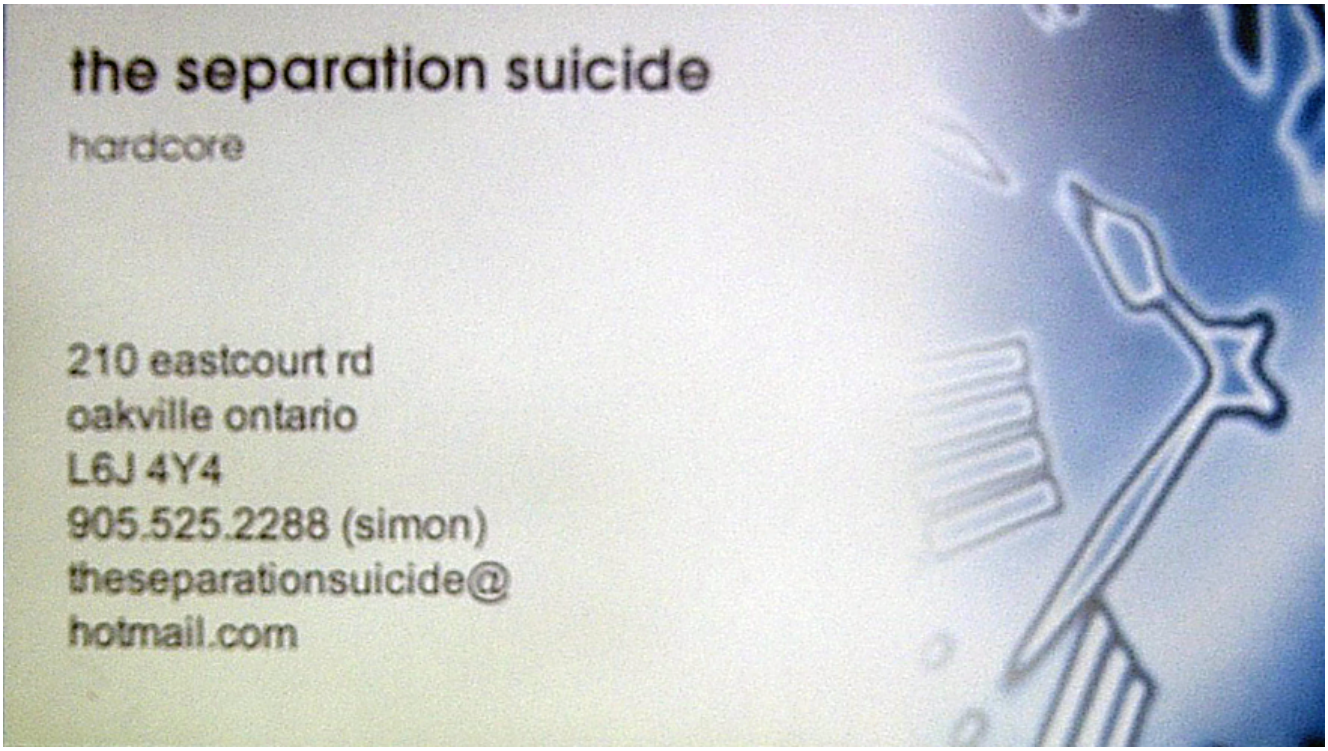
The Separation Suicide Official Biography

The Separation Suicide formed in January of 2002 as a “best of” band from members of Avarice and Confine. Most members were living in the Hamilton/Oakville/Toronto area of Ontario and came together when Gordon Ball left The Fullblast in late 2001. Gordie recruited ex-Avarice members Simon Bruyn on vocals and John “Tiger Shark” Ouellette on second guitar. Already familiar with them from the Confine/Avarice split CD that was released by Redstar Records in 1998 and a tour the bands did together. Gordon had emailed a bunch of musicians during the Christmas vacation in hope to start a new band fast. One of these was drummer Adam Veselisin from Ellington, but he didn’t end up joining. The line-up was rounded out when Gordie was suggested Allendale’s James Parkhill to play drums, by the guys in Boys Night Out that were living with him. Jamie brought one of his friend Jon Schouten (also fro Allendale) to play bass. The band met up halfway in a rehearsal space in Burlington, which was the best they could do with the members spread around in various suburbs. Gordie was also responsible for naming the band, influenced by Joy Division lyrics.



