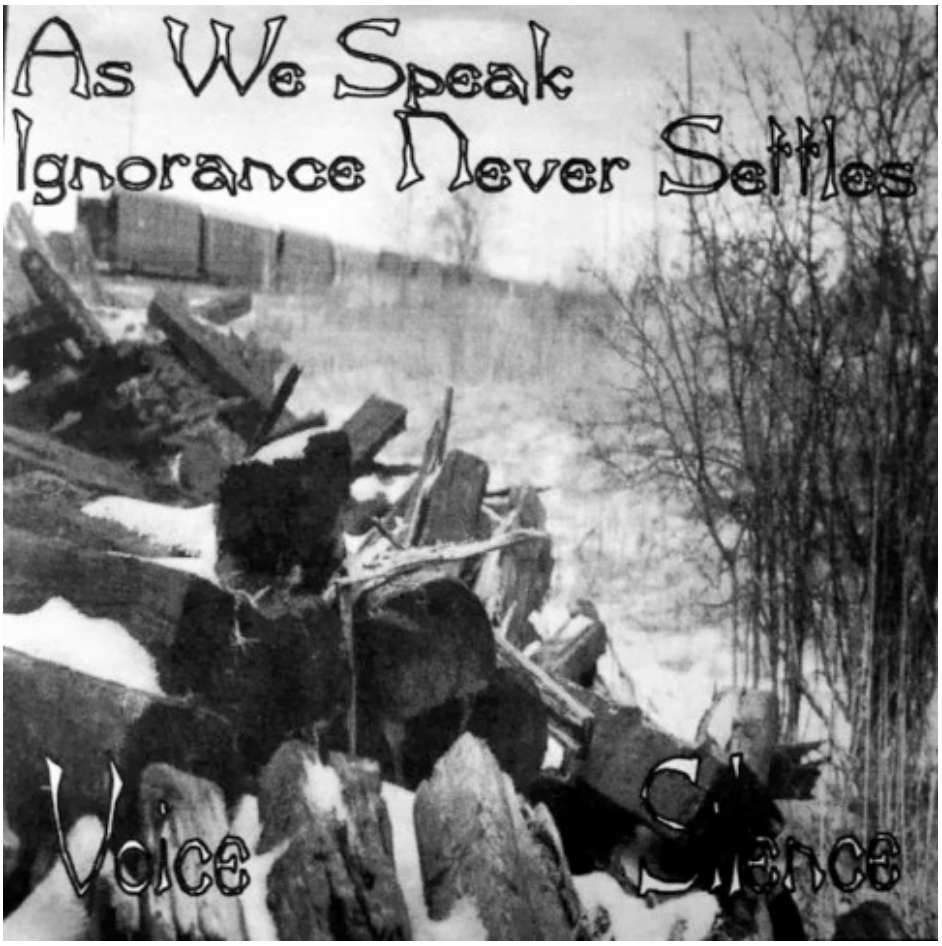
Winter Records & Rhythm of Sickness Records Interview

Winter Records was a label formed by Paul Bright (of As We Speak and Shoulder) in 1995. After putting out four releases, the label changed name to Rhythm of Sickness Records, named after lyrics of a Shoulder song. I conducted an interview with Paul to cover the label's history and help document the immense importance of the releases he's put out.

What was the complete discography of material released by Winter/Rhythm of Sickness?



