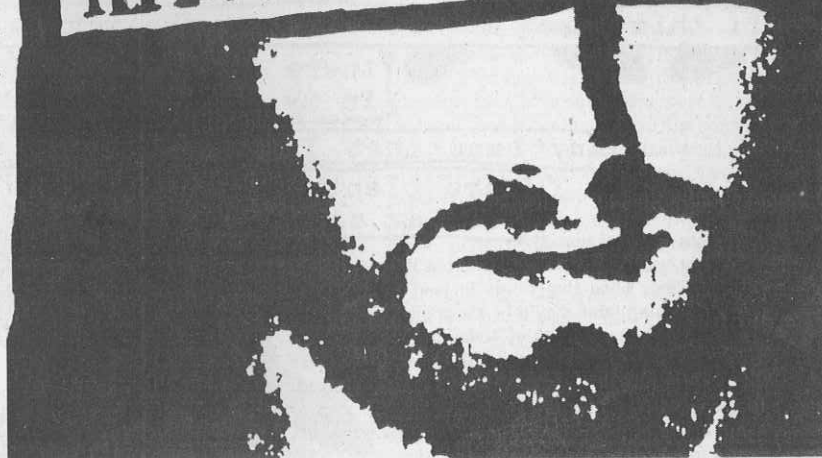


# HAYMAKER

Introduction by Steve Wiltse.  
Questions by Gord Deranged.

It isn't easy to write an introduction for a band with which you are both a good friend and fan, and not have it come off like another tired press release for the latest Fat band. I could use a term like "powerhouse thrash" to describe the band's upcoming LP, or "violent battlefield" to describe their rare, live outings, but that doesn't seem to do them justice. The best way to describe Haymaker may be to steal a quote from Pushead, the mastermind responsible for the incredible cover art, "they don't beat around the bush, they beat the bush to death."

TEAM JESUS... IS LOSING.



**MRR:** Please introduce yourselves, who does what in the band?

**Jeff:** This band consists of the following, Christian plays guitar, slashes tires, and causes large amounts of general mischief. Curt plays drums, makes babies, and is usually in a state of comatose from his pal Mary Jane, the hippy. Scott plays bass, and can out drink any asshole reading this shit. I sing, shoot my mouth off, constantly try to stir up trouble, and will surely one day have my face kicked in.

**MRR:** How did Haymaker come about? Are you happy with the band's direction, and what you've accomplished so far?

**Jeff:** Haymaker came about in the summer of 2000. After investing over a year into a band that played two shows and never had the competence to finish a demo, we then decided to start a band that would actually complete something, so far so good. We recorded a twelve song demo, that's no longer available, altered the line up, recorded a 7" on Deranged, then a split with Ox Baker on Deep Six, and recorded a twenty-five song full length, to be released, some fucking day, on Deranged. There is also a split with Toronto's Fucked Up coming in the next year.

**MRR:** Over the past ten years, Hamilton's been responsible for spewing a slew of angry, pissed hardcore bands: Burst of Silence, Chokehold, Left for Dead, and now Haymaker. Haymaker is partially made up of members, who at one point, were members of those bands. How do you feel about the city you all grew up in, and

the above listed bands?

**Jeff:** This city is a fucking dump, but it's home. It's a working class town with absolutely no frills, and about as much of a future to follow. The bands you mentioned were from a certain time in this city. At that time, Hamilton had a little scene growing, and of course it died out like every scene before it. Right now, I think there are a handful of decent bands again, a lot like the early 90s, although Hamilton's notorious for having no venues and little support for local bands.

**MRR:** Why do you think you are still involved in real hardcore, while others your age dropped out long ago?

**Jeff:** I'm as uninvolved as an involved person could be. I just happen to genuinely like the music. I like writing it, playing it, listening to it, collecting it. How can you "grow out" of something you love? I can see how people become uninterested in the whole politics of the scene. Fuck, I hate the scene, but if you love the music, you can't just stop pretending it exists. If you do, you were never into it for the right reasons.

**MRR:** Guess that's where the title of your 7" came from "Love the music, hate the kids?"

**Jeff:** Absolutely, and that's one of the main things we try and do as a band. If you read our lyrics, or see us live, you'll know instantly what we are about. We don't hide our opinions in some bullshit three-page poem of nonsense lyrics. We don't sit on any fences and we are not out to make friends, everything is black and white, to the point, just like the title of the 7".

**MRR:** On that note, do you feel hardcore is dead? Steven Blush states in his recent book American Hardcore that hardcore died in 1986. How about that?

