



My Riot: Agnostic Front, Grit, Guts & Glory

Roger Miret

Jon Wiederhorn, Contributor

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Miret's memorable, affecting stories capture an important time in the hardcore music scene.

Agnostic Front was an important part of the New York hardcore music scene of the 1980s, and, as the band's lead singer, Roger Miret lived through a violent, drug-fueled, and indisputably memorable era. In his new autobiography, *My Riot*, he shares his memories of those years. Equal parts music memoir and gritty coming-of-age story, it's an eminently readable and fast-paced look at life during hardcore's heyday.

Miret and his cowriter (veteran music writer Jon Wiederhorn) use a straightforward style; the book reads as if Miret is casually telling his stories to acquaintances. The approach works well, in great part because the stories themselves are so memorable.

Miret starts his story with his troubled childhood, dealing with a shockingly abusive stepfather and an economically difficult upbringing. He spent his teenage years in New York's tough Alphabet City neighborhood. First as a bassist, then as a singer, he played with a who's who of the post-punk hardcore bands, and his stories cover all the mix-and-match lineups of Agnostic Front and his various side projects.

My Riot lets fans in on Miret's thought processes during the band's musical evolution and lineup changes, its chaotic touring lifestyle, and the way different factions within the scene often beat each other up. Even as the band was becoming well known, Miret was still squatting in run-down houses, selling drugs to get by, and trying to provide for his young family. His almost reportorial tone makes these stories real and affecting.

While Miret often acknowledges the bad choices he made or tries to clarify perceived misunderstandings about the scene, he doesn't shy away from showing the hardcore era with all its warts.

He writes about stealing purses and mugging passersby to get money for drugs, and run-ins with the cops, but he also records how he rededicated himself to his band, released new albums, and helped cement Agnostic Front's place in the history of hardcore.

Not just for music fans, *My Riot* is a valuable snapshot of an important time.

JEFF FLEISCHER (September/October 2017)

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