

OP-ED

MUSICIANS SPEAK OUT

You think raising one child is tough? Try being in your 40s and raising three—with the most recent being not even 2 years old—while you're also a professional skater and frontman of three different active punk bands (**U.S. BOMBS**, **DIE HUNNS** and the aptly named **DUANE PETERS GUNFIGHT**). Yeah, **DUANE PETERS'** plate is pretty loaded, but don't go calling DCFS yet—it looks like he has it under control.

THERE'S SOMETHING IN THE AIR, my friends, and it's called a new generation.

There is a baby boom goin' down right now, and a lot of 'em are being produced by 30- and 40-something punk rockers. They're being raised on punk-rock music and a lot of non-traditional values. Style is being instilled to these great kids early on, too. They have names like Iggy, Macgowan, Dexy, Shea, Frank, Jak, Sidney, Grace—the list goes on from other punk and revolutionary icons.

A few years ago, two of the guys who are in the U.S. Bombs with me were having kids, and I sure as hell wasn't gonna be part of it at my age. I've got two other boys, Schuyler and Chelsea, who are 21 and 19 now, and both skate and play in punk bands. In 2004, I was in Europe with my other band, Die Hunns, and my then-girlfriend/bandmate (now wife), Corey Parks, was lookin' at me really weird when I got back in the van from a gas station. I'm thinking, "What the fuck does she know that I don't?" We start driving, and sure enough, she goes, "Duane, I just did a pregnancy test, and I'm pregnant!" So I tell her we'll have to push the button when we get home—we'll have a week before we go on the Warped Tour for her to recover! She goes, "I wanna have it!" I told her that she was out of her fuckin' mind! "No fucking way! I've already done that, and it's way too hard, and you have no idea how much diapers cost, and you have no life for years, and we just put out a record, and we are booked solid for the next six months, and blah blah blah!"

She is 6-foot-3 with one hell of an attitude, and she goes, "I'm gonna have it, and we'll have time to finish most of the road, and we'll just have to deal with it!" I went up front and stewed in my shit for about an hour; then I looked back at her and asked her if she had thought of any names. We both started laughing.

She stopped smoking, drinking coffee and breathing fire all that day. That's when I started goin', "There's gonna be a new generation, and

there's gonna be a revolution!"

She watched me cry for days when Joe Strummer passed away, and when we got home we found out we were gonna have a boy, so she asked me what I thought of the name "Clash." Are you kidding me? I started crying like a little girl. This is fucking great!

I was in a skate contest right when we finished the Hunns' road time, and I got knocked out on the last ride of the day, then woke up at the bottom of the Soul Bowl. They made me the winner of the old-man division, and I went home with a concussion and had to have back surgery. That took about a year of recovery time, so I put on a robe, grew a beard, jumped into bed with Corey and said, "Well, let's eat, watch TV and watch yer belly grow!"

Months later, I had surgery, and Clash was born two days after. I was right there with her as her coach and cut the umbilical cord. Now, me and Clash dance to the Clash, Sex Pistols, Eater, the Jam and Ramones, along with all the other greats, every morning when we make the bed that me, Mom and our dog, Chopper, all sleep in. Clash shares his food with Chopper and is learning manners the old-fashioned way. He wears thrift-store clothes and makes makeshift hats with writings on 'em. Everybody that meets this kid comments on what a happy kid he is, and it's because we love him and pay attention to him.

We started interviewing babysitters when he turned 14 months. We found one and had her come over to hang out for a few hours. Corey watched how she played and got along with Clash, then *wham!* She was a nanny. Now we use her about once a week to go back out on tour and go watch bands. Clash flirts with her, and she is great with him.



Because we're older, we're able to spend way more time with him, and a lot of our peers are in the same boat. Tons of kids from people in cool bands are all within a few years of each other, and to me, that's a really great thing. These are the kids that are gonna change this planet we live in, and it's making us watch what the hell we do now as far as being parents who are playing in bands and working as many jobs as possible. We've learned to take time out and just hang out. I always ask myself, "Does it really gotta all get done today?" Hell no! Let's just go to the park and watch Clash play with the other kids! There is a public skatepark right there, and when he gets done with the slide and swings, he rolls around on his skateboard! He is learning to be an individual at 16 months, and he is gonna learn about rock 'n' roll from Mom, and punk rock from Pops.

Clash has already done one U.S. tour with Die Hunns, and when Daddy goes out with the Bombs, I'm gonna fly Clash and Mom out to certain cities so I don't gotta do much time away from the family. For being such a late learner in life and always on the run and thinking my whole life that I gotta die to live, I've gotta admit something to ya: I was wrong as hell! Life rocks, and this thing called family is the best medicine you can get! **ait**

MUSICIANS: HAVE A BURNING ISSUE YOU WANT TO GET OFF YOUR CHEST? Life, music, society, whatever—AP wants you to speak out. E-mail your AP Op-Ed ideas to Scott Heisel, AP's associate editor, at heisel@altpress.com.