**Jeff:** Yeah I think it's dead. I think Steven Blush is right on the money, although 1986 is a little early, maybe 1988-1989. By that point, everything had been done, nothing was new, nothing was fresh, but there still are bands out there that capture that sound, or that image. It's not something you go out to do. It's just there. That's how I feel anyways. In my own little version of hardcore, I picture these bands that aren't caught up in their looks, or what the latest sound is. Remember when areas had their own sound? Like Boston, New York, or even North Carolina, for fuck sakes. I swear you could guess where a band was from by their style. I don't know if that's a good thing, but now you can't tell any bands apart. You could never guess where a band would remotely be from just from their sound, except Europe, *so many shit bands there still!* When I was young hardcore was exciting, intimidating, and mysterious, now it's everywhere, it's at the fucking malls, it's on the internet. Nothing's sacred, nothing's obscure, and that's what kills it for me. No one makes an effort anymore to go out of their way to find this or that, they buy it for a 100 bucks on Ebay. The spirit of hardcore is definitely dead.

**MRR:** Do you worry Haymaker will be judged on the basis of your previous bands?

**Jeff:** I wouldn't worry about that, I don't think it's too far from anything those bands had to do with.

**MRR: Is team Jesus really losing? Don't you feel like your beating a dead horse already?**

**Jeff: That horse is far from dead.**

**If there's even one Zao shirt at a show, then it is far from dead. These idiots will never disappear, and as long as I have the ability to create music, they will know it was not intended for them. I think team Jesus is winning in places where no one seems to mind, but here they're definitely losing. It seems a lot of scenes have made it uncomfortable for them to be present, and that's brilliant. I don't care if this makes me sound like a fucking Nazi, but there is no room for that shit in my version of hardcore. And any band that I'm a part of, will have plenty to say about this fucking cult shit in hardcore.**

My opinion has changed towards things I thought were so important then, but if someone listened to a previous band that I was in, and bought some Haymaker shit, I don't think they'd be disappointed or misled. It's not like we went from Youth of Today to Into Another. I think the songwriting is pretty much the same. My tastes haven't changed.

**MRR: Great picture of you guys in *Heartattack*!**

**Jeff: Yeah, I saw that once, for a second. I think that was a picture of us, before we were fat.**

**MRR: Speaking of *Heartattack*, I understand you've received some pretty strong feedback from the song "Guns don't kill guns..." and the stand you are taking on gun control. Some think it's idiotic, while others have labeled you as "fakes," attempting to fit into a "tough guy" image. Want to expand on that subject?**

**Jeff: I've never heard the "fakes" thing before. We are not a tough guy band by any means, but we will back up anything we say or do. We will fight for what we believe, and if that makes us "wannabe tough guys," then so be it. This song has been completely misinterpreted by fuckwads who want to make a big deal out of a subject they don't even understand, fuckheads who just can't read that well. If saying "everyone should have the right to protect themselves," is idiotic, then I'm the king of the idiots. Nowhere in that song does it suggest everyone should have guns, and we should all shoot each other! First off, the song is based on Canadian gun laws, and seeing how we are Canadian that would make sense. But you have these bleeding heart, piece of shit, American crybabies, who take their civil liberties for granted, crying about a song they can't even relate to. Here is the premise behind the song, laws in Canada are kind of fucked when it comes to defending yourself against another person, we really have no right to do so in any situation; sounds stupid but it's true. The bottom line is, if cops must have high powered, high caliber handguns to defend themselves, then why can't the average tax-paying, law-abiding citizen of Canada? Why does our government want to keep its people unarmed, while their employees continue to get stronger and stronger weapons of protection? Obviously the threat is out there, for them to have the need for weapons, but the threat is out there for Joe public as well. It just seems fucked that we have to bear the weight of human idiocy when some moron goes on a shooting spree in California.**

**MRR: So from your perspective, the threat already exists, and having the right to bear arms is one of many means to protecting yourself. It's naive to believe that guns aren't already available, through means that are either illegal or by registering, which requires certain breaches of privacy through background checks. I guess this is where civil liberties come into play?**

**Jeff: People who are robbing stores, doing drive by shootings, or even tearing up jocks at their high school, these most likely**

aren't people who obtained their firearms legally. If the cops have to fear and protect themselves against these people, then so does the average civilian. I don't want to sound like Charlton Heston here, I know there's more to this argument, all I'm saying is you should have the right to protect your property and family. This isn't a fucking perfect world, we don't all live in the "burbs," and our civil liberties shouldn't be violated for wanting to do this as lawfully as possible. I could have ten, restricted to Canada, high powered handguns or assault rifles as quick as it takes to read this interview, it makes no difference whether they are illegal or not, you can find the shit in no time. These Nazi Germany like gun laws do not change the fact that it's just another excuse for them to keep tabs on us, and keep us powerless, as paranoid as that sounds. So basically this sums it up, if no one had guns, the world would be a better place, but people do, and you can't say who gets what, or who can have or can't have.

