

# SLUG



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SKY CRIES  
MARY

SPECIAL  
COLLECTIONS

# RECORDS...



**Bloodlet**  
*Eclectic*  
Victory Records

I saw COC once, hell, I've even seen AT WAR and NUCLEAR ASSAULT. They were the shows you somehow just ended up at without actually planning on it. The bass and drums from them would pound down on your chest, knocking the wind out of you while you gagged down a smoke. The moshers bumped your beer and you thought to yourself it wasn't a bad little show. Outside of that I never paid much attention to the 'new' metal phase; fun to watch but not all that to listen to at home. BLOODLET hits me the same way. It's a genre you really have to be into to appreciate. If the boys ended up knocking on the doors of SLC, "Hey we're gonna play" I'll probably end up there and watch the long-hairs bob their heads and wave their fists, but that would be the extent of my association with the band. It's heavy, covered in macho vocals, no flash just straight forward guitar attack, and has the standard vocabulary of 'seven-tongued devils' 'molten tears' 'rage,' and 'infinite lost souls' Well done for what it is, but still for heavy metal elites.

—JAND

**Bad Religion**  
*The Gray Race*  
Atlantic

For once the advance actually gives a proper idea as to the music. Is this the one to make the Bad Religion cover boys of Sassy? Can they capture the interest of pre-teens who ignored the Circle Jerks and All even as they snapped up "product" by the third generation? Ric Ocasek produced with the band. All songs were written by Greg Graffin and Brian Baker, who has filled the vacant guitar slot. Baker was formerly in Minor Threat. *Stranger Than Fiction* raised their profile slightly. If the tour with Pearl Jam had actually happened that record might have broken them through. The career retrospective Epitaph released helped even more. I've seen eight-year-olds picking it up. Anyone thinking punk rock has burned itself out needs *The Gray Race*. Melodic guitars, harmonies, speed, songs, anthems are all included. "The Gray Race," "A Walk," "Parallel," "Pity The Dead," and that's only the first side. "Spirit Shine" continues the onslaught on side two. I don't know, maybe they are too old to capture the imaginations of punk's new generation. I thought the Circle Jerks had the best punk rock record of '95 and we all saw where they ended up. The label group appeared more interested in breaking Joan Osbourne than promoting *Oddities, Abnormalities and Curiosities*. Greg Hetson must be happier in Bad Religion. I have two months to enjoy the cassette and memorize the lyrics before the CD hits the stores. Somehow I doubt any-

thing more impressive is going to appear in the meantime. *The Gray Race* is scheduled for release on February 27. Hopefully a club tour will follow.

—Chia Head



**Jack O' Fire**  
*Beware The Soulless Cool*  
1+2 Records

It seems that we have hit a fad of bands that do nothing but covers. In a way it has its humorous perks, but somehow always leaving me questioning whether anyone really has anything new to say. JACK O' FIRE gives us another entire record of covers. Despite my mistrust of cover bands, I will say they've pulled it off well. They give their covers a noisy blues feel; not so much like SPENCER, but more swampy like a little known band from the eighties, SCIENTISTS. The vocals are muffled and turned down a bit, as if the various singers use their voices as just another instrument. Their selections of pieces to cover range from THE WHO, THE CRAMPS, THE BARKAYS, and even Wire's 1 2 X U. Its a fun piece to drink to, just listen to their version of WINE WINE WINE, but if you're a technical freak you's best stay away; they're sloppy. But if we refused sloppiness in music, where would the delta blues be?

—JAND

**Michael Aston**  
*Why Me Why This Why Now*  
Triple X Records

Most of you may remember Michael Aston

from the early '80s alternative band, Gene Loves Jezebel. Aston has been on his own since 1990 and this is his first recording for Triple X Records. Aston brought in Mick Rossi on guitar and Geza X to produce it. (If those two names mean anything to you, then I know how old you are...You old fart!) As always, Aston's vocals are haunting. Musically, this recording has more of a folk/acoustic feel to it. The vibe is very relaxed and the tempo is slowed down, considerably. Personally I think Aston's vocals go great with this type of music. His voice brings a bit of melancholy-type longing to the songs and enough distance to give the album an edgy creepiness. If you liked Gene Loves Jezebel and you like slower songs, I think you will like, Why Me, Why This, Why Now. But you will have to give it time, it's one that definitely grows on you. And by the way, it's a good album for lovers. So grab your favorite partner, light some candles and incense, and watch the night dissipate right before your very eyes.

—RDJ



**Brian Jonestown Massacre**  
*Methadrone*  
Tangible/Asphodal Records  
Now that every band in existence has discovered psychedelic rock in one form or another the Brian Jonestown Massacre have released *Methadrone* as a textbook example of trance/psychedelic without any electronic synthesizers or samples involved.