

Expanding Horizons

Agression

Brandon Jak / Dr. Know

"In 1980, if you were a skater, a punk, a surfer, or just happened to know Mark, Bob, Henry, and Casey, Agression was THEE band in Oxnard. The guys in the band were all a bit older, a lot bigger, and a helluva lot crazier than most of us who lived near them on Cahuenga, a small street on Silver Strand Beach. They had the parties. They had a half pipe. They had weed and could buy beer. For those of us who lived next door, it was perfect. They got the new records of all the bands before anyone else. They had been to The Starwood, The Masque, The Whiskey. They had seen The Germs. They had smoked pot with Black Flag. Agression were the shit. The secret symbol was everywhere. It was their time. BYO must have sensed what we had known for quite some time. Agression had the songs and the talent to stand out above a lot of the L.A. bands of the time. They were nice guys, too. Hell, Henry was a genius. One day Agression was doing crap on Mystic, then they told us about a group of guys from L.A. Well, Canadian Jews from L.A., but they were punks, and that was all that mattered. When Nardcore started, there were more minorities than there were white guys. Race and age and all that crap meant nothing to us. Music did. Everyone who didn't belong any where else were welcomed on Cahuenga Street and into the Nardcore scene.

Shawn Stern and his brothers Mark, Adam, and that other one were already a band, Youth Brigade, and a growing part of the hardcore punk scene in 1980 L.A. They threw huge gigs, they had Skinhead Manor, and Godzilla's. The Sterns were everywhere. They probably found out about Agression like everyone else. You heard a song and wanted to hear more. When the first Agression album, 'Don't Be Mistaken' came out on BYO, the entire Nardcore scene celebrated. A group from Oxnard had made the leap, and were now a part of the bigger scene. The rest of us in the fledgling bands had hope, too. If Agression had made it, there was a chance that we could, too.

Agression went out on tour in an old bus that the Sterns had managed to gather. We all went to see them off. Looking back at that picture



of them on the bus with all of our friends is really a great point in Oxnard punk rock. Local boys done good. We were proud of them, and today, sadly without Mark and Henry around to see it, an entire new generation of kids from broken homes, piece of shit parents, a sense of alienation, and an ear for music, are getting into Agression. It makes an old guy like me proud to say I was there when it started.

Thanks BYO,
for helping out our friends,
and for being our friends, as well."

DEAR SHAWN,
Yo Bro! HERE'S THE TAPE OF THE D.C. SESSIONS! I DON'T KNOW
WHAT HAPPENED BUT ONE OF THE DECKS I USED TO DOB HAS A REAL
BASSY, MUDDY SOUND SO THAT'S WHY THE TAPE SOUNDS LIKE CRAP PLUS
WE'VE RAYED THE ORIGINAL TOO MUCH.
ANYWAY, WE'D LIKE TO PUT ALL THE SONGS ON, EXCEPT THE SECOND
SONG (ON THE TAPE) "REGRESS, NO WAY!" WHICH IS COMING OUT ON POSHEADS'
COMPILATION. ALSO, HERE'S A "ROUGH" COPY OF THE COVER.
I'LL SEND PRESS STUFF LATER, JUST AS SOON AS I CAN DIG OUT THE 'ZINES.
KEEP IN TOUCH, TAKE CARE
KEVIN

Toby Morse / H2O

What does 7 Seconds mean to me? The first thing is they got that PMA. When everything was 'fuck everything,' they were like 'fix everything.'

I think when I first heard them, it was The Crew album. I was fifteen years old in '85 and I'd been listening to punk rock already without any melody or real message. I remember 'Bully,' 'Trust' and 'Colourblind' (may have been first rap in hxc) being songs I could relate to lyrically instead of the fuck-everything, anarchy and fuck-your-mom-etc stuff.

They sang about heartfelt, real life issues, community, the scene and walking together! 'Man Enough to Care' off of the New Wind LP, would give me goose bumps, maybe cause I never had a dad. Now when I listen to it and I am a dad myself, it gives me a different feeling. I've loved every release they ever put out, even when they changed up their style. I have a 'Still Believe' with their logo tatted on me. They've inspired my life, influenced my band tremendously and I still-hate sports!"

7SECONDS



Brent Belke, guitarist, SNFU

"There were times when models did not look like rock musicians. And rebellion and irreverence were not standard advertising tools. Back then, I lived for going to punk rock shows on the weekends. One feverish summer night in '82, a dusty yellow school bus with two bands from LA (Youth Brigade and Social Distortion) and their friends (a road crew?) quietly rolled into Edmonton. They assaulted us with their intense, insane energy and changed me irrevocably. We hung out, had a few beers. They answered all our dumb questions, they wrestled in the parking lot and left us, just like that, going onto the next town like a summer camp on wheels.

Where the suffocating status quo of music and society-at-large had become stagnant, BYO united us with their ideals and challenged us to make a difference and change things. They didn't wait for a record deal (that term did not exist in "band talk" then). They put out records themselves, booked their own shows, toured to connect with their listeners. They continued to roll into town under the radar and leave an indelible mark when they left - by doing it all themselves. That BYO philosophy beats in my heart to this very day."

Marc Belke, guitarist, SNFU

"My first encounter with the Better Youth Organization was when Youth Brigade and Social Distortion came through my hometown in 1982. The tour they were on is forever immortalized in the movie, Another State of Mind. The Edmonton engagement also featured England's Vice Squad. Vice Squad's headlining set came off as trivial after witnessing sets by BYO founders' Youth Brigade and their friends' Social Distortion. We were eager to meet them, bombard them with questions and tell them about our fledgling band.

Despite the small turn out, Youth Brigade returned to Western Canada and we made sure that we met up and played on some of their shows. Those few shows led to our first recording and release. Our song, 'Victims of the Womanizer' appeared on the BYO compilation, 'Something to Believe In.' That album, was an ambitious effort for that time. It attempted to and succeeded as much as it possibly could, to unify the North American punk rock scene.

It was inspiring to have our young band validated with a recording and to be a part of the BYO in some capacity. The BYO was the epitome of what independent artists could do on their own with a little hard work.

By releasing our first two albums, the Stern brothers gave me and my brother the opportunity to do what we always wanted to do, make records and see the world. I'm forever grateful to the BYO for helping me live out my dreams."

Chris Walters / Gofuckyerself Press

"I first met SNFU when I was touring with The Stretch Marks as a roadie. We stopped in Edmonton, where another friend took us to the house where the band practiced. When I saw Chi Pig, I thought he was insane. Here he was, five-foot-fuck-all and a hundred-and-ten pounds soaking wet with beer, yet he was dressed in full punk regalia. This is Edmonton in the early 80s, where even a short haircut was enough to earn you a good beating from the first rednecks who happened by. And here's Chi, walking around with spiky black hair, a homemade punk T-shirt, and loads of belts and pointy wristbands. Edmonton was not a safe place, and Chi was the biggest fist magnet I'd ever seen. I thought he was out of his fucking mind. Then the band played us a few songs. Those kids could play! Chi gave me a sticker they'd just made, that one with the rotted skull on it. Nowadays I see kids who weren't even born when the band was formed wearing that patch. Now that's a legacy."