The Separation Suicide, Hardcore. Business cards printed by Simon

The band created their first website in March of 2002, which was hosted as a page on the Fullblast Media website (xfullblastx.com/tss). They had quite a hilarious biography of themselves on their website in 2002, obviously inspired (if not ripped off) from Oasis:

> *The Britpop band The Separation Suicide rose from obscurity to become the most popular U.K.-based rock band of the mid-1990s.*
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> *Formed in Manchester in 1991 as the Rain by Simon (vocals), Tigar Shark(guitar), John (bass) and Parkhill (drums), the group soon fell under the leadership of Simon's older brother Gordie (vocals/songwriting), a former roadie for the Inspiral Carpets, who renamed the band The Separation Suicide .*
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> *After extensive private rehearsals, The Separation Suicide recorded a demo, which Gordie passed on to contacts at Creation Records, who quickly signed the group. The Separation Suicide's first few U.K. singles, released in spring/summer 1994, were increasingly successful; by the time the group's debut album, Definitely Maybe, came out in the*

fall of 1994, it debuted at No. 1 in Britain, selling millions of copies. In the U.S. Definitely Maybe went gold over the next year, reaching the charts on the strength of MTV singles such as "Live Forever" and "Supersonic."

Though The Separation Suicide was instantly popular after only one album, tensions within the band threatened to prematurely end its career – the band fought openly, drug habits grew large, shit talk circled, the group launched press attacks against fellow Britpop stars Blur, and drummer Parkhill suddenly quit The Separation Suicide in early 1995 after getting into a bar brawl with Simon. But then, was paid to return to his duties on the drums.

Despite the turmoil, The Separation Suicide pulled through their difficulties successfully, returning in late 1995 with (What's the Story) Morning Glory?, which debuted at No. 1 in the U.K. and became the second-best selling album in British history. When The Separation Suicide performed at Knebworth in the summer of 1996, it was reportedly the biggest outdoor event ever held in Britain. Morning Glory? also reached the U.S. Top 10 thanks to alternative airplay of its single "Wonderwall."

The Separation Suicide' third studio album, Be Here Now, came out in 1997, with their fourth effort for Epic, The Masterplan, following in '98. The group produced two albums in 2000: Standing On The Shoulders Of Giants and the double – live set Familiar To Millions. Each album so far, has sold millions and millions to date, and will keep selling because of the fire and intensity of The Separation Suicide.

Early spring 2002, The Separation Suicide hit up the studio to record a 3 song EP to be sold on tour, titled "15 minutes of fame". Now, let the rock n roll revival begin.

During the winter season of 2002, The Separation Suicide was more of an idea than a band. Simon was finishing his last year

at Waterloo University, and the other members were either out traveling or working full time (so they say). Although a first show was booked for March 3rd 2002, it was cancelled, the band jokingly blaming it on Dashboard Confessional being in Toronto on that date and stealing all the potential attendees (they were actually in California at the time). A new first show was finally booked for May 3rd 2002 at The Kathedral with The Abandoned Hearts Club (in which another ex-Avarice member, RJ Larente, played), which was also cancelled. This time the blame was on a “jesus freak who plays acoustic guitar”! Meanwhile, The Separation Suicide recorded their first three song demo in late April of 2002 with Scott Komer at Parkhill Studios (aka Parkhill Project Studio, now called Affluence Productions). Ben Pobjoy, vocalist in The Abandoned Hearts Club, guessed on the recording. This three song demo was titled “15 Minutes of Fame” for which CD-rs were burnt during the second week of May 2002. The demo came with home printed artwork and a cigarette, which the band felt would be a pun on the straight-edge movement they were all known for during their time in Confine and Avarice.

