

ten years old next year." On whose calendar? When are they counting from?

Probably when those stupid limeys stole the New York Dolls' sound and Richard Hell's clothes and told the world they invented it. THE RAMONES were around in 1974! The first time I heard the words "Punk Rock" was in late 1972, when the New York Dolls stopped wearing make-up and told people "Glitter is over, it's punk rock now." So whoever said that can eat 1976 and those British imitators. You've just failed your history course.

My second bitch is about something that appeared (sic) in the letters column a few issues ago. I was thrilled to see GG Allin's brilliant (sic) letter in that issue. It shows that one of the greatest living Rock N Roll self destructivists (sic) is still alive and kicking, even though he was writing from a hospital sick (sic) bed.

I was annoyed, however, at MRR's sleazy use of the parenthetical "sic", to indicate the genius's every misspelling or grammatical error. This is a low trick use by the major dailies (sic) to make everyone who doesn't agree with them look like an illiterate. Einsteine (sic) was a bad speller, too. I'm not saying that Einstein was as smart as GG, I just want to say that spelling doesn't prove anything. It's just a low trick and I was disappointed (sic) to see it used here.

Finally those who are in a letter writing mood and have already written their congressmen to protest the coming tape cassette tax, you should try writing to the public radio station in St. Louis. A good music radio show called PIPELINE was cancelled by a stick-up-the-ass program manager and the local foks are asking for help in getting it back. I lost all the addresses, but it shouldn't be too hard to find. The folks at the St. Louis zine Jet Lag are working on this and you can contact them for more information. Write them at The Mailman Building, 8419 Halls Ferry Road, St. Louis MO, 63147, or call John at (314) 227-4798.

Well buckaroos, that's it for right now. My next report will probably be from Miami. See ya.



I think this is an appropriate time to catch up on some comings and goings. First off, staff wise, MRR continues to grow with no easing up in sight. On the day-to-day front, Martin and I handle most all the business, with Scott, Erika, Ellen and Steve chipping in here and there. Then on Sundays the whole staff shows up, including the forementioned, as well as Kent, Kamala, Rachel and Butch. New additions include Miltz Waltz (of Incoherent House zine) and Cara (of Grudge zine). Brian Edge checks in when he's not at sea (merchant marine), and Anna (ex-Deadly Reign) has moved to D.C. to form a band with George (ex-Battalion of Saints). Jerod Poore moved to Australia last year, sending in occasional reports. And speaking of travel, Kent will be moving to London, England next month to work for John Loder (joining Allison, ex-Rough Trade U.S.) and helping MRR's European distribution. She'll sorta be our Charles Kurault with "on the road" reports. Special thanks go out to Jerry Booth, without whose bookkeeping help we'd be lost.

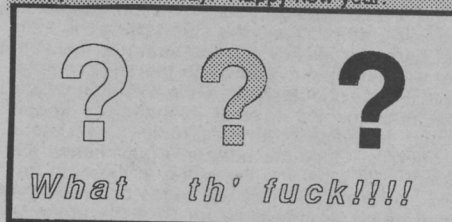
Changes on the radio front too: Ruth will be handing over the radio show syndication to Max, so all mail inquiries from radio stations should now come to MRR's address (P.O. Box 288/Berkeley CA 94701). The radio show continues to be hosted by the regular crew: Ruth Schwartz, Martin Sprouse, Kent Jolly, Jeff Bale, Steve Spinali, Max, and myself.

I think at this juncture I'd really like to thank a whole lot of other people as well for their continuing work. First off, the scene reporters everywhere. They work hard and diligently, trying to cover their scene for little

compensation. Then there's the other contributors: writers, columnists, reviewers, etc. Thanks to all of you. Finally, there's the advertisers, most of whom are barely eeking out a profit (if that); we appreciate your continued work with us and the scene.

The mag itself has been looking pretty good to me lately, as I think Martin has gotten us alot more graphically-oriented. He and I have been working real well together, agreeing on most large matters and able to compromise on the smaller ones..... just as long as we don't start looking like Leading Edge (just kidding, Martin).

As you'll see on the next page, we have some long term plans as well, and hope to get them underway this year (as we have for the last two years!), so I am keeping my fingers crossed. Meanwhile to those who write in urging us not to give up..... fret not, we're as dedicated as ever. And to those who wish we'd disappear..... no way. Happy new year.



This is the second installment of this column, a hopefully monthly feature. This time we're talking with Bob Mould of HUSKER DU on a topic that's important to the whole indie scene. MRR welcomes any differing views on the subject.

