

Brainwashed - Datacide: Magazine for Noise and Politics, "Issue Eleven"

Written by Justin Patrick

Sunday, 29 May 2011 18:49 - Last Updated Monday, 30 May 2011 03:12



The articles in *Datacide Eleven* are just the sort of critical discourse, on subjects I am endeared to, that I have been hungering to read. When it came in the mail I nearly devoured it all in one sitting. After gorging I had to slow down, due to the density of the information, even though I'm used to binge reading. It was like stuffing down a big bowl of pasta only to groan later when it has expanded to the point of bloating. Expanding the brain instead of the gut is healthier in the long run, though it still takes time to digest and absorb. But when it comes to studying up on the culture of Reggae sound systems, of pirate radio signals leaking out from the margins into the mainstream, the paranoid and the conspiracy ridden underpinnings of the Tea Party Movement, it is the kind of work I'm willing to do in order to lead a robust textual life.

[Datacide](#)

The politics of the magazine are clearly activist oriented and of the left while the noise aspect of the magazine is far from the type created by Masami Akita, Emil Beaulieu, or William Bennet, just to be up front. The kind of noise to be found in these pages is predominantly dedicated to the various "steps" (breakstep, dubstep), the various "cores" (speedcore, noisecore, breakcore), gabber and the like. However other genres are touched upon, and not every article deals with music: some are just politics, like the article "The American Radical Right and the Rise of the Tea Party Movement," while others combine musical and political subjects. There is a healthy dose of short fiction, quick and dirty record reviews, charts written up by people in the scene, and an interview with Steve Goodman, author of [Sonic Warfare: Sound, Affect and the Ecology of Fear](#) out from MIT press.

[Stewart Home](#)'s nonfiction is always a pleasure to read. One of the many books I'm now reading is his *The Assault on Culture: Utopian Currents from Lettrisme to Class War*, an engaging art history of various movements and collectives that had until his writing, been largely under-documented. That book ranges from the Situationist International, to Fluxus, Mail Art, and ultimately the Neoism with which Home

himself is associated. So it was nice to have another essay from him at hand, this one with the long title, "Dope smuggling, LSD manufacture, organised crime & the law in 1960's London." Again Home is in the mode of documenting subversive history, this time the interplay between psychedelic drugs, the art world and larger counter-culture, much of it centering around figures whom his mother, Julia Callan-Thompson was associated with.

"Tortugan tower blocks? Pirate signals from the margins" investigates the way in which the lively pirate radio culture of Britain is periodically co-opted by the BBC and the Culture Industry. Talking of several stations from the 1990's Alexis Wooton writes, "they were championing the UK breakbeat hardcore sound that later mutated into jungle, drum and bass and beyond. Broadcast from the empty flats of neglected urban tower blocks, the pirate stations connected the dances, music and ravers, generating a psychic space, a virtual rave, outside the monopolies of the main stations to exist." Alexis goes on to critique how some people contextualized these stations in terms of Hakim Bey's Temporary Autonomous Zones, or as akin to Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's concept of the 'desiring machine'. Some of these stations later applied for and received legal broadcast licensing. Wolton says, "the ease with which the energy of stations such as Kiss FM and Rinse FM are redrawn back into the Culture Industry demonstrates the limits of applying the concept of autonomy to self-organised media. The opposition between claimed and reclaimed space, and between state monopoly and the commons are false dichotomies. Zones of autonomy can appear to exist briefly, but what appears as autonomous development is in the end part of capital's process of setting and breaking limits." She goes on to say, "in its most interesting incarnation pirate radio is not a site of autonomy, but displays the strength of those at the margins to refuse their unity for capital." All the while she explores through history of pirate broadcasting, how DJs and music migrate over to government sanctioned stations. It is a strategy very similar to how the merchants of cool go out and study what teenagers like before selling it back to them.

John Eden's article, "Shaking the Foundations" explores not so much the tensions (racial and otherwise) caused by the immigration of people throughout the Caribbean to the UK, but the positive ways the two cultures have merged over the decades, centering in on the phenomenon of sound systems as a means of social organization. This is a nice article that is a good counterpoint to the usual narratives focusing on the ugly side of colonialism, even while those aspects are acknowledged. Moving from the dancehall to the rave Neil Transpontine gives a history of how social dancing has been viewed by the state as something in need of regulation, and how this has often also been an act of discrimination, i.e., the frequent raids of gay dance clubs. He says, "the global spread of Electronic Dance Music has generally been accompanied by the flashing blue light, the siren, and that moment when the music is abruptly turned off and the order given to clear the building."

