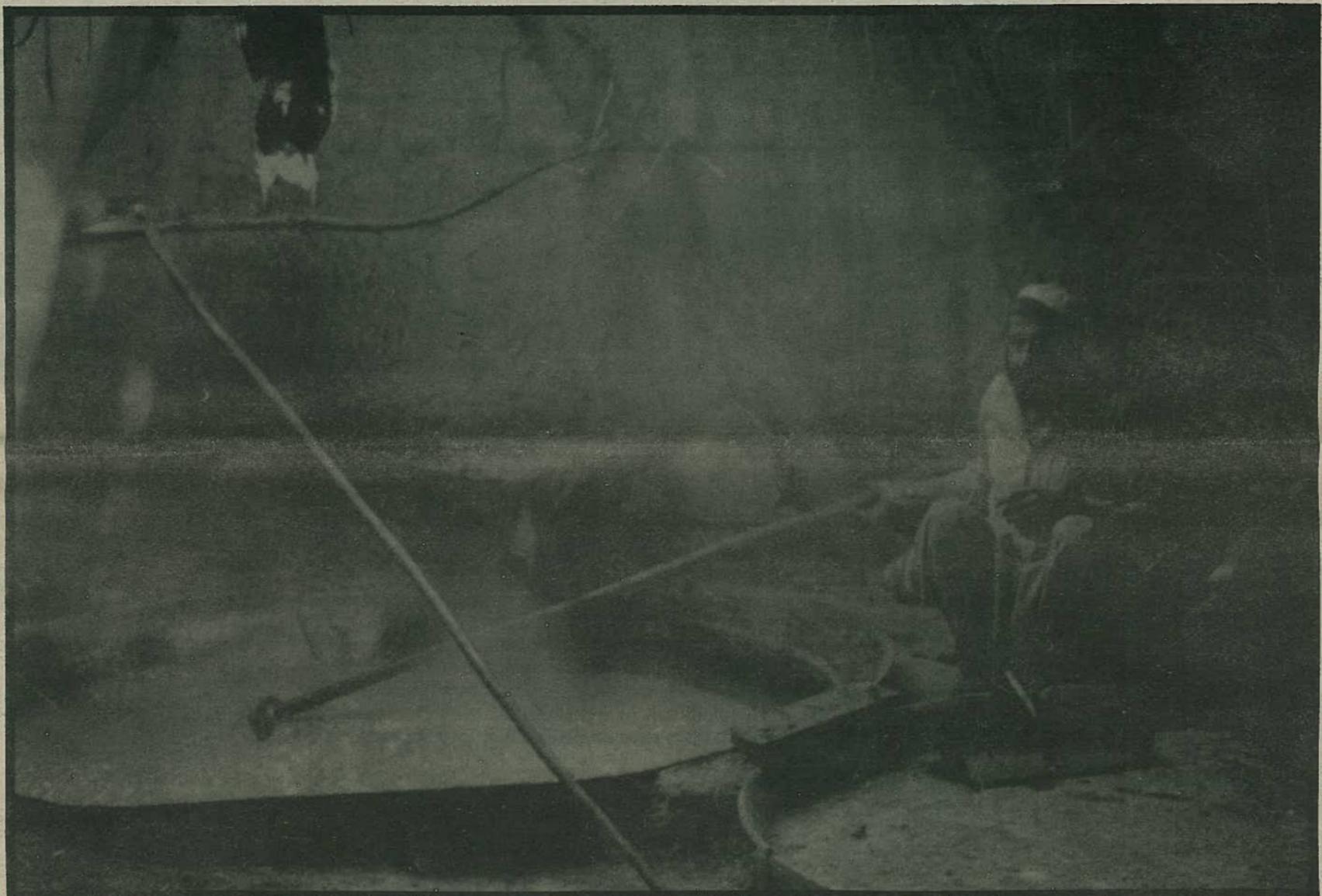


# RHETORIC FARM

March/April 1988

Vol. II No. 2

**FREE!**



## PAKISTAN

NOT FOR BEGINNERS



**SHANE PAUL:**

ARTIST OR MARTYR

RECORD REVIEWS

REBARB POETRY

FICTION

Contents

Pakistan.....3  
 Scott Veggeberg now checks under his seat before taking a bus

Shane Paul.....7  
 Jordan Gruener looks for a martyr in Phoenix, and finds one

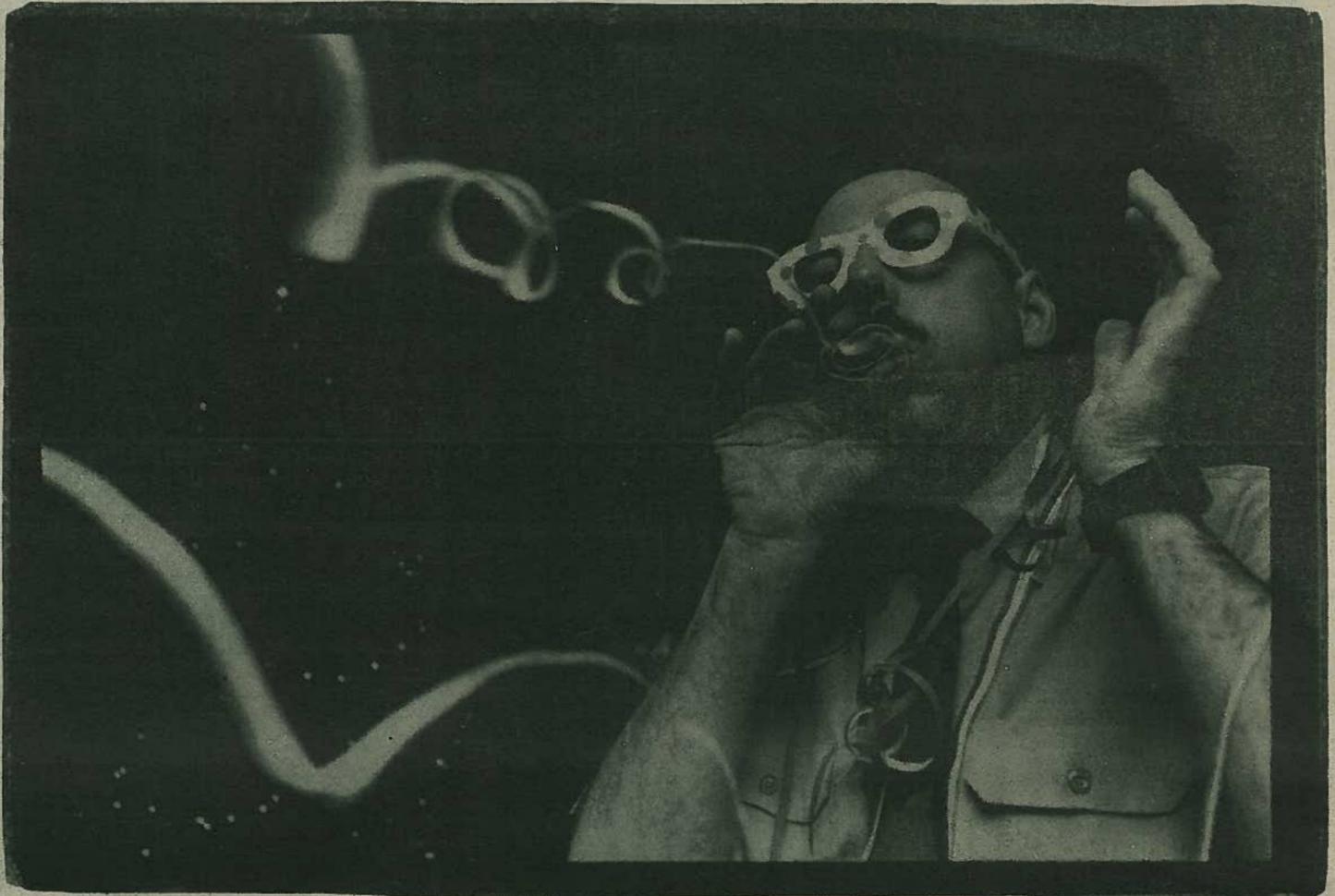
**Departments**

Poetry.....5

Rebarb.....6  
 Fred takes over this month and spits up a few Valium

Al's Cassette Corner.....8  
 The Sloppy Guitarist, Heather Perkins, Wallmen

Record Reviews.....8  
 Killdozer, Laughing Hyenas, Brian Ritchie, Richard Lloyd, Big Black, Yung Wu, Game Theory, French, Frith, Kaiser, Thompson



New Year's Eve 1988

**RHETORIC FARM**

po box 43171 tucson az 85733-3171

Volume II Number 2  
 March/April 1988

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Front Cover Photo by Scott Veggeberg

**F R O M T H E S T A F F**

For those of you wondering where Rhetoric Farm came from, here is a brief overview: Rhetoric Farm was formed in the Spring of 1985 when the forces of the universe converged upon Tucson, Arizona to make a newspaper/magazine/fanzine that would defy space and time.

Tucson was aghast. Never before had such quality fiction, poetry and record reviews been collected with such magnitude. Never before had anyone even attempted to collect such diverse elements under one catastrophic roof.

Even now, we write in wonderment as people try to pronounce the name Rhetoric Farm. We squeal with glee as people read our latest issue and wonder just who Rebarb is.

Our mailbox overflows daily with letters from Texas, California, New York...even France and Austria (we're not making this up). The letters pour in from everywhere. Everywhere, that is, except our favorite place of all—Tucson, Arizona.

Yes, the Old Pueblo. The very place where our farm takes root. The place of Value Village and Mt. Lemmon. The place where the cultures of many lands live in love and harmony guided by the unwritten laws of peace and understanding. A place where lions and lambs frolic in the morning dew.

So what gives, Tucson? Are we over your head? Are we out of touch? Out of reach? We have an address. Write to us. A mind is a terrible thing to waste. So is Rhetoric Farm.

Front Cover Artwork: *The Pregnant*  
 See 1987 Ink on Paper 19 1/2" x 20" by Shane Paul.

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Front cover photo is of a man making brown sugar.

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All back issues of Rhetoric Farm (except issues 10 and Vol. 2 No. 1) are available in photocopied form only, for \$1.50 each.

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- 9: John Doe of X/Ru Paul
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**Volume II**

- 1: Mary's Nightmare/Dream Street /Garbage and Jeff Keenan on Van Christian

**DISTRIBUTION**

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Many journalists go into Afganistan to cover the war. It's sort of a badge of honor. Alas, I did not earn this badge.

