

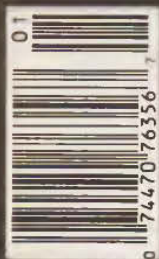
PROPAGANDA

No. 14 SPRING 1990



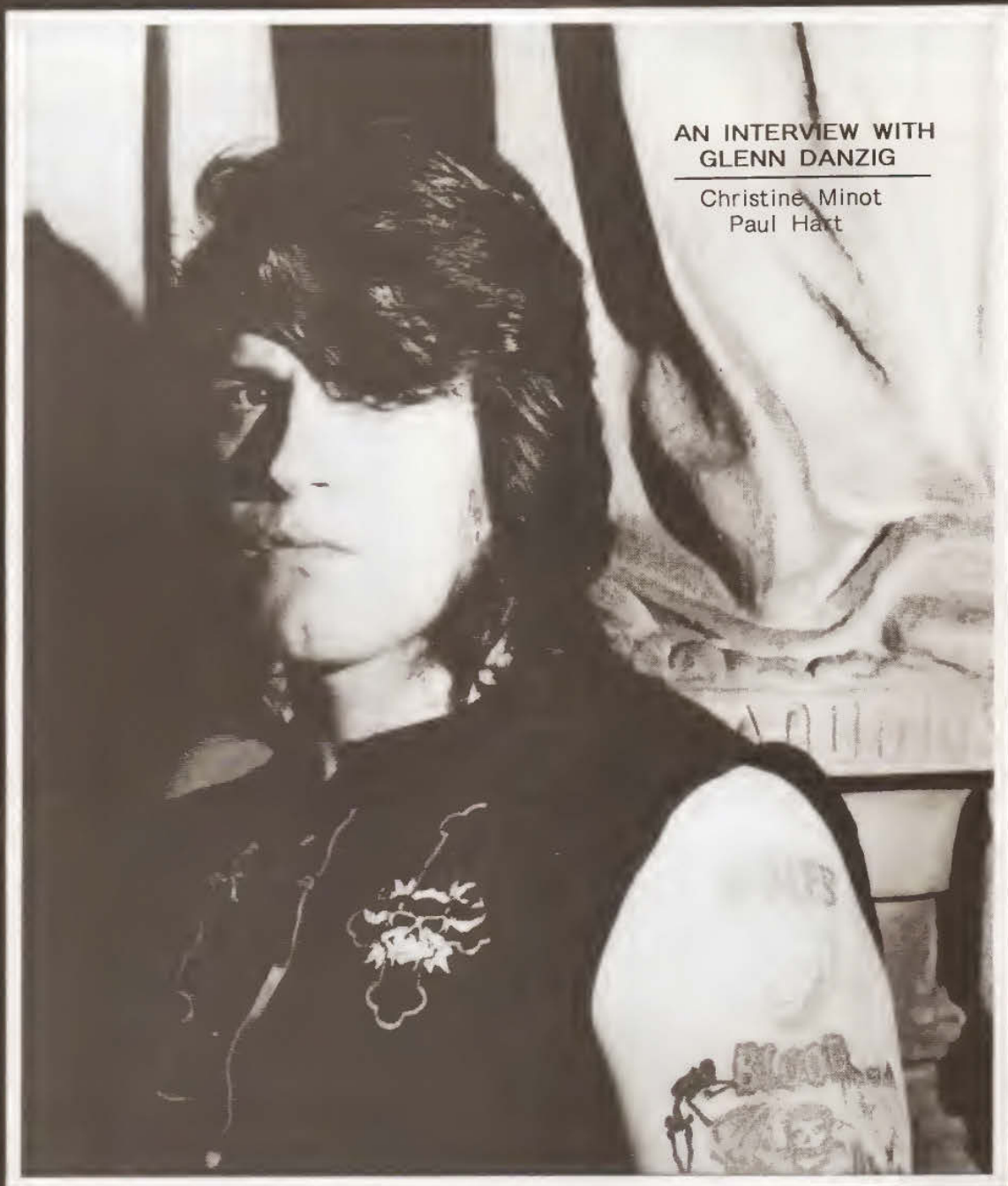
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DANZIG: DOES GOD LIKE IT?



