Those People Essay, Research Paper

Those People

?Oh, so you?re one of those people,? she inquires, in a tone consisting of disdain and surprise, after telling her I?m going to the Mudvayne and Ultraspank concert. She continues, ?so you get all dressed in leather and put in your nose ring to get ready, huh??

I laugh, looking over my rather plain appearance of a Black Label Society t-shirt and jeans, wondering how many laughs I would get wearing leather and give a clearly sarcastic ?yeah? answer.

She looks clearly offended by my nature and explains that she thought that?s what us ?metal people? wore. How we should have rings piercing every available piece of flesh on our heads and that we all wear black, even in summer. She goes on further explaining that we?re all Satanic, that the music is ?too loud,? and that we are crazy.

I listen, somewhat interested in her assessment of the heavy metal community and think about the people I see around at the concerts I?ve been to. Soccer moms, computer geeks, hippie types, and others who don?t seem to ?fit the mold,? they?re there right beside the goth chick and the leather clad anarchist, loving the music all the same. I wonder to myself if I should explain to her the community of heavy metal, how many people that will talk to you while you?re waiting in line for the show, completely unbiased towards what you look like, talk like, or act like, or how great the bands are to their fans, there are very few bands in this area of music who go on stage and make their millions, these guys do it purely for the adrenaline rush of getting on stage and the reaction of the fans. I refrain from berating her prejudices, but only because I?m late for the show, or so I thought.

I step into line at 7:30, only to find out that it?s being held back till 8:30. No one?s particularly mad or upset though, because the guitarist of Ultraspank and the vocalist for Mudvayne are walking up and down the line chatting with fans and signing autographs. The guy in front of me is about 6?6? 280 pounds at least, he?s wearing a Megadeth t-shirt and black jeans, his hair a dyed blonde and a perfect length for the headbanging to come.

He turns around, screaming, ?YOU READY TO ROCK!?

I return an ?Oh hell yeah,? after recovering from the whiplash from the force of his yell.

He extends his hand, ?Hey my name?s Jake, where you from? Every see these guys before? And, who are your favorite bands??

I answer the questions in succession, first shaking his hand. ?Hey, the name is Dave and I?m from Williamsport??

He interrupts, ?No \*\*\*\*ing way, I?m from South, man.?

?Cool,? I reply. ?I?ve seen Ultraspank, but not Mudvayne, how are they??

?Oh, they?re \*\*\*\*ing awesome, the bassist looks just like \*\*\*\*ing Satan,? he exclaims, ?I saw them with Union Underground a few weeks back.?

A third party interrupts, short, almost shaved, hair, a short goatee, and a Cannibal Corpse t-shirt. ?Union Underground? I heard they were awesome.?

?Oh yeah they are,? Jake says, his eyes widening as he explains their sound. ?Oh they have a great sound, their singer is really good, but their guitarist if \*\*\*\*ing amazing.?

I jump in, ?Yeah, I saw them at Tattoo the Earth, short set, but they killed.?

We are joined by an unexpected guest, the drummer from Mudvayne walks over, hearing us discussing Union Underground. ?You guys into double-U?? He continues, as we nod our head, ?Well you?ll like Non-point then, they?re opening tonight, a great band, a lot like UU.?

?Cool,? we say, almost in unison, and then the artifacts of our community are revealed as Jake pulls out a banded bundle of ticket stubs. He pulls out one, after flipping through three or four, and asks the drummer to sign it. He signs it more than willingly, understanding the significance of the signed ticket, probably having a group of them of his own.

After the drummer hands it back, a crowd forms around, all wanting to check out the ?tix.? Others pull out a bundle of their own, trading them to see where they may have been before, the trades of ?I was there? and ?you were like three rows away from me? overwhelm the circle. For the following half hour the discussion focuses on those ticket collections, centering on whom some of the bands are and why some bands ?suck? or ?sold-out.?

I sit back, mainly listening, as I usually do, only throwing in my two cents when bands like Biohazard, Black Label Society, Pantera, and Nashville Pussy are debated. I make mental notes of some of the bands that everyone seems to like, the Deadlights, Boiler Room, and Angelcorpse, among the many.

For the first time, possibly ever, I notice the complexity of our language–hardcore, grindcore, speed metal, death metal, heavy metal, black metal, progressive metal, death core, hyper metal, metalcore?I begin to wonder what all these terms mean as they are repeated over and over again. I think about some of the bands that define ?hardcore.? Biohazard, for example, I wonder why they are ?hardcore? and why a seemingly very similar band like Pantera is ?heavy metal,? yet when you say a band is ?hardcore? I still get an idea of what that band is going to sound like. Right there, in that discussion, listening to the terms being volleyed around was the first time I realized the use of the terms, and I still have no idea where they originated or why there is so many or how someone knows what you mean when you call a band a ?hard/grind core band,? but it works and no one has any problems with the system.

The doors open for the concert, and I give one final look around, to the goth chicks, and the tattooed bikers, the gray haired woman with her two children, Jake, the drummer of Mudvayne who has made his way towards the back of the line. ?Yeah, I?m one of these people.?