**MRR: Religion is another obvious topic you seem to take to heart with, in this and your previous bands. Is team Jesus really losing? Don't you feel like your beating a dead horse already?**

**Jeff: That horse is far from dead. If there's even one Zao shirt at a show, then it is far from dead. These idiots will never disappear, and as long as I have the ability to create music, they will know it was not intended for them. I think team Jesus is winning in places where no one seems to mind, but here they're definitely losing. It seems a lot of scenes have made it uncomfortable for them to be present, and that's brilliant. I don't care if this makes me sound like a fucking Nazi, but there is no room for that shit in my version of hardcore. And any band that I'm a part of, will have plenty to say about this fucking cult shit in hardcore.**

**MRR: On a recent live broadcast on local radio, *Equalizing Distort*, you started a song by saying "some people have heart attacks, I have fucking tax attacks." Can you explain?**

**Jeff: "Tax attack" is the title of a song we have. I'm not fond of the government in the first place, I'm definitely not fond of the government stealing my money every fucking day so they can live like royalty, paying raises and flying in private jets. I'm busting my ass to give 40 percent of it back to these pieces of shit, so they can tell me I don't even have the right to bear arms. I seriously lose sleep over this shit! 30 percent personal income tax, 15 percent taxes on anything we buy, and 18 percent property tax yearly, what the fuck do we have left? Don't hand me this medical care bullshit either, we're almost in the same state as the U.S., give it 5 more years. My heart attack will be caused by taxes.**

**MRR: This is especially relevant considering the current high cost of living of most urban centers, and the extremely low minimum wages a lot of people must sustain themselves with, below the poverty line. What really humors me is the fact that minimum wage is pretty much a standard for a lot of jobs. Those which offer better pay often have this Robin Hood attitude towards it, like they're doing you a favor by letting you get by.**

**Jeff: Minimum wage is absolutely insulting, especially when you consider how long it's been at a frozen number, yet taxes still increase. Cost of living and inflation are always on the rise. Rent and property taxes rise every year, and minimum wage hasn't in nearly six or seven years? You're either too rich or too poor in this system, and if you're "comfortable," it's**





because you've worked your fucking fingers and bones to the ground. I can't even think about this for too long, or I'll go fucking crazy. Our government is fucking us daily, and it seems nothing will change that.

**MRR:** If your perfect world has no cops, laws, or government, what kind of place would it be? Wouldn't it just be a "kill or be killed," "only the strong survive" nightmare?

**Jeff:** First off, I have no faith in humanity, we could never survive without laws, or a structure of government, but that doesn't mean I like cops, or our particular form of government. I could go on about how a society could function with no cops, but it's unrealistic, unfortunately, so I'll just write songs about murdering them all. I do believe we could govern ourselves if we all weren't breastfed on capitalism, but that's a whole other can of worms

**MRR:** How about hardcore kids who have pro-cop attitudes and believe that if you get harassed by cops it's because you deserve it, or better yet aspire to be cops themselves. Though not excusable, this is partly because hardcore/punk kids are much less visible than they once were. In the late 70s and early 80s, punks were easier to distinguish, were overall, more extreme social outcasts than now, and were treated as such. Today, a large portion of hardcore kids can easily blend in, going unnoticed, and thus receive a lot less attention from society's players. With less negative exposure to cops and authority figures, it's comprehensible that such pro-cop attitudes could emerge. Plus the influx of retards over the years hasn't really helped either. What's your two cents worth on this one?

**Jeff:** I could never figure that shit out. There most definitely have always been pro-cop kids in the scene, even in the early 80s I bet. Now it's much more evident. I'm not going to say what people should feel about cops, but I fucking hate them, I hate what they represent, and if some one in hardcore/punk feels that what they represent or enforce is right, then it's hard for me to understand what attracted them to hardcore/punk in the first place. I know because we are drooling idiots, we need some sort of law and order. I'm not excusing that, but these fuckers are not here for us, they are placed here to make sure we don't get in the way of what corporate America, the rich, the politicians want to do. I think I'm getting off topic here, hardcore has definitely blended in with the rest of society, it doesn't push limits anymore, and that invites a ton of people in who 15 years ago, would have been kicking punk's asses in high school. Fuck those people, they stand out like sore thumbs to me, and it's the same bullshit that has let Christian retards spread like cancer. It's time to make this shit a threat again.

