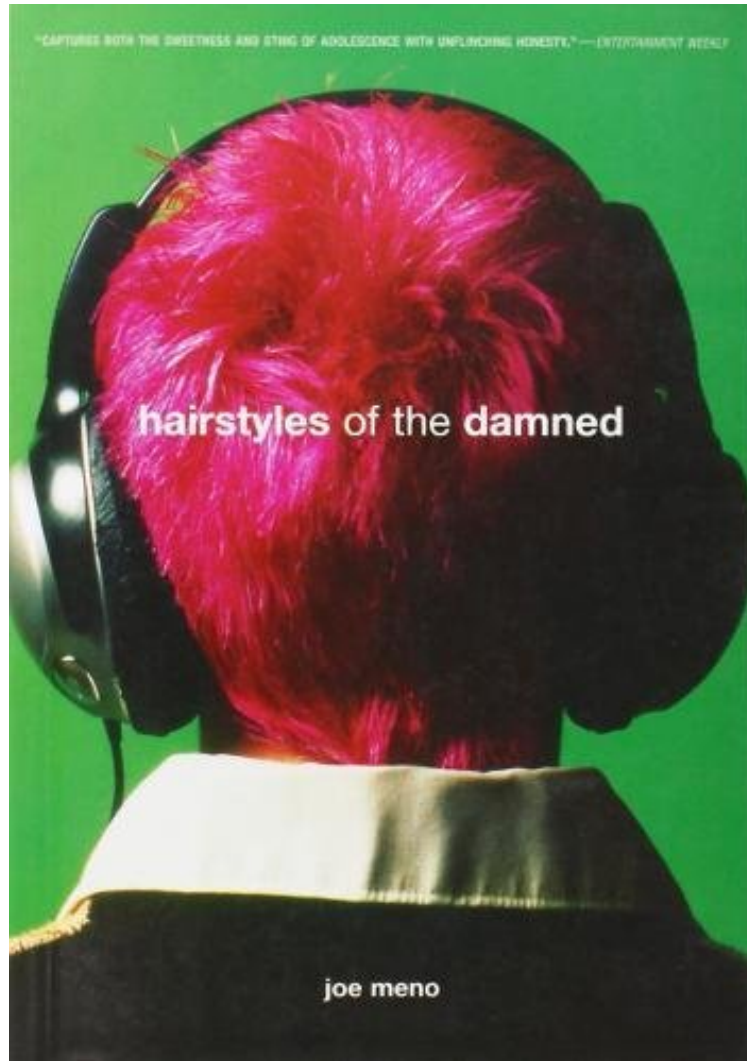


[Download pdf] Hairstyles of the Damned (Punk Planet Books)

Hairstyles of the Damned (Punk Planet Books)

Joe Meno

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Joe Meno : Hairstyles of the Damned (Punk Planet Books) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Hairstyles of the Damned (Punk Planet Books):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. LOVE this book By Lipiskapafantastic writing and such a compelling voice. feels like a very authentic experience. the characters (and especially the main one) are complex and flawed and endearing. all around, imho, a wonderful coming-of-age story about a very introverted guy coming into his own at that crucial period that is the end of adolescence and the very beginning of adulthood. 2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Do Black Doc Marten's Really Reflect Up? By Michael P. McCullough I found out about this book when I heard Joe Meno on NPR. I was excited that there was a book about a punk rocker at Chicago's Brother

