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## Simple Plan breaks pop-punk mold

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With so many new alternative bands gaining exposure among America's youth, it can be difficult to distinguish between them. Groups like Simple Plan are often lumped together with seemingly similar bands like Blink 182, Sugarcult or Jimmy Eat World—an unfair generalization. Sure, Simple Plan may share characteristics with those other bands, but upon listening to their newest CD, *No Pads, No Helmets...Just Balls*, it becomes clear that they are better than the average punk group.

*No Pads, No Helmets...Just Balls* is not the normal angry-poppy-punk album. The song variety ranges from the catchy, destined-to-be-a-cult-hit tunes of "I'd Do Anything," "When I'm

With You" and "The Worst Day Ever," to the mellower, classic-rock inspired "Addicted" and "Perfect."

Lyrically, *No Pads, No*

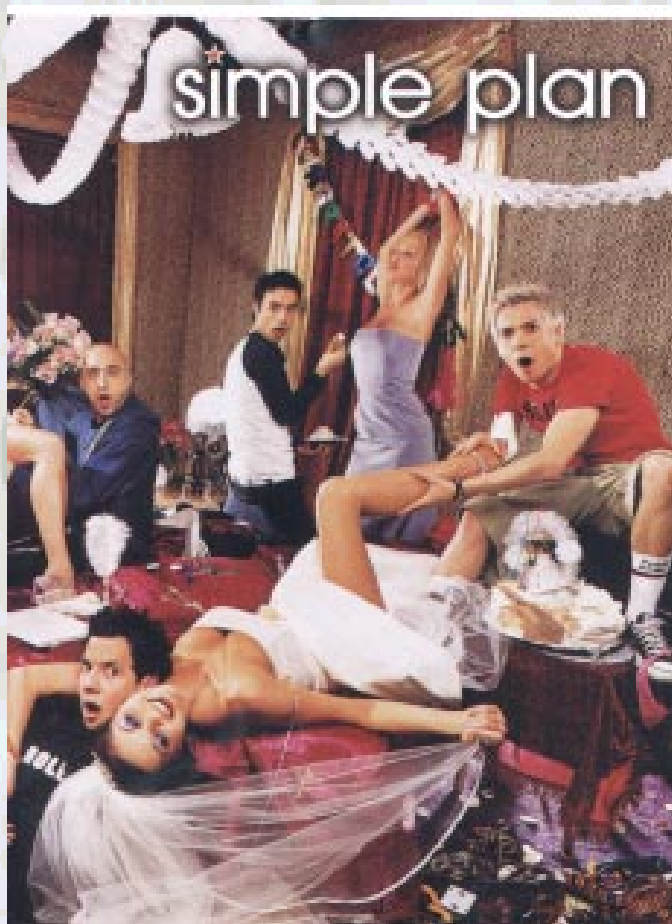
youth story of "I'm Just a Kid." By writing lyrics that actually mean something—as opposed to, say, a certain Canadian popster's

"Take off all your preppy clothes/

You're not fooling anyone"—*No Pads, No Helmets...Just Balls* distinguishes Simple Plan from the typical pop-punk band. Lyrics like "Addicted's," "I'm trying to forget that/I'm addicted to you...I don't know why I'm still waiting/I can't make you mine," which describe the consequences that can result from allowing yourself to fall in love, prove that the band is "deeper" than the average; they write songs with passion, not indifference.

Simple Plan's *No Pads, No Helmets...Just Balls* is a sure bet for any

fan of alternative music, and selling for a mere \$10, it may be worth a try even for those that aren't.



*Helmets...Just Balls* showcases a wide range of song emotions, varying from the punk-love ballad "Addicted" to the troubled