

# 979 REPRESENT



January 2016  
vol. 8 Issue 1



*inside: the force awakens - still drinking - shiraz - obama  
gone take our guns! - ask creepy horse - tales of a punk  
rock never was - cognitive dissonance - concert calendar*



**979represent is a local magazine  
for the discerning dirtbag.**

**editorial bored**

kelly minnis - kevin still

**art splendor**

katie killer - wonko the sane

**folks that did the other shit for us**

mike e. downey - jorge goyco - todd hansen -  
amanda martinez - william daniel thompson

**on the interwebz**

<http://www.979represent.com>

emails to

[redchapterjubilee@yahoo.com](mailto:redchapterjubilee@yahoo.com)

materials for review & bribery can be sent to:

979represent

15530 creek meadow blvd. n.  
college station, tx 77845



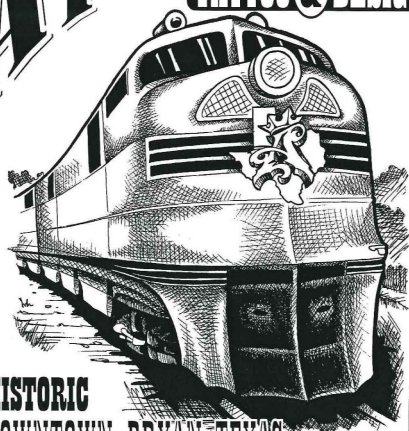
**OBAMA GONE TAKE OUR GUNS!**

this week, President Obama announced he would enact executive orders to close up the so-called "gun show loophole" that mandates all gun sales be subject to background checks. Gun store purchases have long been subject to federal background checks, but not for all private, gun show, or internet purchases. Obama also plans for more ATF personnel to deal with the checks more efficiently and \$500 million will be devoted to bulking up aid for the mentally ill, to help those who need help before they act out in a violent manner. I think these measures will be helpful in the long-term but will do very little to curb the mass shootings that are so painful to the American psyche. Nothing short of drastic will have any effect.

While you will not find me in the camp of folks who want to "take away your guns", you will find me in the camp of people who do not support ready access to weapons of mass destruction to the average American citizen. Our founding fathers inserted the Second Amendment into our national fabric at a time when a weapon shot once every four to five minutes, depending on how quick you were at reloading your musket, was the norm. The concept of unloading a clip of 40 shots in 10 seconds or less was unfathomable to Jefferson, Franklin, and company. Based on the other humanist touches within our Constitution and Bill of Rights, I'd like to think that the framers would not have supported boundless gun rights. They may have shied away from an outright ban. As do I. But I do not understand why anyone needs the capacity to not just kill but wantonly destroy a person or animal with a gun. We are not talking about self-protection. The ability to squeeze off that many shots in a short amount of time is meant for warfare. I know, I know, you need to have semi-war weapons because the gubmint is gone come for you and you need to be prepperrred. Or that if you don't have them then only "the bad guys" will have them. But I just don't see the need.

During a townhall meeting on Obama's executive order (hosted by the president), NASA astronaut Mark Kelly (husband to Gabbie Gifford, who was shot in the head during a mass shooting in Arizona a few years ago, who stood beside him at the meeting) made the point that there are some 60 million firearms in 350 million households in this country. There is absolutely NO WAY POSSIBLE that Barack Obama could take away all the guns, but the propaganda from the gun lobby and the far right props up the gun industry, who in turn props up the gun lobby and far right through donations, continues to spread this rhetoric like wildfire amongst the populace. No one will ever take your guns away. Let's stop the fear mongering and let's talk for real about real gun rights reform in this country. Let's talk about limiting sales of high capacity magazines. Let's talk about a universal gun registration. We have universal automobile registration and no one's come for your Honda yet. If you purchase a gun legally but don't secure it properly and your kid takes off with it and kills dozens, you will be responsible. If you buy a pistol and sell it without the proper paperwork and the next owner does something atrocious with it, you will be held responsible. This will help save lives. Additional resources for helping keep the mentally ill monitored and aided will help save lives. No one's guns taken away, no one's freedom infringed upon, just common sense regulation to help insure Columbine and Sandy Hook are lessons learned. —KELLY MINNIS

**ARSENAL**  
**TATTOO & DESIGN**



**HISTORIC  
DOWNTOWN BRYAN, TEXAS**

**arsenaltattoo.com**



## STILL DRINKING

It's no secret that I lack patriotic fervor for Shiner beers. Exceptions can be made for the **Shiner Black Lager** (lovely) and the **Ruby Red Bird** (circumstantial). Also, the wife loves her some **Strawberry Blonde Ale** (bombers only), but don't even call me about **Shiner Bock**. You can keep it, along with that **White Wing** nonsense that tastes like something to be washed off a car-windshield. Likewise, **Shiner Prickly Pear** is the splintered hooch **Shiner Cheer** can shove straight up the ol' chimney shoot. Still, my legal Texas ID requires me to sample each new Shiner beer with an open mind and palette. This month those new Shiner beers will be the **Birthday Beer #107 Hoppy Pilsner** and the **Wicked Ram IPA**.



