

Joan Jett's new album is mediocre

By MARK BRETT

You may never have seen them, but they were there. You may never have heard their hypnotic chanting, but chanting they were. You probably laugh at rumors of their existence, but exist they do. I'm speaking, of course, of Wesleyan's infamous Midget Nudist Satan-Worshipping community.

Before it was moved to the campus' front lawn, they used the Belmont House for their worship ceremonies. Now, however, the renovations have forced them to move to the old TV lounge in the student union (you didn't really think the bookstore had enough inventory to use that space, did you? A few tee-shirts maybe, but...).

From this den of evil, the Midget Nudist Satan-Worshippers conduct Satanic rites that are

the root cause of the rampant mediocrity that blazes across this campus every day.

Speaking of mediocrity, Joan Jett has a new album out. Normally, that would not be an appropriate statement; most of Jett's work is fine, rollicking rock and roll. Admittedly, "I Love Rock and Roll" is not exactly a Dylanesque wonderland of inventive lyrics, and in the ranks of artistic musicianship it ranks just before Elmer Fudd's operatic rendition of "Kill Da Wabbit." Still and all it's a fun little tune, which is all it claims to be. When she works in this area, creating raunchy little ditties, Joan Jett is in her element.

On "The Hit List," however, Jett moves out of that very comfortable niche and into the wild world of re-makes. Most rock artists have engaged in this activity from time to time, and there

Lifestyles breed trash

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The trash problem is difficult to face because it involves changing our lifestyles. Plastic is harmful for the environment, but plastic packaging is quick and easy. Bottled Pepsi is beneficial to the environment and our pocket-books, but two-liter plastic Pepsi is more convenient. Among the top trash items are many results of our lifestyles of quick convenience; according to the EPA each year 1.6 billion pens, two billion razors and blades, and "enough

aluminum cans to make about 30 jet airplanes and enough office and writing paper to build a 12-foot wall coast-to coast" are thrown away.

Simply taking a good hard look at what they throw away and asking themselves how they could possibly reduce or recycle is the best place to start when joining the fight against trash. If recognizing the problem really is the first step towards solving the problem then America's solution, our solution, is soon to come.

We are soldiers in war on pollution

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I've probably lost all of the readers I am trying to get to, so instead of repeating what all the environmental problems are, let's talk about what I came away with to worry about.

How about the chemist who doesn't think he needs to consider the ethics of industrial polluting? How about the politician who doesn't think he should stand against the public's ignorance about polluting? How about the economist who raises the connection between ethics and economically-feasible-but-environmentally-harmful policies but then refuses to think about them in human terms? And

why did the symposium topics steer so clearly away from population problems and nuclear weapons and waste problems?

I was insulted by the politicians who came to campus. Representative Mavretic's solutions seemed to hinge on my telling someone who throws away a can that he is not nice. Dr. Little [who works for the Martin administration] implied that if you can make an equation [perception of risk is greater than actual risk] you've progressed. And the Mayor of Rocky Mount said clearly that he wouldn't be taking the steps he is if the state wasn't forcing his hand.

But these people all said much that an environmentalist can ap-

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seem to be two philosophies for this: go wild or play it safe. The "wild" philosophy always seems to work best (witness Megadeth's recent re-make of Alice Cooper's "No More Mr. Nice Guy"). Joan opts for the "safe" route, though. Too bad.

The album opens with AC/DC's "Dirty Deeds," on which Jett actually succeeds in sounding ... wholesome. Now, there are places for wholesomeness, but a song about a throat-cutting mercenary is not one of them. The original grunt and growl of the song is replaced with a smooth touch that would seem inappropriate even if I wasn't familiar with the original. Considering Jett's past work, the lack of grunge here is nothing less than shocking.

Also shocking in its shameful grungelessness is the Sex Pistols' "Pretty Vacant." If taking one of the ultimate punk anthems and sand-blasting it down to a basic rock tune were a crime (and Lord knows it should be), Joan Jett and the Blackhearts would be put to death.

Jett strips the song of all of the Pistols' very studied atonal qualities and replaces them with gutless vocal deliveries and stock guitar riffs. The song's ferocity is gone, and it degenerates into brainless MTV papulum.

This album as a whole suffers from a missing ferocity. "Love

Me Two Times," one of the Doors' more laid back tunes to begin with, seems dull and lifeless. Jimi Hendrix's "Up From the Skies" comes across as just a standard rock tune with slightly more drug-induced lyrics than usual, something that should never happen to a Hendrix tune.

The Chambers Brothers' "Time Has Come Today" suffers the same fate (although Jett must be given some credit for picking such an obscure song and for leaving the clocks in).

Creedence Clearwater Revival's "Have You Ever Seen the Rain?" fares somewhat better, but the delivery is so close to the original in this case that you may as well just pull out your copy of "Chronical" if you want to hear it.

Two songs save "The Hit List" from being a complete waste. First is the Kinks' "Cellu-

loid Heroes." Here, the smoothness Jett has been displaying on the album pays off. This sad tribute to Hollywood's past is best played subtly, and Jett's version is played incredibly so. The other saving grace is ZZ Top's "Tush." Jett grinds this one out mercilessly, and succeeds in making the song different from the original without losing touch with its heart.

The problem with "The Hit List" seems to be Jett's approach to the material. Rather than taking her selected material as a musical challenge, Jett seems to either be too reverent or too uncaring (I can't really tell which). In any case, "The Hit List" is a lifeless, lackluster performance.

I've come to expect many things from Joan Jett, but lifelessness is not among them. Better luck next time, Joan.

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plaud. Mavretic quietly argued that human dominion over the earth is a stewardship, not an exploitation. Little realizes the need for public education and is willing to put herself on the front line at such an educational event. Turnage knows that and says that recycling and other solutions are inevitable, so we better get ready to pay for them.

And if I came away with two ideas, they were that we need commitment from a few brave individuals [that's you] and we need to realize how much it is going to cost us to clean up the messes we've allowed — and are allowing — ourselves to make.

We can't all be members of Greenpeace in a small boat taking

on the Soviet whale slaughtering industry, and most of us are too lazy to keep up with local issues until it is too late. But some of us are willing to sift through multidisciplinary, sometimes technical, sometimes poorly delivered, always important information in order to take part in the future. I fervently hope we can save our island from pollution and destruction. We are the only ones who can do it.

Where were you during the war? At Camp David? In the back yard dumping chemicals? Saving a few seconds with plastic diapers? Wake up and smell the rot, fellow Earthlings, and hope it's your compost heap — not Exxon's.