

Dr. Frank
Singing,
songwriting
and guitaring



Jon von
Guitaring and singing
1985-1992



Byron
Bassing
1985-1989



Alex
Drumming
1985 - 1993

When we re-organized the MTX digital catalog to reflect the original records' track lists, it left out quite a few "orphaned" songs that had appeared as bonus tracks on various CDs and compilations over the years. These "shards" were aggregated into a digital album to fill the gap, but then we realized that most of them were vinyl orphans too. Hence the present compilation. — Dr. Frank, Oakland, 2018.

1. King Dork 1997

Long before it was a book, it was a song. The basic tracks for this one were recorded during the Revenge Is Sweet... sessions but the song was never quite completed at the time. One of the rough "in progress" mixes done during the sessions appeared as an out-take on the Lookout compilation Forward 'til Death in 1999 as well as on a split 7" with the German band Gigantor. This more fully realized mix was included on the 2001 ...and the Women Who Love Them "Special Addition" CD re-issue comp. Beach Boy Al Jardine was dozing on the couch in the closet-like other room during the belated mixing session. I wanted to wake him up to ask him to do vox, but chickened out. I think Kevin Army might have casually mic'd the closet door though.

2. How I Made a Million in a Punk Rock Band 1990

One of Jon von's most charming Sky Saxonisms, and among my favorite tracks from these sessions, this was an out-take from the second wave of Making Things with Light sessions at Sound and Vision. I feel like I should apologize for the naked Frehley-isms on the guitar, but I'm not gonna. This appeared on the Big Black Bugs CD comp.

3. Whistle Bait 1996

This Collins Kids cover is one of two songs we recorded with Jim Tierney at Fishtraks in Portsmouth, NH for the Joe King-produced Lookout compilation More Bounce to the Ounce. (It was later included on the ...and the Women Who Love Them CD comp.) Not much more to say about it, except: this is a great song, those were good times, and that P-90 sounds great.

4. Unpack Your Adjectives 1995

This cover of the Schoolhouse Rock tune was one of five songs we recorded at Sound and Vision in '94 or '95, the first recording session to feature Joel Reader on bass and backup vox, and the last thing we ever did at Sound and Vision. The other songs were "Alternative Is Here to Stay", "New Girlfriend," "You Today," and "Semi-OK." My original plan was to do them all as a self-released e.p., but Larry Livermore talked me into doing a single with Lookout instead. The die was cast. We stayed on Lookout. (This song, under the title "Adjective," appeared on the 1995 Lookout Records comp. A Slice of Lemon.)

5. Itching Powder in the Sleeping Bags (live) 1995

I'm a little fuzzy on the precise source of this track, but it was recorded live on the radio, probably on KFJC, and probably around 1994 (Joel/Jim line-up.) It appeared as "Bonus Mystery Live Track" on the CD single version of the MTX / Goober Patrol split from 1995.

6. Fill in the Blank 1990

Not A-list material perhaps, but still kind of a fun track. Recorded at Sound and Vision in San Francisco during the second wave of Making Things with Light sessions, this song originally appeared on the 1991 Flipside compilation The Big One, and was included on the Big Black Bugs CD re-issue comp in 1997.

7. God Bless America 1992

A much loved/maligned song that originally came out on the Blame and Burn 7" comp on Flush Records in 1992. Later it was added as a bonus track to the Our Bodies Our Selves CD issue with no indication that it was "bonus" leaving many fans with the impression that it was the final track of that album. In fact, the song pre-dates the album by several years. It was originally meant to be solo/acoustic, and was generally played during broken string breaks and such at shows. (Contrariwise, "Even Hitler Had a Girlfriend" had been intended as a full band song that became acoustic by exigency.) This recording was meant as the first iteration of what was to be a generic backing track with new lyrics/vox to be added and submitted every time we had a compilation offer with no budget. (cf. "Vive la France" and "God Bless Lawrence Livermore".) It was also included on the Big Black Bugs CD comp. A different mix appears on the MTX/Goober Patrol split.

8. Sackcloth and Ashes 1994

Just me, a good song, a double tracked Les Paul Jr., and the tremolo knob on a Sears Silvertone amp. I wanted to record a whole album like this. Still do.

