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Bad Brains - Live at CBGB 1982

If hardcore took punk's loud/fast rules ethic to its explosive zenith, the Bad Brains took hardcore a couple steps past *that*. This down and dirty disc was recorded over the Christmas holiday at a time when the D.C. outfit was the hardcore band to beat. Black twentysomethings with pasts in jazz fusion and reggae, the group kept the mosh pit working like a popcorn popper. Can't say who's more crucial, yelper H.R. or guitarist Dr. Know, but one thing's certain: the group's rhythmic blasts were behind some of the most exciting rock shows of the late 20th century. Extras include three or four fan interviews that generally cite anger and energy as the Brain's main attractions.

- Charles Bottomley