

ALBUM CHARTS

WXYC

1. **Beat Happening**  
*Dreamy*
2. **Buttsteak**  
*Fattys Got More Blood*
3. **Shonen Knife**  
*Pretty Little Baka Guy*
4. **Bob Marley**  
*Talkin' Blues*
5. **Various Artists**  
*Bottles, Knives, and Steel*
6. **Metal Flake Mother**  
*7-inch single*
7. **Gang Starr**  
*Step In The Arena*
8. **Various Artists**  
*Country Classics Vol. 1*
9. **Fats Waller**  
*His Last Years*
10. **Thatcher On Acid**  
*Frank*

POP

1. **Mariah Carey**  
*Mariah Carey*
2. **C&C Music Factory**  
*Gonna Make You Sweat*
3. **Sting**  
*The Soul Cages*
4. **Wilson Phillips**  
*Wilson Phillips*
5. **The Black Crowes**  
*Shake Your Money Maker*
6. **Vanilla Ice**  
*To The Extreme*
7. **Gloria Estefan**  
*Into The Light*
8. **Chris Isaak**  
*Heart Shaped World*
9. **Whitney Houston**  
*I'm Your Baby Tonight*
10. **M.C. Hammer**  
*Please Hammer Don't Hurt 'Em*

— Billboard

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# Metal: you've come a long way, baby

**H**eavy metal. Just think, 10 years ago true heavy metal didn't exist. The punk movement was winding down and guitar lovers needed a remedy from new wave music. Bands like Iron Maiden, Def Leppard, Quiet Riot, Ratt and Dokken started metal. The music took the guitar of classic rock and cranked it up. In 1983, Metallica burst onto the scene with the loudest sound yet and metal was here to stay.

Like most new forms of music, metal has had its share of controversy. From suicide trials to satanism accusations, metal has had a hard time. Since then, metal has changed and groups have come and gone, but that central power is still there. Today, metal can be divided into two categories; power or thrash metal (Metallica, Prong) noted for its chunky guitar sound and fast tempo, and hard rock or pop metal, (Skid Row, Babylon A.D.) which is not as hard and has a wider audience. Of course, bands can cross between the two.

As we plunge headlong into the '90s, metal continues to grow and change. There are four recent releases that exemplify the course that heavy metal could take over the next decade.

## Fear of God

Within the Veil

Warner Bros.

●●

Fear of God is an L.A.-based group that probably thought they had a good gimmick going. Take three guys who can play power metal and add a female vocalist.

It might have worked if the girl could sing. I mean, I wasn't expecting Pavarotti, but this girl sounds like Mercedes McCambridge, who did the voice for Regan in *The Exorcist*.

On their debut album, *Within the Veil*, the guys crank out some really cool music, but all vocalist (and I use the term loosely) Dawn Crosby does is wail and moan. She sounds as if she is dying. There are two tracks, "Emily" and "Wasted Time," where Crosby attempts to sing within human audio

range, making these pretty good songs. Despite the obvious flaw, the album has an original mix, with distorted voices flowing through the songs, giving the music an eerie quality. It's great for bands to experiment and I'm all for women in metal, but a little more thought should have gone into this project. This album should have been all instrumental, or the group should get a new vocalist.

## I, Napoleon

I, Napoleon

Geffen Records

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I, Napoleon is a new hard rock band that has done its homework. On their eponymous debut album, they display a great grasp of melody. Singer/songwriter Steve Napoleon (yeh, right) has obviously studied other hard rock hits to come up with a good musical formula.

To put it simply, the music of I, Napoleon is not original, it is not new, it is not groundbreaking, but it is well done.

The album is split into two sides. Side day focuses on the good side of love. Songs like "Perfect Absolution" and "Go to Pieces" have great hooks and melodies. Side night deals with the darker side of love. Tunes such as "Whipped Silly" and "I Am the Idiot" stand out, but the brooding acoustic number "Feels Like Suicide" is the highlight of the album. The album ends with a piano concerto by Napoleon. I, Napoleon may not offer us anything startlingly new, but they don't disgrace the sound they are paying homage to.