All songs by Dr. Frank © and © Itching Powder Music (BMI) 1986-99 except A2 by Jon von (Punk Rock Music BMI); A3 by Van Eps/Stoll (EMI Miller Catalog Inc.); A4 by George R. Newall, (American Broadcasting Music Inc.); B3 by Naoko Yamano, (EMI Virgin Songs Inc, BMI); and B6 by Berry/Stipe/Mills/Buck, (Night Garden Music, BMI).

All the studio tracks were produced and engineered at various Bay Area studios by Kevin Army and originally mastered by John Golden except A3 (recorded by Jim Tierney at Fishtrax in Portsmouth, New Hampshire) and B5 and B7 (recorded by Greg Freeman at Lowdown Studios, SF).

Massaged by Pete Mattern at Planet X Recording Studio. Mastered for vinyl and cut by Dave Eck at Lucky Lacquers. Orphaned songs, compiled with liner notes by Dr. Frank.

Photography by Julie Green, Murray Bowles, Ian Harper, Jennifer Kaufman, Eric Nakamura, and various others. "Art" by Chris Appelgren.



Aaron
Bassing
1989 - 1994

1. Yeah, Yeah, Yeah, Yeah 1997

This surf-y song with nonsense lyrics somewhat inexplicably appeared on a 1997 compilation somewhat inexplicably called "Generations I - a Punk Look at Human Rights." Somewhat inexplicably, its title was listed as "Ya, Ya, Ya, Ya." It was later included on the ...and the Women Who Love Them CD comp. I believe this was recorded at Roof Brothers studio in Oakland, at the same session where we did the Duran Duran and Primitives covers. (We used to try to combine the covers comp recording sessions and throw in one of our own songs if there was time for it -- this track was unfunded, meant to benefit... something or other.) I can't remember much more about it, but I do remember the carpet. It was gray and kind of damp. Smelled like cats.

2. Semi-OK 1995

This original version of this song was on a Lookout flexi sampler that came with the September 1995 issue of Punk Planet as well as on the Goober Patrol / MTX split 7"/CD that came out in the same year.

3. Flying Jelly Attack 1989

We recorded this at Dancing Dog Studios in Emeryville ca. 1989 for a Shonen Knife covers compilation called Every Band Has a Shonen Knife Who Loves Them; later on, it appeared as a bonus track on the Making Things with Light CD and subsequently the Big Black Bugs CD compilation. It was one of the first songs we recorded with Aaron on bass, I believe. Many of the covers we recorded were done solely because the people putting them out gave us a small amount of money for studio time, but in this case it was a band I really loved and was one of my favorite songs by them. Our version is... well quite weird sonically, but sort of charming I guess. The guitar stuff was perhaps a harbinger of things to come: this is what happens when you give a boy an SG and a Mesa Boogie. A guy from Jon von's work transliterated the Japanese lyrics for me and I sang them not very convincingly, but that didn't stop it being used as evidence for the still extant folk legend that I am half Japanese. (I'm not.) When we played with Shonen Knife a few years later Naoko Yamano told me my Japanese was "very well." Success.

4. As Life Goes On, You Get More and More Out of It 1999

A home recorded never-before-released song that first appeared on the ...and the Women Who Love Them CD. comp. All it's got going for it is the double-entred title, but as double-entred titles go it's a pretty good one.

5. Kenny Smokes Cloves 1988

One of the earliest MTX songs, recorded in 1988 by Greg Freeman at Lowdown Studios in San Francisco as part of a lengthy demo tape. My old pal Kenny Kaos needed to be immortalized in song, somehow, and while I'm sure I didn't quite do him justice, I did the best I could. This first appeared as a bonus track on the Night Shift album CD re-issue.

