before that band split up I started doing stuff on my own like really secretive and no one knew about it. And then what happened was I met Jamie and that was the first person I ever met and I met him when I was probably eighteen that actually wanted I wanted him to hear everything I'd ever done I wanted to show him all this art that I'd done and all these things that just like you know boxes of things in my bedroom all these tapes and so we sort of struck up a friendship and hung out and stuff and played each other records and it you know we never decided to be a band it was nothing like that it was like a soulmate like he was doing the exact same sort of things. He was doing all this stuff and like I don't know when you're kind of surrounded by your friends in your community or whatever it's like. I think we both had that sense that you see you're supported but your not supported and you're like made fun of for being too arty so you kind of tend to you tend to shy away from ever exposing what you're doing and just keeping something it's feeling like it's making you powerful but they don't know about it you know you do that I mean I think artists do that naturally it's just like it's not the easy thing to just



Me: Yeah like writing a journal or something or starting up something without your friends knowing

Alison: Yeah you know but we met each other and we knew we were safe with that kind of thing and we could totally explore it together and it was the most exciting day of my life meeting him. And you know he was the main reason I moved and it was really like I just decided one morning that I wanted to move I called my mom and told her I was going to move I called the airline and bought the ticket a couple of days later I called him and said I was coming and he didn't believe me and I showed up and I've never gone back and that was like five years ago so.

Me: That is so cool (I know I am gushy there is no avoiding this state right now)

Alison: You know like really spur of the moment but I never regretted it for a minute and it was exciting because I had no money it was just like this new, fresh start and I was fearless and I was you know quite young and just like fuck it why not I hate Florida I don't want to live in America anymore I hate that as well I was really like the disgruntled teen you know I just did not want any more to do with it.

Me: What things did you not like about Florida then?

Alison: It's just not you know it was just very typical like I mean this is not like everybody there are some amazing people and amazing artists that I knew and amazing musicians that I knew there moved and went off to do really great things and there's quite a few of them they'd move and there's a reason for that because Florida's like it's just a bed of sleep people get really complacent really lazy or really happy with just getting videos on the weekends and drinking loads of beer and eating pizza and getting fatter and fatter and doing nothing and their brains are just shrinking and it's like I actually had a panic attack there I couldn't cope with what I was seeing happening because I was just growing up and you know and seeing how people were maturing in that weird way. They'd been so ambitious as kids and then all of a sudden it was like just some of them wanted to be really really ultra normal and I felt trapped I felt so trapped that I left you know. But I've come to find that it's very much like that everywhere in the world there's always people doing there's it's not just that thing but I reacted to it quite drastically and I'm glad I did because I don't regret anything that I've done.

Me: It's just too easy to be mediocre

Alison: Yeah it's just so easy to just kind of be like, 'oh it's alright it could be worse' but it's like 'it's so bad' I don't know. I am really like emotional, really obsessive moody and you know I take things in huge ways it's got to be all or nothing over everything that I do you know I can't kind of go down the middle road I just get sick literally and physically sick at times so I'm glad I'm like that.

Me: Yeah because I was wondering what the pseudonyms were about, like a disguise from that?

Alison: Well it's kind of about what I'm just saying we both felt like that we were like kind of trapped in other people's worlds where we couldn't express ourselves and we were so inspired by the Warhol scene and the factory and all these characters and just people being so over the top and celebrating art and celebrating themselves you know really just I don't know stunning personalities you know and tragic stories and just exciting and whether it was really not that way I don't care because it's like the legend of it is what has been like waking me up in the morning since I was thirteen so you know we kind of both felt like we just wanted to start over and we didn't want anybody to know what we'd done before and that's why I've got such a vague memory of Discount because I made a really conscious decision to forget about it.



Me: Oops sorry

Alison: No no it's okay because I have to talk about it once in a while and it's like I'm still friends with most those people and it's cool but I needed that kind of conscious decision to start over again like really from scratch. I wanted to learn how to play guitar I wanted to do all these things that I never got a chance to in that band. And so we were really drunk and we just like initial our names and just start over and go on tours and we won't tell anybody who we really are and that way no one's going to. We're not going to be feeling that from like backwards we wanted to go forwards like totally and we didn't want any help do you know what I mean? It's like 'hey it's me remember me I was doing this yeah check me out can you help me' I did not want to go down that way. I just felt it would be really trapping and so that's why we did it but it was so light-hearted the name thing you know it just kind of worked out really well in our favour because we did go for like a year and a half without anybody figuring out who the hell we were and it was really really cool you know. I still have people who come to Kills shows who don't know and they'll be standing there watching me play and afterwards they'll be like 'were you' you know at this gig nine years ago 'were you that girl that was in that band erm you really look familiar to me' and I was like I almost got away with it but I can't lie to you (laughter) I don't know what to do and it's like uh huh and then it's like funny because people still don't know yet you know lots of people don't.

Me: That would be cool though I can totally see why you get off on that. So there's a lot of change in the Kills sound the Kills sound is a lot more stripped down like drum machine and guitar and I was just wondering what that might mean, is there any sort of way I which you perceive your aesthetics you know?

