

BY PAUL BOWERS o drugs, no drinking, no promiscuous sex. Within the movement known as "straight edge, these three tenets are the widely accepted guidelines for are use when accepted Summarian to the second liched it calf as a voritable to the second liched it calf as a voritable to the second liched it calf as a voritable to the second liched it calf as a voritable to the second liched it calf as a voritable to the second liched it calf as a voritable to the second liched it calf as a voritable to the second liched it calf as a voritable to the second liched it calf as a voritable to the second liched it calf as a voritable to the second liched it calf as a voritable to the second liched it calf as a voritable to the second liched it calf as a voritable to the second liched it calf as a voritable to the second liched it calf as a voritable to the second liched it calf as a voritable to the second liched liched it calf as a voritable to the second liched liched it calf as a voritable to the second liched lich but what is straight eage an about It has established itself as a veritable It has established used as a verhaute high school subculture, yet it frequently

nign school subcunute, yet it itequently is misunderstood. It isn't a gang. It isn't is misunderstoou. It isn't a gan a club. It isn't even organized. a club. It isn't even organized. a club. It isn't even organized. "There's nothing formal about it at all," says Jacob Pelton, a 17-year-old all," says Jacob Pelton, a tradiction of the same consist of component of the same of th all, says jacov renun, a 1/ year-one senior at Summerville High School. He senior at summer vine 111811 senior. A uas used su argue cuye ior meany invo years, and his peers consider him a sort of our on the tonic of guru on the topic. But where to begin explaining a of guru on the topic. but where w begin explaning a movement with no official member-bin to conversion be dread as and movement with no official member-ship, no governing body and no rule book? Perhaps the best place to start is at the boging in

Launched by song lyrics Launched by song lyrics The year was 1981, and punk rock was the year was formative stars Washington at the beginning. The year was 1981, and punk rock was still in its formative stage. Washington, D.C.-based punk band Minor Threat released a seng titled "ctrainbet place" D.C.-based punk band Minor Threat, released a song titled "Straight Edge," vith lyrics such as, "I'm a person just like you/But I've got better things to do/Than sit around and smoke done ike you/ but I ve got vetter units w do/Than sit around and smoke dope vol 111an 511 around and 511 'Cause I know I can cope." Cause 1 KIIUW 1 Call COPE. Che lyrics were simplistic, as was The lyrics were simplify the time neric ivrics were simplified, typical during the time period, but the song quickly caught on as

an anthem for American punks who an anuient for American Puntos with were disenchanted with the prevalent were disence and when the restriction of the data and a name, drug culture. So the drug-free crowd had a name, So the drug-free crowd had a name, It started in 1981, but a song and even a symbol: black Xs a sung and even a sympul; mack A drawn on the backs of the hands, urawn un une vaces un une nanus, adopted from the practice of marking adopted from the practice of marking underage concertgoers so they couldn't purchase alcoholic beverages. burchase accononic veverages. Today, straight edge continues to find its greatest popularity in the punk and hard-core music scenes, with bands uaru-core music scenes, with vanus such as Eighteen Visions, the Hostage Heart and Casey Jones providing the rieart and Casey Jones providing the soundtrack for many straight edgers. Keeping with the do-it-yourself nature of the music there is still no formation Neeping with the au-it-yoursen hattire of the music, there is still no formal or-Ask a group of teenagers why they ganization involved. became straight edge in the first place, and you'll find their evolutions are

became straught cuge in the max prace, and you'll find their explanations are "I basically followed those three prin-"I basically followed those three prin-ciples anyway," says Summerville High senior Ben Crickenberger, 17, refer-senior bet trinity of guidelinee for the ring to the trinity of guidelinee for the similar. senior Den Unckenvergen, 1/, reier-ring to the trinity of guidelines for the After seeing others around him going After seeing others around nim going to parties and getting drunk, Ben says he started "thinking that I don't have to be unconscious of my surroundings to movement.

be unconscious of my surroundings to have tun. He notes that straight edgers tend to He notes that straight edgers tend to be avid Dance Dance Revolution play-ers. Other than that, "We do the same things most kids do, except without all the alcohol and everything involved" have fun." the alcohol and everything involved." Many are involved in so-called wany are involved in su-caned «scenes": the hard-core scene, the emo scenes i une natur-core scene, une entro scene, the punk scene, etc. Although scene, the punk scene, etc. Although scene, the punk scene, etc. Although there has been a recent backlash against the current civility of scene of te nas ween a recein warman aban the superficiality of scene af-filiation, it is still a way

the straight-edge movement still strikes a chord in some young people, even when it pits them against the popular culture nonserious fun. "I go to a lot of hard-core shows in "I go to a lot of hard-core shows of the

LEU W a JULUI HALU-CUTE SHOWS IN general," says Jacob, a member of the most ait crossed "Prochast Learning" general, says Jacob, a member of the mosh pit crowd. "I've been known to throw a spin kick or two." this reaconing for going straight address His reasoning for going straight edge Is similar to ben's. He saw people getting sucked into drugs and alcohol. He had seen it ruin their lives of Aidentement to be live drugs and aconor. rie nau seen it ru their lives. "I didn't want to be like Straight edge has succeeded where them, he explains. suraisen cuse nas surcecucu vincre some anti-drug programs have failed: It has created an authentic norative re-Source anti-utug programs nave ranku; St has created an authentic negative re-It has created an authentic negative to sponse to the glorification of drug use. Ben theorizes that the majority of ben unconnecs una une majorny or students in his high school are violating students in ins ingreschoor are violation one of the three, if not all, of straight une on une unce, in not and or su argun edge's guiding principles. While this may be an evagoration many largely

es guiding principies, withe uns may be an exaggeration, many straight edgers assume

against-the-world" mentality because of their unpopular views. Living with conviction **Living with conviction** Ryan Drury, a 17-year-old senior at Fort Dorchester High School, likens straight edge to his own Chrietian run Durmester rugu sunuu, uken straight edge to his own Christian foith un. "They're both strong beliefs. They're something you stand by," he says. "They're really strong things that. something you stand by," he says. "They're really strong things that you don't back down from." Drowing a further near that he adde will wack down from." Drawing a further parallel, he adds, "Some neonle remember the downlow "Some people remember the day they Some people remember the day they made the decision. It's like when people and a solution of a solution of the ne get saveu. Ryan comes from a Catholic fam-Ayan comes nom a Canon came ily, but he prefers not to pigeonhole himsolf into a consification according ple get saved." himself into a specific denominanumsen mo a specific activitient tion. For other straight edgers, the mere mention of straight edge and religion in the same eage and rengion in the same sentence brings strongly held opinions to the surface. Straight edge is depending on yourself and no one else. Religion should be relying rengion showing or relying on yourself and not relying on yoursen and not retying on other people to tell you how to do things, says Ben, an atheist. Please see STRAIGHT, Page 2D



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Ink contributor



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faith.

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