

LIFETIME

Jade Tree 2310 Kennwynn Rd. Wilmington DE 19810

Lifetime PO Box 10404 New Brunswick NJ 08906

I (Frank FOE) interviewed Lifetime at the Handy St. house during the last show that would ever happen at the legendary house where bands practice and shows happened and punk rock existed. The bill included SOIA, Lifetime, Bouncing Souls, etc... Lifetime is Pete, Dan, Ari, Scott and Dave. For those not in the know, drummer Scott used to play in the Lehigh Valley band Jessica and lives in the LV, commuting to New Brunswick to be in Lifetime. Thanks goes to Gil and Billy who transcribed this interview. I'm not sure they got the names right, but you'll get the point.

FOE Suppose there are nazis fighting at a show while you are on stage... What do you do?

ARI Hide! ... The first thing we would do is stop playing and whether or not we get involved depends on how big and scary they are. We would definitely stop playing and go home or something wimpy like that.

DAN Let's put it this way. If we could take em, I'm sure we'd act tough. But if they were as big as you (referring to Foe), we'd be hiding under something.

FOE And I'm not THAT big...

DAN Well, that's the problem.

SCOTT I don't think that we've played a show where there were a lot of nazis. There was only one show (Germany) where there were any nazis. But they were mellow.

DAN Aren't all Germans nazis anyway?

SCOTT Yeah I think so.

DAN My mom won't buy a Volkswagon. She thinks they're made by Hitler's youth.

FOE What is your individual favorite Lifetime songs, and why? Mine is "The Gym is Neutral Territory". Cuz it is a great title, rocks, and the lyrics are great!

DAN I would probably say, "Irony is for Suckers", which is on the "Hello Bastards" lp. I just think it is an interesting song.

ARI "Star 69", because for me at least it marked a turning point for the band. I think it is where we started to come into our own as to where we're going, what we were shooting for the whole time. Like melodic yet hyper-aggressive and hyper-fast. That was the first time I felt like we hit the nail on the head.

SCOTT Probably "Ferret". The song has just gone through so many changes and different variations. It just keeps evolving.

DAN It's great because it was written before you were in the band (Scott), but you like made it a new song. It's a lot of fun to play.

FOE When did you join the band?

SCOTT Late August, early September of 1994. Allentown pride!

FOE Was Davé (Anonymous) in the band at one time?

ARI Dave was.

FOE What is your personal favorite tattoo on your body and why?

ARI Definitely my "sad anchor, cherub, broken-heart" tattoo. I told the guy what I wanted. I just like it cause it means a lot of different things. I'm very happy with it.

SCOTT Probably the one on my wrist. Cause it is the first one I ever got

FOE Did you do it yourself?

SCOTT No. Ha ha. Does it look like it?

FOE Well...

SCOTT Some friend and I decided to get tattoos together and we were really young. I was 15. It represents, like, those were the days.

Skateboarding, riding bikes all day. Not giving a shit. Not having to work. Every time I look down, it is a constant reminder of youth.

DAN I thought that tattoo was just a bad case of infected rope burn.

SCOTT Thanks buddy.

DAN This is my latest tattoo (revealing a scab on his leg, just a scab, no tattoo).

DAVE (who just walked in) My favorite is my "Ratbones", a commemorative skate tattoo. It celebrates skating, which made me into what I am today.

FOE You can answer the last question too. "What is your favorite Lifetime song and why?"

DAVE Oh shit, "Ghost". Because of the lyrics.

FOE Are you still doing Glue records?

ARI Yes... The last thing I put out was the Holeshot cd, which was 2 7" and 10 new songs. My partner now is Jason, who was in Holeshot, he runs it with me now. We moved the whole operation to Charles' who does Gern Blandsten. It is in his basement. He helps us out. The next thing that comes out is a 12" with a million bands on it like Lifetime, Bouncing Souls, etc.. Very interesting comp. After that is Johnny X and the Conspiracy. It is Johnny X who plays on that one Bouncing Souls song. It is his band and the Bouncing Souls back him. It sounds sorta like X and the Damned. That good old punky stuff. It'll be out by the end of summer.





FOE Oww, quit burning me you bastard (to Scott as flames from his cig hit my leg)! How did you hook up with Jade Tree and why didn't you just put out your own cd?