Rice High School since I also graduated from Brother Rice and was a punk rocker, so I ordered it immediately. (Of course there are differences: the people in the book graduated around 1991 and I graduated in 1977.) First of all, as some of the other reviewers point out, this book's setting, Chicago's Southwest side, seems to be one of the main characters in the book. I grew up there and for that reason reading the book was a nostalgic experience. It is fun reading a book set exclusively in places you've been. Also, Meno inserts a lot of music into the book, much of which I am familiar with, so that was enjoyable. When I heard Joe's interview with Scott Simon my impression was that he was an articulate, intelligent, sensitive individual. When I began reading the book I wondered if that was the same guy - I was frustrated because the first person narrative was in a loose, conversational tone. It was like totally in the teen vernacular, I guess. Okay - that last sentence was an imitation of the style. At first it drove me crazy but eventually I realized he was using the language style to capture the world of his subjects similar to Jay McInerney's *Story of My Life*. The main character and narrator, Brian Oswald, is pretty inconsistent. At times he seemed like a decent guy, at other times he seemed despicable. At times he was a wimp, at other times he was a tough guy. He runs a gamut from confused and disenfranchised to insightful and self-confident. This is a portrait of the typical teen-ager as a confused young punk rocker. (Actually Brian Oswald makes a gradual transformation in the book from a heavy metal dude to punk rocker.) Another frustrating detail: after thirty-five chapters he starts again at chapter one, and one the main characters (Gretchen) is absent. Then twenty-three chapters later we get another chapter one, so the book seems to start three times. I started to think, "What is this? Just a bunch of half finished junk from his notebooks?" But I also found myself thinking about the book and the characters while I wasn't reading it, and looking forward to reading it each night. In other words the book grew on me and I will tell you all that despite the book's apparent sloppy style it is a coherent work with a beginning, middle, an end - and a point. All the loose ends, including the Gretchen situation, were resolved. This book's disorganized structure and narrative is part of the presentation of the world as seen by a high school student - and I found it to be an interesting world. I recommend this book with the warning that although it is a good book it will drive you crazy. One last point: I can't help comparing this book to the other popular book written about going to Brother Rice High School: *Do Black Patent Leather Shoes Really Reflect Up?* That book came out while I was still at Brother Rice and was locally admired. There was even a musical written based on the book that must have ran for ten years at a local theater. It's still running for all I know. The books are much different, however. The main difference is that Meno's book is much less sentimental. He doesn't seem to be as syrupy about Brother Rice as Powers was. I liked Joe Meno's book. I think I can relate to it, maybe, a little better than I can to John Powers. 6 of 7 people found the following review helpful. I am not Joe Meno's auntie. By S. Kay Murphy. Lest anyone begin to pigeonhole this book with 'young people fiction' or try to make it a punk rockers' anthem, let me just get in a quick two cents worth. I am a gray-haired 50-year-old teacher of high school English. I am not Joe Meno's mom or auntie or nana (though I'm hoping they are ever-so-proud of him). I heard Joe's interview with Scott Simon on NPR and ordered the book the same day. (When it arrived, my 87-year-old mother read the first few pages and then put it down like the cover was inked in acid. "That book has the F word on every page!" Boy, did she miss out by not reading it!) I have to say, my adolescence took place during the '60's--different music, similar issues. Meno captures and distills on the page those ever-so-frustrating and at times enraging moments in the teen years when we all want to scream, "I'm not an S.O.B.!"--especially those of us who were weird loner people with few friends. Right on. This is not a novel for a generation or a culture, it is a novel which will speak to those for whom enduring high school was tantamount to running a gauntlet made up of bloodthirsty, jeering peers and adults. Don't tell my principal, the schoolboard or that certain faction of adults who feel they must control what young people read: I will pass this book on--secretly--to my students. It will be like, you know, subversive.

Included in MTV.com's "These 17 Music-Themed YA Books Could Be Your Life" A selection of the Barnes Noble Discover Great New Writers Program. "Meno gives his proverbial coming-of-age tale a punk-rock edge, as seventeen-year-old Chicagoan Brian Oswald tries to land his first girlfriend...Meno ably explores Brian's emotional uncertainty and his poignant youthful search for meaning...His gabby, heartfelt, and utterly believable take on adolescence strikes a winning chord."--Publishers Weekly "A funny, hard-rocking first-person tale of teenage angst and discovery."--Booklist "Captures the loose, fun, recklessness of midwestern punk."--MTV.com "Captures both the sweetness and sting of adolescence with unflinching honesty."--Entertainment Weekly "Joe Meno writes with the energy, honesty, and emotional impact of the best punk rock. From the opening sentence to the very last word, *Hairstyles of the Damned* held me in his grip."--Jim DeRogatis, pop music critic, Chicago Sun-Times "The most authentic young voice since J.D. Salinger's Holden Caulfield...A darn good book."--Daily Southtown "Sensitive, well-observed, often laugh-out-loud funny...You won't regret a moment of the journey."--Chicago Tribune "Meno is a romantic at heart. Not the greeting card kind, or the Harlequin paperback version, but the type who thinks, deep down, that things matter, that art can change lives."--Elgin Courier News "Funny and charming and sad and real. The adults are sparingly yet poignantly drawn, especially the fathers, who slip through without saying much but make a profound impression."--Chicago Journal "Underneath his angst, Brian, the narrator of *Hairstyles of the Damned*, possesses a disarming sense of compassion which allows him to worm his way into the reader's heart. It is this simple contradiction that makes

