

# The Positive Qualities of Hardcore Music

## Transcription by Evernote

Good evening.

Hardcore music is one of the most promising trends to have emerged not only in the music world, but in the whole society. It is beautiful, it is wonderful, it is powerful, it is mighty. It has lots to offer for us, it is profound inspiration.

Where exactly do we put hardcore music on the musical spectrum? To me, it is very similar to two other types of music, heavy metal and punk. In essence, hardcore music to me is a hybrid of both heavy metal and punk. Hardcore music essentially integrates the best aspects of both metal and punk. Hardcore music thus becomes something bigger and better than what punk and metal were. "Specifically, hardcore music integrates the fierceness of metal with the spirit of punk. It integrates the tempo and pace of metal with the useful energy of punk. It integrates the freedom from rigid melody construction of metal with the stylistic simplicity of punk. In the process, it becomes a very dynamic musical form." [I don't remember where I got the definitions for this paragraph, yet this is similar:

"a type of extremely fast, loud punk music (= fast, loud, sometimes offensive music that was popular in the late 1970s), often with angry political lyrics (= words)"

[https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/hardcore#google\\_vignette](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/hardcore#google_vignette)

"Heavy metal is a loud, aggressive style of rock music. The bands who play heavy metal music usually have one or two guitars, a bass guitar and drums. In some bands, electronic keyboards, organs, or other instruments are used. Heavy metal songs are loud and powerful-sounding, and have strong rhythms that are repeated...

Common features of heavy metal include slackened (downtuned) instruments and unusual key changes and time signatures (metre)."

[https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heavy\\_metal\\_music](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heavy_metal_music)

“Punk or punk rock is rock music that is played in a fast, loud, and aggressive way and is often a protest against conventional attitudes and behavior. Punk rock was particularly popular in the late 1970s.”

<https://www.collinsdictionary.com/us/dictionary/english/punk>]

Musicians [like my junior high music teacher] tell us “every type of music conveys certain types of emotions.” They tell us “inherent to music is expression of emotion.” For example:

- Blues and country can convey sadness.
- A John Philip Sousa type march may convey celebration.
- Some gospel songs may convey happiness.
- Punk tends to convey angst type feelings, while hardcore music tends to convey anger [like people describe punk].

Some say anger is innately bad. I don't believe this to be the case. I believe anger has its use and its function. I certainly see positive uses of it in my own life. There are certainly times when we need to express our anger. Therefore, hardcore music has a good niche. I'm not a type who feels like listening to angry music every day, but there's some days it certainly hits the spot just right.

For example, once my landlord was being unreasonable. There was a new manager that moved in. I had my rent paid up, but he said “the computer said I didn't.” I was too happy about this since I usually don't have lots of money around. I tried to bargain with him. I tried to negotiate, but it didn't work. I went back into my room very angry. What I did is put on an Extinction CD. Extinction is a very angry hardcore band [as my friend describes them]. It helped a lot. It helped me get that anger out of me.

I know a woman who's a bit older who says “she finds hardcore music to be very relaxing.” Lots of times when people think of relaxing music, they think of some soft classical music or some very light music. But she has a point that it can be relaxing because what it does is allows her to purge these negative feelings. It allows her to channel some of these feelings which are eating up inside [as some describe it]. It's very cathartic to listen to hardcore music. Thus, it serves a very useful purpose.

One of the most profound virtues of hardcore music is its realness, its desire to be genuine and authentic [which is how proponents describe it].

Hardcore music bands want to do the art for its own sake [as these bands say]. They don't want to be feign or phony [as these bands say]. They don't want to put on airs [as these bands say]. They don't want to have false pretenses [as these bands say]. They don't want to have fabrications [as these bands say]. In hardcore music, generally what you see is what you get. [as these bands say] They're not distracting diversions, which get your mind off of what's important. Hardcore bands tend to be down to earth [as these bands say]. They realize the fans are very important [as these bands say]. They realize the fans are their breath. They don't think of themselves as demigods to be worshipped by the fans as maybe some of these great metal bands do. But instead, they view themselves as part of the scene. They realize the fans give life to the scene, thus they can't get too arrogant in the head [as these bands say].

These values are often reflected in the songs of hardcore music. For example, a band called Shutdown has a song which says:

- “Don't forget your past.
- Don't forget your roots.
- Don't sell out.”

Hardcore music is not a very accessible music [as these bands say]. It's not the type of music you hear on MTV [as these bands say]. It doesn't have an immediately catchy melody. Thus, hardcore music is in a good position to stay with. They realize doing what they're doing, they have to do for the love of it because it's not something that has mass appeal [as these bands say].

