Queercore
How to Punk a Revolution: An Oral History

Editors: Liam Warfield, Walter Crasshole, and Yony Leyser
Introduction: Anna Joy Springer and Lynn Breedlove

Queercore: How to Punk a Revolution: An Oral History is the very first comprehensive overview of the movement that defied both the music underground and the LGBT mainstream community—queercore.

Through exclusive interviews with protagonists like Bruce LaBruce, G.B. Jones, Jayne County, Kathleen Hanna of Bikini Kill and Le Tigre, film director and author John Waters, Lynn Breedlove of Tribe 8, Jon Ginoli of Pansy Division, and many more, alongside a treasure trove of never-before-seen photographs and reprinted zines from the time, Queercore traces the history of a scene originally “fabricated” in the bedrooms and coffee shops of Toronto and San Francisco by a few young, queer punks to its emergence as a relevant and real revolution. Queercore gets a down-to-details firsthand account of the movement explored through the people that lived it—from punk’s early queer elements, to the moments Toronto kids decided the needed to create a scene that didn’t exist, to the infiltration of the mainstream by Pansy Division, and the emergence of riot grrrl as a sister movement—as well as the clothes, zines, art, film, and music that made this movement an exciting in-your-face middle finger to complacent gay and straight society. Queercore will stand as both a testament to radically gay politics and culture and an important reference for those who wish to better understand this explosive movement.

ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

Liam Warfield is a writer, editor, and educator living in Chicago.

Walter Crasshole is a journalist in Berlin and English-language editor for the city’s 40-year running queer magazine Siegessäule. He is also a regular contributor and columnist for Exberliner, Berlin’s English-language magazine, covering queer and cultural topics. He occasionally translates books from German to English, having just finished his third book translation for punk performance artist Wolfgang Müller.

Yony Leyser grew up in Chicago and relocated to Berlin in 2010. He is the writer and director of three award-winning feature films William S. Burroughs: A Man Within; Desire Will Set You Free; and Queercore: How to Punk a Revolution. He has received critical acclaim in publications including the New York Times, the Guardian, Sight and Sound, and the Los Angeles Times.

Anna Joy Springer is the author of The Vicious Red Relic, Love (Jaded Ibis, 2011), an illustrated fabulist memoir with soundscape (Your Metaforest Guidebook), and The Birdwisher, A Murder Mystery for Very Old Young Adults (Birds of Lace, 2009). Her work appears in zines, journals, anthologies, and recordings. An Associate Professor of Literature at UC San Diego, she teaches experimental writing, feminist literature and graphic texts. She’s performed in punk and queercore bands Blatz, The Gr’ups, and Cypher in the Snow and toured the U.S. with the writers of Sister Spit. She lives in Los Angeles.

Lynn Breedlove is a writer, performer, musician, entrepreneur and community activist born and raised in the SF Bay Area. He’s toured comedy solo shows and with bands Tribe8 and The Homobiles. He is the founder and CEO of Homobiles the ride service. Author of Godspeed and Lynnee Breedlove’s One Freak Show.

ACCOLADES

“Finally, a book that centers on the wild, innovative, and fearless contributions queers made to punk rock, creating a punker-than-punk subculture beneath the subculture, Queercore. Gossipy and inspiring, a historical document and a call to arms during a time when the entire planet could use a dose of queer, creative rage.”

—Michelle Tea, author of Valencia

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