But with random gunfire and terrorist bomb blasts echoing through the border town of Peshawar, Pakistan, I realized I was close enough.

The thin line called border provides little insulation from a war that has raged since 1979. The Soviets moved in to quell infighting among Afgahan communists and never left. About 1 million Afghans have died and 5 million are now refugees in neighboring countries.

I went on this trip with my father, a doctor from Houston who runs a relief effort for Afghan refugees. My job was to chronicle the exploits of the medical group he assembled.

The dull thump of automatic weapon fire far away in the night punctured the tranquillity of the group's first dinner in Peshawar, taken outdoors at the upscale Pearl Continental Hotel. Raised forks froze midway to mouths as members of the medical group turned to my father for an explanation.

"Probably just a wedding" was his none too convincing response.

It seems we were supposed to believe that gun fire and joy were linked out here. Actually, he was probably right. As I later found out, firing guns into the air is a way of celebrating the bonds of matrimony among the Afghan refugees in camps surrounding the city. In this part of the world guns mean Kalishnikovs, a powerful automatic rifle that is the favorite of both Soviet troops and the Afghan resistance.

That "just a wedding" explanation, though, was wearing a bit thin by the time I met Albert Mohn, a Norwegian reporter whose car war was shot at. The bullet entered through the roof and lodged in the floor.

The official police theory was a stray round, probably from target practice somewhere, happened to fall upon the roof of his car.

Mohn was not convinced and said he thought he had been targeted by Afghan communist agents in Peshawar because of his staunch anti-Soviet reporting.

But for Mohn, who has been covering international gunplay since the Korean War, getting shot is a nuisance, not news, so he continued his business undeterred.

We visited the U.S. Consulate, surrounded by an eight-foot thick wall, reassuring until you think of why it is so necessary. We learned that stray rounds were not the only problem in this neck of the woods. The Afghan secret police was sponsoring terrorist bombings around town. There was also the Iranian threat.

Consul George Reasonover informed us that a general death threat had been made against Americans, linked to U.S. military actions in the Persian Gulf. With the presence of "Iranian assets" in the area the consulate were taking the threat seriously, and we should too. That meant staying out of the old market place, no loitering and generally avoiding public places altogether.

Right. We came halfway around the world to one of the most dramatic and

by Scott Veggeberg

# PAKISTAN



THE AUTHOR'S FATHER, DR. KERMIT R. VEGGEBERG, M.D., STANDING NEXT TO A SIGN IMPLORING VISITORS TO CHECK THEIR WEAPONS AT THE DOOR.

Scott Veggeberg

exotic parts of the world to stay in our hotels. Needless to say we quickly learned to ignore the danger element.

"Everything you've heard about Peshawar is true. It's a nest of gunrunners and drug dealers," Reasonover told me. "There are about four or five was going on so it's a fascinating place to be."

