

LEFT OF THE DIAL

Conversations with Punk Icons

David Ensminger

Left of the Dial features interviews by musical journalist, folklorist, educator, and musician David Ensminger with leading figures of the punk underground, Ian MacKaye (Minor Threat/Fugazi), Jello Biafra (Dead Kennedys), Dave Dictor (MDC), and many more.

Ensminger probes the legacy of punk's sometimes fuzzy political ideology, its ongoing DIY traditions, its rupture of cultural social norms, its progressive media ecology, its transgenerational and transnational appeal, its pursuit of social justice, its hybrid musical nuances, and its sometimes ambivalent responses to queer identities, race relations, and its own history. Passionate, far-reaching, and fresh, these conversations illuminate punk's oral history with candor and humor.

Rather than focus on discographies and rehashed gig memories, the interviews aim to unveil the secret history of punk and hardcore ideologies and values, as understood by the performers. In addition, Ensminger has culled key graphics from his massive punk flyer collection to celebrate the visual history of the bands represented. The book also features rare photographs shot by Houston-based photographer Ben Desoto during the heyday of punk and hardcore, which capture the movement's raw gusto, gritty physicality, and resilient determination.

Interviews include Peter Case (The Nerves, Plimsouls), The Damned, The Dils, El Vez, UK Subs, The Deaf Club (an oral history of the landmark San Francisco club), Agent Orange, Angry Samoans, Ian MacKaye (Minor Threat, Fugazi), Jello Biafra (Dead Kennedys), Gary Floyd (The Dicks), Mike Watt (Minutemen), Youth Brigade, Kira Roessler (Black Flag), TSOL, Circle Jerks, Beefeater, Really Red, Vic Bondi (Articles of Faith), Frontier Records, MDC, and Strike Anywhere.

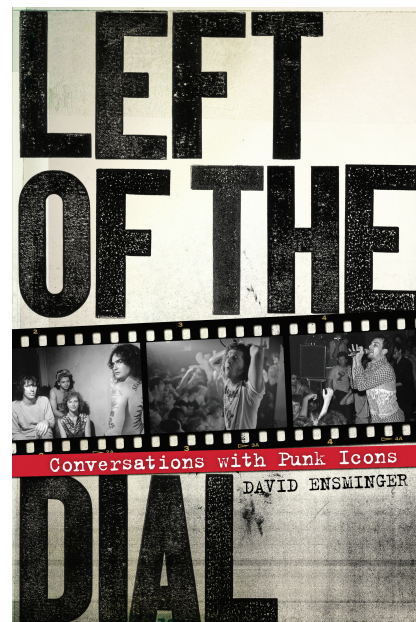
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David Ensminger is a Humanities, Folklore, and English Instructor at Lee College in Baytown, TX. As a writer covering music, art, and contemporary issues, he has authored *Visual Vitriol: The Street Art and Subcultures of the Punk and Hardcore Generations* and contributed to *Popmatters* (where he publishes a monthly column), *Maximum Rock'n'Roll*, *Houston Press*, *Art in Print*, *M/C Journal*, *The Journal of Popular Music Studies*, *Artcore*, *Postmodern Culture*, *Trust*, and others. He is also a longtime drummer, including a stint in the Texas Biscuit Bombs with Biscuit of the Big Boys, and a digital archivist of punk and vernacular culture.

ACCOLADES

"David Ensminger is the right mix of intellectual and real-ass emotional punk. He is a historian and has walked the life... I recommend everything this man is up to!"

—Dave Dictor, MDC



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www.pmpress.org
info@pmpress.org
(510)658-3906



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