

HELLO, WINTER, AGAIN: Snow and frigid temperatures, after weeks of mild weather, remind us that winter's not over. / Photo by Ted Pease

**TODAY'S WORD
ON
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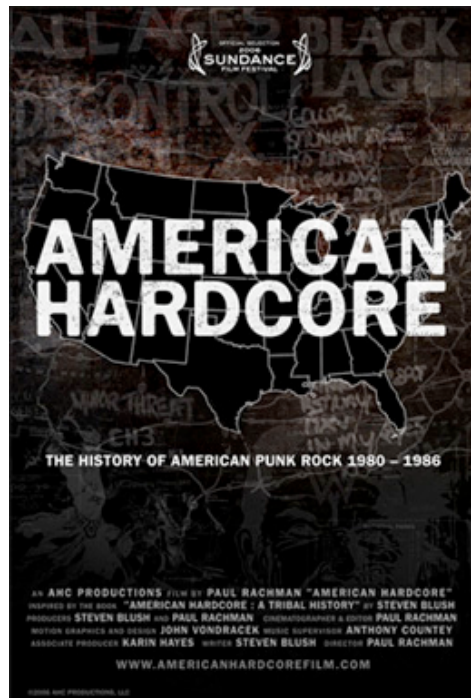
"Outside of a dog, a
book is man's best
friend. Inside of a dog
it's too dark to read."

--Groucho Marx,
philosopher (1890-
1977)



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No need to whisper: 'American Hardcore' awakens Sundance with brutal honesty



By **Jeremy Wilkins**

February 2, 2006 | The names Ian MacKaye, Henry Rollins and Paul Hudson may not mean anything to most, but they meant everything to a subculture of youth in the early to mid-1980s.

MacKaye, Rollins and Hudson were the singers for Minor Threat, Black Flag and Bad Brains, three of more than 30 bands highlighted in the 98-adrenaline-crammed-minutes of the Sundance Film Festival movie, *American Hardcore*.

This brutally honest documentary of a socially defiant music scene stems from a book of the same name published by Steven Blush (Feral House) in 2001.

Blush, who was a hardcore show promoter, college-radio disc jockey, indie label owner, band manager and tour coordinator, became part of this scene when he moved to Washington,

D.C., to attend college.

Paul Rachman, *American Hardcore's* director, also found the hardcore scene as a college student, but in Boston. He began documenting this movement, which was quickly becoming an underground phenomenon, with his Super 8 camera. While still in college he directed music videos for Bad Brains, Gang Green and Negative FX.

The two were aware of each other through their involvement in the hardcore scene, which was spreading to misfit youth throughout the nation. Call it chance, fate or what you will, but Blush and Rachman ran into each other in New York about a year before Blush's book was to be published. When Rachman heard what Blush had been working on he said he instantly had a vision and knew Blush's book would be perfect inspiration and material for a film, and after discussing things, both got to work on the film.

Combining dozens of interviews from members of hardcore bands, promoters, producers, photographers, artists and participants, with live footage from shows and hundreds of still photos and concert fliers, *American Hardcore* creates a vivid idea of what life in this underground scene was like and what it meant to those pushing it forward.

American Hardcore is a movie made by people who actively followed hardcore from its infancy until its death and experienced the energy of what happened in this music scene and culture starting around 1980 and ending in 1986.

It is narrated by the loud, fast and eardrum-piercing screams of the bands that created the music and the scene, demanding to be heard. If they weren't acknowledged then, *American Hardcore* ensures they can and will be now.

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