6. Can't Get There from Here 1992

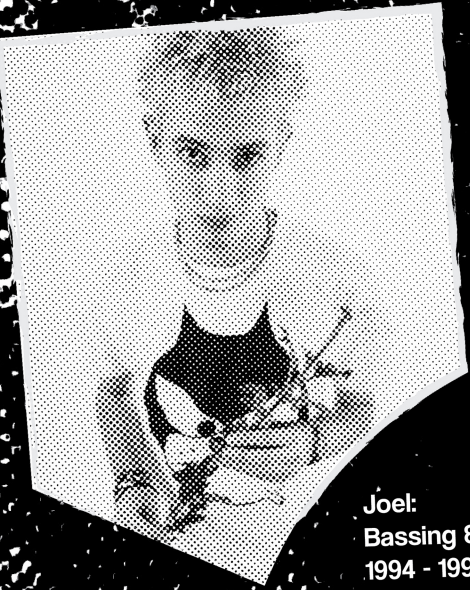
Recorded for a 1992 REM covers compilation called Surprise Your Pig (because they gave us \$200) and included on the Big Black Bugs CD comp. Figuring out absurd sound-alike words for the incomprehensible Michael Stipe lyrics was the fun part and the main memorable feature here. "Donna Reed is not my mom" will forever live in infamy. Years later our old associate Robert Shimp was engineering an REM record in San Francisco and played the track for Peter Buck, who reportedly said "at least they got the chords right." As with so much else in our repertoire, it was the very least we could do.

6. Boredom Zone 1988

The song itself dates back to my high school days. This version was recorded in that Greg Freeman/Lowdown 8 track demo tape session, and it first appeared on the Lookout Records compilation The Thing that Ate Floyd. It was later included as a bonus track on the Lookout CD re-issue of the Night Shift album. Not, perhaps, my finest hour as a songwriter, but I still like the drone/jangle guitar.

8. I Was Losing You All Along 1997

As originally conceived, this song was intended to be the grand finale track of Revenge Is Sweet and so Are You -- the album title appears as a lyric in the bridge, in fact. In the event it never quite "gelled" in the studio and we didn't have the time (nor, arguably, the talent) to do it justice so it was abandoned unfinished. Kevin Army and I did what we could with it several years later to make it presentable for the ...and the Women Who Love Them CD compilation. It was during this session at Shark Bite studios in Oakland that Al Jardine poked his head in to say: "that bass sounds a little picky... not to be, you know, picky" lending a Beach Boy's support to the tone side in our ongoing argument over how trebly and stringy the bass should be. While the recording isn't perfect, this is still one of my favorites among my songs, and I'd love the chance to re-do it properly one day, or to hear someone good do a cover of it. The reprise of the guitar line from Milk Milk Lemonade's "See It Now" was intended to link those two albums together on the basis of some no doubt pretentious rationale I've since forgotten.

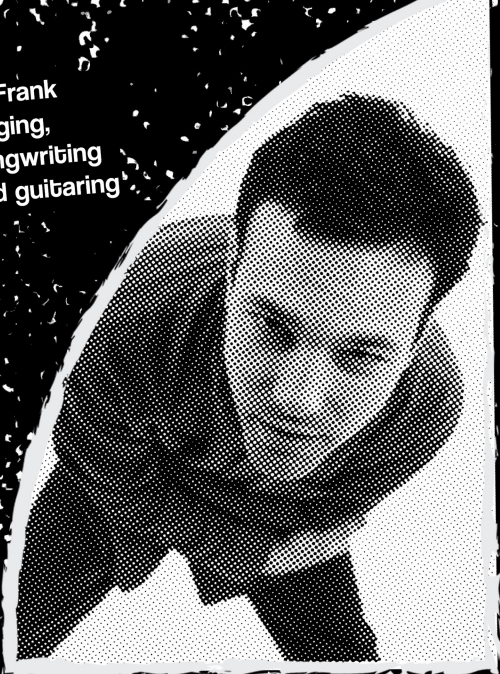


Joel:
Bassing & singing
1994 - 1999

Jym
Drumming
1994 - 1999+



Dr. Frank
Singing,
songwriting
and guitaring



1. We Are the Future People of Tomorrow 1996

This was part of the big batch of songs in consideration for the album that became Love Is Dead. Kevin Army placed it on a lower tier of priority, arguing that we'd already recently done one rock culture lampoon ("Alternative Is Here to Stay!") and already had the self-referential rock-commentary song slot filled (with "Dumb Little Band.") Also it gradually became clear that it didn't quite fit the overall theme and "vibe" we were developing. So we held it in reserve and ended up recording this version the following year very quickly and dirtily mid-tour at Fish Tracks in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, for the Joe King-produced compilation More Bounce to the Ounce.