Meno's portrait of adolescence so convincing: He has dug up and displayed for us the secret paradox of the teenage years, the desire to belong pitted against the need for individuality--a constant clash of hate and love."--NewPages.com"Joe Meno knows Chicago's south side the way Jane Goodall knew chimps and apes--which is to say, he really knows it. He also knows about the early '90s, punk rock, and awkward adolescence. Best of all, he knows the value of entertainment. Hairstyles of the Damned is proof positive."--John McNally, author of The Book of Ralph"Filled with references to dozens of bands and mix-tape set lists, the book's heart and soul is driven by a teenager's life-changing discovery of punk's social and political message...Meno's alter ego, Brian Oswald, is a modern-day Holden Caulfield...It's a funny, sweet, and, at times, hard-hitting story with a punk vibe."--Mary Houlihan, Chicago Sun-Times"Meno's language is rhythmic and honest, expressing things proper English never could. And you've got to hand it to the author, who pulled off a very good trick: The book is punk rock. It's not just punk rock. It's not just about punk rock; it embodies the idea of punk rock; it embodies the idea of punk--it's pissed off at authority, it won't groom itself properly, and it irritates. Yet its rebellious spirit is inspiring and right on the mark."--SF WeeklyHairstyles of the Damned is the debut novel of our Punk Planet Books imprint, which originates from Punk Planet magazine.Hairstyles of the Damned is an honest, true-life depiction of growing up punk on Chicago's south side: a study in the demons of racial intolerance, Catholic school conformism, and class repression. It is the story of the riotous exploits of Brian, a high school burnout, and his best friend, Gretchen, a punk rock girl fond of brawling. Based on the actual events surrounding a Chicago high school's segregated prom, this work of fiction unflinchingly pursues the truth in discovering what it means to be your own person.

From Publishers WeeklyMeno (How the Hula Girl Sings) gives his proverbial coming-of-age tale a punk-rock edge, as 17-year-old Chicagoan Brian Oswald tries to land his first girlfriend and make it through high school. Brian loves video games, metal music and his best friend, Gretchen, an overweight, foul-mouthed, pink-haired badass famous for beating up other girls. Gretchen, meanwhile, loves the Ramones and the Clash and 26-year-old "white power thug" Tony Degan. Gretchen keeps Brian at bay even as their friendship starts to bloom into a romance, forcing him to find comfort with the fetching but slatternly Dorie. Typical adolescent drama reigns: Brian's parents are having marital problems, he needs money to buy wheels ("I needed a van because, like Mike always said, guys with vans always got the most trim, after the guys who could grow mustaches"), he experiments with sex and vandalism. Meno ably explores Brian's emotional uncertainty and his poignant youthful search for meaning, both in music and in his on-again, off-again situation with Gretchen; his gabby, heartfelt and utterly believable take on adolescence strikes a winning chord. Meno also deals honestly with teenage violence though Gretchen's fights have a certain slapstick quality, Brian's occasional bouts of anger and destruction seem very real. He's a sympathetic narrator and a prime example of awkward adolescence, even if he doesn't have much of a plot crafted around him. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.From School Library JournalAdult/High School - Set in Chicago's South Side in the early 1990s, this novel follows a year in the life of high school student Brian Oswald. His friend Gretchen, a heavyset, fight-provoking, punk-music fan, travels with him through the adolescent world of shopping malls, music stores, and suburban streets. And Brian is madly in love with her. Unfortunately, Gretchen loves Tony, a 20-something white-power hooligan who hangs out in arcades to pick up impressionable high school girls. Brian spends the first half of the book trying to build up enough courage to ask Gretchen out. When he makes his feelings known, their relationship is severed. For a time, he moves on and away from her. Trouble between his parents and issues of peer pressure flesh out the skeleton of this work. Written as a first-person narrative, the novel brings Brian to life by making full use of those colorful expletives and sexual jokes that high school boys love so much. The teen is not a nerd or a jock, but lives in a space between those stereotypes. Yet he struggles desperately to find his niche, circulating from cliques as diverse as the DD geeks to the hyper-violent skinheads. Meno plays with music in a fashion reminiscent of Nick Hornby's High Fidelity (Penguin, 1996). The story winds its way back to Gretchen, who inadvertently leads Brian to realize that punk, too, is its own form of a fabricated identity. In the end he learns that he is Brian Oswald - and he's okay with that. - Matthew L. Moffett, Northern Virginia Community College, Annandale Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.From BooklistMeno's third novel is a funny, hard-rocking first-person tale of teenage angst and discovery. Brian, a reluctant junior in a Catholic high school on the Far South Side of Chicago, and his best friend, Gretchen, with whom he is falling in love, and who outweighs him and is way tougher and hipper (she has dyed her hair pink), spend a lot of time driving around and listening to music. It's 1990, Gretchen's mother is dead, Brian's folks are estranged, and punk rock is their gospel. After writing about a 10-year-old in Tender as Hellfire (1999) and an ex-con in How the Hula Girl Sings (2001), Meno now revels in the massive confusion and helpless bravado of adolescence as he portrays misfit teens dismayed by adult misery, weirded out by their suddenly alien bodies, and angry over racism and class prejudice. This is all worthy if familiar stuff, and although Meno fails to dig deeply, he does write with verve and will entertain readers who find tales of teen misadventure and rock and roll irresistible. Donna SeamanCopyright American Library Association. All rights reserved