Last year's Birthday Beer #106, the chocolate cake situation, tasted like a cup of collected chin drool from my toothless granny's Tootsie Roll gumming. Deplorable. The Shiner Birthday Beer is an annual Willy Wonka Bar of possibilities: you can open a winning ticket or a jaw-full of cocoa-backwash. You never know until you crack that first bottle. But this year's Birthday Beer appeared promising from across the room: #107 Hoppy Pilsner (5.0% ABV / 30 IBU). Sound familiar? That's because it is! Six Birthday Beers ago

Shiner released the #101 Czech-Style Pilsner. That sucker was beautiful. Crammed plum to the lip with Czech-Saaz hops, the #101 found Shiner exploring the grander legacies of the Spoetzl heritage: a light German-influenced malty ale brightened with spicy Saaz hops. I bought every sixer I could afford and launched a campaign to make #101 a year-round offering. The victory was never won, but now #101's cousin is in the ring for a fresh round. The #107 Hoppy Pilsner, a bubbly Brut of a beer, once again features that classic malty-but-bright German Pilsner effervescence with a spicy kick from combined Hallertau and Saaz hops. Expect a certain grassy, green lush bent around those spicy hops. Like #101, this #107 Hoppy Pilsner is a beautiful beer that will only increase in demand as the Texas winter wanes into warmer days. Good job, Spoetzl.

On the flip side, I tried Shiner Wicked Ram IPA (6.0% ABV / 55 IBU) for the first time on Austin's Sixth Street while watching an Aerosmith cover band whose lead singer, clad in black-n-white striped tights, kept referring to Steven Tyler as "ol' Stevie". It's the saddest damn thing I saw in 2015. Since then, I've not been sure if the cover band depressed me too much to enjoy beer or if the Wicked Ram IPA was as equally bad as the band. Either way I took three sips of the Ram and tossed it in the trash. (My buddy Alex and I immediately jetted the premises and found a Nickleback-ish band three doors down that wasn't as bad "ol' Stevie's" minions; Lone Star chuggers were also a dollar: Win!) But now I'm sipping the Ram again, feeling Sixth Street sad again, and this swill is going down the drain again. Shiner claims to be using three types of hops here—Crystal, Bravo, and Centennial—but the Ram just tastes like dirty ragweed and malts. Maybe the Ram could act as a gateway IPA for malt-mongers who wanna flirt with hops, but it's as awful as can be expected from Shiner. Keep it, Spoetzl.

—KEVIN STILL

## ASK CREEPY HORSE



Yes, I am a vegan. Even more terrifying, I am an ethical vegan. That's a vegan that is vegan for animal rights. The worst kind, right? You see, although I am a misanthrope and a nihilist, I hate it when I meet people that tell me all about the horrible terrible no good experiences they've had or haven't had with a vegan. Apparently in order to be a vegan you must battle cry your beliefs structure and try and make people feel bad for their lifestyle. To be honest you don't have to be a meat eater for me to have those feelings towards you, I don't even like most vegans either. I don't engage because when the fuck has attacking anyone's personal beliefs or views ever changed shit? Don't believe me, go on Facebook and argue someone's current posted political meme and see how long it takes to get you unfriended. Don't worry, you didn't need them anyways. I don't engage but like anyone if someone is there just trying to troll me, once again knowing it won't do a damn bit of good, I'll at the very least defend myself.

Yeah, I've heard the PETA joke. I've heard "but bacon!" More times than I can count and I've even been told on countless occasions of how they could never ever live without CHEESE! You see, I actually get criticized and made fun of quite a bit when my being vegan slips out like a fart on a first date. I don't run around all will nilly yelling about how I'm a vegan, typically it happens when someone offers me something I don't eat and wants to know why. I'm not ashamed about my personal life choice, so I tell them and it's usually met with a gasp a shriek and either one of the above comments or a story about a terrible vegan. As much as you don't want me going "Oh my god! That travesty on your plate, you monster! Meat is murder!" And then dousing you with verified vegan red paint, I don't want condemnation and that all too familiar joke about eating tofu and grass and whatever we vagabonds eat followed with a "but bacon" comment. Just as much as I don't want to talk politics with my crazy uncle or sex positivity with MRAs.

My hopes for writing this is to open up a dialogue. I think sometimes if we just talk, come to the table curious and not with hard held agendas and bias, even if we can't agree we can at least come away with a better understanding of one another. I am willing under the understanding that we can be cool to answer any questions you may genuinely have. Once again, our beloved editor will field any trolling but if you're curious as to why we don't eat honey, how is red paint not vegan, do you really eat grass and granola, is there a difference between cruelty free and vegan cosmetics, I thought veganism was only for rich people, can dogs be vegan, etc., just ask and I'll be happy to politely throw some wisdom down.

I'm not here to convert, veganism is and has been a very personal and intimate choice for me and I can imagine your life choices are to you as well. Veganism is one of many, many facets of my bane of existence. I've been vegan for going on 6 years now. I don't hug trees or people for that matter, I'm chubby and have a full head of hair, I like Oreos, stout beer and looking at videos of puppies and kittens. If you want to know why a person would be an "ethical vegan" watch *Earthlings* on YouTube in its entirety, if you want to know health-wise why someone would be a vegan, check out "Forks over Knives" on Netflix. Several doctors made that movie so it's not a bunch of hippies telling you to drink green juice for a better chakra.

Again, if there's anything you ever just wondered about veganism or vegans genuinely, I'm happy to explain it. Shoot our editor a quick email with your question and I'll be happy to answer it. And yes, Oreos are vegan.—  
**CREEPY HORSE**

As I prepare to see *The Force Awakens* for the third time in the theater, I can't help but recall the first time

I ever saw a movie three times in the theater...and it was *Star Wars*. Back in 1977, that was unheard of: no Internet, no Google, no texting, no 24-hour news cycle (you watched the nightly news on TV). I went back then partially due to friends on corded phones calling from their homes, live people on the street and at work—all talking about how much more there was to see in *Star Wars*. But I also went back because *Star Wars* was—and still is—so much fun to watch. And it's that fun that's evident in the new movie.