AN INTERVIEW WITH
GLENN DANZIG

Christine Minot
Paul Hart

He raised his spear as the wolves approached. He could barely hear their growls over the sound of his pounding heart. Their eyes were hollow, totally devoid of soul. For him, mortal fear and instinct for survival had closed in, leaving no room for reason or compassion. For that instant in time, prey and predator, man and beast, were of one kind.

Primitive man facing the wolf pack is not too unlike a fan facing the band Danzig live in concert. So raw, so menacing, so full of primitive emotion is their sound, that you feel stripped of everything that makes you modern, rational hominid. Their songs, such as "The Hunter," extol times in human history when such cultured concepts as Greek logic, Roman law, and Christian forgiveness had no meaning or relevance. To Danzig, man is beast, and his morals are relative to his needs.

"We tend to accept everything we're taught about morality," says lead singer and mastermind behind it all, Glenn Danzig. "Morality's a control mechanism. Every social institution uses it, especially organized religion... the church. How many people actually take the time to investigate the origins of religious ideas. Most people just accept what they're fed."

You quickly realize that Glenn is not most people when you analyze what he says in conversation and in his lyrics about the subject. He is truly a scholar in his own right when it comes to the historical development of society's concepts of good and evil and its evolution of religious thought. Songs such as "Twist Of Cain," on the debut Danzig album, infer that even the Bible itself, the cornerstone of our Judeo-Christian belief system, has been periodically altered by theologians at the behest of church



Mark Weiss

The Danzig gang lurks in the shadows of the American rock scene.

officials to reflect the kind of morality they wanted prevailed on their flocks. "Twist Of Cain" was inspired by a book entitled "The Forgotten Books Of Eden," which relates certain lost (deliberately or otherwise) chapters of the Bible, some of which don't paint all that favorable a picture of certain revered characters and events in the Good book. "There are even chapters on Christ that have been omitted," adds Glenn, "because some of what he did in these stories doesn't support what the church is trying to teach about him." It is true that the earliest forms of the Bible were much more harsh and unforgiving than the present-day, "watered down" (as Glenn puts it) version. Also, the God of the Old Testament was much more vengeful and angry than the one we supposedly worship today. So, what is God then, good or evil?

"Maybe it makes more sense to ask what is good and what is evil," responds Glenn. "I mean, good alone or evil alone makes no sense; they're only relative to each other. Without one you can't describe the other. They're both a part of life, and so, I guess, a part of God. Anyway, each society views them differently. If they were absolute concepts, there'd be no conflict in the world." Couldn't some of these ideas be construed as anti-Christian?

"Well, if wanting to know the truth about Christianity, like how and why it began, is anti-Christian, then that's someone else's problem, not mine."

It was this search for the origin of Christianity, especially in northern Europe and the British isles, that brought paganism to Glenn's attention. Most of our Christian customs associated with holidays like Christmas, Easter and Halloween/All Saints' Day have their roots in pre-Christian pagan Europe. "Christmas is celebrated on Dec. 25th only because it was the Winter Solstice festival," explains Glenn. "In order to convert the people to Christianity, a lot of compromises had to be made, like keeping a lot of the old pagan customs." Yes kiddies, you'll never hear your pastor admit to the fact that putting a decorated tree in your house was a pagan Norse custom long before there was a Christmas. Even Halloween and All Saints' Day were originally

the Celtic festival Samhain (meaning Summer's End) which celebrated the harvest and the dead. It also happens to be the name of the band Glenn formed after the Misfits broke up.

"I'm interested in the origins of a lot of religions," says Glenn. "Also Eastern mysticism, the Middle Eastern concept of martyrdom, even paranormal stuff like psychic phenomena. And I want to do more on obscure stuff in literature, stuff most people never heard of."

Danzig records (the debut effort from late '88 and the



The Beast pays for our sins in the "Am I Demon" video.