Though the target is pseudo-political punk sloganeering in particular, as originally conceived it was more of a sort of folk-song, a la Donovan or someone like that, and I still play it that way sometimes when I do it solo. But I'm quite fond of this arguably rather heavy-handed, anthemic realization of it, and it certainly is apt. To my amazement, not everybody who hears it is able to grasp that it's meant as a parody. (Then again, maybe I'm too easily amazed.) I've been criticized for the incoherent "message" and improper quotation (what, you mean Marx didn't say "all they want is opium in their masses, which sucks"?); as well as praised for my insightful commentary ("good to hear you guys doing a political song.. fuckin' genocide, that's so true, man.") For the record, the original, correct line in verse two is "we fight oppressionism for the revolutioning" but I flubbed it in the studio saying merely "revolution" and we just went with it. As you do.

2. Is There Something I Should Know? 1997

This track exists solely because the people who were putting out the Duran Duran covers album on Mojo Records gave us \$200. (Most of our non-album covers originated like that.) I believe this, "Crash," and "Yeah Yeah Yeah Yeah" were all stacked into the same session, at Roof Brothers in Oakland, ca. 1996. I have always been fond of the breakdown-outro just because it's so incongruous. Also because it doesn't have those weird, nonsense lyrics getting in the way of the rock and roll. But those lyrics, man: they're non-grammatical to the point where it was actually quite challenging to get them to come out of my mouth. Some guy on allmusic says the lyrics "deal with a difficult romantic relationship in rather obtuse terms." Boy, I'll say. Obtuseness like that doesn't come easy, or cheap. Kevin Army said "I can't believe you made this sound like one of your songs," a comment which cut both ways I'm sure.

3. Crash 1997

This cover of the Primitives' song was recorded for a compilation called Before You Were Punk. I never got where they were coming from with that title and concept, as the album consists of covers of mostly '80s post punk pop songs. It should have been After You Were Punk, but Before You Subsequently Went Back to Being Punk Again (Basically Because Green Day and Offspring)... but maybe that was too long to fit on the CD cover. It's a great song, though I doubt we added all that much value to what was already there. There are people who know of the band chiefly from this track. I know this because I've heard the words "oh you're the guys who do that 'Crash' song" from more than one mouth. This track along with the previous two in the present sequence appeared on Lookout's ...and the Women Who Love Them "Special Addition" CD compilation.

4. T-Shirt Commercial 1992

This Jon von song should have been on Milk Milk Lemonade but the band was not too keen, and if I recall correctly Alex simply folded his drummer arms and refused to play it. A strange hill to die on, but our career was full of such strange hills. After that line-up broke down and up following the '92 Euro-tour, Jon secretly recorded it anyway with some pals and it appeared under the name Mystery Experience on Lookout's Can of Pork compilation. This was perhaps a strange kiss-off, conceptually, since it remained an advertisement for the merchandise of a band he was no longer in, but then again, we never sold that much merch in those days. At any rate, I am glad to have it aboard.

5. Vive la France 1992

As I've explained before, probably, this fractured-French version of "God Bless America" was simply the original recording with a new vocal track. The idea was to respond to requests for compilation tracks that came with no budget (which was most of them) with some variation of this song, new lyrics being plugged in each time. I envisioned doing this dozens of times, all the major languages, Elvish, Klingon, sound effects, children meowing, maybe a computer-generated robot voice, etc. None of this happened, but "Vive la France" did happen, on the Can of Pork compilation. Lots of people seem to like it, and I get a surprising number of requests to add it to set lists. Must be that je ne sais quoi.

6. Time for Your Medicine 1988

There are three schools of thought on drum solos: (a) they're a terrible idea; (b) they're a really, really terrible idea; (c) they're a really, really, really terrible idea but it was the only way we could get the drummer to agree to play the song. Well there's a fourth school, actually: (d) they're hilarious. I'm gonna go with (d) here. Nonetheless, this is one of Jon von's better tunes, though I'm not sure this slap-dash arrangement and recording does it justice, quite. I love the main riff, though. This is from a demo recorded at Greg Freeman's Lowdown Studios, mid-1988. I seem to recall that we may have recorded the song a second time with Kevin at some point but the details are lost in the shadows of time as they cast them-selves imperfectly upon my memory's barren wastes. And if such a tape exists, it does not appear to be in my possession.