Screenwriters Lawrence Kasdan and J.J. Abrams (who also directed) brought as much of the joy to *The Force Awakens* of the original *Star Wars* films as likely possible: Abrams as a longtime fan and Kasdan as a longtime storyteller and director/writer (he also wrote—and directed—my favorite movie, *Silverado*).

I'll leave all the sophisticated in-depth analysis to others, but the new *Star Wars* is not great in the revelatory way that the original was—that's impossible to duplicate—but it is good and entertaining, and what more could one ask? The touchstones from the past *Star Wars* are still there, and the new characters are equally beguiling. Example: the glee that Rey and Finn share after escaping Jakku is infectious. Simply put, you like them, whether good or tortured (see Kylo Renn).

Like any good serial, Episode VII leaves us plenty to ponder before the next one, but that'll be fine. We still have this one to watch and relish. Just enjoy it. Save me the aisle seat.—MIKE L. DOWNEY

The most fun I had watching a film in the theaters during 2014 was *Guardians of the Galaxy*. Despite being based on previous works, some minor characters in the Marvel comics universe, to the layman it was a completely fresh story that hit all the right notes. It was set in space at least a few galaxies away, had a heist, a prison break, aliens, and so on. Chris Pratt basically played another version of Han Solo. Bradley Cooper somehow stole scenes by voice-acting through a hot-headed raccoon. Audiences connected emotionally with a tree dude that said merely three words, much like an astromech droid or a wookiee. Most of all it had the right balance between action and comedy. My friend said that seeing *Guardians* felt like watching *Star Wars* for the first time, and I agreed. So naturally an actual *Star Wars* movie came out that took that experience up a notch.

I was pretty skeptical after the initial announcement of new *Star Wars* movies being made. Even after I saw the first teaser trailer I merely thought, "That looks cool. It might be okay, I'll probably see it." But after the *second* trailer, specifically the moment when the screen goes back and we hear Han's voice say, "Chewie", then see the pair together just as they are supposed to be thirty years later, I was all in. *The Force Awakens* wisely gives us a good amount of these moments, and every time the Millennium Falcon appears on screen my hair stood on end. At the same time we are introduced to new characters that have pieces of some of the archetypes we're familiar with, but have been rearranged in a new way and are completely unique on their own. For example, Kylo Ren is the new Sith bad guy wearing all black with a

## THE CRITICS AWAKEN: 979

cape and helmet, but while we are shown some of his impressive abilities we learn that he is not as impressive, grandstanding, or impenetrable as Darth Vader was when we were originally introduced to him. In the same way, the other new characters aren't just puzzle-piece matches for Luke, Han, and Leia, and there's still a lot to learn about them after the movie is over.

It is not worthwhile at this point to talk at length about how the prequel trilogy sucked, but one thing in particular that hampered those movies was a need to verbally explain everything that was happening in seemingly every scene, because everything had to be tied together to the original movies that we already knew and loved. However, movies are more powerful when they trust audiences to figure it out the plot themselves, and audiences usually don't get enough credit for their abilities of deduction. Think about *Mad Max: Fury Road*, which, in my opinion, was the best film released in 2015. Yes, some people had seen the previous *Mad Max* films, but they weren't important to the new story being told. For the most part we are dropped into this insane world with car chases in deserts and an army lead by a shredding guitar player hanging in front of a mobile wall of amps with flames coming out his headstock.

While there is some exposition in the new film, for the most part *The Force Awakens* is freed from that baggage the prequels had, and that freedom is what gives it the ability to be so enjoyable. At the same time it takes enough cues from the original films in pacing and fan



# REP TAKES ON STAR WARS

sounds, and smells like a real Star Wars film. And for that reason alone the movie succeeds. Yes, there are

service to feel like a real Star Wars movie. Some have pointed out that *TFA* has a similar plot line to one of the original films in particular, and that's totally true, but in the best of ways. There are even a couple lines that nod to the past to the effect of "haven't we done this before".

To me it makes sense for the new protagonists and adversaries to be all too familiar. In our own history we ape the ones that came before us; we just try to do things bigger and better than what's already been done. What's hard to say is what this movie must have been like for a seven-year old watching it for the first time, but I hope it was just as cool for them as it was for me.

—TODD HANSEN



SPOILER ALERT: I will talk about the plot. Move along if you don't want to swear at me. OK. Like Todd above me, I was skeptical and tried me hardest not to get all hot and bothered over the next salvo of Star Wars films.