Alison: Well there's two of us you know and so that's quite stripped down and we wanted to be able to reproduce everything on stage exactly like in the studio so... Okay so it's like the kind of things that have really inspired us are like I think there's a real art to like and a real beauty in music about the space in music and what you can leave off is just as powerful as what you can put in you know and people forget that and layer and hide things that are not that good with other things and just like a big clump of stuff it's like having an idea and pouring water all over it you know. We just have an idea and you just do it but you just really need to basic things and I think we get really turned on by that because we can do that and we write songs sometimes and the just start cutting it up with scissors you know like we don't need that we don't need this lose that entire sentence you know just you don't need these things because like the message is stronger if it's more direct you know. And it's quite hard to do because I think naturally you want it to be like grand you know and so it's but it actually turns out sounds a lot cooler if you leave the stupid things off. And yeah so but yeah there's two of us and that's just how it is we've both been in bands with loads of people and it's just really exciting not to be you know and using that as a tool. There's only two of us so let's sound like there's more we can create a huger thing with just two of us then we could have ever created with four because that was what it is it was so diluted with four people coming from different directions and Jamie's like part of me and I'm part of him and I just like. If we're in a room together I feel alone do you know what I mean it's like it's just we spend twenty-four hours together we're totally are psychic we don't it's pretty amazing it's like doing a solo record with another person. It just feels like that like we're the same exact person.

Me: So you have a habit of recording albums in two weeks

Alison: Yeah we did that

Me: Did you do that twice for this record as well?



Alison: Well the first one was recorded really fast as well but the first one was written for a year and a half this one was actually written in three and a half weeks from start to finish and then recorded in two weeks and then mixed for a week.

Me: That's really spontaneous!

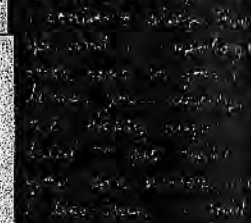
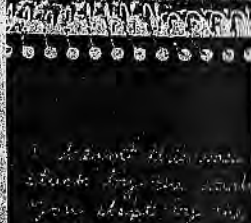
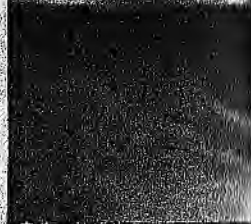
Alison: Yeah it was quite like that was sort of the theme because we didn't have any time at all because we'd been on the road and we could never write songs on the road we're so distracted and like you know our minds are in every direction and just couldn't focus at all. So we just thought let's just lock ourselves away for three well we actually gave ourselves a month but we actually finished way ahead of time because we just sorta stopped sleeping and everything we got so into it and we figured all of our favourite songs were written in ten or fifteen minutes you know so it was super easy.

Me: Yeah because I read somewhere that your songs grow out of conversations that you and Jamie have and so what do you talk about?

Alison: I don't know everything that there is to talk about I mean you know we're like travelling around the world all the time and seeing all these things and discovering all these things together and there's a million things to talk about. But this record is totally written from we went to this place and this place is barren and it's in the middle of nowhere and we didn't know that but our way of kind of coping with the fact that we had nowhere to write was like we thought let's just bring everything that we find inspiring let's bring everything that we've done in the last year on the road. So that was like 3000 photographs we'd taken books and books of journals of writing and art and all this stuff and we basically pasted it up everywhere laid it around and you look at all these things and you remember there's like stories everywhere you look you know and it's really easy to write and it was so simple and we'd get into long conversations about things and all of a sudden it's I've an idea and we'd just record the idea and that was it. We did about seventeen songs in three and a half weeks and the songs that didn't end up on the record were the ones we'd thought about too much and all the ones that came so super quickly and naturally were the ones that made it.

Me: Okay so I read somewhere that the whole 'no wow' title was a comment on how you felt about music at the time and the general culture you were embedded in. And I was just wondering what things make you go wow?

Alison: A lot of people ask that I don't know. (and I thought I was being real clever using their new album title to get into their inspirations ha ha) I don't know I guess just like I'm really obsessed with legends and things that probably aren't true my sorta aspirations are so much more than human you know. I don't feel like I'm ever going to be satisfied with anything it's just I quite like that like I said it has to be super-drastring and super-impossible or I'm not interested so it's that kind of thing you know and the 'no wow' statement was just like it felt like this really strong term for us and it was the first song we wrote for the record so it was just kind of a flag waving over us pushing each other as hard as you could push each other before you broke down and cried and at times we did. You know it's just really really trying to move up a hundred gears you know and in no time at all just going somewhere you didn't know where to go and it's a statement about everything around it's just kind of like I want people to be like that I can't have my way but I want people to be inspired like that just like go for it try and push the boundaries and try and break the rules and try and change them and just get something celebrate art again rather than calling it pretentious and fake and you know people should be like celebrating you know the things that they do and in order to celebrate something that you do you have to know that it's really fucking good and so people need to work really hard and it's just like a call on people to sorta get their shit together



Me: And do something!

Alison: Yeah!

Me: That's really cool. So where do you find your inspiration?

Alison: Jamie's has been my hugest inspiration ever he's the most inspiring person that I know for sure. You know but I'm inspired by really kind of inane things that you just see around I'm inspired by people I'm inspired by tragedy and like crimes of passion and like you know really horrible morbid stuff and really amazing stuff you know like completely on this side of the spectrum or this side of the spectrum because I tend to avoid the middle part because it's really like grey do you know what I mean and just looking at the dark side of human nature is really interesting and people don't really explore. I mean people explore it in films and they explore it in art and it's quite acceptable but people don't really explore it in music. In music if you explore it you get a stamp on your record that says like you know eighteen or over and you get like you know you don't get played on the radio if something's too dark or something's too weird. People don't for some reason it just has not crossed over into music other than maybe in Marilyn Manson for instance who you know people really like him and he's really smart but you know just it's not typically accepted and I think it's really super-interesting that kind of side of human nature like what people will do if they're pushed and what people will do with their you know everybody has like addictions and people do things in different ways people get obsessed and people go crazy and go nuts and just freak out and it's so obvious when you look at the world and the way that it is why commit insane crimes and go ballistic and I think it's really a picture of how it is you know none of the people need to look at it to figure out what's wrong because you can kind of trace through what they've been through you can see that a hell of a lot of other people are going through similar things and it's only a matter of time you know before everything just kicks off I think it's incredibly interesting I think that stuff's inspiring. Loads of our art, loads of our conversations stem from that we like look through the papers for frigging stories about people and just sit and talk for hours.

