

Warren Kinsella

Like the punk-rock bands that influenced his teenage view of the world (and still do), Canada's most notorious political strategist does his best work in the basement.

by Craig Pyette

photograph by Bruce Peters

1. JOE STRUMMER AUTOGRAPH

In place of honour is the autograph Kinsella collected when he found himself a wide-eyed seventeen-year-old at Vancouver's PNE hanging out with The Clash. "Strummer ripped out the page from my notebook and wrote, 'Well I love you baby but I must be rhythm bound,' a classic Carl Perkins lyric." To its left is the famous Penny Smith photograph (from the *London Calling* album cover) with bandmate Paul Simonon's autograph, collected that same night.

2. WWW.WARRENKINSELLA.COM

Kinsella muses on culture, media and politics on his popular blog, which began as a means to rebut neo-Nazi outcry against his book *Web of Hate*. "It looked like a fourteenth-century woodcut five years ago." He credits his brother Lorne, a web designer, with the improvement.

3. FENDER MUSTANG BASS

"I have little hands so I bought this short-scale bass. It's four inches shorter than your average bass guitar."

4. SHEENA

Warren's very pleasant thirteen-year-old border collie is named after the Ramones classic, "Sheena Is a Punk Rocker."

5. PHOTO WITH HIS FATHER

The 1990 Liberal leadership convention in Calgary was a chance for Dr. Kinsella to see his son in action (and serve as official physician to the Chrétien team)—fortunately, it turned out, as the twenty-nine-year-old is seen here nursing a sore knee after being hit by a cab. "His first and only patient that week was his own son." Warren dedicated *Fury's Hour* to his father, T. Douglas Kinsella, who died in 2004.



6. KNEE BRACE

"We were playing 'Roadrunner' at band practice, the greatest two-chord song of all time." The other knee this time.

7. ELECTION PIN

Kinsella ran for the federal Liberals in North Vancouver in 1997. His last remaining campaign poster catches grease beneath his beloved '74 Super Beetle. (He didn't win.)

8. TURNTABLE

\$200 from Restoration Hardware in Ottawa. "On, Off, Tone—that's it!" An original pressing of The Clash's "(White Man) In Hammersmith Palais" single, bought at Vancouver's now-defunct Quintessence record shop the same day Warren met the band, sounds tinny and sharp on the old-school record player—in punk terms: perfect.

9. SFH T-SHIRT

Shit from Hell is Warren's five-piece punk rock band.

10. SKATEBOARD DRAWING

"My five-year-old did that picture of me skateboarding, 'cause we all have skateboards, which is, as you know, a punk-rock function."

11. KINSELLA LIBRARY

With *Fury's Hour*, Kinsella has written five

books, including *Kicking Ass in Canadian Politics*, his primer on the rough-and-tumble political strategy that earned him the nickname "The Prince of Darkness" and comparisons to James Carville.

12. PUNK LIBRARY

"The largest collection of punk-rock books in . . . this part of Toronto" includes the ultra-rare *The Boy Looked at Johnny*, which authors Julie Burchill and Tony Parsons refuse to reprint. "She's a columnist now for the *Times* and he's a big-wheel writer now too, and they hate each other."

13. HOT NASTIES 7"

The Hot Nasties—Warren's teenage punk band in Calgary—released *Invasion of the Tribbles* in 1980 on their own label, Social Blemish Records. The three-song E.P. recently sold on eBay for \$300.

14. FURY'S HOUR COVER

An early version of the *Fury's Hour* book cover from his publisher. They wanted to know if he liked it.

To read an excerpt from *Fury's Hour: a [sort-of] punk manifesto*, visit www.ReadMagazine.ca