Winter Records #1 – As We Speak/Ignorance Never Settles split 7″, 1995



Winter Records #2 – Shoulder “Touch” CD/12″, 1995



Winter Records #3 – Fieldtree “Fleas in His Collar” 7″, 1996



Winter Records #4 – Holocron “Celestial Sphere” 7″, 1996



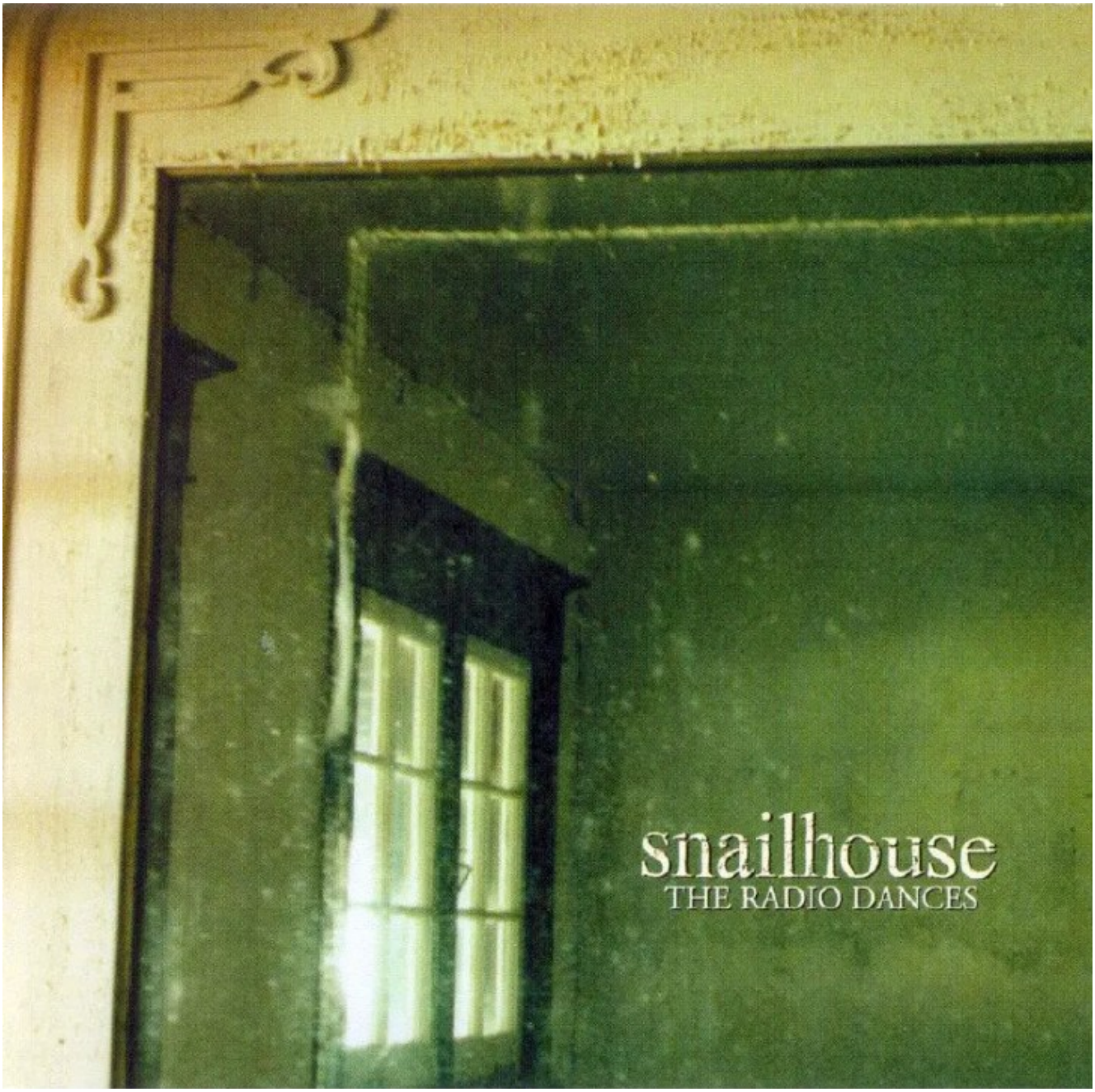
Rhythm of Sickness #2 – Shoulder “Kindling” 7″, 1996



Rhythm of Sickness Records #3 – Chokehold/Left for Dead split 12″, July 1997



Rhythm of Sickness Records #4 – Wooden Stars “Rise Up & Get Down” LP 1998



Rhythm of Sickness Records #5 – Snailhouse “The Radio Dances” CD 1998

- WIN-001 As We Speak/Ignorance Never Settles – Split 7″ (1995)
- WIN-002 Shoulder – “Touch” CD/12″ (1995, with Conquer the World Records)
- WIN-003 Fieldtree – “Fleas in His Collar” 7″ (1995)
- WIN-004 Holocron – “Celestial Sphere” 7″ (1996)
- ROS-001 “The Cold Front” compilation (unreleased)
- ROS-002 Shoulder – “Kindling” 7″ (1996, with Conquer the World Records)

- ROS-003 Chokehold/Left For Dead – Split 12″ (July 1997)
- ROS-004 Wooden Stars – “Rise Up and Get Down” 12″ (1998)
- ROS-005 Snailhouse – “The Radio Dances” CD (1998)



