



An Army of Lovers: Women's Music of the 70s and 80s

Jamie Anderson

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Jamie Anderson's cultural survey *An Army of Lovers* focuses on revolutionary women's music and how it influenced others.

Women's music—music by, for, and about women—addresses topics from love and healing to racism and politics. In the 1960s, it was radical for giving feminist women, especially lesbians, space to hear music by and for themselves. Anderson, herself a performer, begins from the movement's roots, follows it through its growing pains in the 1970s and 1980s, and moves into the present. Despite vanishing venues and declining popularity, the book says, women's music continues to influence the music industry and the women who were a part of it.

The work is encyclopedic, profiling dozens of figures from the women's music industry, from giants like singer-songwriter Cris Williamson to behind-the-scenes talents like Barbara "Boo" Price, who managed artists and produced festivals. Thoughts from fans and volunteers whose lives were changed thanks to women's music factor in, too.

Through these stories, the history of the women's music movement emerges. It is a mostly positive tale, with anecdotes about musicians teaching and uplifting each other, but also includes industry struggles with issues like finances and racism. Photographs showcase subjects doing what they love best: performing and spending time with other women in the industry.

Fascinating and detailed, the book covers everything from the improvisational creation of the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival to the problems that musicians and fans faced when crossing the US-Canada border to attend shows. Interviews, anecdotes, and photographs combine to pay tribute to the brilliant, determined women who banded together to create a unique, inspirational movement.

An Army of Lovers is a thorough insider's look at the women's music industry.

EILEEN GONZALEZ (November / December 2019)

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