The third time the band booked their first show proved to be to right at last. The Fullblast and The Abandoned Hearts Club were doing a weekend mini-tour in mid-May and asked The Separation Suicide to come along. But for some reason, The Abandoned Hearts Club had to drop out last minute. Their first official show was on May 17th 2002 at the Niagara Artists Centre in St. Catharines. This was followed by May 18th at Gino A. Marcus in Windsor with Searching for Chin and finally May 19th at The Embassy in London. Upon returning from this first show and mini-tour, The Separation Suicide immediately started writing new songs in hope to extend their setlist for the summer. The tragic event on June 13th of 2002 of the passing of two Compromise members, Jordan and Dan, greatly affect them, having known them for a few years.

In July of 2002 they were offered to join The End for a near

month-long western Canadian tour. The tour was to have a concert every single night, starting on August 24th in Thunder Bay, Ontario at The Apollo. They would then be taken through Kenora, ON, Winnipeg, MB, Saskatoon, SK, Medicine Hat, AB, Edmonton, AB, Kelowna, BC, Vancouver BC, Victoria, BC, Nanaimo, BC, Langley, BC, Kamloops, BC, then back through Calgary, AB, Edmonton, AB (again), Regina, SK, Winnipeg, MB (again) and finishing off on September 10th in Sudbury, Ontario at the Townehouse. For this roadtrip, the band would welcome Grade's Charles Moniz as their roadie. On July 22nd, The Separation Suicide played at Sonic Unyon with Bleeding Through, 7 Angels 7 Plagues and Avenged Sevenfold. On July 26th the played at L'Anti in Quebec City with Season of Fire and The Blood Anthem.

The Separation Suicide playing at L’Anti in Quebec City. Date and photographer unknown

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In the first week of August however, John Ouellette would quit the band and move to Banff, Alberta. But they continued to play shows as a four piece, including one in Montreal, where they would crash at a friends house and run into an old acquaintance, Andrew Ledger, ex-New Day Rising guitarist. Andrew had been band-free for over a year and was eager to join when Gordie called him a week later to fill in the missing guitarist position, just in time for the tour. But only three days before embarking on the tour, Shad, the booking manager, informed them, in the utmost shadiest of manner, that their participation on the tour had been cancelled. The Separation Suicide quickly finalized plans for a previously booked mini-tour in late September with Boys Night Out, Premonitions of War and A Perfect Murder. The mini weekend tour started on September 26th 2002 at Sonic Unyon in Hamilton, booked by Chris Logan and Erik Hoibak. This was followed by Montreal's Cafe L'Inconditionnel on the 27th, but when the bands got in town, they were told last minute by Dave Boucher that the show was cancelled (which ended up becoming a reoccurring theme for Dave over the years). But things looked up on Saturday, September 28th when they hit up Mlacak Arena in Ottawa and were joined by Katja. The last event of this mini tour was Quebec City on the 29th, at L'Anti with the addition of Mi Amore. To add some credibility to this tour, the bands' van broke down in the middle of the night while driving back to Hamilton and had to be tolled to the nearest Canadian Tire in Montreal.

Having played shows with Mi Amore, A Perfect Murder and Buried Inside, the band was quickly approached by Cyclop Media. In mid-October of 2002 The Separation Suicide signed an album release deal with the label, announcing the spring of 2003 for the album to hit the shelves. Meanwhile, the band kept pressing CD-rs of their demo, this time under the name "Not

All Fun and Balloons”, which they sold at shows. On November 23rd 2002 they set up another weekend mini tour which took them to Quebec City to play L’Anti with Unearth, In Dying Days, A Death For Every Sin, A Perfect Murder, Cursed, Buried Inside, The Bonds, Human Breed, The Fallout Project, Oversight and Silverstein. In December of 2002, Simon and Matt Unsworth, with their production company, Four Dollar Productions, created a music video for “I Don’t Need Dance Shoes to Dance All Over Your Face”, from the demo. The song would be re-recorded for their EP.

