



## I, Shithead: A Life in Punk

*Joe Keithley , Jack Rabid (Introduction)*

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## **I, Shithead: A Life in Punk** Joe Keithley , Jack Rabid (Introduction)

Joey Keithley, aka Joey Shithead, founded legendary punk pioneers D.O.A. in 1978. Punk kings who spread counterculture around the world, they've been cited as influences by the Red Hot Chili Peppers, Green Day, Rancid and The Offspring; have toured with The Clash, The Ramones, The Dead Kennedys, Black Flag, Nirvana, PiL, Minor Threat and others; and are the subject of two tribute albums. They are the band that introduced the term "hardcore" into punk lexicon and may have turned Nirvana's lead singer Kurt Cobain onto a career in music.

But punk is more than a style of music: it's a political act, and D.O.A. have always had a social conscience, having performed in support of Greenpeace, women's rape/crisis centres, prisoner's rights, and antinuke and antiglobalization organizations. Twenty-five years later D.O.A. can claim sales of hundreds of thousands of copies of their 11 albums and tours in 30 different countries, and they are still going strong.

*I, Shithead* is Joey's personal, no-bullshit recollections of a life in punk, starting with the burgeoning punk movement and traversing a generation disillusioned with the status quo, who believed they could change the world: stories of riots, drinking, travelling, playing and conquering all manner of obstacles through sheer determination.

Praise for D.O.A.:

"They rock out. They blow the roof off. Some of the best shows I've seen in my life were D.O.A. gigs. I've never seen D.O.A. not be amazing."—Henry Rollins (Black Flag, Rollins Band)

"The proper medicine growing young minds needed."—Jello Biafra (Dead Kennedys)

"Joey Shithead casts a long shadow."—John Doe (X)

"They've changed a lot of people's lives."—Dave Grohl (Nirvana, Foo Fighters)

Joey "Shithead" Keithley has long been an activist, including as a candidate for the Green Party, and is the founder of Sudden Death Records ([www.suddendeath.com](http://www.suddendeath.com)). He lives in Vancouver with his wife and their three children.

## **I, Shithead: A Life in Punk Details**

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## From Reader Review I, Shithead: A Life in Punk for online ebook

### **Peter says**

As someone who grew up on the B.C. punk scene in the 1980's, I enjoyed the anecdotes about the formation of the scene. However, Keithley's writing style is very pedestrian and he doesn't really offer any insight that can't be gleamed from elsewhere.

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### **Troy says**

A satisfying read. I love D.O.A. and have always respected Joe for his dedication and his political activism. I was not disappointed.

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### **catechism says**

when he was telling stories and anecdotes, this book was really good. unfortunately, he didn't do that very often. mostly it was a pretty dry run-down of all the shows they played and where. frustrating! it was like i was reading an outline of a really awesome book, and i could tell it was awesome because the story and the structure were there, and a few parts had been fully fleshed out, but... yeah. it was like that.

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### **Jon. says**

An interesting enough history of DOA and the Vancouver punk scene of the 1980s and 1990s, but the writing style was quite juvenile. Keithley is obviously quite intelligent, but he also lacks education in the finer points of writing. He could have used a co-author.

Most of the book is made up of stories from DOA's extensive touring history, and many of these were quite entertaining. However, too much of the book consisted of "Then we played Club X in City Y, and it was a great show, with lots of energy." He doesn't tell us what made it a great show or give enough details for us to judge for ourselves. I'm betting a lot of these stories would be better over a beer with Joe in a dive bar somewhere in East Vancouver!

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### **Adam Hodgins says**

interesting story if you're into punk but the writing's not great

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### **Geoff Seymour says**

It is always a little disappointing to discover that you don't actually like one of your teen-age heroes very much. And that is kind of what I, Shithead did to me. I don't know what I was expecting I guess, and I think

Bob Mould's "See a Little Light" set the bar a little high for punk rock biographies. At the beginning of the book, it was fun to here the short descriptions of the concerts and the assbattery, but as it went on, it just became a bit of a trudge to get through. He may have created some of my favorite punk / hardcore music, but the book just didn't work for me. I guess I wanted more substance out the the storytelling, and less encyclopedic rambling.

Thanks for the music Joe, but I will give the book a miss...