The Axe Man — John Christ

new 777 Lp) basically reflect what Glenn is into at the time they're written. And with song titles like "Evil Thing," "Am I Demon" and "When Death Had No Name," one shudders even to think of asking.

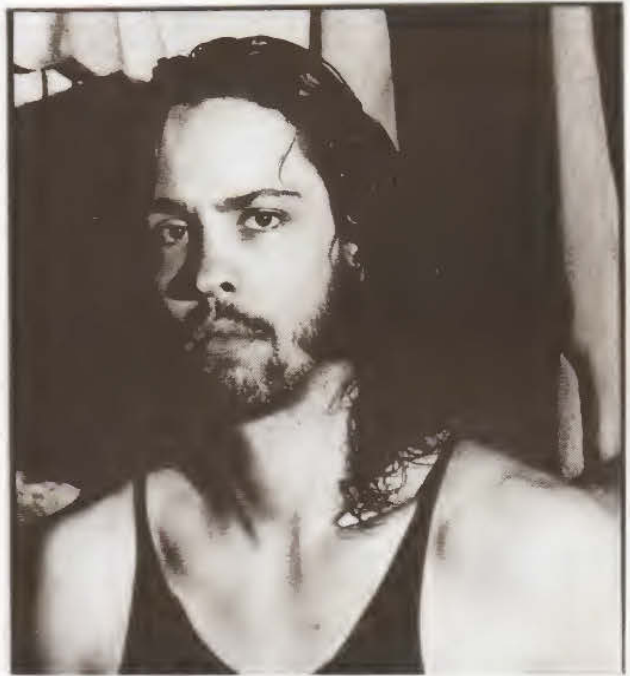
As far as the music is concerned, it's a genuinely timeless blend of early '70s hard rock and metal with a dark undercurrent of heavy blues in the style of the Animals or the Doors. In fact, the combination of Glenn Danzig's deep, brooding vocals and the slow-crunch, grunge instrumentals makes one wonder what early Black Sabbath would have sounded like if Jim Morrison had taken over the vocal duties from Ozzy. While having a truly classic-rock sound, Danzig's music has a very new and original style to it. It can't be linked to any present trend, and thus will probably never become outdated.

With all the tendencies out there in the music world for bands to follow one banal trend or another, how has Glenn managed to avoid sounding like any of his contemporaries? "I really don't listen to much music," confides Glenn. "There might be a couple of things I like now and then, but on the whole, there isn't much I follow. To tell you the truth, I'd rather read." And judging by the size of his book collection (which is extensive), it seems as though Glenn would rather get his inspiration from the written word as opposed to the sung one.

You can rest assured, that as long as Glenn keeps his nose in the books, Danzig will keep putting out music that challenges your intellect rather than insults it.

The only absolute in morality is
the absolute power to impose it.
— Friedrich Nietzsche
Beyond Good And Evil

Special thanks to Michelle at Geffen and Victoria at Def American.



Acidic Bass — Eerie Von



Legendary Banger — Chuck Biscuits

Michael Lavine

BEFORE DANZIG

Paul Hart



The Misfits left a legacy of fear during the early '80s hardcore/punk era.



With albums like *EVIL LIFE* and *LEGACY OF BRUTALITY*, the Misfits evoked images of horror and occult psychotronics. Glenn Danzig wrote songs



that conjured up demons from the old chiller thrillers such as "Monster From Green Hell," "Night Of The Living Dead" & "Horror Hotel."

NOVEMBER-COMING-FIRE

SAMHAIN



After the Misfits, came Samhain, a band named after the fire rituals performed by the pagans to ward off winter's demons of darkness.



Before there was a Danzig, before there was a Halloween, even before there was Christianity, there was Samhain. The pagan tribes of the English isles believed that the end of summer and the loss of daylight that came with the autumn were induced by demonic forces which ushered in the harsh conditions of the long, dark winter months. The Samhain festival (which later became Hallow's Eve or Halloween under Christianity) was held after the October harvest and was punctuated by masquerades and the building of large open fires to stave off these forces of darkness. Here we see Glenn and Eerie Von observing the fire rites on the NOVEMBER COMING FIRE Lp.