Me: Okay so you've started attracting lots of celebrities like Courtney Love and Michael Stipe I mean how do you feel about that?

Alison: I don't really feel anything about it you know just like I think if you live in a big city that's just not even like a weird thing to run into people like that or for them to be around or you know. I quite admire like fashion and music and art and film scene and those people and they've got really excellent stories and they're very cool characters but I think they're not scary people to play a gig to, scary people to play a gig to are kids. You know they are because they're deciding really they're at the beginning and they're deciding which way they're gonna go and they're the ones you can actually have an impact on. You can get them to start a band or you can get them to throw shit at you and you can get them to do things whereas the hipsters just stand there looking really cool thinking about themselves half the time. It isn't very interesting you know. I have loads of friends who are really amazing and they're probably like considered famous or whatever but they're just normal people it's not a big deal. Jamie and I don't get off stage and go so and so was here and blah blah it's just like not even part of it it's more like that fifteen year-old girl in the front row fucking stared me out the entire time and I'm really excited about it do you know what I mean? That's the sort of thing like kids come up at the end and they just tell you they're so free with their language you know they're talking a hundred miles an hour and you can kind of catch half of it and they're so excited and they're bright red and they're trying to say, 'well this is what it meant to me and this is what I'm going to do now I'm going to go home and do this' and you're like that is the whole reason for doing this because that's the kind of thing what happened for me. I went and saw Fugazi when I was a kid and I was so



obsessed by that I followed them round for a month and a half and I changed my entire life because this was all I was going to do and I was already in a band and I was already touring all the time. But there was something about them and the kind and amount of passion they put into it every night the amount of energy absolutely everything they have and it's like they're dead people afterwards.

Me: Yeah I saw them and they played for like two hours

Alison: Yeah and it never goes down at all it just keeps going up it's unbelievable you know I yeah it's just I want to be that have that kind of impact I want to leave the mark you know and I don't care if it doesn't come until twenty years after I'm dead it's like that's the aim that's not. Not really interested into what kind of happens right now it's just sorta. I want it to be like those bands that I think about that are kind of either dead or broken up but they had so much impact on me when I was growing up and they inspired me to do everything I've ever done.

Me: Like who else did that for you?

Alison: Velvet Underground Patti Smith she's still around I saw her play not too long ago fucking awesome and let's see I don't know Television, Magazine, Suicide but I can't really go see them now because if it's bad and I don't want it to change my mind. I don't know a fairly long list but you know that feeling it's just.

Me: Yeah I know what you mean because when I saw you when I was young that was a big influence on me in starting a band and write stuff write music generally and bands like Bikini Kill

Alison: Yeah totally and Bikini Kill was part of that for me and I was quite young when I first saw them and I was like this is fucking totally up my alley this is so amazing

Me: I never got to see Bikini Kill live but you know Le Tigre Kathleen's new band I get a lot from watching them play live

Alison: Oh Le Tigre yeah

Me: So I have to go so do you have any words of wisdom or any lessons learnt or still learning?

Alison: Not really I hate that I get that question and I never say anything (laughs) but yeah.

Me: That's fine

### (An incomplete) Discography!

- Discount - Ataxia's Alright Tonight (1996: Liquid Meat)
- Discount - Half Fiction (1997: Kat Records)
- Discount - Love Billy (1998: Fuelled By Ramen)
- Discount - Crash Diagnostic (2000: New American Dream)
- Discount - The singles #1 (2001: New American Dream)
- Discount - The singles #2 (2001: New American Dream)
- The Kills - Black Rooster EP (2002: Domino)
- The Kills - Keep on Your Mean Side (2002: Domino)
- The Kills - No Wow (2005: Domino)

www.discounttheband.com  
www.thekills.tv

DREAMT THIS WAS A CASTLE

26/10/04. 4.34 pm

I'm absolutely gutted: John Peel contributed massively to the melanie that I am. Shit, Shit, Shit.

No-one else would have, or would have fought to, play us what he did.

Such was his altruistic desire to share his passions, & his inspiring, steadfast integrity in not dumbing down: not selling himself & his listeners out (or selling us short).

I spent my life growing to John Peel's shows. He truly gave me the cake that said EAT ME, encouraged me to take a bite & I grew, & grew, & grew.

I can't imagine the 14+ year old me without Peel to listen to in my room, without him to introduce me to my life & to encourage my listening: true #listeningt.

Those late nights I spent alone, in Suburbia, with Peel shaped, formed & moulded some of my thinking, ideals and future. I owe him a great deal & will miss his guidance. He brought me up well!

There's no fucking way I'd be here, doing what I'm doing, knowing the people I know had it not been, in part, for John Peel showing me the way; showing me what was out there; teaching me there were alternatives.

That first time I heard him play Sheila-Na-Gig did it for me. He knew. He knew. There's very, very few out there now in mainstream music-media who care, let alone know.

We could be fucked.