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### **Ryan Mishap says**

"A Life in Punk" covering 15 years of DOA madness in this concise, rapid report. Less of a memoir or autobiography and more like a recitation of the band forming, where they played, tours, records, etc. Enjoyable read, for sure, as we travel with Joey through the years. He also asides quite a few political paragraphs and evinces a caring, astute side in addition to the fun and chaos of being hard-working punk pioneers who keep on going.

A side note: I recently put in some old DOA to listen to--I loved it when I was a teenager--man, does it suck. Yucky garbage. I don't think it is a case of getting old, but getting better taste!

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### **Minh Minimum says**

Took me back to a certain time in my life. I have fond memories of my "Lynn Valley Tuxedo" and Club Soda. In fact I think I was at a few of these shows. Hey Shithead, were you making notes? I can not remember the mid eighties all that well myself and I am certain that by the amount of beer that I saw consumed at the shows, you can't either. Not sure this book is interesting to anyone but a handful, but I enjoyed being transported back in time and I appreciate the man's work ethic.

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### **Shari says**

Picked this up years ago; Mr. Keithley signed it for me, and even posed for a pic! Great book by a great man!

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### **Gerry LaFemina says**

Joey Keithley is one of the funniest and most generous people I met in punk, and this book captures a lot of that, following the career of the legendary D.O.A. from the late seventies to the late nineties. That said, it ends up reading like a tour diary--it's got it's funny moments, and it surely defines the socio-political stance of what is surely one of the finest peace punk bands ever, but in the end, I just wanted more than just surface level, then this happened, then this...

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### **Mike says**

Great book written by Joey Shithead the singer/guitarist of DOA. Gives a really good history of DOA and a

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lot of the early Vancouver bands.

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## **East Bay J says**

The original D.O.A. lineup of Joey Shithead on vocals and guitar, Dave Gregg on guitar, Randy Rampage on bass and the legendary Chuck Biscuits on drums is, to my ears, one of the best sounding bands to ever plug in and roar. I didn't really get into the later D.O.A. output, though songs like "Marijuana Motherfucker" and "Death Machine" are pretty choice. I guess I'm just real partial to the "faster is better" bands that came into being between 1978 and 1982. Black Flag, Bad Brains, Dead Kennedys, Minor Threat, Middle Class and D.O.A. kicked my thirteen year old ass pretty hard. The later stuff just seems like more of the same but not as cool or interesting.

After reading *I, Shithead: A Life In Punk*, I find I want to revisit all those D.O.A. albums released between 1985 and now. The D.O.A. front man can write! It's like you're hanging out with him over a couple beers while he lays out the oral history of D.O.A. Keithly tells stories in an interesting, engaging way, throws in a few clumsy yet endearing jokes and keeps you turning page after page.

Keithly has always been a passionate man and this is illustrated time and time again in the way he kept going in the face of lineup changes, equipment breakdowns, crappy vans, relationship trouble, poverty, addiction, death, the "music biz" and general adversity. It was his passion that carried D.O.A. across Canada and the United States, helping to establish the first independent touring circuit that caught up and carried thousands and thousands of people in dozens of countries to embrace punk.

The previous owner of this book got Keithly to sign it. The signature says, "Hey, man, talk – action = 0, Joey Shithead Keithly." Talk minus action does equal zero and Keithly lives that ideology. I found his words to be inspiring. If ever there were a poster child for not laying down and taking it, it was Joey Keithly.

*I, Shithead* is full of great photos and reproductions of album art, flyers and press clippings. Rather than a picture section in the middle, the photos are scattered throughout the book in appropriate places so you can look at what you're reading about. Smart! This technique brings added impact to the tales Keithly tells.

Good book!

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## **Paul Childs says**

Pretty good as these things go, a reminder of what the Canadian independent music scene was like into the 90's.

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## **Tom Schulte says**

Keithly formed D.O.A. in 1978, giving him a founder's-eye view of the North American hardcore scene and post-punk underground rock the world over. This chronicle of his adventures shows the many sides of Shithead: musician, activist and businessman. The meticulously researched book has all the names and dates to make this detailed D.O.A. history extend from band autobiography into scene history. The naturally arranged chronological history is full of lessons for would-be independent bands and illustrative anecdotes of

venues and scenes now gone. You will not find this book pandering to a morbid curiosity about rock 'n' roll excess, but you will find a triumphant and inspiring testimonial about plucky punk pioneers as loose-knit islands of affinity grow from a casual network to a global web of labels, venues and touring agencies. The book has plenty of pictures and D.O.A. lyrics from Joey's own hand.

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