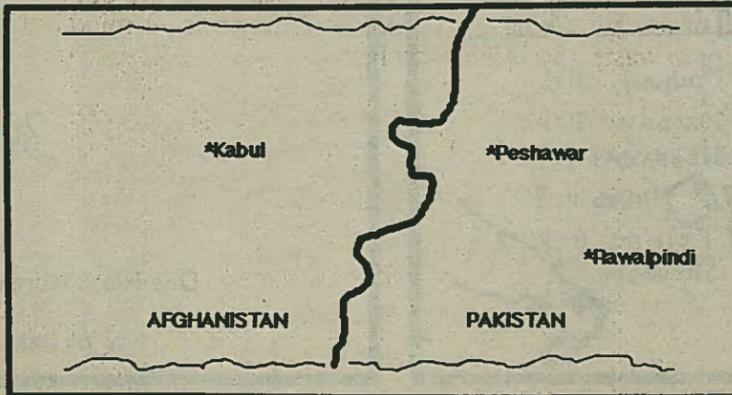
Aside from the fighting between the Afghans and Soviets there are a few minor revolts in the provinces. The tribal territories along the Afghan-Pakistan border have never been subjugated, and even the Afghan resistance fighters must pay tribute to local chieftans to pass undisturbed. Not far away, India and Pakistan

occasionally mix it up over a border dispute in the Himalayas.

Stepping out from the "Fortress U.S.A." embassy building I soon discovered a danger equal to the aforementioned bullets and bombs. It was the Peshawar traffic, an absolute crush of cars, trucks, buses, horse carts, bicycles and camels. One especially hazardous sub-species of this swarm was the Peshawar rickshaw, a hurtling three-wheeled hornet for hire.

After one adrenalinizing blast through town, I took the liberty of coining a motto for these death-defying devices - with apologies to the man of steel:

"More powerful than a terrorist



bombing, stronger than an Iranian death squad...The Peshawar rickshaw - risking life and limb in pursuit of locomotion."

The buses are none too safe either. I took a bus out to the Nas-ir-bagh Clinic to drop in on members of the medical team working with full-time U.S. volunteers there. The next day a bomb went off on a bus travelling the same route, killing five and injuring 30.

This extremely grave incident definitely put a kink in my 'when in Rome, do as the Romans do' attitude, so I took taxis for the rest of my three-week stay.

The Nas-ir-bagh clinic provides treatment for the Afghan refugees in surrounding camps. With the help of a U.S. government grant it also trains Afghan medics for service back inside their country. It was at Nas-ir-bagh that I began to get a feeling for the dimensions of the war.

One patient, a man of about fifty-five, dressed in the traditional knee length top shirt with underlying pants and a white turban, came to the clinic for a refill of a prescription for heart medication. He was written a month's supply but asked if he could get six months.

He said he was going to be inside Afghanistan fighting the Soviets for six months and wouldn't be able to make it back for a refill.

The doctor compromised and gave him a three-month prescription.

Most able-bodied men spend time over the border in their "holy war" against the Soviets. When you ask Afghan men about the war they often pull up some article of clothing and show you their scars. Their X-rays are often littered with shrapnel that cannot be retrieved. Others are luckier - one hospital patient insisted that I snap his picture, surrounded by his friends, while proudly holding a hunk of shrapnel removed from his leg.

At Ibne-Sina hospital, run by one of seven Afghan political parties, I met Abdul Basir. He became a regular at evening chats back at our hotel rooms with beers all around. And yes, Moslems do drink, despite strict religious and legal prohibitions.

To get beer at our hotel, we simply called room service. They bring the 1-liter bottles wrapped in newspaper and laid on their side on a tray. Discretion is required in these matters.

Basir had been a medical student at Kabul University when he got the word that he was about to be arrested as a middle-class intellectual and enemy of the communist government. He was lucky enough to escape to Peshawar in time; he looked back on eight family members lost to the secret police.

Basir now works as surgical assistant but spends three or four months a year in Afghanistan as a sort of medic/warrior.

"I like weapons and medicine together," he explained. His two favorite weapons are antibiotics against infections and rocket launchers against Soviets.

He spoke of one night's adventure. "Once a Russian convoy was crossing through our village. It was darkness, like now. I had a rocket

continued on page 4

Pakistan

continued from page 3

launcher and my brother had a 100-fire Kalishnikov. So, we just attack them and there was a big fire in the Russian convoy. I hit something. All that night I am happy.

"Tomorrow when we came to see what happened, it was an ambulance. I was happy not to spoil the bullet of rocket launcher," he said.

Basir is one of the nicest, warmest and genuinely friendly people I have met. He really saw no contradiction in the fact that he, a medical person, blew up an ambulance. In fact, his only real regret was that they could have finished the ambulance off with the rifle and saved the valuable rocket. Definitely a different kind of war.

Basir's brother joined us one night and told of forays by fighters across the Amu River and into the southern reaches of the Soviet Union. They attack soldiers and steal sheep, he said.

"The people of that part of Russia are very happy (with the raids) because they are also slaves," Basir said.

One night he invited me to go along on his next trip to Afghahnistan, and maybe I will go and earn my red badge

of journalistic courage.

After all, the drama is yet to unfold in Afghanistan with the Soviet withdrawal considered inevitable.

The situation could be chaos. There are seven rival parties based in Peshawar. But it is though they have been in absentia so long they no longer have clout inside Afghanistan. The real power now lies with the thousand or so commanders in charge of guerilla fighting units. Each commander pays lip-service allegiance to a particular party but this has been mainly to obtain munitions and other aid from outside.

Experts fear the Soviet withdrawal could spark a complete collapse of order as in Beirut. Another serious consequence could be a takeover by religious extremists as in Iran.

In any event the Soviets are leaving their "Vietnam" in much the same broken condition as we left ours. It may well be the braver journalist who goes in after they have left.

*Scott Veggeberg is a journalism graduate student at the University of Arizona. He visited Pakistan in November.*



Scott Veggeberg

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Poetry and Fiction

MY ROCK (WHITE LILY)

Cold, from sitting on my windowsill  
Round and slightly flat  
It fits exactly  
in my palm.

(my hand must still be the same size  
as it was years ago when we'd go walking,  
my brother, my sister, and I,  
carrying saguaro ribs for walking sticks  
and collecting stray curiosities discarded by nature,  
chunks of ironwood, and green waxy rocks;  
this rock, different, was from someone's  
landscaped  
front yard --

I wonder if my brother still has his chosen rock  
almost like mine but bigger  
not as perfect for the hand.)

Smooth, colored a greyed white, with holes like coarse pores,  
Looking almost like an egg,  
I imagine if I broke it open  
as the air rushed in the insides would  
crumble and  
crack like damp packed flour.  
The shadow cups one side  
Intrinsic  
And if I could pull it (like a starfish) off,  
there'd be the  
sucking popping noise of the  
breaking of a wet-ringed vacuum.

