

CUSTOMSFORGE'S

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Issue #16

ABOUT US

CustomsForge is a website created in 2014 by the Rocksmith community to make their own songs, communicate more easily and enjoy the game all together

Currently we are approaching more than 40,000 charts made by the community, and have more than 300,000 members.

We welcome thousands more each month

WELCOME

Welcome to CustomsForge's monthly newsletter, where you can find the latest news about CF and Rocksmith 2014 Remastered.

Roaring women

Women can play instruments too, what a surprise! If someone you know, or perhaps yourself, has come to this conclusion then congratulations, you have discovered a new range of great artists to listen to. And if you haven't, don't worry, here's a list of songs to get you on the right track.

Female band songs

Bikini Kill – Rebel Girl
L7 – Pretend We're Dead
Scandal – Takiyou Scandalous
The Cranberries – Zombie
Hole – Violet
Band-Maid – Thrill
Veruca Salt – Volcano Girls
Halestorm – Love Bites (So Do I)
BABYMETAL – Shanti Shanti Shanti
Hole – Celebrity Skin
Garbage – Only Happy When It Rains
Sleater-Kinney – Modern Girl
Dixie Chicks – Wide Open Spaces
The Bangles – Hazy Shade of Winter
Girlschool – Britny Fox
The Pretenders – I'll Stand By You
Patti Smith Group – Privilege (Set Me Free)
The Donnas – Take It Off
Le Tigre – Deceptacon
Siouxsie and the Banshees – Candyman
The B-52's – Love Shack
Vixen – Cryin'
No Doubt – Just a Girl
Gallhammer – Crucifixion
Astarte - Black Mighty Gods/Lloth



Rocksmith 2014 Remastered logo

Issue number 2 of the *Riot Grrrl!* fanzine

Revolution Girl Style

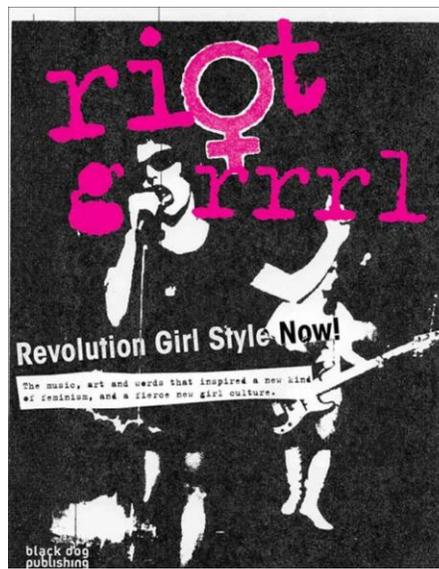
Now!

Women seem to get the short end of the stick when it comes to social problems, or rather we give it to them. But they always keep on fighting, no matter how hard it is. So let's honor them by remembering the biggest feminist movement in music history: *Riot Grrrl*

Background noise

In the 70s punk was born, a fresh take on music was simple lyrics and guitars were the main focus instead of virtuous playing. Since anyone could pick up a guitar and make a hit single, groups such as The Velvet Underground, The Clash and The Ramones paved the way for a musical revolution. **Women were an essential part of the movement as Patti Smith, The Runaways/Jean Jett, Siouxsie Sioux, Au Pair and The B-52's**, just to name a few, **proved**.

However, **there wasn't any emphasis on women** or the multitude of problems they faced in a male-dominated space. Rape, sexism or harassment was not talked about and if they were, they were considered jokes. **Women were background noise**.



Cover of a book about the Riot Grrrl movement

“We need to start a girl riot”

“This summer's going to be a girl riot”

Two decades had to pass for a feminist movement to appear in the scene. **Seattle and Olympia had a great DIY infrastructure** which allowed many young women to articulate their thoughts about sensible themes like domestic violence through fanzines and garage bands. By doing so they fought for their voice in a culture they identified with but were silenced because of its misogyny. This explosion of the self-managed community was the starting point but **the particular moment the movement manifested itself was in the Mount Pleasant riots in 1991. Jen Smith, Bratmobile member, wrote in a letter to Allison Wolfe the words “girl riot”**. While no one knows what phrase was exactly used, what's important is that it was used as wordplay for the magazine that gave name to the movement: *Riot Grrrl*.

You gotta fight for your right!

***Riot Grrrl* places itself in third-wave feminism**, which rejects an ideal model of women and defends their plurality instead, as they are influenced by their ethnicity, cultures, circumstances and many other factors.