Yes, George Lucas broke our hearts. Let's not belabor the point. It is with kid gloves that even casual fans of the original Star Wars trilogy had to be treated, and that is exactly how *The Force Awakens* was approached. At the end of the film the first time we saw it, my wife turned to me and said, "I've seen this movie before and liked it better the first time". She has a point. Director J.J. Abrams seems to take for granted that you will be familiar with the characters, visuals, and plot points of the original Star Wars trilogy, so much so that in a way *The Force Awakens* is more like a Star Wars reboot than a new beginning, not unlike how Abrams treated the two Star Trek movies he made (I am in the minority of folks who liked both those movies). The important point is that *The Force Awakens* looks, feels,

plenty of holes in the plot, some incredibly large. There are still lots of questions we want answers to. I want to take just a moment, out of all those things, to discuss in particular the character of Kylo Ren. I have heard much criticism. "He looks like Severus Snape, he's a spoiled brat, have you seen 'Emo Kylo Ren' yet?", etc. What is interesting to me about this character is that he is coltish. He is much like a boy stepping into the over-large shoes of a man, waiting to see if he can't fill them, can he at the very least begin to grow slowly into them. It seems that Ren suffers from some missing facts about what happened at the end of *Return of the Jedi*. With Luke Skywalker having largely disappeared and the young characters wondering if it was all a myth it's quite plausible that Ren didn't see what we saw: Vader's final redemption. It seems that Ren missed the memo and believes he is the heir apparent to that evil dynasty. While *The Force Awakens* isn't the backstory that *Revenge of the Sith* is, I think we are seeing the very beginnings of Kylo Ren's character development and that's exciting.—KELLY MINNIS

I'll just throw in my two cents worth here, I saw Star Wars episode 7 twice within two days. My father literally raised us looking at Star Wars as an extension of Christianity, yeah he did fuck tons of acid in the 60s. So it'd be a fair statement that I am pretty well versed on the Star Wars universe. I also attack new movies like a conspiracy theorist. Like why wasn't Kylo Ren Jacen Solo? Ben is Luke Skywalker's. Speaking of Kylo Ren, I loved him as a representation of modern day Millennial form Darth Vader wannabe which is JUST as frightening as the man in black himself. But an untrained desert dweller with burgeoning Jedi ability is going to take down a Jedi trained almost Sith Master with Skywalker's DNA? I mean even Luke had to train and now this Rey is hearing Obi Wan's older and younger voices to take the lightsaber and can withstand dark power torture? Not buying it. I mean she would have to be the end-all-be-all of Jedi and maybe she is.

I called that Han Solo would die as I knew how much Harrison Ford hated the idea of returning. Felt his death, for as shocking as it was, was also kind of underwhelming. I mean it's Han Fucking Solo. I liked the pain and strain conveyed in Carrie Fishers eyes as Leia. I mean all she has seen and living a life she may not have chosen. There's a realization that this is her lot in life whether she likes it or not and she's stepped up to the plate as General.

In the closing scenes we also see the guilt in Luke Skywalker's eyes as he's revealed. I'm hoping this preludes into a dark side seduction as we see in the books, but I doubt Abrams will take it there with the golden boy of the franchise. I would like to see a very dark and dismal follow up though. Hope needs to be lost, much like the sequel to a new hope, Empire that is the one true movie of the whole shebang for the true Star Wars enthusiasts. We need another *Empire Strikes Back*, we need to believe that the Jedi waver at the hands of the dark side so we can have the violent upswing back in the third and final movie closing the book on whole story.—AMANDA MARTINEZ

*DISCLAIMER: This is only the second short story I ever quite written, way on back in 2009. It was compiled when I was greener, though I can not promise I've catapulted in betterments since. I love these characters. I think still think about them often. I hope you can enjoy.*

He wrapped the phone cord around the tip of his finger. Over the next few minutes, as she tried to console him, not succeeding at any one moment, he watched the bulge at the end of his index finger slowly fill with blood and turn purple, like a grape. This was his nervous twitch. He was not nervous talking to Bailey. He had known her a very long time. Still, the day weighed on him, and, instead of taking it out on his gullet or the walls or his friend, he took it out on his finger with the phone cord. It was what he did in moments like this.

"Look, it was an accident," Bailey said. The blood pooled hard against his fingertip, flushing the skin from pink to red to purple. "And accidents happen everyday to all kinds of folks who don't watch where they're going," she added. Her tone was less than enthused. She still sounded young. Or she was still young. He couldn't decide anymore. He had known Bailey a very long time, and she had changed very little. Her skin was still alabaster white, her hair still shoulder length and black with red striped tones. She still spoke with her hands, which he could see flailing about even when they spoke through wires in different rooms. And she still smoked a pack of menthols every three days, even though she never inhaled a single drag. "I know these things could drop me like the bad end of a Viking invasion," she'd say opening a fresh pack of Newports, "but they sure as shit make me feel alive." Bailey was a constant. She had reached a decided perfection early in life and remained there. She simply refused to evolve.

"I know it was an accident, B. I know that. Still, I feel weird about it."

"Why feel weird about it, Finn? The prick lived. You said so yourself. Said he was moaning when you left. All bashed and bloodied up in a pool, yeah, but moaning. So what's your deal?"

He loosened the phone cord. "Look, I know it was an accident, and I know the guy lived, but, B., you didn't see it. You didn't see this kid laying there." His voice was old next to hers. Everything about him had always been old next to hers.

"Hell, I wish I had seen it. Sounds jackrabbit crazy. I mean, seriously, you don't see something like that everyday." Her enthusiasm rose, he imagined her hands drawing spirals in the air. "Just tell me again, Finn. Tell me again how you're driving, you're checking your hair, you're thinking the night feels fine, and then BLAM! Pedal-metal pate."

He wound the cord hard around his finger. "B., you're not helpful. This is not helpful. I called you for support." He unwound the cord and leaned back into his chair. He could feel the phantom coil of the cord still tight around his knuckle. "Look, B., I don't know why, but I'm having a really hard time with this, okay? I don't like the way I hit this random kid and just left him there."