E L A I N E P A N G

THE FLOWER VENDOR

The flower vendor  
Sat with her lifestyle  
On a street corner.  
She dared the faces  
In passing, speeding cars  
Not to buy her gifts.  
She laughed like a mandolin  
And waved carnations  
In the air.  
No one stopped  
Or browsed or bought  
The vendor's look or flowers.  
The flower vendor  
Sat alone at sundown  
With long hair and no money,  
A day gone by  
without much cause. . .

K J S C O T T A

ACCIDENT SIDESHOW

Buying tacos and pepsi to watch the roadside show, sports fans gathered to see bodies twisted and faces contorted in the competition between life and death. They munched their meals as blood and flesh and metal flowed together into one spectacle of thrilling horror. Standing and staring, trying not to enjoy the taste of blood too much, the people mumbled the appropriate sounds of compassion while they fought for a closer look. The mangled bodies of five young boys, too young to be killed in an auto accident, gave the neighborhood a Sunday Matinee.

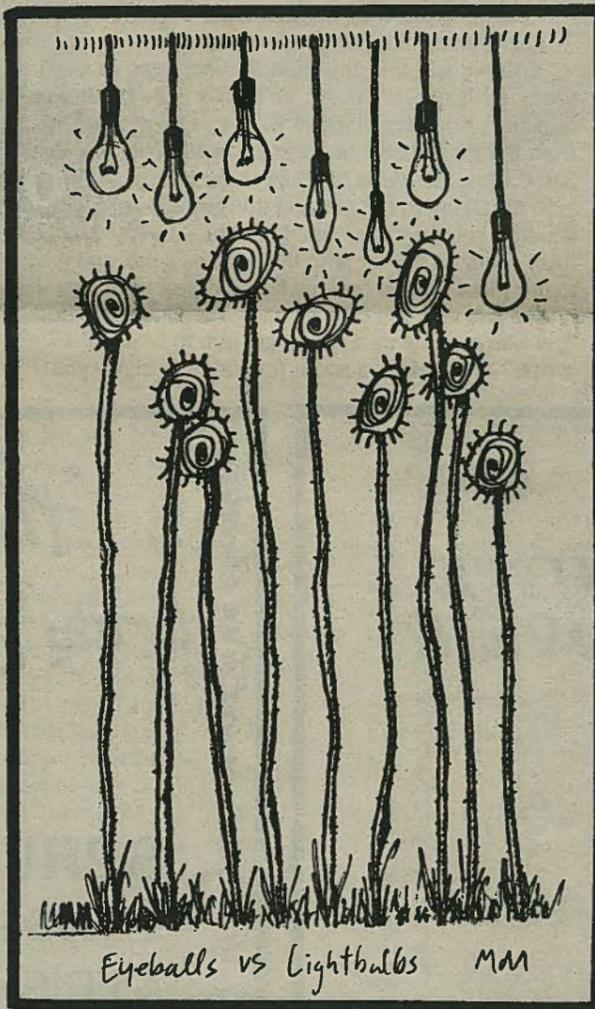
Witnessing a change in the world as it lost a few lives did not move the masses. It only made them hungry for peanuts and candy apples. Five young faces slipped from sight like fireflies, like an afterthought they were gone. When the biggest fireman had pulled the smallest body from its metal grave he vomited. Someone eating a burrito on the curb laughed out loud as if he were applauding the perfect ending to a perfect show.

K J S C O T T A

TRIBUTE

I still feel you  
Sticky sweet upon my fingers.  
I can take you  
Out of my pocket  
And remember the taste of you.  
You linger closely,  
Along the edges of my thoughts,  
Near the rim of my consciousness.  
Like an angry storm  
Of ice and rain,  
You sting my being  
And cloud my eyes  
With the very trace of you.

K A Y E S W A N



Mike Miskowski

GRAVES THAT DARKEN WITHOUT THEIR SHADOWS

We are all lost here in the light that washes the wrinkles and stretches the hidden; but love can master these symbolic codes, these allegories dressed as hallucinations, these undisclosing dreams. x is the answer. When you say you love me, you refer to what? That sex is being traded for financial benefits? Polarization sets in. Discipline can never rime with blessing. Never? If love is the answer, what then is the question?

E D W A R D M Y C U E

# STORIES FROM DOWN SOUTH-WAY DOWN SOUTH

AS TOLD BY REBARB

Ok, this is Rebarb and this week I'm really lazy so I'm going to let, actually it's this month, right? This month I'm really lazy so I'm going to have my friend Fred talk about...

Is this going to be on the radio?

We were in Mexico for awhile together, it was really fun, we shared a really funky hotel and she's going to talk about it.

Yeah, well this hotel like in the 1950s got, um, they built it, the government built it. The government built this really fancy hotel you know, they were going to make a big resort out of it you know and they built it, and like a few years after they built it, it got wiped out by a hurricane, and they never really bothered to fix it up you know, and it's like 30 years later and the hotel is still standing and so they rent out these second floor rooms, those are the only ones you can get, and like all the windows are busted out and everything and all these hippy-type people stay there and like there's like two people working the whole time, you know, some old junk guy. And, um, and all these really weird people stay there it's just really weird there's not much to say, but all the leaves are all grown up around it.

Rebarb: And the beach and everything.

And it's right on the beach. It's beautiful, but you can't get there unless you walk like a mile down the beach.

It's really scary at night and there are all these fucking mosquitoes and they're all munching you the whole time you're walking. It's really uncool. There's no one in the whole hotel but there are lights on everywhere, but there was no one there. I don't know, I don't know what else to say it was a weird hotel.



Paul Roth

## YOUR GUIDE REBARB

Rebarb: There were dogs barking. Can we turn this off for a second.

OK, we met this guy from Bisbee, right, in Mexico, yeah, in Mexico, of course, he knows like - cause a bunch of people from here lived in Bisbee. OK, we met this guy from Bisbee and he took us to this really cool place called San Carlos. So we're hitching to get there right, we're kind of talking to the guy and this guy we were with couldn't speak Spanish at all. Right, so we're sitting there riding in the car with this guy, he's um, and we get to this place and we find out he's a doctor right, and the tv's on and we can't take advantage at all and they're like "get him to write us a script, get him to write us a script." You know, a script for Valiums, right, you

know, he's trying to tell us you have to give this donation, you know, and all this stuff. Then we go to this place, and this is the weirdest part, this, this bar-type place and this friend of his had met these whores, OK and he's sitting there with these whores and they both look like girls to me and there was a transvestite sitting at the other table and you could tell that he was a transvestite, but these girls were girls, I know they were girls, and this guy is like, don't say his name OK, that's uncool, it shouldn't be in the thing, anyway I'll try not to say his name. Anyway we're sitting there at this table and he decides this girl is not a girl, but he can't speak Spanish at all, right, I'm the only one who can speak Spanish, so he's like "ask her, ask her," you know, we're all like trying not to talk about her, you know, like going, "Which one?" Just sitting right where you are, and we're like which one and he's like "ask her, ask her" and she totally knows we're talking about her. And she kind of has a little mustache, it was really funny, like this guy, he was saying "Man, you never know around here because, I've been like all the way there and found out, you know, that it wasn't a girl." And I'm like no way, fuck you, it was really uncool.

