

BAD TIMES

The Official Occasional Newsletter of Bad Religion

ISSUE NUMBER SEVEN, OCTOBER, 1997



WHAT IT WAS, and WHAT IT IS

1997 is almost over and where have Bad Religion been? Cities across America and all over the world have not heard a single note of BR live on their stages. Is it true? Is the rumor of the band's breakup a reality? Has Greg G. finally given up on society and checked out? Have they decided that punk doesn't pay and settled for regular jobs in the bustle of modern society? **NOT ON YOUR LIVES FAIR READERS!** We have simply taken some time out to spend at our houses, something we weren't able to do in 1996, because our intense travel schedule, (see the last issue for a list of shows in 1996). So luckily, we were able to be home for a while and enjoy our families and domesticity somewhat. But just when you think we have totally forgotten you we surprise you with news of our incipient visits back to your necks of the woods! In 1998 we will begin another tour of the world that will once again take us to more destinations than ever before! We have been selected as the featured band for the 1998 **WARPED TOUR!** It sounds like a great idea and we hope you all will make it to one of these special events. There will be something like 10 major acts, exhibitions of pro skateboarders, punk vendors, lots of food and drink, and a broader array of Bad Religion merchandise than ever before. All for a cheap admission price! **WOW!** What are we waiting for? Let's get this show on the road! Well, we have to wait until July of 1998 for the fun.



Bad Religion are not the kind of guys who just sit around and do nothing on their time off of course. 1997 was spent being very productive as well. Brian Baker spent his time playing the clubs with local Washington D.C. punk bands, Greg Hetson continued work on his music label and put together punk musicians from around Los Angeles to form the Punk Rock Karaoke ensemble. And Greg G. recorded a solo album.

There were special appearances by the band also. In February, the band left for Australia and played two weeks of sold-out shows down under. We want to thank all of the aussies for their kind support and warmth. They made the long trip a wonderful experience. It was a real reward for us to play for people who have been waiting so long to see us. We also played two weeks of shows in Europe during June. These were mostly large festivals that are a lot of fun to play but not very intimate. During that time we were lucky enough to play a few smaller shows in out-of-the-way towns such as Linz and Dornbirn, Austria, and Strassbourg, France. We can't overstate how important these types of shows are to us. We love interacting more directly with people. It reminds us of the "old days".

Speaking of the old days, last weekend, September 28th we decided to take a little break from our current recording project, so we played three shows in New York City that were very reminiscent of our early club gigs. They were at the Wetlands, Coney Island High, and CBGBs. The latter club hasn't seen us on its stage since 10 years ago! All of the shows had a \$5.00 ticket price and we sold a special limited edition T-shirt. While on stage Saturday night I spoke to the crowd and said "I hope all of you go out and tell 10 friends to join you in buying our new record next year. Because if you help us get a gold record we will become rich beyond our wildest dreams. And when we don't have to worry about money anymore to take care of our families, we can play shows like this in every city.... **FOR FREE!!!**" I was only half joking. If we didn't have any financial concerns, I would love to play free shows, it is keeping with the spirit of why we started in this music scene. So buy the new record and make us rich!



THE NEW ALBUM!

We are currently in the midst of recording our new album. It will be released sometime early next year. We have already finished the basic tracks and it promises to be another classic BR work! Some of the titles include: The Hippy Killers, No Substance, Sowing the Seeds of Utopia, Victims of the Revolution, Raise Your Voice!, and The Biggest Killer in American History. All of the titles tell a story about life in America, thereby continuing the new-folk tradition that our style of punk has fashioned over the years.

The album is being recorded in Ithaca, NY, the home of Greg G. We are trying to record it in the way our earlier albums were made, by using our own resources as much as possible. There are two studios involved. We recorded the basic tracks at our friend's studio in Ithaca. He is Alex Perialas and he owns Pyramid Sound, a rough-looking place from the outside, but state-of-the-art facilities inside, where it counts. The vocals and some guitar parts are being recorded at Polypterus Studio, Greg Graffin's home studio. The project is being produced as a collaborative effort by the band, Alex, and our live engineer Ronnie Kimball. Our last two albums were recorded by producers we had no history with and in studios that were alien to us. This one feels much more organic and natural, and this feeling transgressed to the music itself.