New generations of trapped 14 yr olds almost definitely are.

Discography represents a good memory over experiences without imagination or curiosity

Leeds' last organisation supporting adult women survivors of childhood sexual abuse shut down in February 2005 due to lack of funding. SA-SH (Sexual Abuse - Support in Healing) was a tiny rented shop in Harehills where a handful of women, all volunteers and abuse survivors themselves, gave their time and energy to support others coming to terms with their abuse. Less than six months earlier Leeds Rape Crisis helpline closed also due to lack of funding and 2001 saw the demise of LISA (Leeds Incest Survivors Action) for the same reason. The situation for local support agencies is not unique to Leeds and even nationwide organisations like NAPAC (National Association for People Abused in Childhood) have had to close their help and info telephone line recently because of lack of finances and external support.

Have you even *heard* of any of these organisations?

How often do you hear talk of survivors full stop? But we hear plenty about paedophiles. Personally I don't remember hearing the word 'paedophile' until about five years ago when suddenly, particularly following the murder of Sarah Payne, I heard it almost every time I switched on the TV or radio or read a paper. Various tabloid newspapers, most famously The News of The World, took it upon themselves to 'name and shame' paedophiles (or not, as the case may be, for they often got the wrong person) all under the emotionally manipulative guise of 'protecting our children'.

The media is obsessed with evil shadowy paedophiles stalking the neighbourhood but can't bring itself to address the fact that the greatest threat to children is from family members, that the vast majority of abuse happens in the home and for this is all the more difficult to detect. Yet whilst the media are consistently preoccupied with the vice of paedophilia they unquestioningly champion the nuclear family unit, inaccurately focusing all their attacks on outsiders, thus avoiding any consideration of the fucked-upness of systems already in place. It will always be so, that is the purpose of much of the media. Such an approach is inaccurate and dangerous. Even liberal papers such as the Guardian and Independent discuss paedophiles in terms of estimated statistics which seem redundant in light of the fact that so much abuse is never reported or recorded. Society's focus is on the children for whom there is support from statutory agencies, if the child is able to disclose. There is little recognition that most abuse survivors never get help as children but grow into adults who may never feel able to talk about what's happened and who, given the current state of affairs, may never be able to access support if they want it. The focus of the media and society as a whole is on demonising deviant sexual behaviour and playing on the public's fears for their children. Keeping women and girls indoors and scared. If abuse of the most vulnerable people in society was really the issue, if women's welfare and self-determination were genuinely valued, then support for survivors would be invested in. The focus of the media's disgust is not upon the fact that survivors experienced abuse and subsequent trauma, but on people having 'weird sex'. It is precisely 'the children', or the adults into whom the children grow, who are forgotten in the process of demonisation as the lack of support for survivors shows. Since SA-SH shut down there is no specialist help in Leeds for women survivors, and only one group for men. Health and other services are not informed of how to support those who've been through abuse; even on the internet resources for the UK are few and far between.

The connections between childhood sexual abuse and other social issues are long forgotten by local and national government who speak of doing away with poverty, crime, drug use, alcoholism, domestic violence, homelessness, educational underachievement, long-term unemployment, mental illness, suicide. Childhood abuse can shatter your self esteem, sense of self, it devastates confidence and thus your ability to study and work - it affects every one of your life chances and leaves you with a lot of things in your head to try and block out in whatever way you can. Does it take a genius to work out that supporting the huge number of women and men who've survived sexual abuse could make all the government's statistics look a lot healthier, could massively change society for the better?

In a climate of fear, anxiety and hysteria, where so much urgency is invested on finding an unknown, outsider menace lurking in the distance upon which to lump blame for all society's ills, any genuine concern for the survivors of sexual abuse is lost. Certainly the message for adult survivors provided by the media and society is, thanks for giving us our nemesis, now you're on your own.

#### Support after rape, sexual abuse or sexual assault

Please note that Leeds Rape Crisis Helpline (0113 2440058), SA-SH and LISA have now closed due to lack of funding. Below are some other organisations in the region, which offer support to women and men following rape, sexual abuse, sexual assault and domestic abuse.

This list was last updated in Feb 05 but funding for these organisations is constantly under threat. Please be aware that services may have changed their opening hours or have closed entirely. Keep trying and support will be available.

This list is Leeds-centric, and may well be incomplete. It is only meant as a starting point for your own research.

If you feel strongly about this lack of resources, raise money for your local organisation, if you no longer have one write to your MP, etc etc...

Please feel free to photocopy this list and leave it in public places.

#### Specialist rape and sexual abuse helplines and centres

**Barnsley Sexual Abuse and Rape Crisis Helpline** 01228 298560 (Mon 1-3pm Tue, Wed & Thu 6-8pm) Women only.  
**Bradford Sexual Abuse and Rape Crisis Survivors Service** 01274 308 270 (Tue 8-8pm, Wed & Fri 1-4pm) Women only.  
**Derbyshire Rape Crisis** 01332 372 545 (Mon 10-12, 6.30-8.30; Tue 10-12, 7.30-9.30; Wed 12.30-2.30, 6-8; Thu 5.30-9.30; Fri 10-12, 1-3)  
**Doncaster Rape and Sexual Abuse Counselling Centre** 01302 360421 (Mon 5-7pm; Tue 9.30-10.30; Thu 1.30-2.30pm) From 13 years. Some face-to-face counselling.  
**Hull Rape Crisis** 01482 329990 (Mon 10.30-12.30, Fri 5.30-7.30pm) Women only.  
**Kirkless Rape and Sexual Abuse Counselling Centre** 01484 450040 (Mon & Wed 1-4pm; Fri 5-8pm) Women only.  
**Manchester Rape Crisis and Sexual Abuse Counselling Centre** 0161 273 4500 (Mon-Fri 10am-4pm)  
**Respond** 0808 808 0700 (Mon-Fri 1.30-5pm) National helpline and support for victims and perpetrators of abuse who have learning difficulties.  
<http://www.respond.org.uk>  
**Sheffield Rape and Sexual Abuse Counselling Project** 0114 244 7936 From 13 years

