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Radio Silence: A Selected Visual History Of American Hardcore Music



Synopsis

Radio Silence: A Selected Visual History of American Hardcore Music is a tribute to the innocence and accidental sophistication that jump-started the look and sound of hardcore music. Hardcore music emerged just after the first wave of punk rock in the late 1970s. American punk kids who loved the speed and attitude of punk took hold of its spirit, got rid of the "live fast, die young" mind-set and made a brilliant revision: hardcore. The dividing line between punk and hardcore music was in the delivery: less pretense, less melody, and more aggression. This urgency seeped its way from the music into the look of hardcore. There wasn't time to mold your liberty spikes or shine your Docs, it was jeans and T-shirts, Chuck Taylors and Vans. The skull and safety-pin punk costume was replaced by hi-tops and hooded sweatshirts. Jamie Reid's ransom note record cover aesthetic gave way to black-and-white photographs of packed shows accompanied by bold and simple typography declaring things like: "The Kids Will Have Their Say", and "You're Only Young Once." Radio Silence documents the ignored space between the Ramones and Nirvana through the words and images of the pre-Internet era where this community built on do-it-yourself ethics thrived. Authors Nathan Nedorostek and Anthony Pappalardo have cataloged private collections of unseen images, personal letters, original artwork, and various ephemera from the hardcore scene circa 1978-1993. Unseen photos lay next to hand-made t-shirts and original artwork brought to life by the words of their creators and fans. Radio Silence includes over 500 images of unseen photographs, illustrations, rare records, t-shirts, and fanzines presented in a manner that abandons the aesthetic clichés normally employed to depict the genre and lets the subject matter speak for itself. Contributions by Jeff Nelson, Dave Smalley, Walter Schreifels, Cynthia Connolly, Pat Dubar, Gus Peña, Rusty Moore, and Gavin Ogelsby with an essay by Mark Owens.

Book Information

Paperback: 224 pages

Publisher: MTV Press (October 7, 2008)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1576874729

ISBN-13: 978-1576874721

Product Dimensions: 7.3 x 0.8 x 10.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.8 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (13 customer reviews)

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Photography > Music > Musical Genres > Punk #212 in Books > Arts & Photography > Music > Musical Genres > Heavy Metal #1559 in Books > Humor & Entertainment > Sheet Music & Scores > Forms & Genres > Popular

Customer Reviews

For the masses who felt slighted by Stephen Blush's American Hardcore, Radio Silence is the cure. The book's success lies not in achieving what it has set out to do, but in the fact that it never claims to set out to do anything at all but take snapshots of various facets of the US hardcore scene from the early 80's through the early 90's. By no means is Radio Silence a history book on hardcore, but every page has a history lesson that comes across as much more valuable than Blush's broad sweep of hardcore's past. Radio Silence touches on straightedge, skate rock, screamo (the real screamo that was big 15 years ago), Krishna-core and investigates the localized styles of hardcore that came from Boston, DC, New York, Orange County, Connecticut, San Diego, etc. As the subtitle explains, the content is mainly visual - live photos, demo tape inserts, skateboards and worn out t-shirts take the place of "you had to be there" nostalgic banter. There are some great surprises in the book - a handwritten letter from Mike Muir of Suicidal Tendencies to Pat Dubar of Uniform Choice; a handmade mockup of Youth of Today's Disengage 7" layout; and a great selection of record covers and t-shirts in the back of the book organized by design content. This is a flip-through book - not a book to read cover-to-cover - and every time I open it I find a new picture or quote I hadn't seen before. I was a little bit worried that this book was going to be another punk rock history lesson but the collection of items on display inside have given me more information than any written account could ever have done.

I should confess right off the bat that the main thing that made me decide to shell out \$20 to purchase this book sight unseen was the sheer number of contributors to it from my beloved Orange County, California hardcore scene. Over the years, I've read quite a few books on hardcore but none of them did a very good job of covering the O.C. hardcore scene to my satisfaction. When I stumbled upon the Radio Silence website via an email from a friend, I was elated to FINALLY see a book about hardcore on the market that employed so many O.C. scenesters, many of whom are just as relevant to me and my life now as they were back in my early 20s (I'm 38 now). Needless to say, after giving it a day's worth of thought (hey, \$20 ain't chump change after 8 years of George W. Bush), I made the order on .Best \$20 I ever spent. As someone who got heavily into punk and hardcore music in the mid '80s and was actively involved in the early '90s O.C. hardcore scene,

Radio Silence is nothing less than the ultimate yearbook of that bygone era. Jam packed with over 500 mostly previously unseen color and black & white photographs of all things hardcore (literally ALL things hardcore, folks) from 1978-1993 and anecdotes from over 100 participants of every hardcore scene that existed during that period of time, the book serves as both an extremely satisfying trip down memory lane for the people who were there and a very thorough sort of introductory time capsule for current hardcore fans who are interested in finding out more about the deep history of this genre of music. Add to that the fact that the pages of this coffee table book (again, I mean that literally) were printed on thick and sturdy paper stock and you've got yourself a timeless document that you will no doubt refer to many, many times throughout your life.

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This is a beautiful book!! showed it to a friend who said "you can see how loud it was just looking at the photos", and I think that summarizes it very well. The power and passion shine on every page, but the layout is subtle, and the paper quality is exceptional, which leads to an overall pleasure of a book to leaf through. This would make a great gift for anyone who has ever loved American punk rock!

Radio Silence is a real keeper. With the rash of books hitting the shelves these days to document the punk hardcore scene(s), the truth is that almost all of them reflect the rag-tag and aspirational style of the scene without really forming a true, cohesive assembly of thought or theory. And the web just helps fuel this patchwork collection of history. But Radio Silence doesn't try to be more than what it is- a collection of great visuals spanning a wide range of hardcore's lifetime. Modest yet still cool at the same time, I really just like this book. It is fun to look at, represents the scene(s) well. The mix of photos, record covers, layouts, t-shirts, etc. is a great one. Seriously, you should own this.

This book combines the oral story telling of "Banned.." with the visual impact of "My Rules". Like the title says it is a Selected history and the writers have chosen to keep the scope of the book to east coast and socal bands of the late 80s to early 90s with particular interest paid to edge bands. To truly appreciate this book it would help to come from a record collector's background--but if you really want to have a feel for a bye-gone era absolutely pick this up---also see how many of the records from the back of the book you have---CDs don't count!!!

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