Over the last year or so, the period in which most of the ideas developed for this album, we have been re-discovering some of our old favorite punk records. It has been quite a while since we listened to records such as Stiff Little Fingers, and Sham 69, the Adolescents, and the Germs GI. These were some of the stimuli that inspired us during the creation of the new record. I am sure that those who are familiar with the old-school punk tradition will find many familiar motifs from that era on the new Bad Religion release. Some of the new songs are classic punk: simple melodies, delivered with conviction and heart-felt intensity. To many this might seem like simpler production. But that is not the case. A simple, powerful chord progression with Bobby Schayer driving home the rhythm delivered with a classic melody can never be called simple. On songs like "Raise Your Voice", the communal inspiration is unmistakably sublime, despite the sparsity of chords.

There are also a few songs that can be classified as true punk ballads (BR is one of the few bands still

playing this style of punk song). No Substance is one of them. This song speaks of the lack of meaning and emotion in the world today, despite our immense communication networks, we are a more empty people than ever before.

We feel more creative than ever and it will reflect in this new release. I hope you all enjoy it and convince everyone who doesn't know about BR how wrong they are.



INNSBRUCK SNOW BOARDING

Bad Religion has been selected as the feature artist to play at the 1997 International Snow Boarding Championships in Innsbruck, Austria. We have always felt a strong affinity with those who pursue board sports (snowboarding, skateboarding, and surfing) and, in fact, some of our earliest shows were at skateboard parks in southern California. Last year we played at Board Aid in Big Bear California and had a chance to see some awesome athletes do wonders with their boards. This year should be no exception. The best from around the world will be there with us in Innsbruck and we are even going to get out there ourselves and show what the old-school boarders can do! MTV Europe will be broadcasting our concert all over the world so hopefully you will be able to see our show. Call and complain to your local MTV provider if you don't get to see it. They could surely bump one re-run of Beavis and Buttthead to air the BR concert, don't you think?



AMERICAN LESION, by Greg Graffin

Well, after a few years of putting it off, I finally decided to record a solo record. It is called American Lesion. This wasn't because I was trying to compete with Mr. Brett (who put out a solo single last year called The Daredevils) or because I thought I would make a lot of money on my own (I did it for free without any advances from record labels) or because I wanted to play music with another band (I wrote all the songs, and played all the instruments myself). Rather, I recorded this album because since I was 15 years old, I have been obsessed

with writing music. I do it almost every day of my life, and there are a lot of musical ideas that simply are not appropriate for Bad Religion but I still want to record them. Also, the last two years have been particularly tumultuous for me emotionally and I wanted an outlet for it. So I decided to start putting some of these songs on tape at my home studio. They were songs that have been written over the last 10 years or so, and some that are only 1 or 2 years old. Eventually, I started to realize I had almost enough material for an entire album.

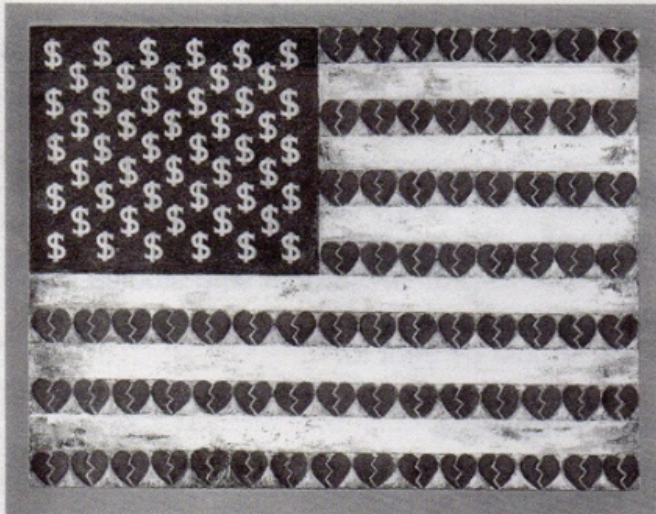
I wrote a short prospectus to my friends as an explanation of what I was up to:

Dear friends,

This is a very personal project I have been working on. It consists of songs that I have written over the last ten years that were not recorded by Bad Religion. They constitute a more emotional side of me and one that I usually don't exercise when I am with my band.

TITLE: "American Lesion"

This concept relates to today's climate in our business-dominated society. You are seen as a pariah if you try to do something that isn't profitable, regardless of the emotional wellness it promotes. You become, in a sense, a lesion on the tranquil surface of prosperity that America stands for.



