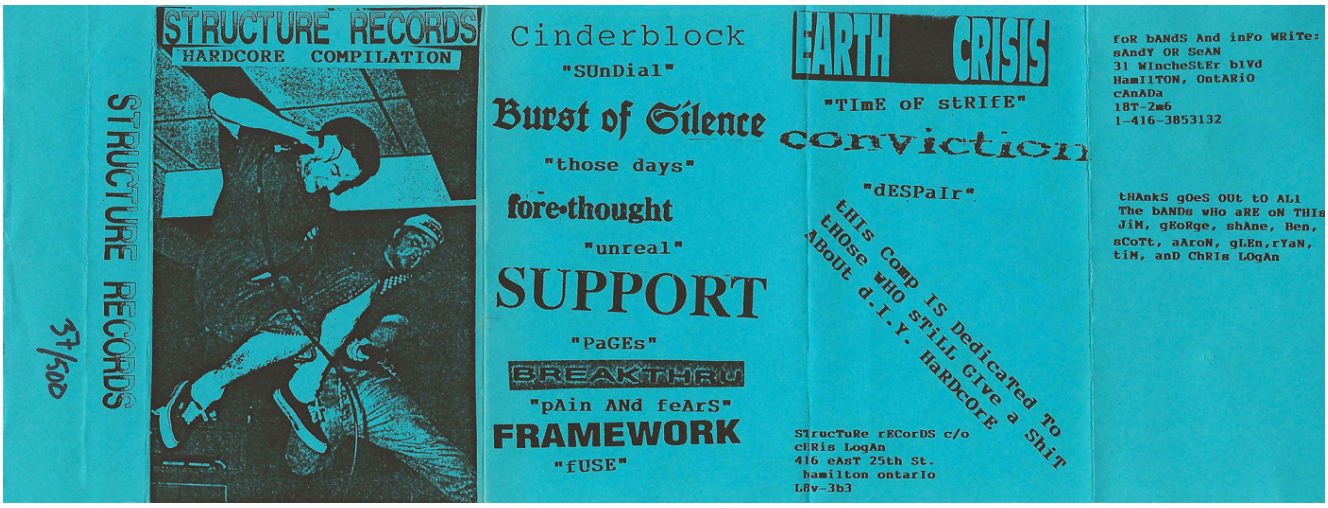
Burst of Silence Official Biography

Burst of Silence was formed in the later part of 1991 with Ryan Hollingworth on vocals, Zak Husted on bass, Sam Mamone on drums and Christian McMaster on guitar. They formed from different circles around the city of Hamilton, but they all went to the same highschool, Hill Park Secondary (with the Chokehold guys); Ryan lived with Zak, who knew Christian. Ryan was also friends with Sam, so they all got together, jammed it out and tried writing. In the beginning their influences ranged from Black Flag, Crass, Gorilla Biscuit, Youth of Today, Agnostic Front, Sick of it All to Pantera, Slayer, Machine Head, Megadeath and Black Sabbath. They named themselves after a Citizens Arrest song after trying to figure something for a few hours, and finally started taking ideas from records. In early 1992 they recorded their first demo with Sam's brother, John, at House for Zak (400 Upper Sherman Avenue), where Ryan lived. They made about 100 copies of it and mostly gave them away to friends and people at the shows. The intro and outro on the tape were taken from a children's record that Sam had (or that Zak's dad had). During the early days, BOS often played at House for Zak, and with Chokehold and Incision, but were always restricted to Ontario.

Burst of Silence's band-made demo tape

Burst of Silence's demo tape as made by Structure Records (I'm looking fora full scan of the artwork)

In the late spring of 1992 they expended to a second guitarist, and after trying out a couple guys (including Chris Ansley), settled on Chris Logan. With this addition, BOS started playing in the states, mostly in Buffalo. Chris Logan who was starting up Structure Records, wanted to repress the demo and that ended up being the first release for Structure. At this time, the demo was retitled "To See You Suffer…". They started sending out a lot of these demos to labels across the the continent, but for the rest of the year, BOS continued to play shows with this stable line-up. They then appeared on their first compilation, Structure Records Hardcore Compilation, compiled by Sandy Robertson, which used the song "Those Days" from the demo.



Burst of Silence as featured on the Structure Records Hardcore

Compilation, 1992

In early 1993, Joe Villella invited the band down to Lockport, NY to record four songs at Watchmen Studios with Doug White. This was going to be the band's first 7″ called "Thicker Than Blood" on Joe's own label Gloomandoom Records. Chris Logan did not appear on this recording, due to his dedication to Chokehold; he only appeared live with Burst of Silence. So they recorded as a four piece. When Joe received the test press, and showed it to the band, it turned out that something went wrong and it sounded horrible. With some arguments, the release was cancelled. In order to use the songs, BOS decided to add them on all future dubbings of the Structure Records version of the demo, which was a very limited amount. It was during this time that they played a certain show in Massachusetts, with Chokehold, that winter and were in a car crash on their way down. Christian ended up having to go to the hospital with a whiplash, and was bandaged up. They still played the show, but were mysteriously never payed for it!

