

Written by Jeff Ignatius
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The sound on the Statistix's *American Dream EP* is rough, with echoing, thin, buried drums, and vocals that are often blown out and as a result sometimes have an unpleasant, visceral piercing quality. The bass on the 37-second-long "Punk as F---" is bloated and warped. The volume varies from track to track.

It is, in other words, pure punk, assaulting ears for less than 13 minutes over its eight songs.

None of this is a complaint exactly. The Quad Cities trio is simply conforming to the movement's shabby-DIY template: full-throttle and full volume, with little patience for nuance – with little patience, period.

The members of the band – bassist/vocalist Spencer Statistic (born Spencer Scott),

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guitarist/vocalist Ian Adolescent (born Ian Carter), and drummer Jacob Disaffiliate (born Jacob Shuck) – are in their teens or early 20s, and they wear their immaturity with honor. The bio provided by the Statistix boasts of an early eight-minute set, threatened arrests, a guitar cabinet catching on fire, and an aborted show (“one of their proudest moments”). So if you go to their July 21 EP-release show at the Moline Viking Club, you’ve been warned about what might go wrong.

All that aside, the *American Dream EP* has a fair amount of spiky charm. Obviously, there’s no opportunity for the EP and its songs to wear out their welcomes, and the elemental riffs provide a strong skeleton. Two primary vocalists offer variety and, on occasion, effective counterpoints to each other – such as on lead track “No Future.”

But as the anti-establishment, defiant, hopeless song titles suggest, there aren’t many surprises here, and no discernible wit or humor beyond an interlude that botches a change-the-lightbulb joke. (It’s actually subtly funny, and I’m guessing the phrasing error *is* the joke.) As a result, there’s a by-the-numbers, rote vibe.

That’s offset to a large degree, however, by the EP’s energy and rage, and by some sharp touches.

The hoarse but nimble vocals on the title song are compelling, and its tempo changes and shifts in dynamics – when layers of the cacophony are peeled away – give the impression of something roughly crafted instead of merely spat out.

And not to overstate the comparison, but “Sex with a Philosopher” and “F--- the Media” recall Hüsker Dü in its indie-label days, with the speed and coarseness unwilling to mask core melodicism. “Sex with a Philosopher,” in particular, wouldn’t be out-of-place next to *Zen Arcade*’s opening two tracks, with expressive vocals conveying actual emotion in the tuneful punk fury.

The Statistix will perform on Saturday, July 21, at the Moline Viking Club (1450 41st Street, Moline), with Minor Decline; No Coast Criminals; Brains! Brains! Brains!; Waffles, & His 32 Imaginary Friends; Eat the Wrench; The Demographix; and Captains! Vessels! Admission to the 6 p.m. all-ages show is \$5.

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