"What the shit did you think you were gonna do? Toss him over your shoulder and fly him to the nearest Boy Scout meeting for first aid?" Bailey laughed as she said this. "Besides, somebody probably came along pretty soon and scooped the prick right up. The city has ordinances about these kinds of inconveniences." She paused to drag her cigarette, followed by an exaggerated exhale. Bailey knew that smoking didn't look or sound as cool when you didn't inhale, but she didn't care.

"Bloody hell, Bailey, he wasn't a opossum or a house cat.

He was a kid. The ordinance for scooping dead kids off the road is called the law. Suits and yellow tape and the evening news will be all over this. It was all very sloppy."

Bailey lit another Newport, ignoring Finn. "Let's not belabor the point with all this whining, Mr. Manslaughter. I want details. You were telling me how you burned down this kid with your Dotty, and how you, you of all people, suddenly grew a conscience out of the whole deal. Damn, Finn, I mean, this is some seriously fine-ass chat-chat tonight."

He wrapped the cord around his left ring finger, top knuckle, and watched the grape swell. In his mind, he saw the kid on the road again, pumping a rusty mountain bike, wearing a blue letterman jacket with blazing gold insignia. Finn held his Datsun 510 (an embarrassing car, he felt) at a steady pace behind the kid, trying not to push him. Finn was not in a hurry. The night was nice. Finn had the windows down. Jim Croce sang off a cassette tape about the dirt-track demon, Rapid Roy, that stock-car boy. Finn watched the boy in front of him whirl white sneakers in pedal spinning blurred circles. There was no shoulder or sidewalk on the road, and the other lane curved invisibly around the bend so that Finn could not see oncoming traffic. He did not want to take any chances passing the cyclist. Finn kept a steady pace, not in a hurry, not pushing the kid, just watching the boy ride.

Finn sized him up to a stocky 14, maybe 15. The kid's size and jacket gave him away as an athlete. Finn wondered if the kid was riding home from a game or practice. He tried to imagine what sport the kid played, and he remembered long days in his old village, running among the vines until the sun went down. Finn watched as the kid turned his head to glance at the car in his peripheral vision. As the boy eyed Finn, the bicycle skittered into the road, jolting the front tire with electrically jagged currents. The kid swung his forearms hard into the handlebars to correct his balance. Then, as if anchored by an invisible force, the bicycle's front tire bore down, and the kid flipped over the handlebars into the middle of the road.

The driver, keeping a slow pace, witnessed the boy's entire event unfold. Gravity and ground collided on the cyclist too suddenly for Finn's brakes to respond as he felt the front passenger tire clump over something solid, followed by both back wheels thudding a larger clod. He hoped hard, maybe in the dear name of Jesus (though he dared not tell Bailey he may have prayed), that the thump had not been the boy. But Finn knew better. And the sight in his review mirror, just before Finn laid his head on the steering wheel, confirmed that he had not run over the boy's bicycle.

\*\*\*\*\*

"Finn? You there?" Finn awoke from his place on the road. His home was quiet. A small light from the kitchen fell across the living room floor, etching the toe of his black boots. Finn's middle finger throbbed hot, like a yard-tick on the belly of a porch-dog. He thought it might pop. He unwound the cord from his hand and, holding his throbbing middle finger in the air, rubbed his face with the palm of his hand. Maybe he should just abuse his gullet instead. "Finn, you bleeding tit, are you there?" Bailey exhaled loudly into the phone.

"Yeah, B. I'm here. Sorry, I just was thinking about the kid."

"Well, listen, Richard Skid Marx, while you're having your moment over there grieving teenage road smears, Mama's belly done gone to growling. When are you coming to pick me up?"

# \$HII



# SHIRAZ

Finn looked at the clock. It was nearly 1:30 a.m. The bars would close soon. Last call and closed kitchens. Parties moving to all-night diners and pancake houses. Streets and alleyways filled with the drunk-

only unaware. It was time to go. He could think about the kid later, maybe tomorrow. Finn leaned forward, clicked his teeth with his tongue (another nervous tick), and ran his fingers through his hair. He heard a car pass on the street below. Somebody else slammed a door. He looked out the window, felt his feet on the floor and stood up. He could still feel warm blood at the end of his finger.

"Alright," he said. "I'm coming. Give me twenty minutes."

"Huckleberry hell," Bailey said. "I was about to eat my own feet."

"Twenty minutes, B. I'll knock on the window."

"Finn, wait. Wait a minute," Bailey said, sounding rarely serious. She paused. Finn could not hear any sounds of fake smoking. "Be careful, Finn. Just be careful on the way over."

"Thanks, B. That's more helpful than anything you've said all night."

"Yeah, just be careful not to waste anyone without me. Okay?"

"Bailey Renee," Finn said. "Twenty minutes. I'll knock on your window."

And the phone clicked.

\*\*\*\*\*

Finn walked into the kitchen and pulled a wine glass from a cabinet near the refrigerator. It was made of pure crystal. He owned two wine glasses, one bottle opener, no plates and no silverware. If Finn ever had guests, they would remark at the bareness of his kitchen. Some, who ventured to use the trash can in the pantry closet, would notice the crates of wine bottles stacked neatly out of the way. "Out of the light," Finn would say. A tall glass of Shiraz already stood on the countertop, unopened and still wrapped in a golden paper cap. Finn held the bottle in his hand and ran his finger along the label. The wine was from Australia, and the imprinted image of vines on the label reminded Finn of his father's voice calling him inside before the sunset.