It's not something that everyone out there is going to immediately catch on to. I believe hardcore music is an acquired taste. You have to listen to it before you start to like it. You may not like it right away, but if you start to listen to it, it grows on you. That's why it's important to give it a chance. When you give it a chance, you will see how real it is, how great values it is, how they're doing it for the love of it instead of just money [as these bands say], as many others do.

In hardcore music, there's a form of dancing which is often done at hardcore shows [Common Knowledge]. This is also done at metal shows. [Common Knowledge]. This is the form of dancing known as moshing. But there's a key difference in how it's done in the hardcore scene and how it's done in the metal scene. Typically, in the hardcore scene, moshing tends to

be more civil, controlled, and respectful [as observers note]. You don't see this in the metal scene [as observers note].. In the metal scene, it tends to be chaotic, disrespectful, unstable [as observers note].

I believe this reflects the nature of the hardcore scene. In hardcore music, you see everyone many times. Thus, you don't want to break someone's bones by being overly aggressive in the mosh pit when you're going to see that person two weeks from now at another show. Also, people do moshing for better reasons in hardcore. People do moshing to get in the spirit of the music. They do it to become a part of what is going on. In metal, it's often just stimulation. It's the beat that drives it. In hardcore, it's often done for togetherness, purposedness.

Another great virtue of hardcore music is how cheap their shows tend to be [as observers note].. It's not unheard of to find a hardcore show for single-digit entrance fees [as observers note].. Sometimes, you can even go to a hardcore show with top bands for six or eight dollars [as observers note]..

Imagine doing this for a metal show. I doubt if any time in this universe or any other universe you are going to be able to pay eight dollars to go to a show with Ozzy Osbourne, Metallica, and White Zombie. That's not going to happen any time soon. You're probably going to be paying \$40 or \$50 for all those bands. Sometimes for even one of those bands.

When you can see a great hardcore show for probably no more than a movie ticket, the scene is doing something right. The show is even better than a movie ticket because it's live. They're able to provide these low ticket prices for a number of good reasons. One of those, there's not middle people involved. When was the last time you heard Ticketmaster selling hardcore tickets? Probably Metal evil and pop. didn't ever. Thus they don't need to charge more fees to accommodate Ticketmaster. Also, there's not all of these theatrical devices which they can be at metal shows [as observers note].. Fireworks, makeup, cost a lot [as observers note].. Hardcore music is very simple and down to earth. There's not many unnecessary thrills. That can keep costs down. Also, hardcore bands generally don't stay in four star hotels. Metallica probably does this. Sometimes hardcore bands even will sleep in a fan's house. This demonstrates how well the scene works together. Do you think Metallica ever sleep at one of their fans house? I don't think so. Sometimes they even sleep on the floor. On the floor.

Judas Priest probably will never sleep on anyone's floor. They will have their nice waterbed to sleep on.

Also, the hardcore bands realize something very important. They realize young people are the heart of their fan base [as demographics show]. Therefore they cannot alienate the young. The young often don't have much money [as observers note]. Therefore they don't want to charge outrageous ticket fees which you cannot afford. They realize where their bread is buttered. When shows are cheap, when shows are probably more real than any of these other rock shows [ as observers note], you are getting some of the best bargains for your dollar. Even someone like me who often struggles making it, I could even afford a hardcore show.

I knew a person who was in a hardcore band. He made a very astute observation about the hardcore scene. He said, "the hardcore scene has this great sense of togetherness, belonging." He said, "It's beautiful how people feel they are as one." You don't see this in the metal scene. You don't see the same camaraderie. In the hardcore scene it's closer knit. Therefore these bonds can be formed.

Some of these themes are expressed in hardcore lyrics themselves. There's lots of hardcore pride type songs out there. There's an excellent song by a band called Warzone which is called "Brotherhood." It says, "we're one family." Certainly the family is a great image of togetherness, of belonging. The title of the song is especially significant because the title is saying the brothers and the sisters play an important role. This is not a male-only country club. This is something we all come together. This is something that should not discriminate. We should realize that women are an important part of the scene. Oftentimes music subcultures can be sexist [as observers note]. Therefore the more women are welcomed.

That Extinction CD that I was talking about earlier I got it in an interesting way which reflects the nature of hardcore fans. A friend of mine was going to this hardcore show. I wanted to go but it just didn't work out. He was so nice to buy a brand new CD for me. He got it for me back. Very, very nice. Just to help me get exposed to some more hardcore fans. Lots of hardcore songs talk about clubs they've played in. They realize where they grew up in is important. That song earlier mentioned it said "don't forget your roots." Hardcore bands don't forget their roots. A club they've played in day after

day after day. They realize that made them who they are. They're not going to forget about it. And forget about it.