ARI The only reason we did put out our own stuff is because we wanted to break away from New Age for whatever reasons. We just wanted to get something out and we just thought about doing it ourselves. Our whole intentions from the beginning was to get on a label that could do more for us than we could do or any other label could. Jade Tree convinced us that they could do a lot for us and they have...

FOE How many of the new cd have you sold?

ARI Right now there are 13,000 sold, 14,000 in press, so that is pretty good. I remember one time we were on tour with Snapcase and they had sold like 10,000 and we were like "Oh, My God, a hardcore band selling 10,000!" Once we hit 10,000 we were like holy shit! Sometimes I feel like we're still a band that has only one 7" out and has 3,000 sold. The funny thing about Lifetime is we can go from playing in front of 1,200 people to playing in front of 30 who are staring at you like we're retarded. It keeps you humble. But sometimes it keeps you down. Everything is sorta like a gamble. There is an element of excitement to that but it's also a lot of pressure. You come to a show and you're like "Are a lot of people gonna come.. all psyched or like no ones gonna come and they'll look at us like, "Where's the mosh parts dude?" It really doesn't matter about the size of the show, it matters about the intensity of the show. If we play like a basement and if it's full and the kids are goin crazy, its better than a big club that's full. . It's kind of a good place to be. We can see both sides of the spectrum. Sometimes it is frustrating.

FOE The first successful band that I heard about was Kraut, they sold like 10,000 copies of their lp back in the day.

DAN When we sold 10,000 I was doing jumping jacks naked in the bathroom. Lagwagon sold 100,000 records, but we can tour anytime we want.

FOE How and why did you book this current tour with Weston?

DAN Cuz we like creamy white ass!

FOE Weston is the band then!

ARI They'll make us look good every night! We wanted to tour with a band where we wouldn't headline every night. It's really not good for us to do it that way. Margie (booking agent for both bands) called us and said "Do you want to tour with Weston?" and we said, "Yeah of course". We know what to expect. We've played with them a million times and plus we're friends with them. Our sounds are sort of compatible. When we toured with Damnation, it was kinda weird cuz

they're like metal and we're speed pop. I think it'll be a good tour coheadlining with Weston.

FOE Is it just going to be the US?

ARI And Canada.. It'll be a 6 week tour.

FOE Some of you are in college?

DAN 2 of us are in grad school.

FOE How does that work with the band?

DAN We have just made a decision to pretty much work in the band full time. I'm only a year away from my doctorate but I'm taking a leave of absence. So is Dave.

FOE What are you getting your doctorate in?

ARI Cheek spreading!

DAN Psychology.

FOE Excellent, you'll have fun on the Weston tour then. Lots of potential patients out there...

DAN I'll tell you two things right now. First, school makes you stupider. Second, I think I learned a lot more about beings by being in this band and working with people in this capacity than I did in the classroom. Also, any skill you gain with dealing with people tactfully and skillfully in a clinical or professional sense, it's unavailable to me. I'm not attached or objective or particularly sensitive in dealing with the band. Any of these guys can tell you that. I wish I could apply the type of personality I have with the band in school and vice versa. I'm totally not level headed or great when dealing with people.

ARI He's a pain in the ass.

DAN I'm a big pain in the ass. I'm not that good with dealing with the people in the band. I wish I could be a lot better... If I could have put my band motivation into my school work, I would have finished 3 years ago.



FOE So what does making Lifetime a full time thing mean?

DAN Committing to the band before all else. And touring and playing full time. We got to the point where we sold that many records and we're like we don't know what will happen until we go out there. All of our friends are like busting ass. Like the Bouncing Souls, for example..

SCOTT Good example.

DAN We were on our third tour and we took them along for their first. Since then, they've never stopped touring. They're like amazing now. They're so big and they're so great.

ARI And they deserve every bit of it. We wish we would have worked as hard.



DAN We've sold this many records without touring. And now we just wanna see what we can do.

ARI Me, personally, I have no other interests. Music is what I wanna do. Even when Lifetime breaks up, if it ever does, I still will want to play music. That's the only thing that keeps me sane.

SCOTT I totally feel the same way. (Someone walks in and tells everyone the show is over cuz the cops have arrived...)

SCOTT We can still do this interview...

DAN (to Ari) If you were a man you'd deal with the pigs. The fuckin donut eaters.... (Ari leaves interview to take care of the business of dealing with the cops...)

FOE How appropriate that the cops show up at the last show here... Why is this the last show at 67 handy St.?

