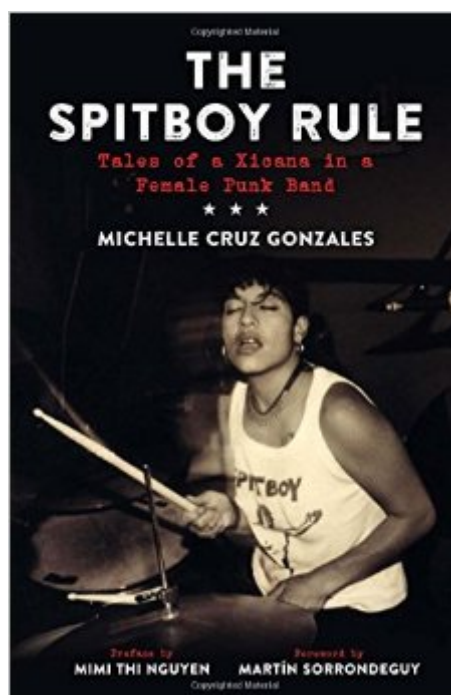


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# The Spitboy Rule: Tales Of A Xicana In A Female Punk Band



## Synopsis

Though not a riot grrl band, Spitboy blazed trails for women musicians in the San Francisco Bay Area and beyond, but it wasn't easy. Misogyny, sexism, abusive fans, class and color blindness, and all-out racism were foes, especially for Gonzales, a Chicana and the only person of color in the band. Unlike touring rock bands before them, the unapologetically feminist Spitboy preferred Scrabble games between shows rather than sex and drugs, and they were not the angry manhaters that many expected them to be. Fully illustrated with rare photos and flyers from the punk rock underground, this fast-paced, first-person recollection is populated by scenesters and musical allies from the time including Econochrist, Paxston Quiggly, Neurosis, Los Crudos, Aaron Cometbus, Pete the Roadie, Green Day, Fugazi, and Kamala and the Karnivores.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Michelle's intelligent, sincere and passionate writing certainly makes this book worth reading. Plus, it is about an era of music that has seen the different and often sad paths that artists took. Michelle, obviously, went in a positive direction. My favorite part is when she brings the band to see her grandmother. A window onto her soul, she describes the visit with restrained but wonderful insight. Her observation that she was raised in an environment in which creativity was embraced [be it, sewing, crafting, cooking, gardening] is a powerful message to hold closely. Art is essential no matter what it is or how it is taught. This book made me aware of my role as a parent to keep the message of art alive and significant. My son, a professional drummer, was captivated by the story. Not because of the music parts but because Michelle didn't hold back about "the road" and its

foibles.

I have been a fan of Gonzalez' writing for many years now on her blog. Though I know nothing about her band and next to nothing about the era of Punk Rock (except that they were weird looking kids), I found her book thoroughly enjoyable to read! A fossil, I date back to old Bohemian days of the late 50s, the Beat Generation, the Hippies, the Civil Rights Movement, and now the Senior Citizen brigade, so I readily identified with this story of young, Punk Rocker woman, Chicana, artist and poet, trying to play serious music, to iron-tough and demanding audiences, wanting what all artists, or humans for that matter, ultimately seek: love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Being a Chicano artist myself, I empathize with Michelle's struggle to find her place in a White World. What an amazing story she has to tell! Funny, tragic, insightful and unflinchingly honest. I highly recommend this book to all artists, musicians and poets, and all young people convinced they are "different" and trying to make their mark in an seemingly uncaring world.

Somewhere between Gloria Anzaldua and Cherrie Moraga's groundbreaking *This Bridge Called My Back* anthology and the superb oral history *Please Kill Me, The Spitboy Rule* expands ordinary notions of punk rock and feminism. Michelle Gonzales, drummer and co-founder of the band *Spitboy*, relates Michelle Gonzales' effort to forge an authentic identity as a punk rock Xicana who marches to a different set of beats. Her story of negotiating the vexed landscape, cliques, sects and ideologies of 90s female punkdom has a resonance far beyond the local, and it's an absolutely fascinating read, especially for those who like to paint outside the lines. Gonzales as a prose stylist is crisp, direct and nuanced as her music. Highly recommended.

Gonzales gives a glimpse into a life most of us have never lived--even if we were punks. What's exceptional is that it provides voice and history to punk in California that goes beyond the typical. Latinx are often invisible if we assimilate into the white world well enough. She gives power to the idea that you can fit and not fit at the same time and exactly why that is. More books should take on class and race in this way. It's not talked about often enough. Thoroughly engaging read.

This is a really incredible book about race and gender in the 90s punk scene. Punk thought of itself as so counter-cultural and anti-patriarchal, and yet, as Gonzales's book shows (and anyone familiar with the scene remembers), racism, classism and sexism were as common there as in the society at large. The book isn't all political musings, either--lots of great discussions of touring the world,

collaborating with other bands, and the songwriting process. A really insightful and inspiring read.

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