7. Hello Kitty Menendez 1994

This song is hard to explain to those who need an explanation, which I am occasionally asked to provide by younger people. So many dead references, including the main gag and entire justification for the song's existence. Well, these things happen. This appeared on the 13 Soda Punx compilation on Top Drawer Records and I believe it's the final song we recorded with Alex. The guitar solo still amuses me, as does "doctors and dentistes."

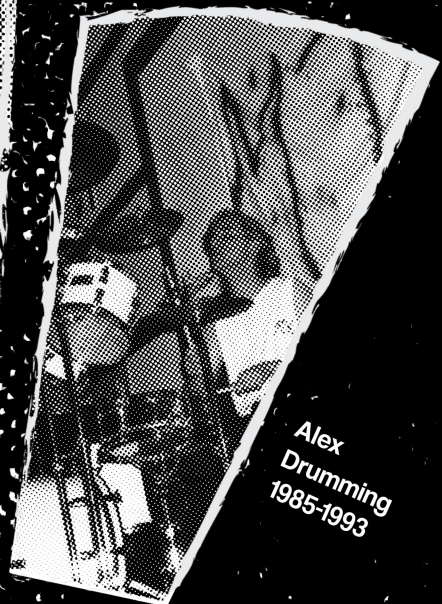
8. How'd the Date End?

As originally conceived, the ... and the Women Who Love Them CD EP was supposed to have six tracks, and the 7" would have two of them, plus an extra song that wasn't on the CD. The song slated for this slot was "Checkers Speech," but Jim was really fond of that track and insisted that it be on the CD. I had to come up with an additional song for the 7", and this was it. (Kevin Army managed to veto the other contender, "A Gal and a Half" which was a half-baked ragtime-type love song about a fat girl. A good call, I understand that now.)

At that time we were already way, way over our tiny budget for this project, so the song had to be dashed off really quickly. When it came time to do the vox over the guitar track I realized that I'd missed out a whole chunk of the song (the bit where the narrator describes being picked up where he'd fallen down, read his rights, and brought downtown.) There was no time to correct the error, and we just went with it. The truncated song was included on the 7" but not listed in any way.

I always meant to do a proper version with all the lyrics. This one was recorded in my bedroom, and first appeared on the Women Who Love Them "Special Addition" compilation.

Jon von
Guitar, songwriting
and singing
1985-1992



Alex
Drumming
1985-1993

Byron
Bassing
1985-1989





Aaron
Bassing
1989 - 1994



Joel:
Bassing & singing
1994 - 1999



Jym
Drumming
1994 - 1999+

1. Told You Once 1999

"Told You Once" was one of over a hundred songs on Fat Wreck Chords's Short Music for Short People compilation. It was meant to be songs that were thirty seconds or under I think. Ours clocked in at ten seconds, which I'd hoped would be the shortest but in fact "Short Attention Span" by the Fizzy Bangers beat it by a couple of seconds. Oh well. The recording was one of those backline-in-the-studio deals where the bands would shuffle in, do their song, and shuffle out. The engineer and I didn't see eye to eye on... anything, really. He was very unhappy with my funky but classic 1957 Les Paul Junior, and kept trying to get me to use this metal-looking guitar he had instead (which I didn't—I have my principles.) Admittedly, it was hard to tune. Basically, there was a lot of conflict packed into those ten seconds, which may well be the best way to record a song that goes "fuck the fucked up fucking fucks..."

2. Don't Go Away Go Go Girl 1992

This was recorded for a four-song Banana Splits covers comp called Banana Pad Riot, which also featured tracks from the Young Fresh Fellows, the Vindictives, and Boris the Sprinkler. Nice little record. We also put it on the end of the Our Bodies Our Selves CD as an unlisted track and unexpected ending to "God Bless America", coming after eight minutes of silence (because that's the kind of stuff we used to do back then.) So its first release as a hidden track actually preceded the release of the compilation it was recorded for by some four years. I always loved this song, and Aaron's Joey Levine-esque backup vox on our version still charm me. By the way, it was recorded at Dancing Dog Studio in Emeryville ca. 1992 in the same session as "Swallow Everything," "More than Toast", "Together Tonight," and "Not Guilty."

