

(Homo) Core Values



ZINES

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Most cultural and political movements experience growing pains and often reinvent themselves along the way. "Homocore" has really only rebranded itself as "queercore" to be more inclusive, but definitely started out with values that embraced all flavors of marginalized queer folks. These weren't token efforts, and they weren't as a result of some attempt to be PC. From dyke punks on motorcycles to African American punk drag queen divas, homocore was blessed with an amazing set of genes that has fueled it along for a generation and still to this day points the way forward in how to build community and defeat fascism in all forms.

The eponymous **Homocore** [Issue 7, 1991, 64 pages] is perhaps the most fondly remembered of all queer zines, but was not the first yet managed to broadcast information to radical queers in a transcendent way that cemented its

reputation as a leader in the evolution of the scene. From the cover photo of Donna of Team Dresch showing off her yo-yo champion skills, through the self-admitted haphazard methodology behind the writing, Homocore still reads as if it were fresh and hot off the press (it helps that the President at the time was also named Bush and the line between terrorists and freedom fighters was just as thin as it is today). Editor Tom Jennings is forthright about lacking the polish and attention to detail that some people expect from zines (for example, the space where a missing graphic should have been has a handwritten "oops" in its place) and his honesty is validation of why so many people are fans of the zine. The contributors to this issue are also some of the key people who propelled the homocore/queercore movement from the slam pits to the streets, folks like Deke Nihilson, G. B. Jones, Bruce LaBruce, and Larry Livermore. Homocore is archived on-line at <http://wps.com/archives/HOMOCORE/> along with a brief history of the zine written by Tom.

In Your Face and Up North

Homocore has a portability that allowed it to flourish wherever queers and punk rock scenes existed and at times many North American cities had their own brand of Homocore, including Toronto, Ontario. Editor Alan O'Connor harnessed (pun intended) his energy, enthusiasm, and political beliefs to create **Homocore Toronto** [Issue 2, 1993, 16 pages] as a

way to express how the scene evolved there. Unlike Tom Jennings' freewheeling editing and layout styles, Alan's expertise in graphic design and layout really shine. The photo quality is superb, the writing top-notch. His preference for hardcore and industrial music sets him slightly apart from the original **Homocore** zine and allows him room to throw lovely acerbic commentary along the way, as in this commentary about a club night called SHOK, "The crowd is mostly straight but people have worn fag t-shirts. When will those queer skinheads smile a bit and stop being so fucking shy?" A contributor to this issue, Lily Braindrop, wrote the centerpiece article for this issue entitled "Coming out of hiding" that was lifted from the

"Absolutely Queer" issue of a 1992 edition of the venerable punk rag **Maximum Rock'n'Roll** that deftly offered advice to young queer folks who were newly out. These bits of wisdom are timeless and still have relevance even now because they are humanistic in their approach and aren't preachy or idealistic. Alan went on after this issue to organize what was ultimately the final part of the trilogy of the SPEW queer zine event series, held in May 1993.

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