The Separation Suicide photoshoot taken in early 2003 for the promotion of “This Conversation”. Photo by Gordon Ball

By the week of January 20th 2003, The Separation Suicide was ready to record again and revisited Scott Komer at Parkhill Studios to record the vocals, guitars and drums of five songs. Joined by them in studio, initially as just a spectating friend, were friends Connor Lovat Fraiser (of Boys Night Out) and Ben Pobjoy (of The Abandoned Hearts Club). When came time to record vocals, the band asked both of them to contribute, and so three songs were embellished with their talent. The bass was however recorded a week later with Shawn Butchart (of The Abandoned Hearts Club) at his home studio The Pointy Beaks Nest. When all this was done, they shipped it off to Andy Krehm at SilverBirch Studios in Toronto to master it. In February, Cyclop announced that the new Separation Suicide EP “This Conversation” would be ready in time for the label’s

showcase in mid March of 2003. Gordie, a professional photographer and artist outside of band time, set up a camera timer photoshoot for the band in promotion for the album.

The showcase in question was non other than the Goodfellow Records/Cyclop Media two day Festival which occurred on March 15th 2003 at Sonic Unyon in Hamilton and March 16th 2003 at L'Anti in Quebec City. The bands that were showcasing were Goodfellow's Taken, Bloodjin, Blessing the Hogs, Cursed, The Red Chord, Premonitions of War, Season of Fire and Cyclop's Buried Inside, A Perfect Murder, In Dying Days, Mi Amore and of course The Separation Suicide. The Separation Suicide's set was to play from 17:20 to 17:45, between Premonition of War and Buried Inside. For this festival, the two labels put together a sampler, which featured the newly recorded Separation Suicide song "Frank Zappa Was Sure Right About One Thing", and was sold during the events. Unfortunately "This Conversation" was not out in time for the fest. After those two massive shows, they played at The Hideaway in St. Catharines on March 22nd with A Day and a Death Wish, From Gallows Tree and Shotgun Rules.

The Separation Suicide EP “This Conversation”, Cyclop Media, July 2003

“This Conversation” EP was re-announced for April 8th 2003 but delayed again until finally news on the Cyclop Media website promising that it would be out by the end of April and allowed for pre-orders to commence. But contradictions within the news on the website for the next few months led fans to have to wait until July of 2003, before a purchase link was made official and the CD hit the stores. The CD featured artwork by Connor Lovat Frasier, who still continued to support the band. That April 11th, The Separation Suicide played at Trasheteria in Guelph with The Dillinger Escape Plan and Every Time I Die. They were also approached by Andrea Goonan at United Edge Records when the label’s third compilation was getting put together, a dedication to Jordan Wodehouse and Daniel Langlois of Compromise entitled “For You”. It is unknown if the band submitted a song to United Edge, and it being ultimately left off because the band had broken up by the time it came out in January of 2004. Chances are however that the band never got around to record a new song for this tribute.

The Separation Suicide band photo used after John Shouten left the band. Photo by Gordon Ball

In August of 2003, Jon Schouten was replaced by Adam “The Big

Heat” Mansbridge on bass. Adam had been friends with the Boys Night Out crew and was a good fit for Separation Suicide’s mentality about having fun as a band. Once again to break in their new member, The Separation Suicide would do a weekend mini-tour, this time with the legendary Shai Hulud and accompanied by Fairweather. On August 31st they played at The Trasheteria in Guleph, followed by L’Anti in Quebec on September 2nd and to finish off with Montreal on September 3rd at Salle L’X. They had also planned to tour the states with Boys Night Out through out September and October of 2003, but the members were all moving in different directions. Gordie and Simon were moving to other cities, while Adam and Andrew were attending University of Toronto and Jamie attending another. The band’s unintended final show would be at Sneaky Dee’s in Toronto with Rise Over Run, Arkata, A Day and a Death Wish and Two Knives on September 18th 2003.

Download The Separation Suicide discography