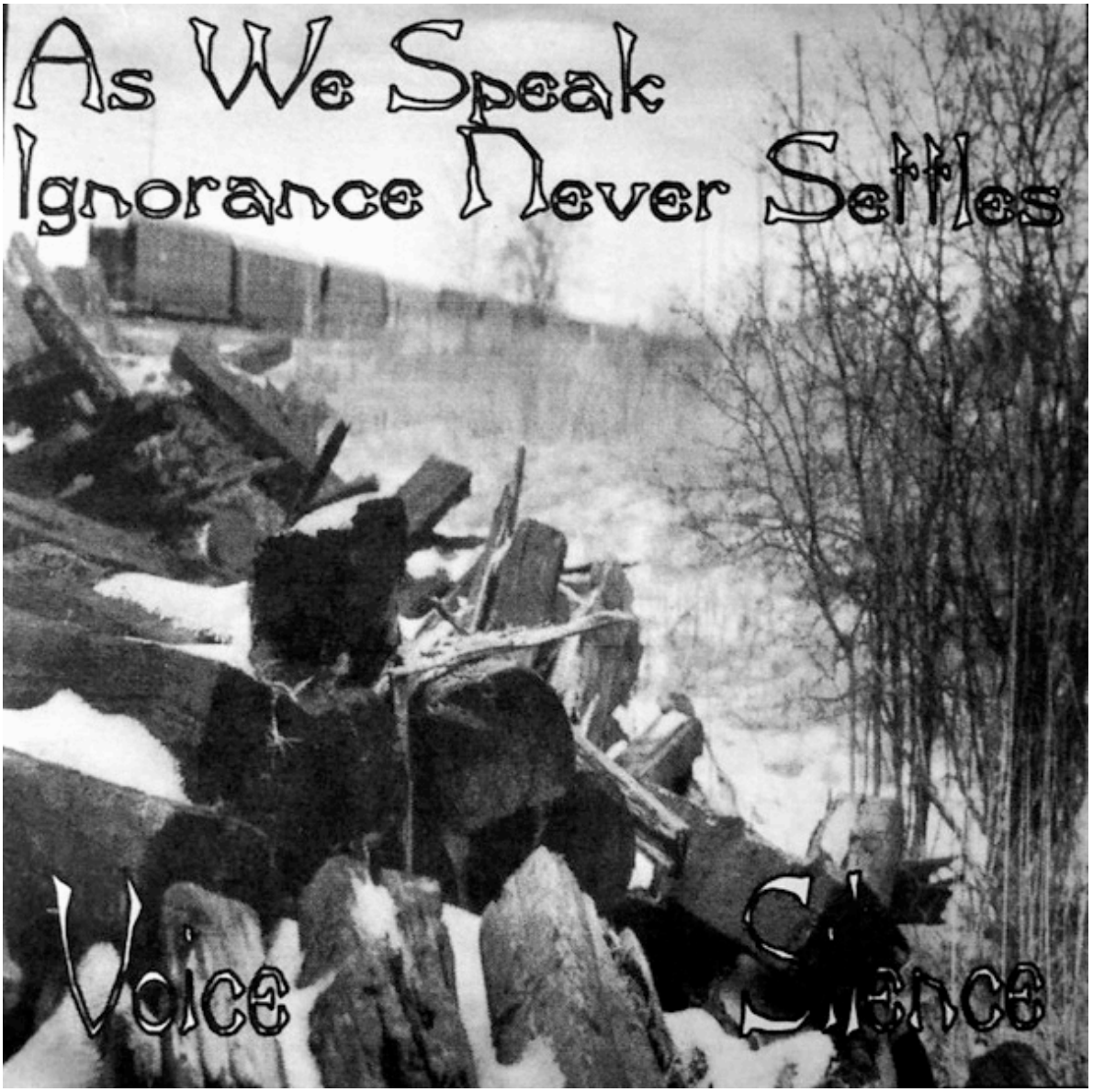
Winter
Records logo

-You first started Winter Records in 1995 in London, Ontario. Where did you run your label from at the time? What made you settle on the name Winter?

I ran it out of my room in my moms basement, I think I was 16 so i still lived at home. My friend Ben and I were talking about starting a label and we were walking down the street one cold winter night and i thought that the name “winter” was as good a name as any for a label.

-What made you decide to form a record label? Had you worked with record labels before, even in your own bands? What was your goal in creating a label?

