

**USA TODAY
BEST SELLERS**

USA Today's Best-Selling Books list is based on sales last week at independent and chain bookstores, mass merchandisers and online retailers.

Reporting stores include: Amazon.com, Amazon Kindle, B. Dalton Bookseller, Barnes & Noble.com, Barnes & Noble Inc., Barnes & Noble e-books, Books-A-Million.com, Books-A-Million, Bookland and Books & Co., Borders Books & Music, Brentano's, Davis-Kidd Booksellers, Hudson Booksellers, Joseph-Beth Booksellers, Powell's Books, Powells.com, R.J. Julia Booksellers, Schuler Books & Music, Sony Reader Store, Target, Tattered Cover Book Store, Waldenbooks.

1. **"Burned,"** P.C. Cast, Kristin Cast (St. Martin's Griffin)
2. **"Savor the Moment,"** Nora Roberts (Berkley)
3. **"The 9th Judgment,"** James Patterson, Maxine Paetro (Little, Brown)
4. **"Lover Mine,"** J.R. Ward (NAL)
5. **"The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo,"** Stieg Larsson (Vintage)
6. **"The Last Song,"** Nicholas Sparks (Grand Central Publishing)
7. **"The Girl Who Played With Fire,"** Stieg Larsson (Vintage)
8. **"Wild Fire,"** Christine Feehan (Jove)
9. **"Sweet Tea at Sunrise,"** Sherryl Woods (Mira Books)
10. **"Summer on Blossom Street,"** Debbie Macomber (Mira)
11. **"Deliver Us From Evil,"** David Baldacci (Grand Central Publishing)
12. **"The Help,"** Kathryn Stockett (Putnam Adult)
13. **"Hannah's List,"** Debbie Macomber (Mira)
14. **"The Wimpy Kid Movie Diary,"** Jeff Kinney (Amulet Books)
15. **"Blood Game,"** Iris Johansen (St. Martin's Paperbacks)
16. **"The Carrie Diaries,"** Candace Bushnell (Balzer + Bray)

— USA Today

Book mentions Reno as influence behind 'straight edge' philosophy

By Mark Robison
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Reno was one of the influential cities behind the philosophy called "straight edge" that arose out of the punk rock music scene. Gabriel Kuhn, based in Sweden, mentions this in his new book, "Sober Living for the Revolution: Hardcore Punk, Straight Edge and Radical Politics."



Gabriel Kuhn

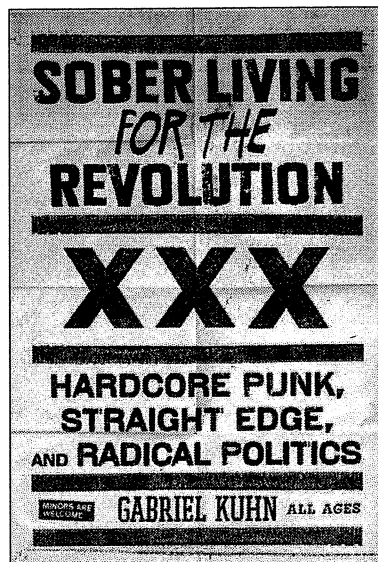
Reno Gazette-Journal: What is straight edge?

Gabriel Kuhn: The history of straight edge spans 30 years by now, and a number of interpretations have developed. On its most basic level, straight edge means to abstain from alcohol, nicotine and illegal drugs.

However, there is a variety of "stricter" definitions. To some, it means to abstain from all intoxicants, so — depending on your understanding of "intoxicants" — this would include abstinence from caffeine, certain prescription drugs, possibly refined sugar and so forth. Some straight edgers also see nonpromiscuous sex as a part of their straight edge identity, while others simply call for "responsible" sexual conduct or don't consider sexual conduct a central aspect at all. Especially since the 1990s, straight edge has also been inextricably linked to veganism by a number of people.

RGJ: In your timeline of straight edge history, Reno gets three mentions.

GK: Writing from an international perspective, I think that people have two main associations when it comes to Reno and straight edge: They know 7 Seconds as one of the most important and influential straight edge bands of all time; and, in recent years, they have heard about



PM PRESS

"Sober for the Revolution: Hardcore Punk, Straight Edge and Radical Politics" is written by Gabriel Kuhn.

the accusations of straight edge crews acting as "gangs." ...

I would say that the scene that developed around 7 Seconds has left a very positive impression on many people, including me. Today, it is sometimes forgotten that Positive Force DC, the long-running and much respected activist community, was inspired by a Positive Force group founded in Reno in 1984 — the first one ever.

RGJ: In the National Geographic Channel special from 2008 that highlighted Reno's straight edge scene, some parents were worried about straight edge while others were supportive. If parents came to you saying their child was into straight edge, what advice would you have?

GK: First of all, I would assure them that such a choice is generally comforting and not alarming. Whatever the exact definition, straight edge can keep kids from some of the most self-destructive paths they can embark on, and I assume this is something that any

parent feels happy about. If people are really concerned about violent behavior or "gang" associations, I guess they could always talk to their kids about what straight edge means to them and about how compassion should guide their actions and not arrogance.

In any case, it is not straight edge that will get kids into trouble. A certain straight edge scene or crew might serve as a vehicle for kids to get into trouble, but my guess is that they'd get into trouble anyway. People who beat up on others in the name of straight edge would beat up on others in the name of whatever. Venting frustration or living up to patriarchal values is obviously more important to them than straight edge. In other words, straight edge might be used as an excuse for violence, but it will never be the cause of violence. To the contrary, I am convinced that a compassionate understanding of straight edge can be one of the most effective means to prevent such behavior.

RGJ: A Reno band named Contend is working on an EP for Catalyst Records. Where does Catalyst fit in straight edge's history?

GK: Especially if one is interested in the political dimensions of straight edge, Catalyst has had an enormous significance for straight edge history — particularly in the U.S., but also internationally.

The 1990s saw a strong politicization of straight edge, with animal rights and environmental concerns becoming ever more prominent. Roughly speaking, this went two ways: Some people developed a strict moral code around these beliefs, sometimes tying them to ideas of "naturalness" and "innocence" that fed into very conservative politics, including homophobia and attacks on abortion rights; others focused on expanding the relationships

between straight edge and political activism in more complex ways, spawning many encouraging and inspiring projects and initiatives.

Catalyst Records played a crucial role for the latter tendency, managed to build international connections and continues to provide an important platform for political straight edge. The label's website offers one of the most insightful discussion forums for politically oriented straight edge to this day.

RGJ: The aggressive sound seems to conflict with the thoughtful, kind voices captured in your book.

GK: Maybe "seems" is the key word here. I don't think there really is a conflict. The question relates to the history and meaning of punk and hardcore in general, and also to other "aggressive" music or art forms, in which you've always encountered kind people.

Aggressive music helps to vent anger. Being angry and being kind are no contradictions. They can be two sides of the same coin, the anger stemming from kindness being constantly upset and challenged in a world ruled by greed, competition and a general disregard for the needs of others. Anger can of course trigger destructive behavior — both for yourself and others — but not if it is channeled in the right way.

I believe that punk and hardcore, and hence, straight edge, can help to turn anger into something positive: The music allows you to release a lot of negative feelings in socially acceptable, nonharmful ways, and you come out as a more composed, balanced and kinder person.

In that sense, the meeting of aggressive sound and thoughtful, kind voices is no contradiction, but rather a very natural union.

For a longer version of this interview, visit RGJ.com/blogs/data.