**MRR:** There are a good handful of rumors floating around about you guys. What's the funniest thing you've heard said about Haymaker?

**Jeff:** That we're good!

**MRR:** On your upcoming full length, you do a Nunfuckers cover. Why the Nunfuckers?

**Jeff:** The Nunfuckers are seriously one of Canada's most underrated punk bands, nobody knows this band, they can be compared to the likes of Jerry's Kids, same time era too. If they were from the bullshit States they would of been huge, in my opinion at least, one of Canada's best.

**MRR:** Pushead is doing the artwork for the cover. How did that come about?

**Jeff:** I sent him the new shit and asked if he'd be into it. I know bands that I was involved with in the past had pestered him for art, so I thought there would be no chance really, but what do you know, he dug it and that was that.

**MRR:** Is it hard to be straightedge, and about to turn 30; is it easier now, or harder than when you

were 20?

**Jeff:** This question has nothing to do with the band. But I'd say it's harder now at 30, I have two friends my age, who are still straight edge, and it just make you question shit everyday. When I'm 75 and have some life altering disease, is straight edge going to be important to me then? I fucking doubt it. The older I get, the more I question it's importance. I have no interest in getting smashed, high, or whatever, but it just makes you wonder. My aunt is 80 and has osteoporosis. She just started drinking recently to make the day go by without pain, could you say you wouldn't do the same? It just seems so trivial when you put it in that perspective. Anyhow, this band has nothing to do with straight edge.

**MRR:** Haymaker shows have become somewhat of legendary around here. Could you describe a typical show for you guys? What's the craziest thing that's happened at a Haymaker show?

**Jeff:** A typical show is trying to round up everyone. Usually, Curt is nowhere to be found. Between the mass amount of alcohol and drugs consumed during load up, I find it hard to believe that we are a band. This might be why we never really play out. Then when we play, people usually stand far away, I get punched, shit is thrown at us, at least 60 dollars of fireworks are ignited, glass everywhere. It is much crazier in our hometown. Maybe equipment gets it, maybe it doesn't. Then we leave quickly before the cops show up. The craziest shit I ever saw was when four bouncers just walked away from people destroying everything. They stood at the back, shrugging their shoulders, letting us practically burn the place to the ground. They didn't know how to handle these people rolling in glass, lighting themselves on fire, and destroying whatever they got their hands on. Oh, and we never get paid.

**MRR:** After seeing you live, especially in your hometown, one cannot ignore the violent aspect of your stage presence and the crowd's reactions. I'm not referring to mosh kids trying their new moves and the silly fights that often result, as what I mean by violence. I'm referring to fire extinguishers being thrown at the crowd, the PA system getting smashed to pieces, chairs flying around, people punching you on the head. Do you see this as necessary, and in many ways reflecting the music and lyrics you produce. If so, do you at all feel responsible for the consequences that may result, i.e. injuries, venues being shut down, promoters losing money?

**Jeff:** We rarely play at all, and when we do, I want it to be memorable for the band and the people watching. I don't care who gets hurt. I don't care if I get hurt. I don't care about the venue or the promoter. At this point, if we played and nothing happened, I'd feel like we wasted our time. After all, we are out to destroy hardcore! We are interactive entertainment.

**MRR:** Any chance you folks will ever tour?

**Jeff:** We might tour one day, if we can slip across the border. We'd probably like to do a week or two of touring. We're not 18 and living off of mom and dad's pre-planned college fund, so it's hard for us to take anytime out of real life. If we did, playing in front of a bunch of kids we don't even like, seems like a waste. But maybe one day we'll do it, and call it a holiday, then the shows could be optional, depending on our mood.

**MRR:** Any last words?

**Jeff:** Last words? Never.

www.haymaker.ca, www.derangedrecords.com  
Haymaker have a 7" on Deranged Records and a split 7" with Ox Baker on Deep Six Records. Their killer full length should be out on Deranged shortly. Also in the works are a split 7" with Toronto locals Fucked Up, and a split LP with Dumbstruck (UK) on Deranged later this year.