Some of these big rock bands couldn't care less about some club they played in 30 years ago when they were just trying to make it. The hardcore band, even the pop bands, would probably still play in the club they originated. They love the club scene, the very intimate clubs [as hardcore bands say]. It may be more profitable to play to these big concert halls, but they like the virtues, the togetherness, the bonding that occurs in these club scenes [as hardcore bands say].

There's one contribution the hardcore scene has given us, which, if that was all it contributed to us, would be not alone to be deemed. This was the straight edge movement. The straight edge movement is simply a lifestyle based in hardcore music, affirming the values of living a life of no drugs and having sex, only committed relationships. Hardcore music gave birth to the straight edge scene. No other musical subculture did this. It didn't happen in rock, it didn't happen in country, it didn't happen in blues, it didn't happen in classical, it didn't even happen in punk.

Furthermore, today still there's only one type of music which has straight edge, hardcore music. None of these other types of music have integrated straight edge into their scenes. I believe that is their folly and that is the wisdom of hardcore music. Hardcore music, through straight edge, has created something unique, something fabulous.

The straight edge movement is very rare as youth subcultures go, because it is a youth subculture that actually condemns the use of drugs. Most youth subcultures we're aware of promote the use of drugs. Everything that is in the hardcore scene is in the straight edge scene. The values in the hardcore scene are amplified and concentrated in the straight edge scene. There's the close-knit nature, there's the values of being real, there's the ethics, there's the togetherness, there's doing the music for the music's sake in the straight edge scene [as sXe bands and fans say]. I love straight edge, therefore we must realize we owe a great debt to hardcore music for giving us the straight edge scene. One of the best moves not only in contemporary times, not only in the music world, but in society as a whole, for all times, as far as I'm concerned.

What are some popular hardcore bands? There's a couple of hardcore bands that I am particularly fond of:

1. One band I like is DOA. They're from a label called Alternative Tentacles, which is based on the West Coast. DOA themselves come from Canada, specifically Vancouver, British Columbia. They're the type of band that before I even listened to their music, I knew I was going to like them. They just seemed so neat. They have lots of political songs. They sing about the drug war, communism, poverty, environmentalism, plus many other issues. They've been around a fair amount of time. They're a band one should definitely check out.
2. I also like a band called Minor Threat. Minor Threat was a very early hardcore band. The 1980s was their heyday. They are the ones that gave birth to the straight edge movement. Part of this is one of those situations where they weren't using birth control because they had no idea what would arise. Lots of interviews with Ian McKay, the writer of Minor Threat, says "he had no idea what would result from writing two songs he wrote." He wrote two songs which affirmed his drug-free lifestyle. He didn't want those songs to cause a militarized intent to, but they did [he said in interviews]. They created a huge scene that arose. There's lots of straight-edge youth that are growing and growing. Ian McKay is not part of the straight-edge scene, but through his songs he inadvertently gave birth to it [as he and others have described it]. They have lots of good songs, lots of angry songs that express legitimate discontent. They express issues which people going through life will experience. They express righteous anger at people who are stupid, petty, and wrong.
3. Another hardcore band I like is a band named Warzone. They tend to be more melodic than some of the other hardcore bands. They're on Victory Records. They sing lots of hardcore pride-type songs. They also sing some songs with social, maybe political awareness.
4. I like another band named Shut Down. They're also on Victory labels. They're part of what hardcore fans and observers call positive hardcore music. Sometimes music can be very negative, as critics will tell you. We certainly see lots of negative music out there, as critics

will tell you. But positive hardcore says we want to be an inspiration for the fans. We want to be an inspiration for the youth. Therefore, we're going to have positive messages. It's also been known as positive music.

5. One of the premier contemporary hardcore bands is Earth Crisis. I also like their music a lot. They have lots of excellent lyrics. They are very passionate and dedicated to straight edge. They also are dedicated and passionate towards veganism and environmentalism. They're very intense in their ideas. They don't mince words. They tell it as it is. They love what they stand for. They're not willing to stand for any injustice.

Besides some of these bands that I like, there's also bands such as:

- Snapcase
- Stripe
- Integrity
- Ten Yard Fight
- Donuts
- One Life Crew
- plus many, many others.

As time goes on, there seems to be more and more hardcore bands developing.

The hardcore scene is a very special scene. It's a wonderful scene. It has given us a lot. Only society itself would adopt the values that have made the hardcore scene. Society itself would be far better off. Only society would become a macrocosm for the microcosm of hardcore music. Society would benefit immensely. It would flourish. Hardcore music is a powerful, mighty, beautiful force. I hope it continues to flourish, continues to blossom. I wish this scene lots of success, lots of good fortune, because it's a very beautiful scene.

Good evening.