Sheffield Survivors 0114 279 8333 (Thu 6.30-8pm) Men only.  
Survivors UK 0845 1231201 (Tue & Thu 7-10pm) Men only.  
<http://www.survivorsuk.co.uk>  
York Rape Crisis 01904 610 917 (Thu 7-9pm)



## Rape

**Male Rape Support Association** 07932 896274; 07932 967461 (Mon-Fri 8am-10pm)

**STAR (Surviving Trauma After Rape)** 01924 298 954 All West Yorkshire. Women and men 14 and over who have experienced recent rape.

<http://www.starproject.co.uk>

## Childhood sexual abuse

**Blue Door** 0113 248 4847 Support for under 18s who have experienced or witnessed abuse.

**Chesterfield Sexual Abuse and Incest Line** 01248 556114 / 559689 (Women in North Derbyshire only, not a helpline, counselling by appointment)

**Mosaic** 01274 308 018 West Yorkshire. Support for families affected by sexual abuse. Support for mums, dads, children, counselling, groups

**National Association of People Abused In Childhood** 0800 085 3330 (freephone helpline, Mon-Fri 9am-5pm) <http://www.napac.org.uk> (this line closed Dec 04, may reopen)

**NSPCC Child Protection Helpline** 0808 800 5000 (freephone, 24 hours)

**SAFE** 01722 410889 National helpline for survivors of ritual abuse (Mon-Sat 6-8pm)

**Self-Help Initiatives Project (SHIP)** 0113 245 5151. Group for adult male survivors of sexual abuse. Also anger management and other groups for women and men.

**SURVIVE (Adult Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse in North Yorkshire)** 01904 642830 Women only. Thu 7.30-10pm. Answerphone checked daily.

## Sexual health

**Leeds Centre for Sexual Health (Leeds General Infirmary)** 0113 392 6725  
Appointments for sexual health checks. Call for details of clinics in other areas of Leeds

**NHS Direct** 0845 46 47 General health advice

## Generic counselling in Leeds

**Burley Lodge Centre** 0113 275 4142 Leeds 6 area.

**Leeds Counselling WPS** 0113 245 0303

**Leeds Crisis Centre** 0113 275 5898 Short-term emergency counselling.

**Leeds Mind** 0113 230 7673

**Market Place** 0113 246 1659 13-25 year olds only.

**Women's Counselling and Therapy Service** 0113 245 5725

## Other

**British Pregnancy Advisory Service** 08457 30 40 30 (local rate)

**Childline** 0800 1111 (freephone, 24 hours)

**Connect Helpline** 0808 800 1212 (freephone, daily, 6-10.30pm)

**Genesis** 0113 245 0915 Support for those who are or have been involved in prostitution.

**Leeds Survivor Led Crisis Service** 0113 260 9328

**Leeds Women's Aid** 0113 246 0401

**National Domestic Violence Helpline** 0808 2000 247 (freephone, 24 hours)

**Samaritans** 0113 245 6789 (24 hours)

**West Yorkshire Police** 0845 606 0606

## Useful websites

<http://www.sdfwomen.org.uk/abuse.htm> - information for disabled women experiencing abuse

<http://www.rapecrisis.org.uk>

<http://www.womensaid.org.uk>

<http://www.abuselaw.co.uk>

# BULLEN'S BAKEOVERS



Reason 162 Mmmmmmm tasty!!!

How to convert a drab Morrisons chocolate sponge cake into a brilliant something gatecrasher. Jane Asher (she's always storming parties to steal back her cakes) would dream about it in karma with down a shopping aisle.

## Today's look

### BUENO IN THE HOLE

Ideal for those who are looking for an alternative to last seasons fillings or just want to have fun by mixing together styles from a classic dinner and desert.

- 1 First get the foundation right by making up the cake mix as the instructions tell you to (fig. 1). There's no need to follow them religiously though. Use milk instead of water if you want, have fun with it. It's your cake, it's your style. Also, using milk is in the ethos of Kinders' organic pushing advertising and the ethos of the ingredients used in the savoury sausage based dinner we're creating. So don't be afraid, go for it you want!
- 2 Grease and line a tin. This will both make you feel professional and allow for, if you wish, to get a small picture of Jane Asher underneath the greaseproof paper (fig. 2) in an attempt to turn Asher to stone and so bless your cake. If you are a Satanist then you'll probably want to use a picture of Della Smith, yeah or the other way do.
- 3 Place however many Bueños you want in the tin. It's your cake, have fun with it! Although a good tip is to use sausages to mark out where you want the Bueños to go as referencing the original look of the dinner course will help you to not get too carried away.
- 4 Pour the mix around the Bueños leaving a little bit over which you should then use to cover the tops of the Bueños with. You'll have to use your fingers here so don't fancy about with some shit, ahem, get stuck in. Visualize washing your hands in Jane Asher's soapy frigwater afterwards if this helps Jane's frigwater has turned all brown she's done a good job.
- 5 Place in a preheated oven and set a timer. There's no way you won't be peering about in front of a mirror affected about how you'll look carrying this masterpiece and it's all too easy to forget about the actual cake! Have fun in both of the mirrors, you've set a timer!
- 6 Remove from oven (fig. 3) and badda baking bing! Or bing bing bing!



