

Popsturbation: Scenesters, tapioca pudding and dead horses

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Anthony: You know what I really can't stand in music?

Dave: Plentiful hooks, catchy choruses and dances people learn and then show you, not realizing you don't care and won't pay attention?

A: Besides that ... you know how much I loathe the music industry and how it manipulates popular tastes.

D: Just because our album deal fell through ...

A: Hey man, we both knew *Midgets Without Souls* had a future. Clowns Without Pants would have been a debut album the likes of which hasn't been seen since Christopher Cross. Platinum my friend, platinum.

D: You keep dreaming, I'm going to prepare some fine tapioca pudding. Tapioca the likes of which hasn't been seen since ... yeah, I've got to make that tapioca ...

A: Anyway, my focus of pain and angst, the likes of ... scenesters.

D: Do you mean groupies? I have a few of those. The Dave Conklin fan club is ever grow-

ing. Membership is free. And the tapioca flows like water from a stone.

A: That fan club was nothing but a ploy to seduce innocent high school girls into your seething clutches, and you know it. Now back to scenesters.

D: Groupies ... I love groupies. They're so desperate for attention, celebrity sex and backstage passes.

A: No, scenesters aren't groupies. They're much worse. Scenesters are the bane of my existence. They're like that paper cut on your knuckle that never seems to heal.

D: I thought failure to grow a respectable pompadour was the bane of your existence. Staring at the Morrissey poster won't make your hair grow, you big fro'd groupie.

A: At least I'm not a scenester. Can you possibly explain to me why anyone would want to join a scene?

D: No, this article was your idea, you do the writing.

A: Wait, isn't it always my idea? And don't you always do the writing?

D: Hey, bring it on!!!

A: You know I could never

hit your pretty face — unless it was made up like some punk kid or a brooding Goth child, or perhaps glowing red like a neon raver.

D: Oh! Scenesters ... yeah, I hate them too — all those plaid and khaki'd Dave Matthews fans, with their domestic beer and pre-torn caps. And all those people who go to raves to spin glow sticks and cause their dancing arch-enemies to suffer severe disorientation and E-induced hysteria. I could use some hysteria, though.

A: Remember when we got that elephant and threatened to trample a group of school children if our requests weren't met?

D: Anthony, all you asked for was extra mustard.

A: But I got it, didn't I? Yes, yes. But back to scenesters ... the pretentious manner in which they conduct themselves irks me to no end. They present themselves as if they know everything about music, but only follow a select group of bands and either dress to show their allegiance to the band or conform to the associated scene.

D: I once got dropkicked at a hardcore show for wearing a Michael Jackson European Tour shirt, so I understand what you mean.

A: You should have been wearing a navy blue Diecast hoodie, a few piercings, dark baggy cargo pants and an empty backpack covered in local band patches.

D: When I was at this rave last week, I was covered in company logo patches. I am a commercially sponsored raver, but that didn't keep me from getting dropkicked again. Those scenesters sure are hostile against outsiders.

A: Don't get me wrong, I'm an advocate for band support and non-commercialism. I listen to music from almost any genre, but I mostly enjoy going to small local rock clubs. It just makes me sick to see 80 percent of the crowd at a metal concert dressed like Jonathan Davis impersonators: goofy dreads, unkempt facial hair and draped in Adidas apparel. This doesn't compare to what the punk scene has become.

D: Anti-conformist conformity that ends up playing out like a twisted, voluntary punk

fashion show. The ultimate horrors, however, are emo and indie rock shows. Shaggy hair falls over dark-rimmed glasses while retro shirts and cardigans sway out of time from the music. Most of the females try to pull off a look that could be called pseudo-mod, but mod died in the '60s where it belonged.

A: I think one of the reasons "underground" music remains underground and largely unsuccessful, at least commercially, is while the fans emphasize uniqueness and "not selling out," they already have sold out. They have limited themselves to following one genre, one mode of dress and a handful of bands all sounding alike. In most cases, when one band in the genre separates itself through ingenuity, trying to expand both the fan base and the boundaries of the music itself, scenesters attack the band's supposed lack of credibility. So most bands are stuck playing the same songs to the same crowd.

D: I remember when I was little, I wanted to ride a horse but it was dead.

A: Right.