DAN Everybody is movin out. And it's all Pete's fault. Our bass player and singer (Dave and Ari) live here. Dave lived on top of a rafter in the attic. He slept sideways. He'd bring in straw and debris and make a nest up there. This has been a second home for all of us. We practice here.

FOE How long have there been shows going on here?

DAN Four years... People will be talking about this show for years... Sick of it All played in our basement!

FOE So why is everyone else movin out (obvious that the Lifetime guys will be on the road)?

SCOTT Two other guys are going on tour too. The others will not be able to keep up with the rent. (Dan and Scott fight over who's beer is whose.)

DAN You should be happy that I'm drinking your piss Lehigh Valley brew.

FOE Of all the songs you could cover, why did you guys decide to do the Husker Du cover? (they cover "It's Not Funny Anymore" on "Hello Bastards")

DAN The lyrics, it is about FTW, Fuck the World. It is the ultimate youth anthem of American punk.

FOE What is the biggest handicap you have had to overcome in your life? I have this theory that we are all handicapped in some way...

SCOTT I made a lot of poor decisions in the past. Along the lines of personal choices. Like the lifestyle I chose to lead, who I associated myself with and a lot of stuff that goes deeper. My biggest handicap is I've got to let the past be the past.

FOE Have you dealt with it? Or are you still dealing with it?

SCOTT Still dealing with it. A few years ago I was completely neurotic. I was throwing up and worrying about stuff. I had this big phobia of death. I think there is stuff I got to do but I don't know what to do. I fear leaving unfinished business behind. (noise and commotion outside) Sounds like a full blown riot outside... (no riot) The band has really helped me out. Like getting out of the Lehigh Valley and seeing the world.

FOE (Dan has difficulty getting the cap off of the bottle of beer) Use your teeth. If you can't use your teeth to open a bottle of beer, then you don't deserve to drink the beer! That is South Side Bethlehem talk.

DAN I'm really sorry I'm such a wuss.

SCOTT Like being in Europe was probably the best experience in my life. Everyone should at least see the country they live in, instead of being isolated in one area.

DAN That's a real trap for me... I look to my degree (at college) as freedom. The field of mental health relates to my punk rock ideals. I'm not religious but I think I'm fairly spiritual, and I think we all agree that the world is a fucked up place. I really think we have a purpose in life. If nothing else, I'd try to make my little corner of it somewhat of a nicer place. I know this sounds Mother Theresa-ish but to alleviate human suffering in any way is an admirable thing. I think you can do it to some extent with punk rock. Basically, when I get the degree I can do anything I want. I could teach, consult, or do any social work. But, I wanna work as little as possible. I hate work. The band meant freedom. It has become the most exciting thing in my life. Everything is hectic. I can't pay attention to my clients because I'm working out song arrangements in my head. If I wake up every morning with a song in my head it is my brains way of telling me this is my path. My handicap, to answer your question is dealing with a long curse of low self esteem, which I think everyone deals with. It can come from parents, friends, etc. In America, if you are a boy and can't play sports everyone says you suck. I have a continuous battle as to if I'm an asset to anyone. Years of little league baseball taught me I should just stay in my basement and not come out of my house. I'm 28 years old and it's still a very painful part of my life. I'm hyper-sensitive to it. It is a lot of geeks crying story. I'm sure the guys of Weston have told you of being put in right field (where no one hits the ball). I'm the biggest geek in this band.

FOE Do you think making Lifetime full time is gonna add any pressure?

DAN We have a degree of pressure but we don't have a vision of what success is. We won't climb over dead bodies to achieve success, but none of us want to die wondering what would have happened if we would have put our all into it.

FOE Is there anything else you'd like to add?

DAN Yeah, I'm surprised you are so young. It's not a put down... In the last two months I've met Jim Testa (Jersey Beat zine) and Al Quint (Suburban Voice zine) and they're old. Old like your uncle in the computer business or something. But you've been doing FOE for fucking ever. Before we met, I saw you walking around and thought, "Oh there is another HC kid".

FOE (that brought back a lot of memories, because of the bond I had with a lot of zines in the early days... Earwax, JB, SV etc...) I just don't look 30 that's all. Hardcore and punk keeps you young.

DAN I don't look 28. We went to pick up beer and I got carded. If I went to get cigarettes I'd get carded.

SCOTT I'm at the opposite side of the spectrum, I don't get carded anywhere and I wish I would.