By Paul Hallowell Bullen





When I was a little girl, I didn't have the time of day for dolls, I much preferred more creative stuff involving glue, pens, paper & a whole lotta mess. I had a few second-hand Barbies that I wasn't particularly attached to (I never have had that maternal urge!), I didn't give them names, and they spent their lives naked in a bag of bath toys along with the A Team figures. Skip on a few years to the 23yr old me, enter my room and you'll be greeted by shelves full of dolls, whether it be boxed, wide eyed 'fashion' dolls, collector comic-book and manga style dolls, deathly goth dolls, retro huge-headed dolls, snowboarding, outdoor-pursuing dolls, electronic dancing dolls, novelty tourist dolls, punked-up cheapo dolls or hula girls, my room is now a plastic-fantastic doll haven.

How has this feminist ended up surrounded by plastic (faux ??) representations of females & femininity? And can dolls ever be a good thing?

"I won't have one of those things in the house. It gives a young girl a false notion of beauty, not to mention anatomy. If a real woman was built like that she'd fall on her face"  
"If we don't let her have one like all the other girls she'll feel singled out. It'll become an issue. She'll long for one and she'll turn into one. Repression breeds sublimation, you know that!"  
(Margaret Atwood: The Female Body 4, 1993)

#### Hey, doll face

It's estimated that in the US, the average girl owns 10 Barbies, while her British counterpart has 5. With other dolls (noticeably Bratz dolls - the new wave of fashionable, streetwise, & decidedly hot dolls) outselling Barbie at the moment, dolls are still huge business, the 'must-have' toy entering kids lives.

Melissa Miller (2002): 'I find it strange that dolls shapes are so uniform. We should be giving children dolls that are tiny, dolls that are medium-sized and dolls that are larger. So then, when children take off their clothes, they will notice that there is a difference and learn from that. If a child is presented with one shape over and over again, it seems inevitable that they will start to think that this is normal'

I think this is part of my obsession, collecting such varied and weird dolls, a huge range of female representation, from the sublime to the ridiculous, quite like the women I know...

#### I am, doll parts: bad skin

Looking away from Barbie and her 'Toys R Us' comrades, 'normal' doll sizes, shapes, lifestyles, taglines, forms and merchandising approaches are being challenged left right & centre. Hell, there's alternatives: forward thinking, politically conscious or independently made dolls for empowerment, escapism and identification.  
Now if only kids were given more opportunities to play with these honeys...

Blythe: "She's a nun, a hippie, a starlet, a tennis player, uptown catching a cab or downtown spacing out, prancing on the beach or telling Santa her secret Xmas wish. Blythe is every woman!"  
(Gina Garen: This is Blythe)  
(well, I guess it's a wider spectrum of female representation than mainstream dolls provide their audience: that of mother, wife and job-holder)

Blythe is the girl you wish you were sometimes. She can be anything you want. [...] They all have different traits that carry over things you wish you woulda done, or coulda done, or shoulda done' (Donna Czarski in: Bust)  
(Imagination and creativity and escapism is a huge part of doll culture for many owners)

Emme: 'Emme at size 16 is the first "plus size" doll. The woman she is based on (Melissa Miller, (38), America's most successful plus size model) does not have preternatural proportions, on the contrary, with a 43-33-44 figure & weighing in at 13 and a half stone, she is more like the average American or British woman than Barbie could ever be. [G. Hodge. The Independent 24/12/02]

Feral Cheryl: 'This doll runs barefoot, dreadlocks in her hair with coloured braids and beads, wears simple rainbow clothes, has piercing & a range of tattoos, and even a bit of natural body hair.

'In contrast to the 'fashion doll' mentality, Feral Cheryl does not have an extensive wardrobe, or high heels, or swimsuit, or gym gear, or wedding dress, or cheerleader outfit.

'Her motto is, "Live Simply, Run Wild". You may find Feral Cheryl at a local market, her dreadlocks tied back, belly button bared, dancing away to Bentmettle in her bare feet'  
[[www.feralcheryl.com.au](http://www.feralcheryl.com.au)]

Dyke Dolls: The world's first lesbian action dolls are now on sale ([www.dykedolls.com](http://www.dykedolls.com)).

The 12-inch-tall Bobbie wears a boy-beater T-shirt, a leather biker jacket and a bitchin' tattoo. If you're over 21, you can buy the full accessory package, which includes a tiny leather harness, dildos and miniature vibrators.

In addition to the flagship Rockabilly Bobbie, there are two other Dykedolls to choose from: Doc Holiday and Diesel Dyke are Bobbie's Sapphic sisters, bursting with lesbian style and sensibility. (Doc is) as cute as a button, wearing cowboy boots, a sleeveless flannel and a straw Stetson. If Western aint your thang, and you prefer 'em a bit more on the butch side, Diesel Dyke could be the gal to rev your engine - she sports a cutoff gasoline shirt and low slung jeans, a wallet on a chain and a short, butch haircut' [Curve, Dec 04]

Get Real Girls: 'Our mission is to make a difference in young girls' lives by providing entertaining properties that promote self-confidence and healthy active lifestyles. Our message to girls, 'Be your own role model' reflects our strong belief that girls are adventurous at heart, and can be inspired to play and succeed. We want girls to know that in life, it's best to be in the game, and not on the sidelines' [[www.getrealgirls.com](http://www.getrealgirls.com)]

Featuring a series of dolls having adventures snowboarding in France, surfing in Australia, backpacking in Africa, & scuba diving in Mexico, Get Real Girls provide realistically shaped and clothed dolls that encourage their audience to join in their adventures. Each doll comes with its own bio: these girls are going to college, developing their own homepages, and have aims to become Vets and Marine Biologists, amongst other things. Eat that, pregnant Barbie!