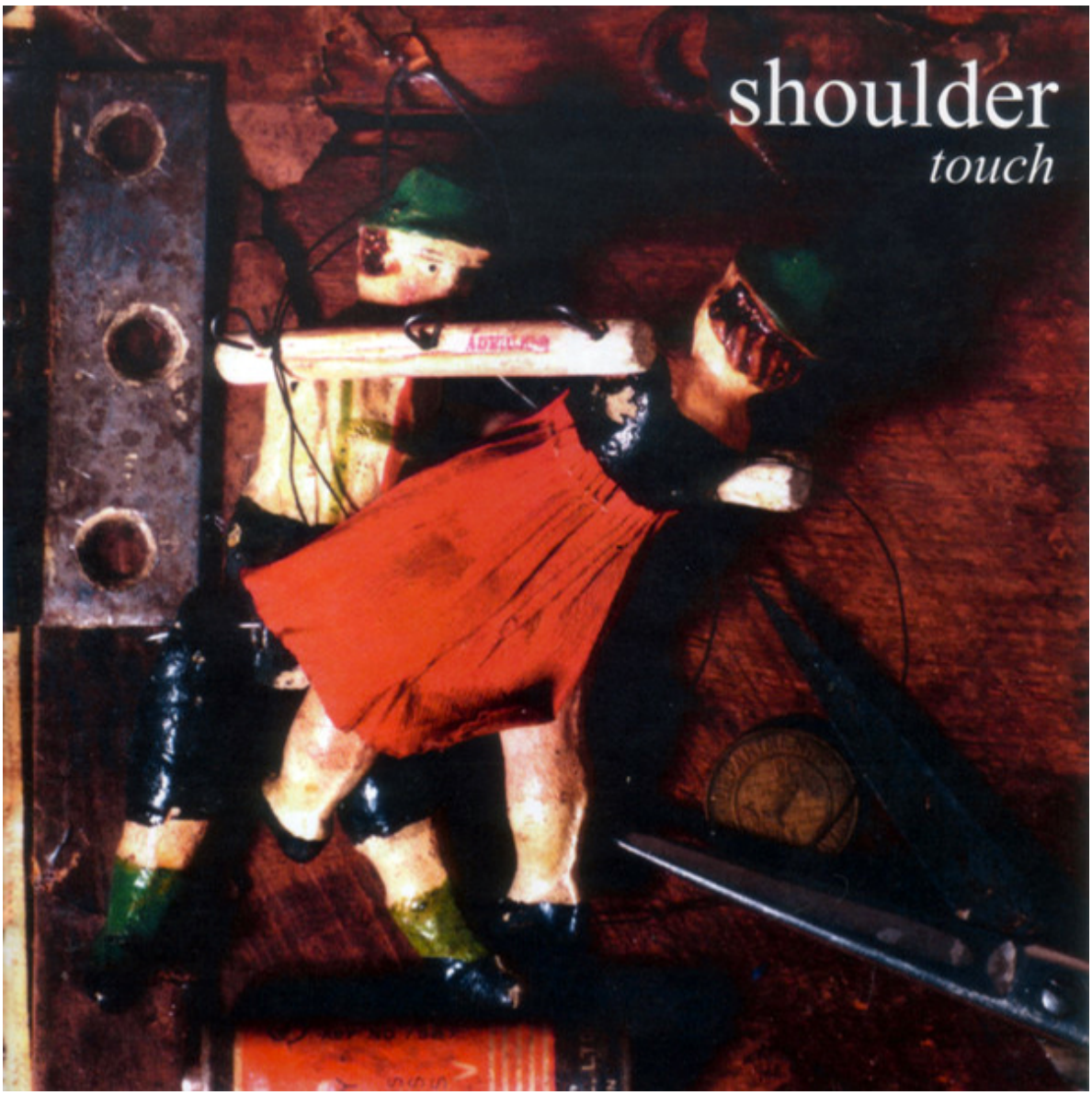
It just seemed like the logical next step for world hardcore domination. Bands i had been in since 1990 had put out cassette demos but we really wanted to put something on vinyl and didn’t really want to wait for someone else to do it. I had just been to the “A New Hope Hardcore Festival” in Madison, WI and i realized that there were a lot people my age (teens) that were doing labels so i asked around and found out where you could get records pressed and how much it cost…. and then just did it.



Winter Records #1 – As We Speak/Ignorance Never Settles split 7″, 1995

-How did you end up working with Ignorance Never Settles, which eventually became one of the most important bands from Ontario 90’s hardcore.

I think the singer of INS went to school in London, Ontario at the time and Scott the singer of As We Speak had their demo. The song on that 7″ by INS sounded like Chokehold, a band that was universally loved by everyone so we though it was a good choice for the other side of the 7″. Our song was a lot faster, much like early 90’s midwestern hardcore, like Endpoint or Spit Lip.