Carefully, with no regard for the clock or Bailey's patience, Finn used his thumbnail to peel the paper around the lid of the bottle. It broke easily and tore in an even line at the edge of his cut. Finn looked at the bottle and considered how many individual grapes must be crushed and fermented to make one bottle of his family's Shiraz. He picked up the opener, screwed it into the cork, and twisted the handle. Harvest was Finn's favorite time of year. The excitement. The color. The flavor of wine that moved in the air, as if the trees were bibbers who gave thanks in their silent breathing. He bore his hands down on the opener and pulled. A solid pop released his arm in a catch motion. He sat the bottle down on the counter and removed the cork with the opener. His father had taught him to always sniff the cork. Relish the cork. "It is the heart of a bottled Shiraz," his father would say. "Remove it, and the bottle bleeds."

Finn held one of his two wine glasses in his hand, swirling a newly poured touch of the bottle's blood. Lifting the glass to his nose, he closed his eyes and sniffed. All the grapes, one by one, that make a single bottle. All the grapes. He could see them on the vine, plump, purplish black, their veins bulged and feeding the fruit every inch

of earth it could pass along. Finn took a sip of the wine into his mouth and held it. His eyes remained closed, and he thought of the grapes. All the grapes that made a single bottle of Shiraz, and all the grapes that fell along the path, that did not grow, that withered, that fed insects and workers. It takes a million grapes to make a wine, and a million grapes more never enter the bottle. "Sloppy," he thought to himself, still holding the wine in his mouth. "So much waste of something so beautiful."

And then he thought of the boy crushed beneath his car. Blood pooled and poured onto the road like some cruel goddess's empty libations. Finn stood over the boy, knelt beside him. The boy looked at Finn, panting a sound of wet breath caught in the motion of tide. There was fluid, then there was not. His eyes blinked in panic at Finn. The man touched the boy's face tenderly with the back of his hand. "You almost made it, didn't you, boy?" Finn said. Blood formed a new stream on the asphalt and rolled towards Finn's foot. "I am sorry you did not make it." The boys eyes rolled back. Perhaps there was pain, or perhaps only shock. The man ran his fingers over the boy's eyebrows. "And I am sorry that I cannot help you. I can do nothing for mercy or vengeance. Neither any longer exists within me. I hope you will understand." The boy spat a black goo onto his chin, some hit Finn's wrist, and the man lifted his hand to smell the boy's extraction. After wiping his hand on the boy's letterman jacket, Finn turned, climbed into his car, and drove home.

"Sloppy," Finn thought to himself again, realizing the familiar discomfort he had wrestled all night. "So much waste." Then, having swallowed none, Finn spit the Shiraz into the sink, wiped his chin, and recorked the bottle.

The clock read 1:57. He was late. Bailey would be angry, and he would catch hell. Luckily, she had not called yet. Carefully, Finn placed his glass into the sink, allowing a small thimble of wine to remain in the bottom. After deadbolting the front door, he walked into his bedroom, slipped on his shoes, and crawled onto the window ledge. Looking out over the city, he saw lights for houses, businesses, marquees. Lights for people. He clicked his tongue against his teeth, tasting the sting of alcohol. The heart of the Shiraz. Then he looked four stories below at his car, "Dotty" as Bailey called her. He had already washed the front bumper and tires. "No more sloppiness," he said to himself. But there was no time to think of that now. Bailey was waiting. She was hungry. So Finn slipped off the ledge and fell into the night. — KEVIN STILL

BRYAN 979.822.6747 201 W. 26TH ST.









# TALES OF A PUNK ROCK NEVER WAS

I created the name Junkie Lovedoll after feeling like the only representation of women in punk rock were either junkies or love dolls and thought that sounded pretty fucking cool. I was 15, drinking gallons of the punk as fuck Kool-Aid and believing I could truly make a difference. To have been remotely a part of punk rock past 1992 was about as fucking cool as wearing a leisure suit and a 5 foot blonde Afro wig to church. Okay, I'll admit now that sounds kind of cool but you get the idea. Punk was in fact very dead and its last smoldering remains were being smeared across CDs of this new school movement of rich kid frat boys with Mohawks playing super shitty chords to whiny irreverent and ironic songs about girls not pooping and drinking lots of beer. My disdain seethed during this outbreak period of NOFX, Blink 182, and ska punk.

I was 12 years old when punk rock happened. To me, at least. I had always been very weird and awkward yet I obsessed over being one of the popular girls. My brothers were very handsome and popular and I was just everything opposite of that. I made sex jokes and cursed, I said the wrong thing at the wrong time, I was clumsy and incredibly fucking poor. Back then it was so fucking uncool to wear hand-me-downs, clothes from thrift stores and garage sales. I had been on the popular girls radar as I had started stealing cigarettes and candy for them. I somehow thought that I had meaningful relationships with them but they made a point to put me in my place the last day before the Christmas break humiliating me in front of our entire middle school class. I was crushed and I can tell you I sobbed outside like a little baby.

As I cried alone and cursed just about everyone and everything I've ever known, I was approached by three girls. They were in the grades above me and the leader was a girl named Amanda I had taken up for when she shaved her head and dyed her bangs green. She asked innocently what was wrong and I told her curtly I had a headache. She turned to look at my tormentors who all looked away and said "A headache huh? Well eat this candy cane and it will cure it. When you feel better, go to the office and call your mom. Tell her you'll be spending the night at my place."