Then we ate all these Valiums and lost the camera and my boyfriend got really fucked up on these Valiums. We had like 30 Valiums between the three of us and we each ate ten.

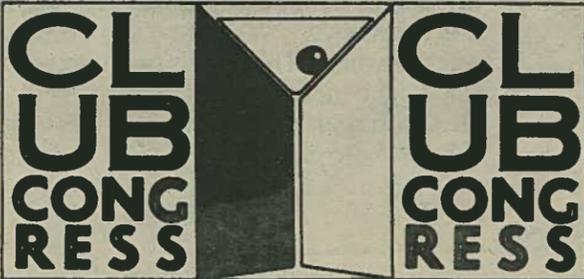
One of the only things I remember is this girl, she was telling me, "My brother is a doctor, let me go ask him, it's OK."

And she comes back, she's like "whatever you do, don't drink anymore." I'm like, "OK, OK."

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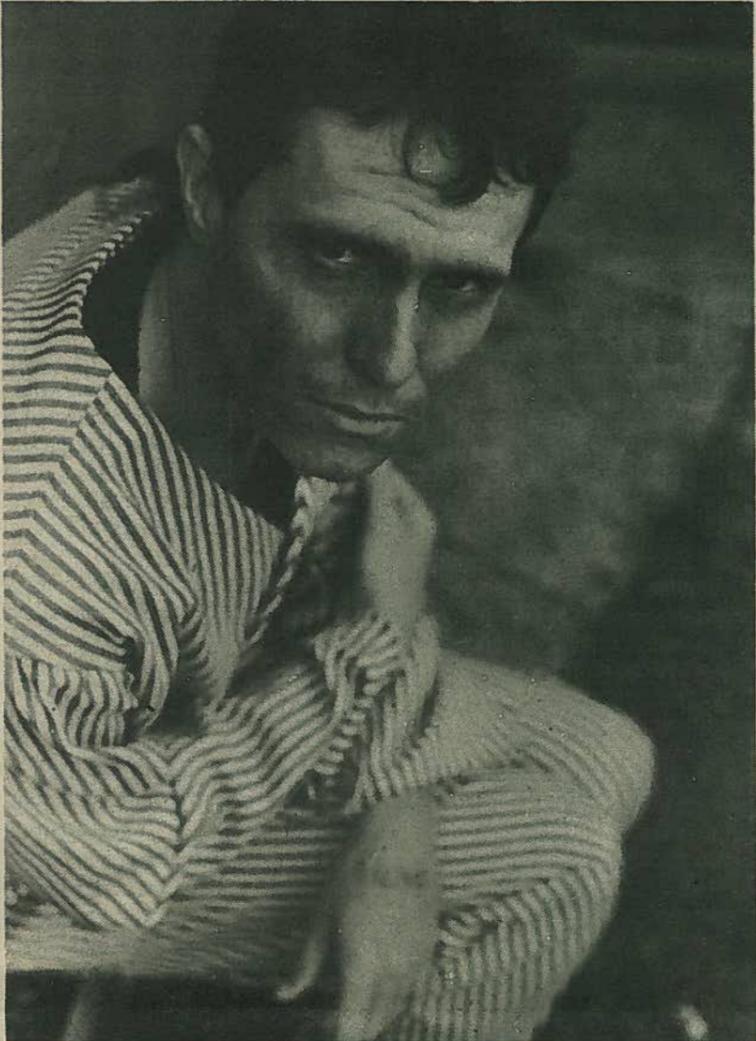
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Ann Davey

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this is true. They've called me this in the papers. No. No. No.

The nineteen word list stretches, like some cancer, down the page, jabbing Shane Paul with all the expletive glory of cheap graffiti on a bathroom wall, which is what *Licking Wounds* looks and reads like. But these names, "false prophet," "un-credible citizen," and "goofy idiot" are just a few of the lines Shane Paul has endured.

*Licking Wounds* is a place where Shane Paul and his staff hack at society, art and artists, newspaper writers, and whatever else gets in their way. But along the way, Shane Paul writes a thank you letter, for general consumption: "And remember that famous quote 'IF YOU CAN SAY NOTHING NICE DONT SAY NOTHING AT ALL?' well you can forget that, you have made my paintings very very valuable. KEEP RIGHT ON TALKING."

Of Shane Paul's 230 canvases he has sold none. He won't sell them. He only gives his art away to those who have helped him, for example, put out *Licking Wounds*. But Shane Paul does say that in 50 or 100 years when he's dead and gone, that he hopes his work sells for millions of dollars. "It'll be my way of scamming (gallery owners) back," he explains. But until the time Shane Paul is recognized as the artist he says he is, he will continue to kick and

throw up unscheduled (and at times unwanted) displays all around Phoenix. He will still be there painting and seeing what he likes best — the effect, the withdrawal, and the anticipation of his work.

Which isn't a problem for Shane Paul. When we talked, Shane Paul had a small exhibit in Phoenix at the Seventh Avenue location of Zia Records. The withdrawal was already evident. At times Shane Paul has found chewing gum stuck to his work or records piled on it. This may be due to the fact that those who admire Shane Paul's work the most aren't regular customers at Zia's. "They've been abused as human beings," Shane Paul says. "A lot of derelicts like my art."

At the same time, destruction of his work is also partially understandable, by Shane Paul's own admission. "It's art and it's not even good," he says. "I put it back in their (his critics') faces. The reality they've (society) created inside of me."

Shane Paul is difficult to understand. It's hard to tell whether he's all hype or if he's legitimately hassled by his detractors. He must like the attention, because he always comes back for more. In any case, Shane Paul's work is here and available.

Jordan Gruener is publisher and a co-editor of Rhetoric Farm.

I finally see him at a record store in Phoenix, we're supposed to meet for an interview, and we do, but Shane Paul is a little late. He's flustered, windblown, and wants to know where the photographer is, 'I thought I was getting the whole thing,' he says. So I guess that's what he's used to now, after getting written up in the *Phoenix Gazette* a couple of times and the *Arizona Daily Star* once.

Shane Paul is something of a media star, but definitely not a media darling. It all started when he put up an unscheduled exhibit on the Phoenix Art Museum's lawn, back in 1987.

He's been labeled a 'guerrilla artist' in the *Gazette* — the name sticks —

by Jordan Gruener

just for putting up a sculpture of a door and a chair at the Phoenix Art Museum. This isn't the makings of an artistic revolution, but it worked just as well, especially when the unsigned work was discovered.