Winter Records #2 – Shoulder “Touch” CD/12″, 1995

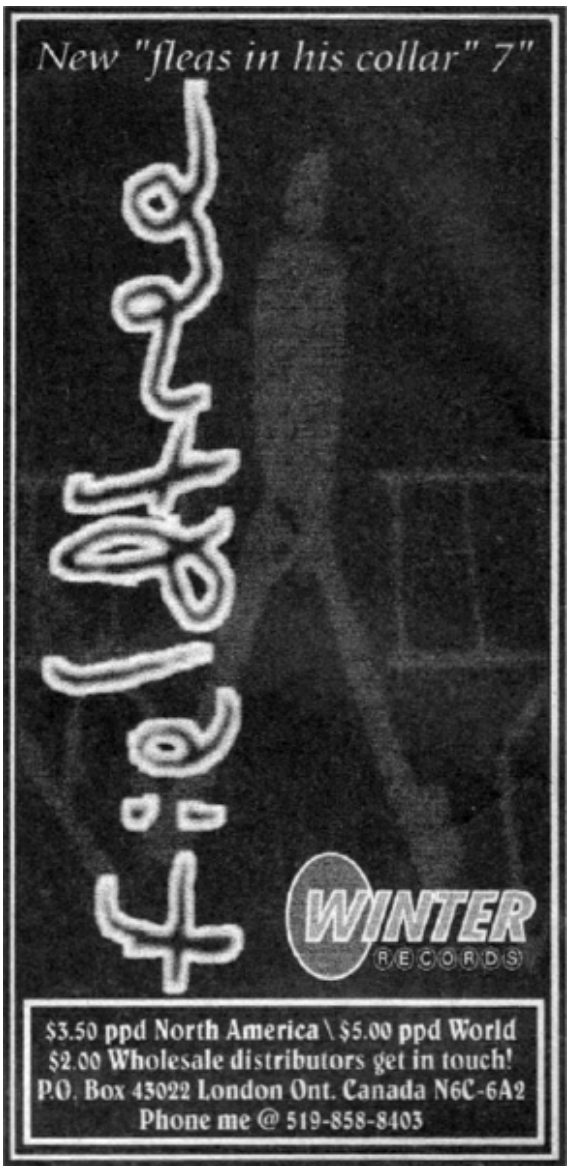
-How was that first 7″ received? How many copies were made? As We Speak didn’t last very long after, and the band sort of merged into Shoulder right? You then once again worked with your own band on Winter, by co-releasing the first album “Touch” with Conquer the World Records out of Detroit. How was the collaboration with CTW at the time?

I think Maximum R&R did a review of the AWS/INS 7″ and it was good, but the As We Speak cassette demo was way better than the 7″ and the last unreleased stuff we did with Bry (who ended up being in Shoulder) was super good. I still have a vhs of the last As We Speak show… pretty heavy. Mike Warden from CTW was like a kind of psychotic uncle erie (

The Who reference) type figure for all of us in the scene in London. He came up to London with all the midwestern and Detroit hardcore bands to and we would go down to the Grounds Coffee House and places like that to see Detroit hardcore shows. I distinctly remember seeing the Strife, Earth Crisis and Snapcase show at the Ground Coffee House at the University of Detroit in 93. Those bands had a tremendous influence on As We Speak. Mike and i eventually put out the Shoulder lp.



Winter Records #3 – Fieldtree “Fleas in His Collar” 7″, 1995



Ad in the May 1996 issue of HeartattaCk zine, advertising for Fieldtree's 7″

-The labels 3rd release was your only time working with a none Canadian band, Fieldtree. How did you come in contact with this Michigan band, and what was the reception of this release 7″?

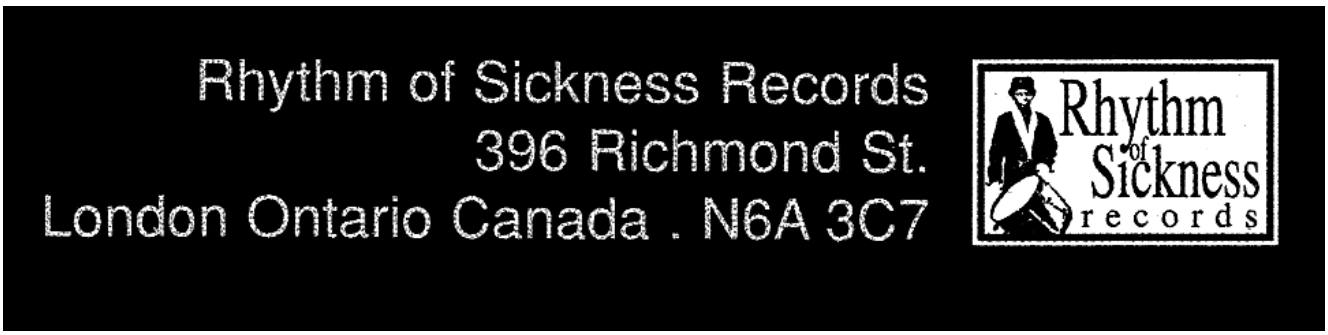
Fieldtree was a band from Michigan, I liked the recording and just though it was a good thing to put out, I don't remember much more about it.