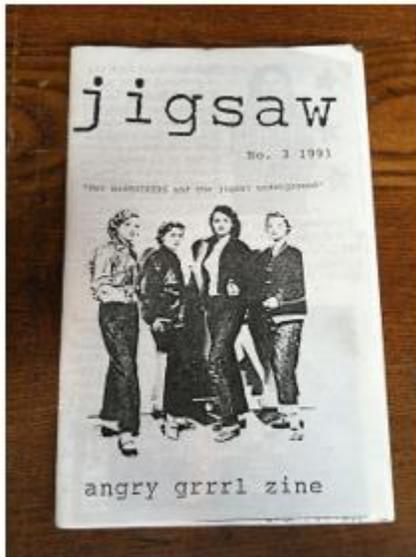
The goal wasn't just to talk bring to light problems such as sexual abuse, **but also to actively fight against the systems that oppressed women**, in this case in the underground scene.

Fanzines

Fanzines are magazines made for and by fans. There were three fanzines which, eventually, lead to the creation of *Riot Grrrl*:

Jigsaw:

Founded in 1988 and edited in Olympia by Tobi Vail, it was mainly about the relationship between feminism and punk in the north of the United States.



Girl Germs:

Founded in 1989 thanks to Molly Neuman and Allison Wolfe, it was similar to Jigsaw. Girl Germs also documents the coming together of *Bratmobile*, during this time.



Bikini Kill (the fanzine):

Founded in 1990 by Tobi Vail and Kathleen Hanna, it consisted of essays about feminist theory and punk. It should not be confused with Bikini Kill the band.



These were the three most important ones and **the movement deliberately avoided the mainstream up until Riot Grrrl! was created.**

Riot Grrrl!:

This fanzine discussed a **wide variety of themes** such as: Sexism, domestic violence, rape, stalking, sexual abuse, harassment, discrimination, mental health problems, eating disorders, veganism, incest, homophobia and many others. **The hate towards these fanzines (and particularly this one)** presented itself through other fanzines, with words



Issue number 4 of *Riot Grrrl!*

such as “whore”, “bitch” “dike” and “man-hater” being usual.

This proved that sexism was still present in the scene and quite normalized in some parts.

There were several ways of distributing these magazines. Some shops would hand them out for free if asked, but this wasn't usually the case.

Generally, they were given out in concerts and many of these fanzines can still be read today as they have been scanned

and preserved in blogs or internet archives. Such is the case for *Jigsaw*.

Concerts:

Riot Grrrl bands wanted to play live, and they did so with their unique flavor of punk, popularized by the band *Bikini Kill*, which is considered the pioneer of the movement mainly because of their radical feminist lyrics and sound made them stand out from the rest. **These concerts were, in practice, performances which had two objectives: Giving visibility and security to women and fight against misogyny.**

The first step to solve a problem is talking about it and this movement was a meeting point for all women who have been harassed at some point in their lives. **Not only did the groups give out fanzines and the lyrics to their songs so everyone knew what they were singing about, they invited women to share on stage their experiences** about, for example, sexual abuse and domestic violence to remind them they were not alone and a support net was available if they ever needed one.

The second step towards solving a problem is doing something about it, and **many times the musicians would write derogatory words like “bitch” and “slut” on their bodies with lipstick or markers to reclaim them**, just like many other minorities have done so in the past. **They would also dress like the stereotypical ideal women from the 50s and 60s so other women would feel more comfortable in their concerts.**

One of their most controversial actions was asking men to move to the back end of the room so women could be at the mosh pit.



Kathleen Hanna singing in a concert

Hillary Belzer argued that *“Women could make their way to the front of the crowd into the mosh pit, but had to ‘fight ten times harder’”*

Criticism:

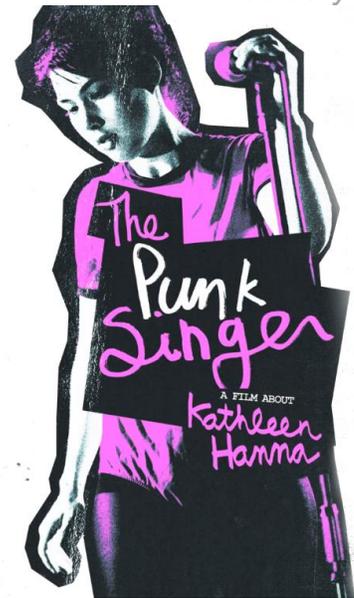
Amongst the rain of sexist insults and flavor aggression towards groups and fans alike, some properly constructed criticisms were made.