3. Another Yesterday 1994

A song from the Love Is Dead overflow that we wound up recording for real for the subsequent Revenge Is Sweet and so Are You album. It was a song the band liked so we did it, but if that hadn't been the case I'm sure it would have ended up on my 1999 solo album. I'd had big production ambitions for it that never got to happen, which is maybe a good thing, maybe not. In those days, as perhaps now as well, I really had to expend a lot of effort if I wanted not to "over-write" and this is an example of having tried that hard. This first appeared on the ...and the Women Who Love Them "Special Addition" CD compilation.

4. Gilman Street 1988

This version of the now rather famous song is from that Lowdown Studios demo. The lyrics aren't 100% together, but I still like it a bit better than the one that eventually ended up on Rough Trade's Big Black Bugs 12" in 1989. I want to try to dig out this tape and see what else is on it. I remember it having a whole lot of songs on it, including at least a few of the ones that wound up being on the Making Things with Light album. I've got bins and bins of tapes in my little apartment—I'm basically tripping over them—and I'm sure one of them is this. This track first appeared in public as a CD bonus track on Lookout's 1996 re-issue of the Night Shift album.

Anyway, as many have had occasion to point out recently, it is perhaps just a bit of a shame that I of all people was the guy who happened to write the "Gilman anthem." It could have been a lot more sycophantic and triumphalist and mythopoeic in other hands. Sorry about that, Punk History.

5. I Ain't Gonna Be History 1988

We knew this great old Maniacs song from the Live at Vortex LP and this not-all-the-way-baked attempt to cover it is an out-take from the Night Shift sessions at Hyde Street Studios. It was included as a bonus track on the Lookout CD re-issue of that album. Too many songs done too fast, we were young and inexperienced.

6. Look Back and Crack 1989

We could never quite make this song work in the studio, though we tried several times. This was the final try, an out-take from the first batch of songs we recorded with Kevin Army in 1989 that became half of Making Things with Light the following year. We'd also tried to do it for Big Black Bugs, and I think there was an earlier attempt as well. I remember it working better live, but maybe I'm kidding myself.

7. God Bless Lawrence Livermore 1992

This was never intended for release. I just did the alternate lyrics to "God Bless America" during a vocal take to amuse Kevin Army. (That's what gave me the idea to do a bunch of different versions, though we only ended up doing one other in the event.) Kevin was amused enough to make me do a full track of it, and I think he may have even inserted it subliminally into the "God Bless America" mix. Good times. We put all three on the Big Black Bugs re-issue compilation CD. It may not be much, but it is a "shard" and, thus, this is the place for it.

8. King Dork (Forward 'til Death version) 1997

This mix was an out-take from the Revenge Is Sweet sessions, left unfinished because we had run out of time and we already had too many songs to deal with. We assumed we'd come back to it some time, finish it up, and use it for something. That finishing up didn't wind up happening till five years later (2001 ish) when Kevin Army and I attempted to do so for its inclusion on the ...and the Women Who Loved Them "Special Addition" compilation CD. In the meantime, this version, which was basically just a rough mix not really meant for release, had found its way on to the Lookout Records compilation Forward 'til Death. It's the first version many people heard of this song and some folks seem to prefer it. In other words, it is, if nothing else, a "shard," and it seems a fitting final track. Had I but known how important this song and its conceit was to become in my later life, I might have taken more care with the whole thing. Then again, I might not have.

All songs by Dr. Frank © and © Itching Powder Music (BMI) 1986-99 except A2: Duran Duran, Biot Music Ltd., A3: P. J. Court / S. Dullaghan / Tracey, Complete Music Ltd., A4 and A6: Jon von, Punk Rock Music (BMI), B02: Scott / Radcliffe, Anihanbar Music Company (BMI), B05: Shaw, United Artists Music Ltd.

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