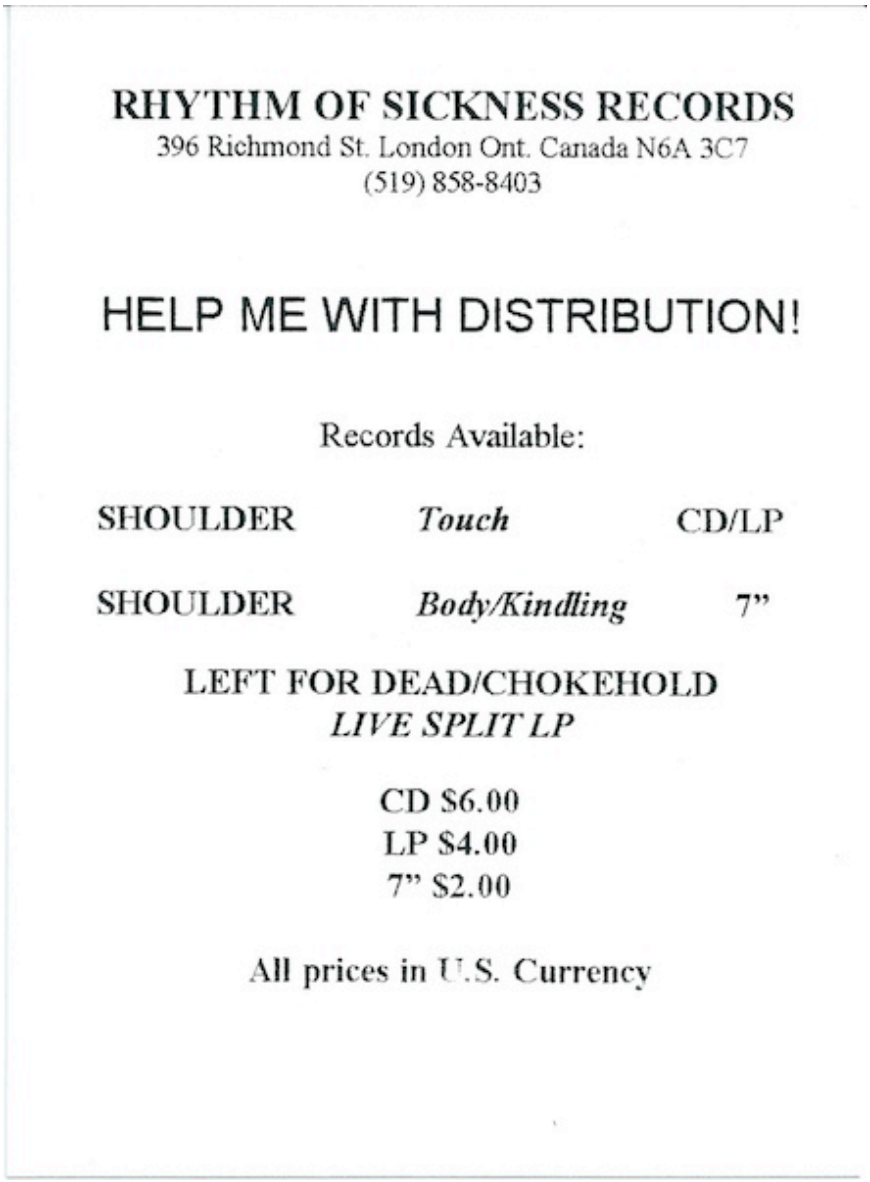
Winter Records #4 – Holocron “Celestial Sphere” 7″, 1996

-You then worked with Holocron, releasing their 7″ EP. This would end up being the labels last output under the name Winter. How was this release welcomed? I assume that when the band released their split with Reversal of Man later that year, it managed to get more copies of that record sold?