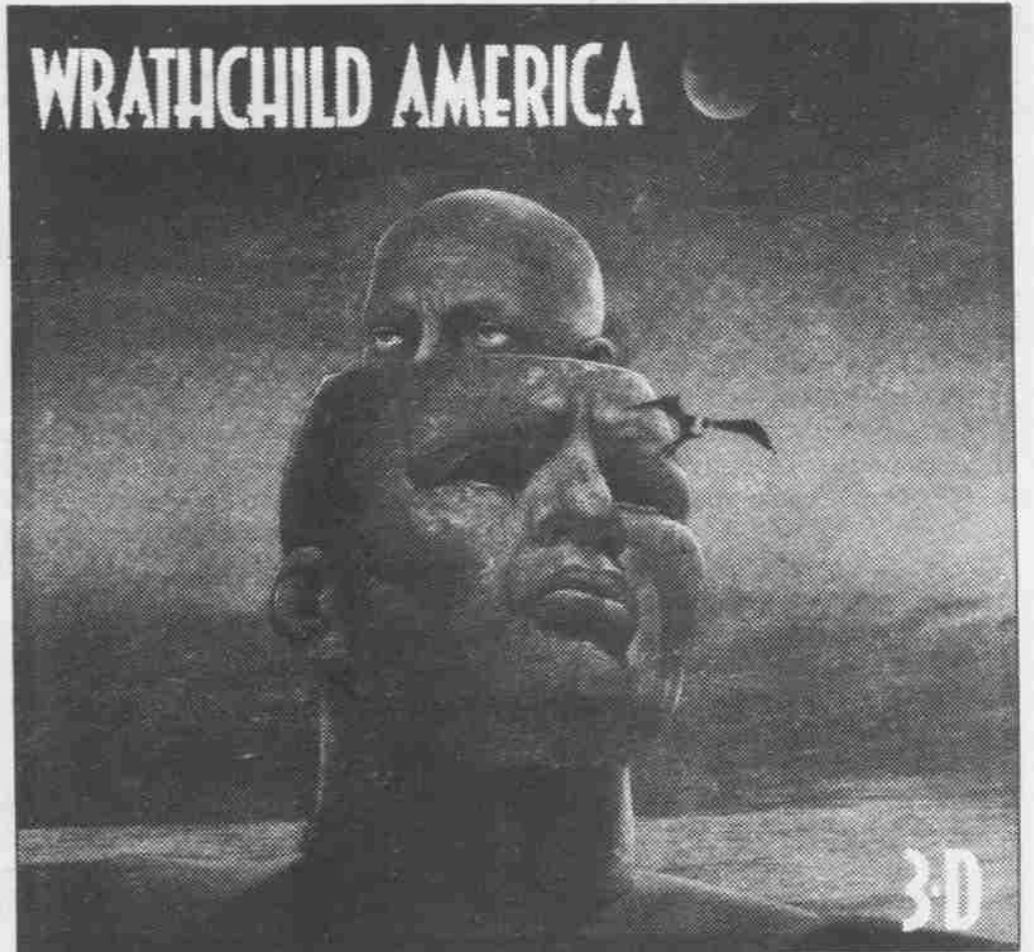
## Saigon Kick

Saigon Kick

Atlantic Records

●●● 1/2

Saigon Kick is the latest discovery by master producer Michael Wagener. In the past, Wagener has worked with Dokken, Metallica, White Lion and Skid Row. If Wagener works with a group, they're



going to be promising, and Saigon Kick is headed in the right direction. Their debut album presents us with a group that, like Jane's Addiction, is capable of producing several sounds.

Their sounds include psychedelic Zen rock ("New World"), angry Sex Pistols-inspired rock ("What Do You Do"), Beatle-esque pop ("My Life"), power metal ("Month of Sundays") and acoustic rock ("Come Take Me Now"). The problem with the album is that the songs are short (averaging three 1/2 minutes), and even with the group's diverse sound, it gets monotonous.

Still, it's refreshing to see a band trying to break the mold of metal and it's great to see a famous producer take a chance with a young band.

## Wrathchild America

3-D

Atlantic Records

●●●●

When Wrathchild America debuted in 1989, they made me feel really good about the future of power metal. They were loud, fast, hard and progressive. Progressive to the point of doing a faithful version of Pink Floyd's "Time." Now Wrathchild America is back with a new album entitled 3-D, and things are really getting weird. How weird? There is a banjo used on this album. Sure, some of the songs like "3-D Man" and "Surrounded by Idiots" are straight-ahead power metal, but some songs break all of the rules of metal. This album contains country, honky-tonk, clas-

sical and reggae.

Reggae?! On a metal album?! What were they thinking? Well, whatever they were thinking, it works. These guys from Virginia knew full well that this album would either be called junk or genius. It turns out to be genius. The highlights of the album are two six-minute-plus songs, "Draintime" and "Desert Grins", which leave the listener exhausted from all of the tempo changes. There is a song based on the books of Thomas (Silence of the Lambs) Harris and a song based on the movie *Helraiser*. Wrathchild America went out on a limb and found their nut.

From the examples stated here, it seems that metal will continue to flourish in the '90s. New bands will take the work of their successors and add to it. Groups like Wrathchild America will attempt to cross musical boundaries and groups like Fear of God will use today's technology to improve their sound. And with the world looking forward to Metallica's new 12-track album being released soon, the future of metal looks very stable.

I realize that a lot of people wish that metal would go away. I have bad news — it won't.

— Mike Long

## THE RATINGS

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