Now he wants a photographer to shoot a mug, but there aren't any around. So it's a good thing he's got plenty of photos of himself. He slides one to me after we sit at some dank bar, just across the street from the record store. Shane Paul also pushes over the latest photocopied issue of his publication, *Licking Wounds*.

Don't call this a fanzine, he says, it's a "piece of art." He opens it and jabs an index finger at the second to last page.

It's not me, he explains, none of

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Reviews

# Al's Cassette Corner



Now that I'm a big music critic for this mag, people are always coming up to me at parties and thrusting their little tapes into my hand, begging for just a little ink. "Don't you write for Rhetoric Farm?" they say, as they attempt to ply me with liquor, babes, and drugs. This is great! I thought being in a band was fun, but this rock critic stuff is even better. All the freebies, and the salary, it's incredible.

Anyway, send your stuff to P.O. Box 40421, Tucson, AZ 85717 for review. Here's a selection of stuff that has reached my ears lately, and should reach yours too, so be sure to write to these folks and your life will be enriched.

**The Sloppy Guitarist - The Sloppy Guitarist**

A local tape featuring the ultra-quick

by Al Perry

acoustic guitar strumming and vocals of Mr. Chris Morrison. This is what they call folk music I guess, and it has a definite British slant, like Billy Bragg or Richard Thompson or somethin'. All in all, the songwriting is real solid, with my fave tune being "Three Booring Words," about the words 'I love you,' and the need for a less cliched way of saying them. A cool tape, and local to boot. I'd like to see this stuff done live. (P.O. Box 3754, Tucson, AZ 85705)

**Heather Perkins - Dangerous Household Objects; Why I Did It/Binky's Revenge; Burning Through**

These three cassettes have that homey charm about them that you only find in recordings done in a simple four-track home studio, for fun. Some interesting uses of noise, though they're not industrial or nuthin'. Some of the songs adhere to actual "song structure" and some tend toward the experimental. All in all these are some of the best hometaping efforts I've heard. Good guitar work, and a buncha guest musicians are found in these simple, minimal recordings. Check it out. (Land-O-Newts, 3851 Hilyard, Eugene, OR 97405)

**Various Artists - High Desert Zona**

A compilation of stuff, all from Phoenix except for three tracks by yours truly. Though not as comprehensive as it could be, it contains 90 minutes of mostly good stuff from Fourth Generation Rain, 24 Hour World, JEEM, Radio Architecture, International Language, Troy Weber, Numb Numb Stiffs, Theatre of Ice, Phantoms of Orpheus, Maybe Mental, and Fine Science. I just got this in the mail today, so I've not listened to it in depth, but I can recommend it for anyone who follows local music. It's 90 minutes, diverse and you oughta get it. (Frank

Publications, Inc., P.O. Box 56942, Phoenix, AZ 85079)

**Wallmen - Mr. Happy Man** With names like Jethro Deluxe and Stormin Omar Nowhere, these Subgenius-inspired weirdos approach music from a rock-as-Dada stance. Whether they're making funny sounds or playing poppy, acoustic numbers with twisted lyrics, a bizarre sense of humor permeates all their work. I've got a few tapes by these guys and they are all highly enjoyable. They are now working on a record, and I for one can't wait. (7711 Lisa Lane, N. Syracuse, NY 13212)

**Various Artists - Guitar Town** (Calypso Now)

**Various Artists - Chart Attack** (Calypso Now)

**Nisus Anal Furgler - Die Russen Kommen** (Calypso Now)

These two compilations were recently sent to me by the swell hard-workin' Rudi, who is involved in a number of musical projects as well as running his tape/record label. He's got a great catalog of indy cassettes from all over the world, in many styles. The two compilations above contain the work of a number of garage bands in a variety of genres from paisley, to grunge, to pop, to "nu-wave," to surf. I've never heard of any of 'em, but to my surprise there's hardly a clunker in the bunch. And for such a small country (Switzerland), there's a lot of 'em.

The Nisus tape is more of an experimental kinda thing, with fuzz guitar wash underneath sax, electronics, radio broadcasts and other found stuff. It's great, better than usual for that kinda sound. (Postfach 12, CH 2500 Biel 3, Switzerland)

Al Perry is guitarist/vocalist for Al Perry & the Cattle when he isn't tending bar at Tequila Mockingbird.

## Records —

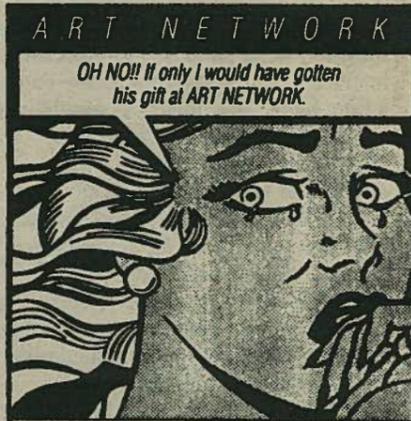
**French, Frith, Kaiser, Thompson - Live, Love, Larf and Loaf** (Rhino Records)

More specifically, that's John French (a.k.a. Drumbo, late of Captain Beefheart's Magic Band), Fred Frith and Henry Kaiser (independent freeform guitar mavericks), and Richard Thompson (who played in Fairport Convention years and years ago). This is the oddest supergroup since John Cage met Sun Ra, and F.F.K.T. deliver the best international music album ever done by four Caucasians.

Part of this is understandable since they each have done intensive explorations of cultural musics — Oriental in the case of Frith and Kaiser, Gaelic in Thompson's instance, and I would argue that tenure with Captain Beefheart counts as an alien culture, which draws in French, too.

Their collective approach to these musics is heartfelt and with the sensitivity toward the song they possess, a twisted and melodic energy runs through all of these tunes, especially their cover of "Surfin' USA," which would kill and then revive Chuck Berry should he ever hear it. (Write to: Rhino, 1201 Olympic

continued on page 9



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**Records**

continued from page 8

Blvd., Santa Monica, CA 90404)  
-Ess Kranz

**Brian Richie - *The Blend*** (SST Records)

There is a fine line between moral indignation and self-righteous finger-pointing. Before making his next album, one wishes Brian Richie (bass man for the Violent Femmes), whose concerns are supposed to be geo-political (as the press kit states), would spend some time exploring this issue. It might also benefit his songwriting to spend some time exploring his own backyard before attempting to show us the ills of the world.

The music is the best part of this album, in particular percussionist Abdulhameed Alwan. But it strains so hard to be strange, to be "geo-political," it borders on the unendurable. A fourth or fifth rate *Sandinista!*

(Write to: SST, P.O. Box 1, Lawndale, CA 90260)

-Richard Connell

**Richard Lloyd - *Real Time*** (Celluloid)

One time foil for Tom Verlaine in Television, Richard Lloyd fell sway to the call of the poppy after they broke up and recorded *Alchemy* before drifting away in a heroin fog. He kicked, and resurfaced last year with his second solo album.