> People liked it. There were a lot a amazing crusty, hardcore bands from Quebec at the time that were getting a lot of attention from HeartattaCk magazine. People were into that shit at the time. They were from Guelph and Toronto. That was a really screamy and intense record, one of my favs. It still holds up.



Rhythm of Sickness Records logo,courtesy of Michael Coll.



Rhythm of Sickness Records ad from 1996

-In 1996 you changed the name of the record label to Rhythm of Sickness. The name was taken from a Shoulder song ("Kindling" to be exact). Why did you decide to change the name of the label? Did you find a set back when doing this or were the

same people still following? By this time you also had a different address, where were you operating from by then?

Around this time the band Shoulder came in to the world and we were writing and recording quite a bit… one of Bry's lyrics in the song "Kindling" were "all the kids are dancing to a rhythm, a systematic rhythm of sickness…." and for some reason i change the name of the label to "Rhythm of Sickness" or ROS, kids used to call me ROS the boss. I think by that time i had moved out on my mom's basement. At that time i opened a record store, with the ROS name.

-You were then working on a various artist compilation for the new label's first release. What can you recall about that? It never came out, but can you remember who was supposed to be on it?

I know Drift and Jonah from Quebec contributed a song each and Propagandhi was going to give me a live song… Holocron as well and Shoulder recorded the song "This Is Not An Exit" for it.

The name of the LP was "The Cold Front" and it was all Canadian bands. The cover was going to be a group of 7 paintings but then I changed my mind about the artwork after seeing an album cover by a hardcore band called Threadbare. I tracked down the artist that did the painting (Jordin Isip) and went to meet him in NYC. After that I got involved with the art scene in NYC and started to phase out my music activities. I went back to London and transformed my record store into an art gallery and the comp never came out.



Rhythm of Sickness #2 – Shoulder “Kindling” 7″, 1996

-The first released album by the labels new name was your next Shoulder release, the Kindling 7″, which was once again co-released by Conquer the World, under its short-lived subsidiary Conquer the World Black. However this time only a vinyl version of the album was made, as compared to almost all CTW releases which had a vinyl and cd version released. What was the story behind that and how was the involvement with the label by then? Mike Warden (of CTW) once told me he had plans to release this ep with bonus tracks of compilations and demos. Was this part of the original plan?

Around that time a lot of people were out to get Mike, like kill him. One time me and him were literally barricaded

inside his loft in down town Detroit by these dudes from Florida that wanted to kill him. I think he tried to kill himself. It was crazy. His old loft used to be Funkadelic's jam spot. Mike was going through some hard times then, he probably could not afford both vinyl and cd. hahah



Rhythm of Sickness Records #3 – Chokehold/Left for Dead split 12″, July 1997

-What came next was one of the most notorious splits of Canada. I read that this split, Chokehold/Left For Dead, was originally meant to be a Shoulder/Chokehold split. The split did become huge and is now very hard to find, as everyone who has it, keeps it. How many copies were made of that split?

Both bands had broken up by then but were doing reunion shows, or was this released before their breakups?

