

NEW RELEASE

# Minute by minute, NOFX a tasty punk rock treat

By Jason Hardy  
Staff writer

At first glance, the latest NOFX release seems like a pretty standard album for one of modern punk rock's most notorious bands.

You're a little shaken when you realize that it's only 18 minutes long, but you figure, "Well, they can probably fit about 10 songs into 18 minutes."

But there aren't 10 songs on "The Decline." There aren't even five or four or three. There's just one.

One 18-minute, 21-second song from a band that's built its career on songs that are two minutes or fewer is pretty strange. But what's even more strange is that it's really good.

It starts off sounding sort of two-dimensional but ends up with a sonic monumentality that is unmatched by any other NOFX endeavors.

Two minutes, seven seconds into "The Decline," and it starts to take shape as something quite unique. The tempo shifts and key changes are tight and unexpected. The backup vocals are used sparingly at first, so when they come in at 2:36, it creates a very unified energy that is abruptly subdued with a bass solo at 3:10.

As the song progresses, the layers become more and more evident, while

still creating a cohesive sound. It's almost as though the band starts out as stock NOFX and takes the song with them through a sort of musical rediscovery, all the while retaining what has become the band's musical identity.

Along the way, NOFX switches sounds to a lot of lo-fi moments that sound distant, as though they're being played in a tunnel, which quickly crescendo into up-front vocals and clean, crunchy guitars.

Five minutes, eight seconds into "The Decline," the backup vocals have become a very individual element. They're edgy and honest sounding, as opposed to being generic punk rock "ahhhhhhhhs" that just sound like singer Fat Mike's voice has been duplicated into a thousand tracks.

The liner notes attribute backing vocals to someone named Spike, and whoever he is, he definitely had a positive influence on the song.

At 5:35, the song's energy and pace digress into a very slow tempo with fuzzy, reverbed guitar chords being slowly strummed. The vocals have a distorted edge to them and are sung in a very smooth and soothing style.

There is no strong format to the song, as it is impossible to really pick a verse or a chorus, but it never really sounds muddled. Riffs and melodies

may appear more than once, but they are never presented in the same way twice.

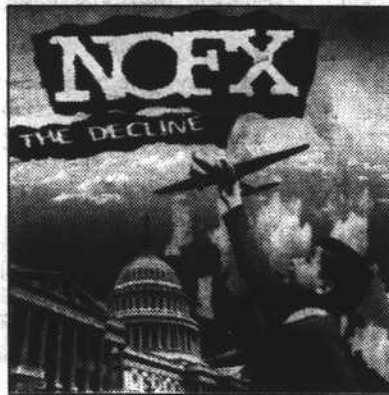
Eight minutes, 47 seconds and what would an epic song be without a drum solo? Fear not, NOFX comes through with a stampede of bass and tom-tom drumming in two crushing bridges. What would a NOFX song be without a noodling guitar solo? Again, guitarist El Hefe keeps tradition alive.

At 10:55 into "The Decline," some of the strangest and most interesting moments begin. There is a pulsating fuzz noise and a spacey emptiness, and the song is anchored by two voices saying the same thing — "one more pill to kill the pain." One voice is soft and up-front, while the other is screaming from what sounds like the bottom of a well.

After about three minutes and a few tempo changes, NOFX experiments yet again with a fast-strummed, woody-sounding stringed instrument resembling an antique mandolin or a broken classical instrument.

Lyrical, the song remains true to one topic — how our society is really crappy. But it's broad enough to fill 18 minutes. Word usage is metaphoric story telling, but the song has moments of poetry as well as blatant satire.

At 14:53 "The Decline" enters into its final lap, sticking to one chord progression for the final three minutes. In



## REVIEW NOFX

**TITLE:** The Decline  
**LABEL:** Fat Wreck Chords  
**GRADE:** A  
**FIVE WORDS:** Punk gimmick turns into classic.

fans and for those who've become burned out on NOFX's short and fast style.

It's great to see established bands experiment and do so without sounding worse than when they started. For that reason alone, "The Decline" is definitely a step ahead of most clichéd punk albums.

the background we hear trumpets, church bells, crowd cheering and the sound of marching feet, all of which eventually fade out.

The CD sells for \$11 and is definitely worth it, both for longtime NOFX

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### Congratulations Tim Schultz

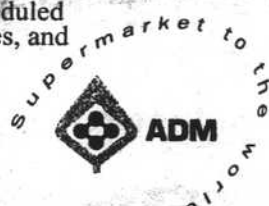
Tim Schultz is a graduating student in chemical engineering. Leaving the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in February, Tim will begin his new career for Archer Daniels Midland Company. Tim will be working in corn processing in Decatur, Illinois.

ADM is the world's largest agri-processing company and is based in Decatur, Illinois. ADM is continuing to expand throughout North America as well as in China, Europe and South America. ADM processes corn, soybeans and other oil seeds and produced high fructose corn syrup, citric acid, Vitamin C, Vitamin E, TVP vegetable oil, lecithin, ethanol, as well as many other products.

Tim found out about ADM's career opportunities from career services and scheduled an interview with ADM. He interviewed in Decatur, toured production facilities, and was then hired as a production assistant.

Tim will begin training for a period of six to twelve months. During this time he will work with different technicians and engineers as well as learn about the entire process of production at the plant. He wanted the chance to have hands-on experience. Tim is eagerly awaiting his new career at ADM.

We look forward to Tim joining us. WELCOME TO ADM



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