Riccardo Balli, in "Sonic Fictions," remixes Philip K. Dick's classic [Clans of the Alphane Moon](#) .

Written by Justin Patrick

Sunday, 29 May 2011 18:49 - Last Updated Monday, 30 May 2011 03:12

The original version of the story concerns an insane asylum on a moon outside the solar system that has been abandoned after a space war. The people in the asylum organize into their own social groups based on what their mental illness is: there is a town for manic people, a town for schizophrenics, etc. In this story the people are organized into clan based on their musical affiliations, Gabber, Hip-Hop, Dub/Regga and Goa/Trance. It is humorous and well written, though if it had been me I would have chosen different styles for the clans due to my own tastes, like Drone, so-called Apocalyptic Folk, and so-called New Music if I had to pick some. The next two sections remix Fulcanelli's alchemical writings. The first part of an article on William S. Burroughs is also included, as well as some other fictions.

Datacide wouldn't be a magazine about noise and politics without an article dissecting the "Transversal strategies of the New Right in Neofolk and Martial Industrial." Here, author Christoph Fringeli lays into the usual suspects: Douglas Pearce, Tony Wakeford, Ian Read, Boyd Rice and Michael Moynihan, with a special focus on Wakeford and Pearce. The article delineates the ways those with Far Right tendencies make use of a metapolitics that "manifests itself less in the forms of [political] parties than in networks of think tanks, conferences, journals, institutes and publishing houses" presumably the book he cites *Looking for Europe* is included in this camp. He adds "record labels and distributors, venues and festivals, fashion and fetishism also add to the cohesion of the scene and operate as transmitters of ideas." The current political climate, which is not so much in favor of fascism, causes those who hold these views to disguise them by presenting them through music and art, as opposed to formally organized political parties. In this manner the ideas are able to live on. "The right wing Gramscian strategy works best when the recipients of the ideas don't identify them with the hard right but with 'common sense'. This is a very small scene which tries to ennoble its consumers into being supposedly part of some 'elite'".

Though not much of a Sol Invictus fan, I've enjoyed Wakeford's collaborations with Steve Stapleton on *The Revenge of the Selfish Shellfish*, and his work with Andrew Liles under the moniker of The Wardrobe, on the *Cups in the Cupboard*

record. In terms of his association with the British National Front, he has gone on record to say his membership was "probably the worst decision of my life and one I very much regret." This membership is supposedly one reason why he left Death In June. When I was first getting into Current 93 I immersed myself in a lot of tangential material: Death In June of course being among them. When Wakeford and Pearce were both in the earlier band Crisis they had played at concerts for an Anti-Nazi League and a Rock Against Racism show. When listening to the few Death In June records I've picked up, I didn't find them to be particularly martial or fascist, but of course I'm not a militaristic person. Perhaps I was naïve. I haven't studied up on Waffen SS camouflage, and so didn't recognize Pearce's costumes as such until that fact was pointed out to me. Then I learn through Fringeli's article that one of his songs contains elements of the *Horst-Wesse-Lied*

, the anthem of the Nazi Party. How does this jive with someone who is openly gay and whose

Brainwashed - Datacide: Magazine for Noise and Politics, "Issue Eleven"

Written by Justin Patrick

Sunday, 29 May 2011 18:49 - Last Updated Monday, 30 May 2011 03:12

main musical project has played live shows in Jerusalem? I don't know. As far as I'm concerned, whether or not their association with this type of rhetoric is endorsement, flirtation, or critique, it lacks in imagination. Over the years Death In June hasn't held my interest, and as my awareness grew of these associations even less so. Just as the music of Burzum might have some interesting sonic moments, why would I want to listen to someone involved with arson and murder? There is plenty of other music to be enjoyed. Much of it is a lot more interesting conceptually and I don't risk the dangers of putting myself into the head-space of someone with questionable motives.