To this point I had never once ever been invited to spend the night or really go over to anyone's home before. My mom being the negligent piece of shit she is, was fine with her daughter staying with total strangers. I met Amanda at parent pickup outside of school. We loaded into the car and her mom promptly would hand her a carton of smokes and nonchalantly my new friend tells her mom that we need to go off to the store and get me some cool makeup so I would look cool at a punk show tonight. My head whirled at this news. A concert! I was going to a concert! With punks too! I looked down at my head to see hunter green bongo jeans outfit and matching green and yellow plaid back pack with brown leather ropers. I had been following my family's style of country style. My room covered in posters of Garth Brooks and random other country singers of the late 80s and early 90s. I wore sweaters made by my grandma complete with material cut outs painted over with glitter paint and traced in corresponding puff paint. To be honest I truly wasn't quite clear on what this punk rock was exactly.

When we got back to her home after buying the nights required accoutrements, Amanda throws me a pack of smokes, lights up and puts some vinyl on to play. Sitting on so debonair as she takes long draws off her cigarette, she tosses the album cover to me for Social Distortion's *Mommy's Little Monster* album. I'm like Quasimodo short and hunched over trying very hard to look cool and like I belong, fearing rejection at any moment. I lean over and pick up the album and start reading the liner notes. I seriously begin to cry as I'm reading lyrics that equate to feelings and thoughts I had always had but never conveyed. I'd never been to a rodeo, my mom had never sold me into prostitution for a better life and I had never swam in the Chattahoochee. I couldn't relate to the current country music my family listened to with reverence but here before me I understood the angst, anger, sadness and oppression Ness would sing about on this album. I was in disbelief. Naturally women's rights, gay rights, animal rights and even political tyranny always meant

something dear to me that fell on the deafest of ears in my family, and here I was hearing band after band sing about it.

Amanda sits up and asks "Are you ready?" "Ready? Ready for what" I ask as I'm awakened from this epiphanic stupor. "Ready to cut away what they want, what society wants, to find you." (So this sounds melodramatic but for fucks sake I was in the 7th grade and she the 8th, like you were any less at this age.) We got to her bathroom and she shaves the underside of my hair, yes the shaved underside pony tail look of the 90s, the precursor to today's side shave. This was before even nose rings had hit their stride, so just imagine that this was at a time fucking revolutionary and badass. Because it was. We'd also dye my hair amethyst leaving the shaved part alone. I applied black liner to my lips and red liner to my eyes after covering my face in cornstarch. You did that back in the day as Urban Decay didn't quite exist yet. When asked by her mother why I chose that makeup scheme I replied "because I can!" With complete and utter glee.

I was outfitted in an old Dead Kennedys bedtime for democracy shirt, another girl's red plaid bondage pants, her brothers old military jacket, an old pair of combat boots she had that we repaired with duct tape and I laced together with wire as the shoelaces were broke and we covered the dyed portion of my hair with a beanie. Truly, I looked fucking rad and I knew it then as much as I know it now. I really had found me and my inner anathema. I repulsed people and their standards of dress as I walked by and I loved it. I loved the unconventional take of what beauty was, what hair should look like for a proper lady and that makeup should enhance a woman's beauty. Fuck you and your standards! I was free.

We get to the show and I've lost my sudden bout of freedom. Hours earlier I was some basic wallpaper. I existed and went with whatever I was wished to. Now suddenly I had the power to be anything and anyone and that was fucking scary in its own right. We get out of the car as I nervously fumble out of my seat belt amidst the fleeting moments of pondering what the fuck I've done and what the fuck I'm doing. My friend's mom states she'll be back to pick us up at 1AM. What? I'm twelve and have never been out so late and it's barely 8pm! We go inside and I'm seeing people that you would see on talk shows and in the news that were supposed to be scary and deviants. We are greeted as if we are long lost family. "This is Mandy, she's new." My friend says to a group of hooligan types as she cups her hand around her cigarette to light it. "Um hi, I'm Amanda." I nervously squeak out correcting my friends naming of me. I'm greeted with hi, hello, hugs and even conversation as Amanda leads me around.

The show is Avail, SNFU and Woodenhorse at the Nite Owl in Pensacola, FL. A smutty, lascivious den of no good. It was all ages BYOB. I'm standing at the outer rim of the crowd watching the bands when two guys walk up to me smiling, pick me up and throw me dead in the middle of the pit. I turn around long enough to see their faces encouraging me to join in. At this moment I let go of fear. I let go of rejection. I let go of everything that has hurt and I am baptized in this moment forever. As I slam dance along to the music with the crowd and pick others up that have fallen, I am now completely free.

What Amanda didn't know and couldn't have known, is that I had planned to take my life that afternoon after school. I had been horrifically physically and sexually abused without ever having an outlet. Any voice I had had been silenced years before, wings permanently clipped. I was lonely and felt like an outcast. I struggled with my faith and burgeoning sexuality. Being bullied for so long, tortured with pranks and rumors. Feeling like I didn't have a friend in the world felt like the end of my world.