*Real Time* is number three, and the first live recording (not counting

Television's *The Blow Up* on ROIR). Recorded last April at CBGB's, Lloyd and his three-piece band set-up, hooked a recorder to the soundboard and invited the public in. Once in, they were treated to songs from every facet of his career, as well as some new tunes. Basically, this album demonstrates that Lloyd is a more incendiary and spontaneous guitarist live than in the studio, which is saying quite a lot.

Though his vocals are merely adequate in places, his fingers never fail to bring the guitar to life, stringing the solos together with passion and precision. Where Verlaine has become almost lethargic in his solo work, Lloyd is alive and kicking on this remarkably clean-sounding album.

- Phil Lipkin

**Big Black - *Songs About Fucking*** (Touch and Go)

None of the songs seem to be about fucking. Steve Albini is still the resident revengeful runt of rockdom. Roland the drum machine is still as ferocious as a hammer, as on target as a drill. Their songs would be too harsh for even the most rabid Wire devotee.

So what else is new? Well, Big Black is calling it quits with the release of this LP and it makes you reconsider your belief, if any, in God. With the death of Divine, Andy Gibb, and now these guys, what's the use of living anymore?

(Write to: Touch and Go Records, P.O. Box 25520, Chicago, IL 60625)

-Jayne Hybrid

continued on page 10

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## Records

continued from page 9

**Laughing Hyenas - Merry Go Round** (Touch & Go)

Screaming fits and voyeuristic tendencies - that lean toward the observation of strangers' fights - a fatalistic delivery and dredging bass lines clean the lakes of life and the Laughing Hyenas' John Brannon gladly spits it all up on your doorstep.

The guttural vomiting Brannon passes off as singing is more than just delightful, it's a heady fuse of bile leading to the walls of "Stain." The whole thing blows in a stinking cacaphonic mess when, as he says, he comes "down from above" to, of course, "stain the walls/with love."

Laughing Hyenas dish out the cliches as well, in "Hell's Kitchen," where the lyrics resemble a suburban sub-plot of menu requests, bitching, and no good times, implying nothing less than a severe beating. And when they throw in trumpet on "Gabriel" - well, there's just not much else you could ask for.

- Jordan Gruener

**Yung Wu - Shore Leave** (Coyote)

It looks like another six-year wait for the next Feelies album.

Yung Wu is made up of the same members of that influential Hoboken outfit. The big difference would have to be that the lead vocals are handled by percussionist Dave Weckerman (who, so far as can be told, never utilized this aspect of himself in the Feelies).

Undoubtedly, *Shore Leave*, will be compared to 1986's phenomenal *The Good Earth*, which is unfair. The Feelies have their own history to contend with (after their 1980 debut on the all-too-cool Stiff label sold miserably, they retreated back into obscurity) and *The Good Earth*, which sold miserably.

*The Good Earth* was an exhilarating return to form by surpassing the form they had set for themselves, and everyone else. *Shore Leave*, on the other hand, should be seen as what it is: a collection of pleasant, unassuming pop songs that create a mood more than they carve a message.

Besides Neil Young (whose "Powderfinger" gets fair treatment), the only other artist covered is Brian Eno and the choice is fitting. Like Eno's music, their's is as startling as the listener cares to make it. And great music is often startling indeed.

-Peter Catalanotte

**Game Theory - Lolita Nation** (Enigma)

Scott Miller suffers from a unique affliction: too much talent.

Lurking behind every corner is another quirky chord progression, another haunting hook. The cumulative effect weaves a dense fibre of moods and dynamics - often in the same song.

But this is a double-LP and as such, it succumbs to the principal evils of this vinyl genre: an album's worth of material, interspersed with plenty of excessive studio fodder and half-written throw-aways. This makes *Lolita Nation* the strongest Game Theory release to date, at the same time it makes it their weakest.

Miller knows just how bold this expanded LP is, and he accepts the challenge all the same. Of course, it's a grand gesture pulled off without a hitch. Guitarist Domette Thayer takes the vocal spotlight on a few crafted gems, and, as always, the entire band plays with spirit and spunk.

The bad news is you have to sift through layers of waste ("Shard," "Kenneth, What's the Frequency?," and almost all of the last 10 minutes of side three) just to enjoy the brilliance of "The Real Sheila," "The Waist and the Knees," or "One More for Saint Michael."

None of this should affect Game Theory in the grand scope of things: they are still one of the most original and exciting pop/rock outfits in America. But just how much talent can one person take?

-Peter Catalanotte

**Killdozer - Little Baby Buntin'** (Touch and Go)

If Killdozer has managed to slip past you, suffice to say they are a mix between the Butthole Surfers, a John Waters film, the Meatmen and *The Exorcist* (but only the pea soup scene). It's almost as if some professional wrestlers decided to form a malicious rock band.

So, how's their latest? Well, they pulverize Neil Diamond's "I Am I Said." Englebert Humperdinck makes a guest appearance on "3/4 Drill Bit." The crescendo burp of "The Noble Art of Self Defense" goes on for all of infinity.

So, really. C'mon. How's their new album? Is the pope Catholic? Does a hangover hurt? Would you like the loudest, most obnoxious noises known to man playing on your stereo? Does that answer the question?