The biggest issue in the movement was

representation. Or rather, the lack thereof. The movement was aimed towards white, middle-class punk girls and this separated every other woman who didn't conform to this idea. **There was never and racism nor intentional oppression against people from other races or ethnicities, but this lack of representation alienated them deeply from the rest.**

It was also accused of being sectarian and extremely closed, but this is largely disregarded because very few people made these claims, the most famous case being Courtney Love.

It should be noted that they weren't being sieged from all sides by the rest of the music scene. In August 1991, the *International Pop Underground Culture Festival* was celebrated and a day was dedicated exclusively to rock made by women. Kurt Cobain loved Bikini Kill and said they were one of his biggest inspirations. Ian MacKaye produced and edited some of the band's records and introduced the topic of gender inequality in Fugazi's lyrics. But, as we are going to see now, having a few allies wasn't enough when the spotlight shined on them.



Cover of the documentary *The Punk Singer*



Back cover of *Riot Grrrl!* which advertised a concerts with band like Fugazi

Decline:

In the 90s, the media started to focus more and more on grunge and alternative rock genres. **The term Riot Grrrl was used by the media when referring to bands that had women in them, regardless of their opinion on feminism.** It happened to bands like *The Breeders*, *Babes in Toyland*, *Veruca Salt* and *Hole*.

A coordinated attack began aggression and news outlets accused the bands of forcing feminism in their fanzines and concerts. They also took out of context nearly everything they did in concerts and published photographs where they actively mocked them for wearing their underwear over their clothes or dressing up as 60s women without looking into why they did so.

Corin Tucker, member of *Heaven to Betsy* and *Sleater-Kinney*, commented: *“I think it was deliberate that we were made to look like we were just ridiculous girls parading around in our underwear. They refused to do serious interviews with us, they misprinted what we had to say, they would take our articles, and our fanzines, and our essays and take them out of context. We wrote a lot about sexual abuse and sexual assault for teenagers and young women. I think those are really important concepts that the media never addressed”*

By the time the media changed their focus most groups had split and their fans were gone since they felt their message had been deeply misinterpreted and applied to a band like the Spice Girls, who subverted their message.

The riot didn't stop:

It seemed like it was the end of Riot Grrrl. And truth be told, it was. There hasn't been any Riot Grrrl revival but its spirit hasn't gone anywhere. In fact, it's more alive than ever. **Riot Grrrl might have died but the riot didn't stop.**

On the internet there are thousands of forums who support the message of Riot Grrrl which also are platforms where women from all around the world can share their problems and victories. The center around self-determined feminism.

In 2012, Fermín Muguruza singer of *Negu Gorriak* and *Kortaku*, **directed and produced a fake documentary called Zuloak**, in which a fictitious band with the same name went across the **Basque musical scene, analyzing it and focusing on bands composed of women** and the impact of the Riot Grrrl movement. Most bands don't have the typical Riot Grrrl sound but they follow their footsteps.

In January 2019, Bikini Kill announced a reunion tour. Tobi Vail said they are back because they want to be part of the new conversation about feminism and they are frustrated that women still face the same problems they did 30 years ago.

Many other groups such as The Regrettes, Pussy Riot, Hello Cuca, Nosoträsh and Kitten Forever, just to name a few, **continue their legacy** by fighting for women's rights their own way. **After all, women will never surrender and the riot will never stop.**

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CustomForge's profile picture in all social media accounts.

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Charter's tip of the month: "A good guitar/bass tone makes a CDLC more enjoyable. Search for a good one and control the volume until it fits perfectly. If you can't find one, create one! People will be grateful for your work!" – **SnowShovel96**

Website Updates

If you see a dead link, make sure to report it! Please remember that the website depends on donations so donate once, in a while, any amount helps!

Moderators & Server Admin

We are looking for some moderators and a server admin, if you are suited for these positions then follow the link at the bottom of the page.

CFSongManager

Did you know, CustomsForgeSongManager is a tool to (amongst many, many other things) repair older CDLC files and add Dynamic Difficulty to CDLC that may still be missing it?

PATREONS

An extra special shoutout to all of those who support us with a couple of bucks every month. You may not realize it but your kindness helps us more than you can imagine.

Thank you for reading CustomsForge's monthly newsletter. Keep on rockin'!

WANT TO JOIN? APPLY TODAY: <http://bit.ly/applytoCF>