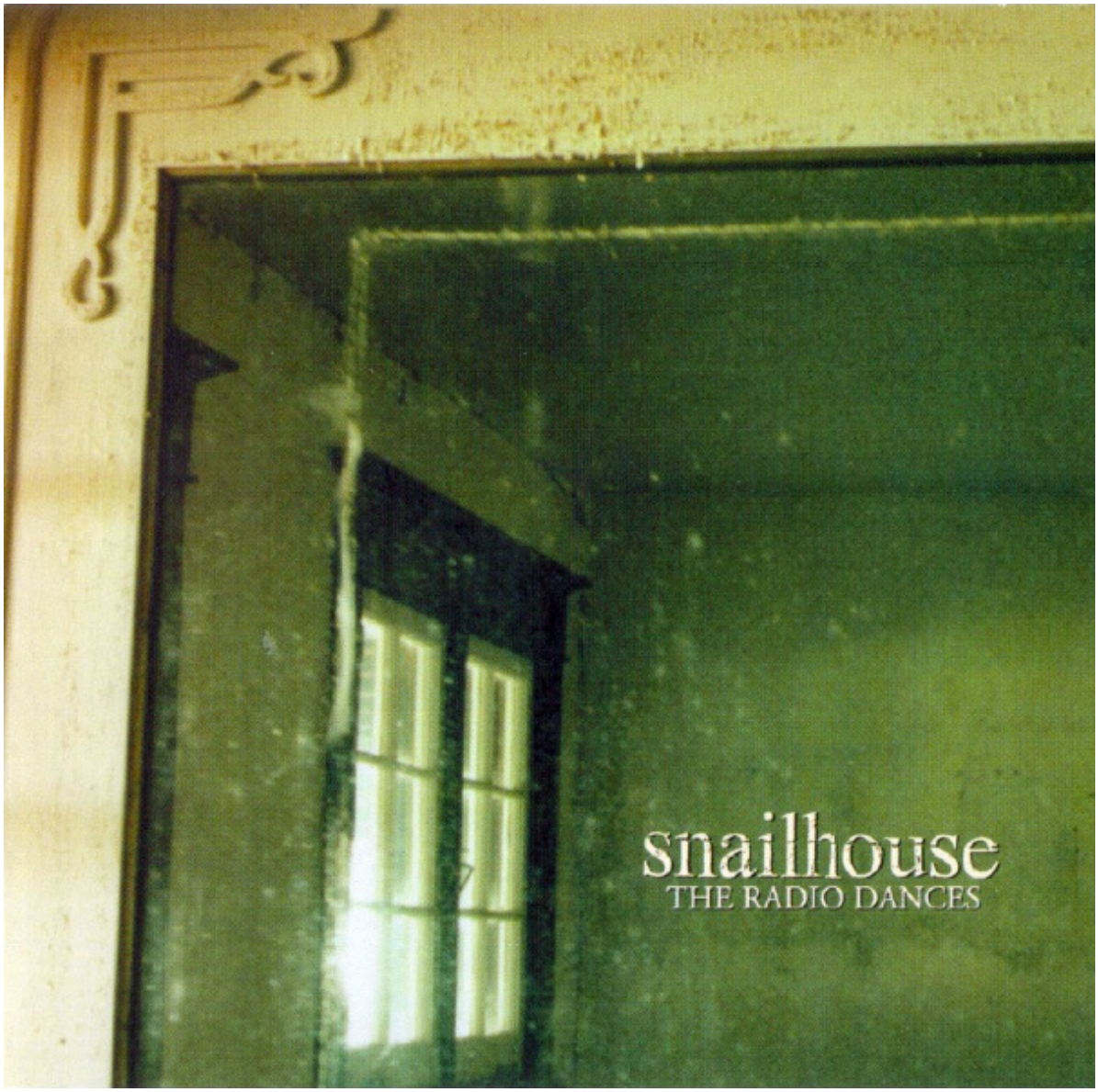
This was released while both bands were still active. 1000 were made. I sold most at some fest in Toronto in 97? I just remember absolutely fucking worshiping Chokehold, they could have mailed me a turd and I would have released it somehow. LFD were a bit different. I know it sounds crazy now but at the time they kinda seemed like some kind of throw back band, like to a different era. They were amazing though. I remember seeing DRI when i was 13. It was me and my friend Ben, and this huge native american guy and that was the pit. Just us 3. He would basically just crack me and Bens heads together but we loved it. “Thrash Zone” from Left For Dead had that vibe.



Rhythm of Sickness Records #6 – Wooden Stars “Rise Up & Get Down” LP 1998

-Then occurred a total change in musical direction for the label. You worked with Wooden Stars first and then with Snailhouse, which both were bands by Mike Feuerstack. At the time the bands were residing in Ontario and not Quebec, but how did you hook up with them and decided to release material from indie bands rather than hardcore and emo you had been focusing on until then?

> I just was tired with the bullshit hardcore scene in Ontario. I was 100% emo….!!!! And so were the Wooden Stars, in fact Bry still jams out with Mike. You have to be careful of what kind of barriers you put around you. I always though The Afghan Whigs were one of the greatest emo bands of all time…..



Rhythm of Sickness Records #5 – Snailhouse “The Radio Dances” CD 1998

-Both of those releases were pretty well received from the reviews i read, but yet they were the final output for the label, which has been on hiatus since. How many copies of those CDs were made?

I made 1000. I changed the ROS label and record store into an art gallery. Still totally DIY.

-How do you look back on your days running the label?

Ya i miss all that shit. I still am exactly the same. Still totally DIY, hardcore, fuck everything and everyone. I still

have never had a real job, never voted, never been to a strip club. hahah i have a lot of extreme bitterness and resentment towards the world. I bough a book on amazon the other day about emo.
We put out records and distributed them, booked tours, set up shows for bands from all over the place, started a scene, no cell phones, no internet or computers. no email. I don’t know how we did it.