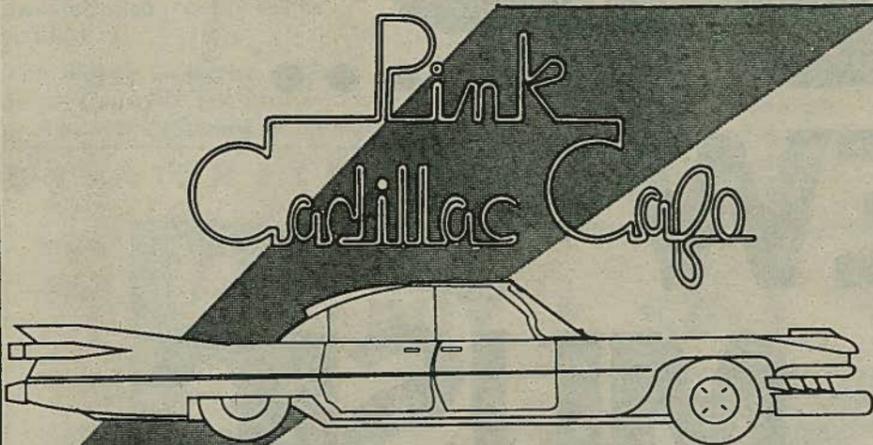
-Peter Catalanotte

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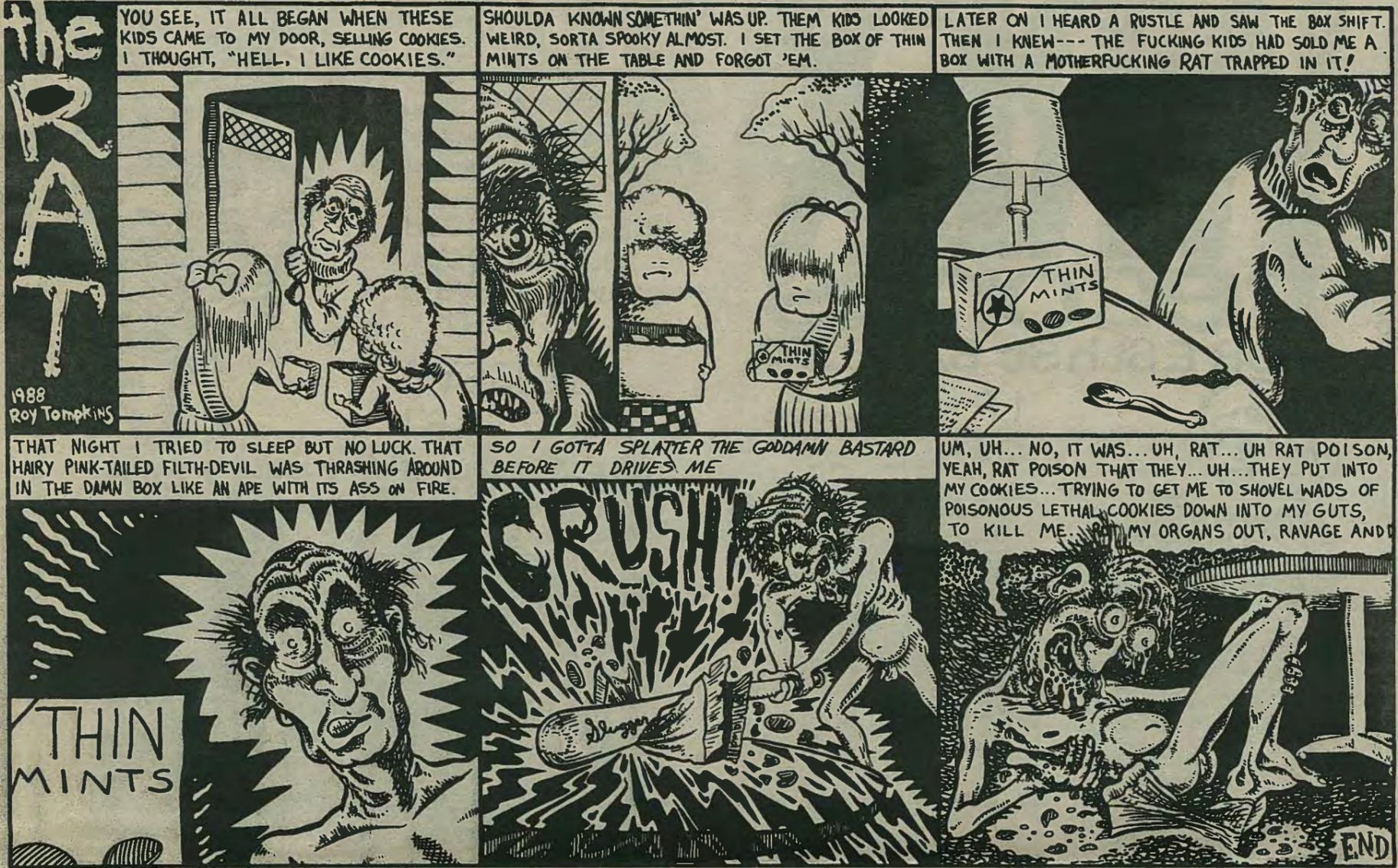
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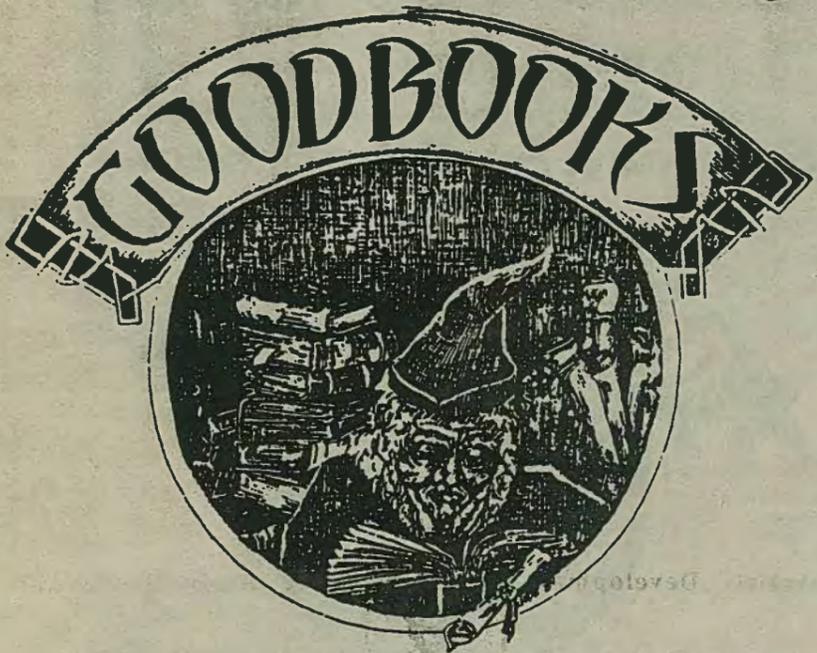
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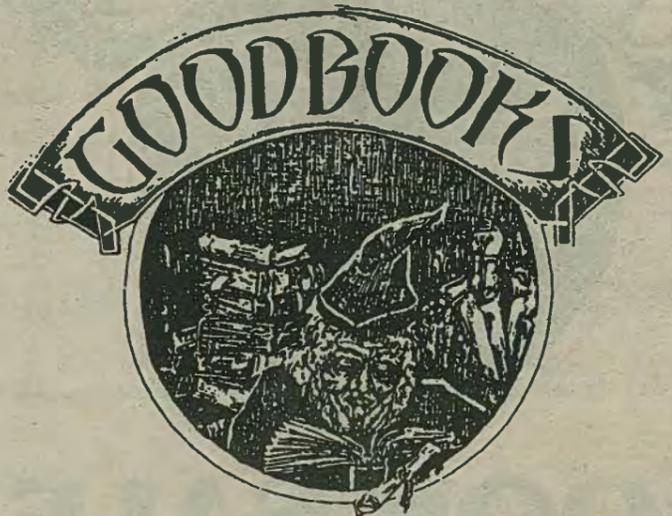
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