

# Autobiography Notes 2015-2016

## By Jennifer Gann

### Chapter 2: Punkrock Rebel

"We can live our own lives!  
Fuck authority!"  
— Wasted Youth

i was always a wild child. Aside from being gender-variant in my pre-teen years, i got kicked out of the fourth grade at a private Christian school after a rock-throwing incident where another kid, a white boy, was throwing rocks at me and calling me names — you know, the usual homophobic epithets like "faggot" and "sissy". i admit i was scared.

we were in the school yard playground, where two giant tractor tires provided us both cover. When i threw some rocks back at him in my defense, he was apparently hit in the head unintentionally. He started bleeding badly and crying as he ran to the teachers.

## 2. Chapter 2 - Punknock Rebel

Of course, he blamed me with a pointed finger — punk ass snitch!

Needless to say, the school principal called my mom and kicked me out of school as a behavior problem. This neat lit' Christian school on Magnolia Ave. in Riverside wasn't so forgiving as Jesus of Nazareth.

In 1979, we moved to the predominantly white neighborhood of Huntington Beach, in Orange County, California. Just south of Los Angeles, O.C. is known as the home of Richard Nixon and John Wayne, as well as Disneyland and Knott's Berry Farm theme parks.

My parents enrolled me in Schroeder elementary school, where I completed the fifth and sixth grades without any serious behavioral problems. Though I was taken to the principals office and spanked with a heavy wooden paddle, for what I don't remember, I cried and screamed.

## Chapter 2 - Punkrock Rebel

i started hanging out with some older kids in my neighborhood who were Stoners, and started smoking marijuana at age 10. My friend Kirk's parents had a greenhouse full of pot plants in the back yard. i was shocked when he blew off two of his fingers building a pipe bomb for the 4th of July.

My friend Aaron and i used to ditch school and go spend our lunch money playing video games at the local liquor stores. Asteroids, Space Invaders, Pac-Man and Missile Command.

Around age 11, after my heroin addicted step-father, Jim, beat me so hard he broke his own hand, and pointed a gun at my mom threatening to kill her, i ran away from home. i was traumatized!

Three days later, the police found me at a pizza joint in Westminster late at night with no where to go. When they took me home, my step-father told the officers "we don't want him,

9

## Chapter 2 - Punkrock Rebel

he's incorrigible!" My mother remained silent.

So, the police took me to Albert Sitton Home ("ASH"), an orphanage right next door to the Orange County Juvenile Hall and the Theo Lacy branch jail.

From there I was placed in several group homes, including one in Corona where they simply medicated all the kids with psychiatric drugs, and one in Yucaipa (Riverside).

I was finally sent to Awahnee Hills Boys Ranch in Madera County, where I eventually ran away from with another boy and got busted for burglaries. We spent a few months in Madera County Juvenile Hall, then I was transported by Tri-County back down south, with a layover in Visalia. We flew in a Cessna aircraft, my first time in a plane, with two older convicts, male and female. Now I had a criminal record, and I was only 13.

I went to New Alternatives,

## 5 Chapter 2 - Punkrock Rebel

a coed group home in Costa Mesa. I spent nearly a year here, which was not too bad. I liked living with several girls who were older than me, and mostly female staff, but eventually I ran away. I just couldn't resist the call of Freedom!

Running the streets, looking for good times, I met a punk rocker named Pat who got me into the punk music counterculture. In the 1980's, O.C. had a vibrant punk scene, from which sprung some well-known bands like T.S.O.L (True Sounds of Liberty), and the world renowned Social Distortion. I immediately identified with the anti-authoritarian attitude and lyrics. I spiked my hair, donned a pair of biker boots and a black french coat, and became a punkrock rebel!

a year or two later, I cut my hair into a Mohawk, which I fanned out with AquaNet hairspray, wore black eye-liner, a leather jacket and Doc Martin boots. We basked in the glory of ~~the~~

## Chapter 2 - Punkrock Rebel

youth, and soaked up the negative attention we got from shocking the civilian population.

i remember going to house parties where punk bands played in the backyard with kegs of beer flowing freely. One night, at such a party, i saw a band called Us Against Them (UAT) which the cops raided chasing us all out of the house.

i piled into a car with my friend and two other dudes we didn't even know. "You want to go to Hollywood?" they asked. "Hell yeah!" we said.

So, we ran around Hollywood and Sunset Boulevard with street punks, homeless people, and prostitutes. All the gay boy street hustlers hung out at Oakie Dogs on Santa Monica Blvd. i saw a punk show at the Olympic Auditorium in downtown L.A. starring the band Battalion of Saints and Abrasive Wheels. One of my favorites was Social

## Chapter 2 - Punkrock Rebel

Unrest.

For the next few years I could never get enough of partying with friends, enjoying the freedom and camaraderie which could only be found in ones youthful experiences. I loved the anarchist aggression of punk music, my favorite bands included Minor Threat, Rudimentary Peni, the Adolescents, Dirty Rotten Imbeciles (D.R.I.) — which I actually got on stage with at Fender's International Ballroom in Long Beach.

We stole liquor and beer from convenience stores and grocery markets. We'd get drunk, take drugs like LSD or crystal meth, and go around vandalizing property. After all, as the song says, "Property is theft!"

We would soon graduate from petty crimes to the more organized criminal activities of common street thugs, packing knives and guns, doing armed robberies.