COVER IMAGE: "Our National Heritage"

More and more people in every socio-economic class are working longer and harder to try and make ends meet. Paying the bills has become our most precious motivation. In this scramble for dollars we are becoming purely robotic, concerned with and motivated by mere black positive numbers, losing touch with our more sensitive human capacities. Our new national heritage is one of dollar signs and the trail of broken hearts that litter the way in our quest for the gold.

I hope you enjoy hearing a different side to the singer of Bad Religion.

*Sincerely,
Greg Graffin*

The songs consist of piano, drums, bass guitar, electric, and acoustic guitar, and of course, me singing. I was very worried that people who liked Bad Religion might not like to hear this more emotional side of me coming out on tape. Also, I thought it might interfere with the serious, intense, image that BR has worked so hard to maintain all these years. So I asked the BR fans if they thought songs like these would be interesting. The question went out over the internet through the Bad Religion Mailing List that Len Smith operates. To my astonishment, I received over 1000 responses within 4 weeks, all of them positively encouraging me

to release this material. So it is thanks to those interested BR fans that I was able to convince myself to finish the project and ask my record label to release it.

Atlantic records have been very supportive as well. I told them that I wanted to make it available at a cheap price at independent record stores and small chains. They said "no problem". They are going to manufacture the goods for me and distribute them through their own subsidiary distributor called ADA, and the price is going to be less than 12 dollars, I hope around \$10.99.

I am also playing two live shows by myself. I will play piano, acoustic guitar, and sing, without any other people on stage. For the first time in my 17 years in Bad Religion, I might actually be nervous on stage! The first show is in New York City at the Knitting Factory, November 4th. Then, on November 12, I will be in Los Angeles at the Viper Room. Yes that same place that the coolest people in L.A. hang out at. I guess I will finally be allowed in there! I am really looking forward to these shows. I will probably just talk a bit and play songs off the solo record, and a few BR tunes, unplugged. I am also making T-shirts because the front cover art work is exceptional

Look for the record in your local stores. It is coming out on CD, Cassette Tape, and Vinyl also. So ask for it by name: "**American Lesion**". The initial printing only consists of 10,000 units.



[WWW.BADRELIGION.COM](http://www.badreligion.com)

Within the next three months you will be able to browse at the official Bad Religion web page on the internet. There are scores of Bad Religion web pages already set up on the web. They are operated by people who have some sort of interest in what the band has to say and what the band stands for. We benefit greatly from their diligence and their desire to share information about BR with the entire internet community. The new official web site won't interfere at all with those already in existence because www.badreligion.com will be very mono-specific in its scope. Our only intent is to provide exclusive merchandise officially designed and sanctioned by Bad Religion. In a sense, it is going to be a Bad Religion shopping mall on-line.

Our first products will be old-school T-shirts that are no longer in print. We have located a number of the original screens and we are printing a limited number of numerous designs from the earlier years of Bad Religion. Keep checking for the web site over the next couple of months and you should see the first product line soon. It also will advertise BR stickers, hats, jackets, and other items for sale at a reasonable price. We are excited to offer this stuff and we are overseeing the quality control, so you know it will be great! We hope to have it running before Christmas. We plan to send out an announcement postcard when the site is up and running. Remember www.badreligion.com for all your clothing needs!



BAD RELIGION RESEARCH AWARD

Bad Religion has always been interested in promoting skepticism and scientific inquiry. Now we would like to announce our first research award for such pursuits. The award carries a \$3000.00 stipend and will be given to the most innovative research proposal we receive.

The Bad Religion Research Award:

Who may apply? Any university or high-school student (with valid registration credentials)

Purpose of the award: To promote field studies in the cultural or physical sciences.

Proposals should be sent to:

Research Proposals

c/o Michele Ceazan, manager

137 W. 14th Street

New York, NY 10011

Proposals will be judged on the following criteria:

- Ability to undertake and finish the research
- Creative experimental design
- Breadth of significance

The award will be presented sometime in the late Spring or early Summer 1998. The judges are the band members.

We hope to hear from all you young scientists.



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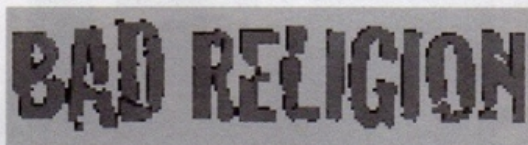
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