Having someone seek me out and give me the greatest gift of self was everything, and we are still friends to this day. This was the very beginning of some of the best and some of the worst times in my life and truth be told, I wouldn't change it for the world.—JUNKIE LOVEDOLL

# CONCERT CALENDAR

**1/9—Oh Sleeper, In the Trench, Myra Maybelle, Isonomist, Morningside, Distance/Here, Aphotic Contrivance @ Grand Stafford, Bryan. 6:30pm**

**1/9—MyDolls, The Prof. Fuzz 63, Girlband, The Ex-Optimists @ Revolution, Bryan. 9:30pm**

**1/21—Corusco, LUCA, Sidechick, Hand Me Down Adventure @ Revolution, Bryan. 8pm**

**1/22—ASS @ Revolution, Bryan. 10pm**

**1/23—The Honey Dewdrops @ Grand Stafford, Bryan. 8pm**

**1/30—Second Runner Up, A Deathbed Promise, Electric Astronaut, Corpus Angel @ Grand Stafford, Bryan. 8pm**

**1/30—StephFest II feat. Funeral Horse, No I'm the Leader, Jody Seabody & The Whirls @ Revolution, Bryan. 10pm**

**2/5—LUCA, Leavenworth @ Village Café, Bryan. 8pm**

**2/5—Brazos Valley Derby Girl Art Show feat. Girlband, Mutant Love @ Riddle Gallery, Bryan. 9pm**

**2/10—Vox Vocis, And Then Suddenly, Forever Today, LUCA, Electric Astronaut @ Revolution, Bryan. 7:30pm**

**2/13—Wonderbitch @ Revolution, Bryan. 10pm**

**2/20—LUCA, Exit Glaciers, First Thought Worst Thought, The Inators @ Revolution, Bryan. 10pm**

For a moment, be so kind as to take a step back and remove

your over sensitive protective media-induced blinders and set them aside. I would like to paint you a mental picture of my own that I have noticed for some time. The trend that I speak of is cognitive dissonance in relation to the physical, mental, spiritual, and now digital worlds which we thrive in. I probably should add natural instinct to the list as we've seen an increasing distancing of ourselves culturally and socially from the world from which we sprung. These very instincts that are wired into our very molecules once gave us a fighting chance and were embraced and honed. Nowadays, these very same instincts could most certainly lead to your social if not actual physical undoing. I'm illustrating this not to denounce society as whole, but merely to bring attention to the adverse effects repressing such instincts could potentially be causing down the road for both the individual and the whole.

If psychology has taught us anything, it's that repressed things have a way of boiling over into many unforeseeable paths of action, thought, or projection into the world around us. A lot of times it can be something along the lines of a preacher having impure thoughts about a member of his congregation, or a child disobeying his gut though he knows he shouldn't and otherwise if the moment and setting were any different, nothing would have transgressed. These are merely examples of common cognitive dissonance. While C.D. is nothing new, I feel its effects grown the further we've distanced ourselves from actual human face to face, personal interaction. Our desire and requirement for these things does not merely go away either, they internalize and pop up elsewhere, in places like your day to day life actions.

I feel that we as modern evolving humans should be weary of completely ignoring our natural cues. If your gut says "don't do this or that" don't do that then and you'll probably be better off. If your feet say walk to the corner store, but your brain says "but I have a car". If we can learn to culturally, socially, and personally bridge the gap between our bodies, hearts, and minds, then perhaps there will be a world better off than what we inherited from our ancestors when we leave it the next batch of humans. By changing how we view our bodies, minds, and general selves to seeing us as natural beings instead of beings of wrong doing we might be able to eliminate some of the murky doings of the world around us that we've created for ourselves that no one actually seems to enjoy because of how corrupt someone long ago once was. So why then, I ask, must we suffer for the

## COGNATIVE DISSONANCE

past's enforced idiosyncrasies? The growing rate of C.D. is directly

correlated I believe and can only be decreased through implementing rigorous changes in how we interact with ourselves personally, those around us, and the world which we currently thrive in. I suggest we start asking the questions needed to get the answers we so desperately need but don't realize because we're too caught up in someone else's dream for the future from long ago. It's time to update our values, and practices to be more whole and honest and natural, not to encourage people to do a few good deeds while looking down on them for not being able to afford to live as well. Let's make a world where we can thrive and all enjoy this live as well as possible while we're here. After all, none of us asked to be born, we just were, and we find ourselves here with these other people who are trying make the best of something didn't necessarily want any part of in the beginning. One is posed then to ask: do we hate ourselves for existing so much so that we feel the need to pass on the dissatisfaction of existing to others as opposed to attempting to bridge the divides there are still too many, who feel that we should "pass the buck" so to speak? This should change.

Think about the times your eyes have seen something, and you know you saw it, but your mind tells you logically it cannot be. So we forget it, push it away, and pretend it never or couldn't ever have happened, right? Why wouldn't we believe or senses? Because of cognitive dissonance we've trained our minds to retreat instead of expanding them. Perhaps that's why even our greatest minds barely can use up to ten percent of their brain power. Supposedly the Buddha found his inner and outer truths, accepted them and learned from them till he become one with the cosmos, allegedly transcending consciousness through time and space and simple combusted into a ball of light before his followers. Was that his full potential? By facing the undeniable truths of each other and ourselves, perhaps we can change our world & ourselves into things truly of beauty and marvel and rid ourselves of so many of the self-induced nuances that bog us down and this joint experience so frustrating at times. Take a moment and look into yourselves, and ask "who am I truly? And how can I be better?" If we all do this, then we'll all begin to learn to see the untapped potential in all of us. After all as Einstein said "Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid." I agree, embrace your uniqueness, don't be afraid to be different or good, just be you plant your uncommon seeds. For they will surely grow into things of grandeur & beauty."—WILLIAM DANIEL THOMPSON

# MYDOLLS



WITH SPECIAL GUESTS

## THE PROF.FUZZ 63 THE EX-OPTIMISTS GIRLBAND

REVOLUTION CAFÉ, DOWNTOWN BRYAN  
SATURDAY JANUARY 9TH - 9PM - \$5