

Take a coffee break; see Coffin Break

Grunge band to play Red & Black Cafe

concert

If either caffeine-fueled mosh sessions or shorthaired grunge bands are your thing, be sure to get to the Red & Black Cafe Saturday evening.

There you'll find Coffin Break, in all probability with their shirts off so you can see their tattoos.

Coffin Break has played twice before at Duffy's. The Red & Black will be a "good intimate setting" for the band to play, said David Lee Rabe, promoter of the show.

Rabe said he hoped the fact that the Red & Black does not serve alcohol would not affect the band's reception.

"If people have to drink to enjoy music then something's wrong," he said.

Last year, Coffin Break released "Thirteen," the latest addition to their five-year recording history that began with a demo tape and has included such high points as winning a spot on an album of Kiss covers with a one-minute version of "Deuce."

On "Thirteen," Coffin Break delivers tight, well-executed thrash-

“If people have to drink to enjoy music then something's wrong.”

—Rabe
local promoter

punk. The sound, they have said, is a mixture of the band's Seattle roots and other more mainstream influences, such as The Jam, the Beatles, Elvis Costello and the Who. Possibly the

mod influences account for the fact that only one member of the band has long hair.

This mix of influences gives Coffin Break a curious sound, at times reminiscent of Iron Maiden. That sounds like an insult but isn't. The guitar breaks, especially, have the compacted clarity of Dave Murray, if not all of the force.

What gives Coffin Break real force, though, is David Brook's drumming. More than a background, the beats push the songs forward and fill them out.

The lyrics on "Thirteen" cover fairly predictable subjects, but it is impossible to make out what the singer is saying anyway.



Courtesy of Epitaph Records

Coffin Break Cover

— Matt Silcock



Courtesy of Epitaph Records

Coffin Break will play at the Red And Black Café Saturday.

Lack of cockroaches indicates coldness

People are always whining about the weather, claiming the heat or the cold or the rain or whatever else is so bad. I don't listen to them; it's usually not that bad.

But last week I listened. It was cold, damned cold. I have suffered through complaints about the cold since last fall, but there was no mistaking the coldness of last week's cold—a cold so cold it made one long for the simple, lost days of mild frostbite and subzero wind chills.

How did I know it was an authentic sort of cold?

I knew it because there were no cockroaches in my kitchen.

I have this thing about the cockroaches in my house. I don't like them. They come out to prowl and munch each night, but my repulsion did not reach its height until they started singing and dancing on the counter in broad daylight.

It is the constant sight of their blissful revelry that brought about a gradual change in my demeanor, moving me from mere disgust to outright vilification. It is not an obsession or anything, but my roommates have become concerned since I began to stalk the beasts at night.

Understand, I am into animal rights and vegetarianism and all. But with belligerent roaches taunting me, I draw the line. The attitude of casual defiance, the carefree sampling of my thoughtlessly uncovered foods and the raucous gatherings of family and friend roaches bother me.

Somehow there seems to be no end to them. They crawl into our apartment from above and below, and for each one squashed, two more appear the next night in a Hydra-like progression. But this has become an epic struggle, and I sometimes hear a Greek chorus singing as I wield my sword-like hand, chopping down the foe.

I hunt them at night. Whenever I enter the kitchen and flip on the light, I run to the sink, both hands poised in killing position, and fell at least one in every encounter. But they just keep coming.

Then last week, there were no roaches in sight. In vain, I dashed about the kitchen, feverishly hoping to uncover a new feeding and breeding ground. Even their occasional refuge, the bathtub, yielded nothing.

In curiosity or mad hope, I turned the faucet, half expecting to see a stream of roaches pouring out. In-

By that standard, last week was frigid

stead, the entire house shuddered, and a pale, ghastly visage burst out into the bottom of the tub.

It was the head of a cockroach glaring at me with all the hate in the world. I froze for an instant, and it began to sprout waving, icy tendrils that grew slowly toward me. Still unable to move, I was saved just

before they reached me when a single drop of water fell from the shower head and shattered the gory thing, like a rose dropped to the floor after being frozen in liquid nitrogen.

Now that was cold. It's warmer now and the roaches are back. It's still a bit cool for I often spy little puffs of cockroach breath

rising in the air as my fist descends with lightning speed. But this is nothing like the cold of last week.

I mean, I know something about cold.

When I was 17, I moved into the basement of a guy named Mike Nowalls. He lived in a run-down house in a run-down section of South Omaha.

No matter how warm the water, regardless of how long it ran, the metal floor of the shower stall remained burningly, seeringly cold — cold as cannot be imagined, a cold that was fire and ice all at once.



David Badders/DN

Though three stories high, his house had no walls inside. And the exterior walls, uninsulated, were not exactly thick or shielding themselves.

A friend of mine also lived there for a brief period. The three of us lived in the basement next to the furnace since it was the middle of winter and damned cold.

Each of us had a cot and a sleeping bag on a different side of the furnace, which had been rigged (illegally if I recall) to blow warm air out directly above us.

I basically lived inside my sleeping bag since it was the warmest place in the house. I read in it, wrote in it and listened to scratchy records while in it.

With practice, I could drag myself along the floor to a hot plate and cook and eat plain-label macaroni and cheese—all without leaving the sleeping bag stretched across the cot.

I learned quickly to put next-day's clothes, gloves and all inside my sleeping bag to keep them warm.

But there was one thing for which I could not prepare: showers. Each morning I would put it off as long as possible, as I was snug and warm inside the cocoon of my sleeping bag.

Finally it could be put off no longer. I would gather my clothes and a towel, crawl out of the bag and dash toward the stairway, a timber frame like the rest of the house.

By the first stair, I could see my own breath. But things were in motion and matters decided. There was nothing to do but carry things out to their cold, gruesome end.

By the top of the stairs, I was numb to the cold. Shedding layers of clothing did not add to the coldness. Nor did standing there naked under a dim bulb for what felt like hours while waiting for the water to reach even the tepid level.

But then a newer, more cutting cold awaited. For no matter how warm the water, regardless of how long it ran, the metal floor of the shower stall remained burningly, seeringly cold — cold as cannot be imagined, a cold that was fire and ice all at once.

Now that was cold.

And for all its squalor and filth, I never saw a single cockroach in that house during the interminable, endless month I spent there.

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