MRR: There are a lot of rumors going around that you have signed to a major label. What impact do you think it will have on the independent/underground music scene (and do you feel any commitment to the underground scene)?
Bob: First off, we'd like to say thanks for asking us about it. Hopefully, this will be one of the only times we'll be asked about it; we really don't want to spend the rest of our time on earth talking about signing with a major label. Yes, we've signed a deal with Warner Brothers Records; obviously we can't tell everyone everything that the contract contains. Generally speaking, their contract calls for at least two albums in the next two years, the first Warners LP to be released on March 17, 1986. The major part of the contract, at least to us, allows us complete artistic freedom on the project. Grant and I are preparing to mix the first LP this week, we're doing all the artwork in house, same as always. The songs we wrote for this LP were around long before the Warners deal was a reality, so I don't think there should be any radical changes in style. We were writing these songs for ourselves and we've always written songs that make us happy first. When we were a unknown quantity to the hardcore and punk

crowd, we tried to express what we had on our minds as clearly as possible, in both what we do as human beings or musicians. On that thought, I don't think the Warners deal will change our attitude one bit.

A lot of people, especially on our European tour of September, confronted us about not being political enough. I agree completely with them. Earlier on in our days as a band, we attempted to deal with general global concerns (nuclear war, racism, and fascism) in very general and basic terms. We soon realized that we were not as well equipped as other bands around us to expound on certain political theories, but these things were, and still are, on our minds. To us, it seems more important to deal with why people are people and make certain people see things in such a negative way. That may sound like a cop out, especially now that we are in a better position to spread a certain "gospel" to the "masses" (whoever they may be).

Basically, we're not going to use music as a political tool when we don't have enough

concrete knowledge about delicate political issues. It's better not to inform people than to misinform people about a subject of this magnitude. Of course we don't want to see any more wars, bigotry, or bulldozing of innocent people or countries. We're human beings with feelings and we have deep opinions on these subjects. I think the thing we're trying to make people realize is that most of the hatred and bigotry in the world starts right between your own ears, ours included. This society has stereotyped subcultures of all varieties through mass communications (be it TV, advertising, or the printed word), and it is repeatedly ingrained, day after day, through the entertainment and business worlds.... be it the Coors Light ad which portrays middle-American workers as beer drinking bar hounds, up to the ladies cosmetic ads on any number of television shows portraying families living in projects or mansions-- they're all guilty of displaying America as a completely factionalized society. People have to take a look at the society around them and decide where they stand and what attitudes that position might shape. That's what a song like "Real World" meant: who are you, why are you looking for some sort of religion to follow, punk or otherwise? We weren't knocking people who live within the Anarchist society, we were simply stating that anarchy was not the answer for us and may not be the way of life for a lot of people. We're just asking people to take a look at themselves and if they don't like what they see, do some thing about yourself before you take it out on someone else. No two people are alike; everyone is unique in one way or another and people should be proud of being different. It's a little unsettling when people are different like everyone else though. I'm sorry if we ruffled some peoples feathers along the way, but maybe we're more interested in arguing with people than constantly agreeing just to seem in good graces with someone. If we presented a challenge to someone's personal philosophy - great, we've done our job. If we've insulted anyone personally, we apologize and ask you to take a second look. We don't have any answers that are right for everyone, but I'm sure, as I sit here putting this piece together, that we've got some damn good questions.

As far our involvement in the underground scene goes, well, our little joke is that we're now the establishment-- hardly likely considering how adamant we are about the way Husker Du operates from day-to-day. I had talked to Tim briefly on the phone about the sellout concept, and I think it goes alot deeper than the "evil" major labels. In my mind, the real evils may lie within the management companies and booking agencies. Some of these companies are very good with bands like Husker Du, some are not so good. We're still self-managed and we've hired one person for full time assistance with booking. We're still conscious of our audience, we're trying to play all-ages shows, we're trying to keep the ticket price down, and we are trying to keep people off the stage because we're tired of losing half our guarantee because of destroyed PA systems and half our teeth. It has nothing to do with elitism; we're concerned about ourselves staying in one piece, and not endangering unsuspecting people in the audience. Everyone has a right to see Husker Du, not just the slammers in the pit. We haven't gone through a new image change 'cause we've never had one. Believe me, Husker Du would be much more saleable if we had a look of any sort.

I don't think Husker Du signing to a major label will have an effect on the underground scene at all. Just because we've signed to Warner Brothers doesn't mean that there won't be ten new bands next week. If anything, it might be a sign that something is happening, that some people are finally listening to the underground, and they might even respect what's going on. Nobody at Warners has asked us to tone down; they haven't asked us to sound like U2, they're completely happy with the high end distortion and tons of ride cymbals and people yelling and singing pretty and writing any kinds of words they want. They signed Husker Du because they liked Husker Du and not because they think we will be the next Rick