Burst of Silence’s 7″ “Thicker Than Blood”, released by Stability Records in December of 1993

In September of 1993, BOS played a show in a church just outside of Chicago, where they met Tony Brummel of Victory Records. During the show, the band was impressed at how many people were actually signing along to their songs, even though they still didn’t have a record out. It wasn’t long before Iain Hursey of Stability Distros contacted them to put out a 7″ for the label he was starting up. Iain sent the band to Mainway Studio in Burlington, ON, in October of 1993 to record four new songs with producers Shawn Velloin and Atilla Turi. Kyle Bishop, Sean Moriarty and Greg Taylor, who were still in Incision, provided backup vocals on the recordings. By October

29th, 1993 the test press was made, and “Thicker Than Blood” was released in late November/early December. Victory was distributing Stability Records, and by mid-December they had already sold 600 of the 1000 records pressed. The 7″ pressing was 300 on maroon red, 100 on swirl and 600 on black. BOS would play a great deal of shows in the midwest area right after this, as Iain was booking them all over the place. Chris Logan would leave the band to commit fully to Chokehold after being in the band for a little over a year and did not tour for the 7″. Chris Ansley tried out once more for the second guitar position, having lived on and off with them during the last few years. His guitar skills had improved greatly since the last tryout and this time he was accepted. They started gaining more metal influences during the summer, listening to Cannibal Corpse, Death, Bloodlet, Neurosis, Slugfest.

"What Still Holds True" compilation by Holdstrong Records, featuring Burst of Silence, 1994

By the time January 1994 came about, Sam was asked to leave the band for the more fitting Aaron Petrie. They were heading in a metal direction and Aaron, who had been friends with Christian for a while, fit those needs. In this early part of the year, Mike Mowery released the compilation "What Still Holds True" which used the song "Hold True" and also featured Chokehold. The compilation would be repressed in early 1995 by Phyte Records. BOS started writing new material almost immediately with the new drummer. They continued to play shows almost every weekend, continuing with Chokehold and quite often with Sun Still Burns.

Artwork of what would have been Burst of Silence's full-length album "Burning" in 1994

The 7″ had been so successful for Stability that it was only in April 1994 that he sent them back to Mainway Studio to record a full-length album, once again with Shawn. BOS had hoped to get the 12″ released by the beginning of the summer for their tour, but Stability was pressing the Bloodlet 7″, so it got put off. The album was going to be called "Burning" and they even pressed a few shirt designs with the album cover for the tour. Stability started promoting this album with posters and flyers all over the place. Before their summer tour however, BOS were invited to play at the three day A New Hope Hardcore Festival in Madison, Wisconsin in late May 1994. Iain put together the fest, and BOS got Sun Still Burns and Chokehold on the bill as well (but Chokehold ended up not going). SSB and BOS were set to share equipment down at the show, but as BOS had the van and were taking Matt Jones and Tim Delowska with them, they didn't have much more room than for their guitars. BOS ended up using Ricochet's gear at the fest when they played Saturday May 28th. SSB was set to play on Sunday May 29th, but BOS had promised to bring the van back to the family friends who had lent it to them. Of course this caused some problem for one of the bands…

Upon returning, Iain and Ryan started booking a month-long tour of the states for the summer. The tour would be 25 shows

in 30 days in July 1994. The 5 guys of BOS were paired with Iain and his girlfriend in a 1986 Ford Econoline van. The tour started out in Wisconsin, then went to Chicago, Detroit, Buffalo, Erie, then through New England down to New York and New Jersey, down the eastern coast of North and South Carolina and Virginia. No doubt like any tour with limited living space, tensions built up. Throughout the tour, BOS sold a load of different shirt designs, and Iain distributed flyers and posters of the new album that was coming out. After the tour, Aaron Petrie was kicked out of the band, and Chris Ansley announced that he had been sleeping with Iain's girlfriend the entire time. As soon as Iain found out, he dropped the band and refused to release their full-length album. A German label, March Through Records, would later attempt to release the album on CD, in 1997, but it never happened.

To fill in the drum position, they added Curtis Langridge, who was Zak's cousin and had also played in Sub Level with Ryan. They continued to do a great deal of shows in Ontario and the north-midwest states. A dude from California (let me know if you know who it was) contacted Ryan for BOS to do a split with A Chorus of Disapproval, and of course the band said yes. He sent money up for them to go record a single song, "Rain", at Mainway once again. They sent him the song, and they never heard from him again.

Hollywood Records (yes the same one owned by Disney) was interested in setting up a meeting with the band, for a possible contract for their newly formed subsidiary Hollywood Metal. They sent Iain a fax and a meeting was to take place during a three-show weekend mini tour where they were supposed to play Chicago, Indianapolis and Detroit. On their way that Friday, they were stopped at the US crossing border, and when they were searched, some weed was found in Curtis' wallet (contrary to recent blog myths, BOS was never a straight-edge band, they only featured some straight-edge members). The band was refused entrance in the states, and a slow depression

started setting into the band, after having lost the chance to be on a major label. At the tail end of 1994, Zak and Christian quit the band because they knew touring was now going to be an issue and they wanted no part of a major label association. Although they kept being asked to play shows all over the states, that was the end of the classic Burst of Silence.

1995 was rather slow for the remaining members of the band (Ryan and Chris Ansley), and they decided to reform the band as new. They got a new drummer, Jamie McGinnis and a new bass player, Mike Presseiary and played a single show at Beasley Skate Park in Hamilton, still under the name Burst of Silence. But by the end of 1995, they renamed themselves “Sinsick“.

In 1996, Dave Buschemeyer was putting together the compilation called “Benefit for the Buffalo Animal Defense League” and chose a song from BOS’s catalog to include on the unreleased compilation. Recently, Joe Villella went back to Watchmen Studios to remaster the original version of Thicker Than Blood. It is now included in the discography.

Burst of Silence Complete Discography