Skylar: 'Someday I want to be a veterinarian and I'm on my way to reaching that goal by having my own Pet Rescue site online. I'm going for it!' (that's the only downside to these awesome dolls - my life as an unemployed 23yr old, with few aspirations, has just paled in comparison to a dolls'... damn!)

#### Doll Revolution

'She came whizzing down the stairs, thrown like a dart. She was stark naked. Her hair had been chopped off, her head was back to front, she was missing some toes and she'd been tattooed all over her body with purple ink, in a scroll-work design.  
She hit the potted Azalia, trembled there for a moment like a botched angel, and fell.  
'I guess we're safe'  
(Margaret Atwood: The Female Body 4, 1993)

Maybe my doll obsession isn't such a bad thing after all.





# Interruptor Jones

Interview by Vinny (skilldemon@yahoo.co.uk)

## Introduce yourself.

Antony Krasauskas AKA Interruptor Jones. I would say that I play emo, but it's got a really bad reputation recently. I'm thinking more along the lines of old skool, big thick glasses, tank tops, proper side partings (not the half way over fringe over the eyes one). Like Morrissey, Rivers Cuomo, Walter Schriefels kind of style.

## Let's start with the obligatory shameless plug. What are you working on? Any gigs coming up?

At the moment I'm still trying to get the hang of recording on my laptop. It's not that difficult, it just comes out sounding like it was recorded through the wall of a skip. I'm hoping to figure that out and get it sold at gigs. Also, there's been talk of recording a split ep with a couple of friends of mine, and maybe a big name celebrity on there too. Gig wise I don't have many contacts so I'm not great at setting gigs up, but I've got a few calls in.

## How easy do you find it to come up with lyrics and music? Does it come naturally or do you struggle?

I can write lyrics piece of piss. Writing good lyrics that don't sound stupid the next day is more difficult. Usually I just write complete toss. I have books filled with the most self serving "why doesn't anyone understand my pain" bollocks. This is just stuff I write to please myself so that I can get around to writing better things. The best songs I've written were all done in about 10 minutes. I appreciate people taking weeks to tweak lines and notes and stuff, but when I do it like that it just sounds forced. Like I'm trying too hard. Partly that, and partly just because I get bored easily, so if something takes longer than 20 minutes I'll have already been distracted by shiny things by then.



## Although you're a solo artist do you ever think about getting a full band together to play your stuff? How would that change your overall sound?

I do sometimes think it might be better to have a band. But I hate the idea of being the writer/singer/guitarist in a band. I'd much rather be in a band where everyone writes the songs. I know I'd hate to just be playing somebody else's songs because I wouldn't feel like I was getting anything out of it. I know for me, my songs are very personal. I'm surprised when people say that they can relate, or even that they like it. I can't see that anyone else would get much joy out of playing my songs. It'd be like someone reading out of my diary. You always play/sing/whatever better if there's something of yourself invested into it.

## How do you perceive your own personal image as regards being Interruptor Jones? Does it even matter to you, and should it matter to fans?

To me, I'm just some guy who writes songs. It always sort of bugs me when people get caught up in hype or fashion when it comes to bands. It's one thing to wear a band's shirt, or hat or whatever. But when you start dressing exactly like them you lose the point. The number of alternative individuals you see wearing the exact same shirts and jeans and hoodies. It's the same with punks, emo kids, goths, metallers, chavs, football fans, and gangstas. I'm not saying that people shouldn't want to fit into a style, because that's just human nature to want to feel like you belong somewhere. But when you can't recognise your friends in a pub because they're all dressed exactly the same it's going a bit far. I don't try and put any sort of image across. I just am who I am. I admit I do wear a lot of black, which could be seen as attaching myself to a goth stereotype. It's like people make fun of chavs for wearing the same hats and the same coats. But the same could be said about the emo kids. I don't see that I'm trying to live up to a pre-imposed image. I am wrong of course...no-one is original. I must have stolen it from someone, because people were here before me...

## Who or what are your greatest influences?

These are all going to be typical selections I'm afraid. Musically I would say I am really influenced by Bright Eyes, The Cure, Matt Skiba, Ani DiFranco and Eels, to name a few. Outside of music, definitely Bill Hicks has been a big influence on me, particularly in the way that I look at the world. Allen Ginsberg, Henry Rollins, David Lynch, Beer, lots of beer. And I have to mention Jhnonen Vasquez too; otherwise I'll be exiled from the goth community.

## Anything else you'd like to add?

Nothing I can think of. Ooh, the website. [www.interruptorjones.tk](http://www.interruptorjones.tk) has a link to songs you can download. That's it I think...

**... let's go, let's sit, let's talk politics; it goes so good with beer...**

I've recently read an interview with Krist Novoselić (ex Nirvana bassist, and all round Grunge-God®) who, since the demise of Nirvana has been acting upon his political convictions by becoming deeply embroiled in activism; and has recently written a book entitled, *On Grunge and Government*, that makes his stances clear.

The interview & Krist's comments leave me with a huge sticking point which challenges my thinking around activism, as I know it.

Anyone who has read my 'zine, *I'm Not Waiting*, may be kinda clear on my political activist stance. 'Change' and 'Revolution' can be achieved and co-opted by independent, individual action, outside of political structures. The cultural can be political, and political activism does occur within culture. Independent, cultural, DIY action, *now*, operating at a distance from power structures, is as important for change as governmental action could ever be.

However, Krist (as interviewed by Punk Planet, (btw, all quotes herein, are from PP Issue 65), one of my most important sources of independent news coverage: unbiased and unreserved), such a prominent figure in the 'alternative'/grunge/'punk' scene for so many years, and still upholding this position; (as shown by Punk Planet's interest in him and his views), describes a politic so different to my own that it makes me question my integrities, and my beliefs.

Krist's political work, focus and beliefs come from working WITHIN Political frameworks and WITH the Political system.

**'Novoselić embraces democratic ideals with such abandon and expresses such a heartfelt belief that real changes happen by working WITH the system instead of against it, that the more cynical among us may roll their eyes.'**

**'after Nirvana ended, I really started to get involved in conventional politics. I started a political action committee and I recognized that in order to be effective advocates, we needed to cultivate a constituency'**

**'we supported candidates for office'**

**'Working with a coalition, Novoselić helped to defeat ordinance[s]'**

**'Succeeding in the face of the slow grind of the democratic process is a wonderful experience'**

**'After contemplating a run for Lieutenant Governor of Washington State in 2003, Novoselić decided against public office for the time being (he hasn't ruled out a run in '08)'**

How does a 'punk' (in the largest sense of the word), from Krist's background, seemingly change direction to believe in Governmental and Parliamentary systems as the way forward?

Krist is clear that he has hope and belief in 'the system', he has made a pledge of allegiance to working within the system to reform it, and is very optimistic about the effects this will have; an optimism that comes from his activism within the system in a conventional way, immersing himself in the ins and outs of the democratic process.

I'm confused. It's really challenging to me, as a DIY activist, to read of such alternate political action from someone within the 'punk scene', and to see the flaws in both our arguments (maybe). And to see Krist's admirable hope for, and belief in the system. (And in a way, (though the circumstances were far more complex, and necessary), it's kinda what I felt to see so many people from the punk community in support of John Kerry in the last US election, when he was never that much of a better alternative, really (tho, for the sake of human rights, queer liberties, and women's rights, I understood the motives for such an allegiance with traditional Politics at that time))

A big challenge to me are these comments from Krist:

**"It [the hope and belief in the system] comes from working within the system in a conventional way, and coming away from it with victories.**

**"we worked within the form of democracy to do it. We were reacting to things in Washington and instead we decided to be proactive about it, and that's how you approach the system: you talk to legislatures about it, you go to public hearings, go on record, you make your case, and you make your point - this is wrong, this isn't working, we need to make things better, this is how we make things better.**

**"democracy [is] pretty great, because it's a non-violent form for change.**

**"here's the punk part of it: You're challenging the status quo.**

**"This is the new wave. It challenges the status quo, and it creates a more raw democracy. Its people powered.**

**"Its about preserving democratic institutions, but giving them an upgrade. Its just like how punk rock didn't kill rock 'n' roll, it gave it a new life ... Rock 'n' Roll is enduring; so is democracy.**

DIY activism, by its very nature, is extremely pro-active in its challenge of the status quo. DIY activism doesn't just highlight what is wrong, and how this can be made better, it provides alternatives and action in the here and now, on people's individual levels, and in individual's lives. It's intrinsically people powered: by people who have to live in the society for which decisions are being made; what rawer a democracy can there be?

**P.P: >Its an old cliché that rock 'n' roll can change the world. But I wonder if your actions contradict that. I mean, you've left rock 'n' roll to save the world - or at least part of it<**

I think this (above) is what I'm trying to get at. Whilst this is not a Novoselić-bashing piece, by any means, or from a completely cynical point of view, I can't help but wonder how and why Novoselić needs to be a spokesman for conventional politics, when his past actions stood him in great stead to be an advocate for alternative politics, rather than (seemingly) contradicting them.

Why move from a position of 'agitator' to a position of 'organiser'?

Punk Planet kinda hit this nail on the head, for me, when they pose:

**P.P: >The way you put it, it doesn't seem like you're suggesting this massive change. Instead you're able to make it seem like its just another addition at a time when the flaws in the system are laid bare. I'm still not sure its that easy.<**

To move towards conventional politics, and the governmental system, does that not leave 'radical' political areas of concern out in the cold? Can radical ends be achieved by working with, and inside such a conservative medium? No, of course they can't. Buying into such a flawed system, regardless of optimistic hopes to change it, is almost futile. It (in my opinion), is the whole system itself that needs to be changed, not things within it.

Is Krist's politic one of liberal acceptance, rather than of an overturning? Is that the difference? Can this difference be embraced for the good of all?

For Krist to be accepted (as he clearly is) within 'the system' and the governmental structure; for him to be making changes; for his 'alternative' lifestyle and directives to be accepted; and for him to overturn the structure to allow himself to represent his 'alt' (?) political causes surely can't be all bad. It's subverting from the inside, right..?

But, can 'Grunge' and 'Government' ever be used in the same sentence, as Krist does in his book's title? Are they not a contradiction in terms? Anti-establishmentarianism within government structures...

What a headfuck.

Dec 04. (diy\_feminist\_activism\_zine@hotmail.com)