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Title: Hard Wired for Heroes: A Study of Punk Fanzines, Fandom, and the Historical Antecedents of The Punk Movement.

Abstract

Using the *England's Dreaming Archive* as a primary research resource, this thesis aims to investigate Punk fanzines as a source of social and cultural documentation; present new evidence of the genealogy of the Punk movement, and also investigate the authorial role of fans and fanzines.

Though sub-culture is generally considered to be a product of the twentieth century it relates to gang culture – a much older phenomenon. Street style and gang cultures are also inextricably linked. Punk was self-consciously dissociating itself with mainstream culture in favour of originality and creative plagiarism and was more likely to be influenced by the anti fashion of the streets than that dictated by the high street. Contemporary comments from fanzines provide inside information on the inception of a youth movement and its emerging, and diverging ideologies.

When a publication is considered too low-brow to be of consequence it is free to make social comments whilst remaining virtually invisible within the cultural mainframe. For

example when *Comic Cuts* (a satirical publication targeting young working class and lower middle class males¹) was first published, its appearance coincided with the emergence of Hooligan gangs. Its front-page characters were hooligans, and, while it may be coincidental that other gangs dressing in the same way started to appear all over the country, there probably is a causal link. Further historical research suggests that twentieth century sub-culture may have been informed in part by tradition and folk memory. The format of the comic – both British and American – is evidenced in the fanzines.

When Punk fans were producing fanzines their mission statement was one of love and loyalty to their alternative culture, and in particular, to the bands. Fanzines within the archive reveal a desire for heroes, the almost religious like devotion of the fans, and the sexual energy underpinning youth movements.

Fanzines were an attempt by the Punk community to retain autonomy and authorship of their movement and to prevent its appropriation and adaptation by mainstream culture.

Literature Review

England's Dreaming: The Jon Savage Archive is a collection of fanzines, papers, journals and photographs which was used in the preparation of Jon Savage's highly influential book *England's Dreaming. Sex pistols and Punk Rock*. The archive provided the primary research resource used for his thesis. As Jon Savage's book, synthesises material in the archive then this also was an invaluable source. Although focussing on the *Sex Pistols*, Jon Savage's book remains the seminal work on Punk. Its strength is its meticulous research and the influences of significant individuals associated with the band are thoroughly investigated.

As the *Sex Pistols* have been so influential it is hard to look beyond them as all works on British Punk invariably feature the band and their associates. The Archive is probably the only place in the world to have so much original material on the phenomenon as a whole. Some fanzines are preserved by Urbis in Manchester, and writer Bob Dickinson has a personal archive, but their combined collections are negligible by comparison. Fanzines, and British fanzines in particular, present an opportunity to examine pristine Punk at its inception; to evaluate the input of the avant-garde, and to consider where credit for authorship of Punk belongs. The original material permits a re-appraisal of Punk; of the role of fanzines, and of Punk's community of fans.

Jon Savage had made a connection between Punk and politicised art and the combination of the two suggested a timeline connecting avant-garde art movements of the early twentieth century with the work of Jamie Reid, Malcolm McLaren, Bernie Rhodes and Vivienne Westwood; all of whom were highly significant in defining British Punk. At the early stages of research it was necessary to investigate Dada and Futurism. *Futurist Performances* in particular prefigured the work of sound artists and performance artists of the later twentieth century. But although their work was anarchic and political, a connection with Punk – as experienced by those writing Punk fanzines – was tenuous at best.

Punk fanzines initially presented as a visual phenomenon. The technique of montage was axiomatic to the period and ideal for appropriation by the amateur so reading investigative text on the subject was necessary. Dawn Ades'; *Photomontage*, features the work of John Heartfield which was also exhibited at London's ICA in 1976. Thanks to the high profile of the *Sex Pistols*' publicity, Jamie Reid's work was plagiarised but montage was already in the public domain.

Punk had claims made on its behalf which were important to understand before re-evaluating. Greil Marcus' *Lipstick Traces* is an important history but some of his claims have since become problematic. He claimed that Punk was instigated by Malcolm McLaren. The claim that Punk was a Situationist scam, is alleged by Nils Stevenson in *Vacant, A Diary of the Punk Years 1976-79*. Both Greil Marcus and Nils Stevenson place Malcolm McLaren in an authorial role. Jon Savage does not make those claims, but he

gives enough space to Situationism and Lettrism in *England's Dreaming* to raise its, and consequently McLaren's, profile. Jon Savage has subsequently said that too much emphasis has been placed on Situationism but it was a necessary part of the *England's Dreaming* investigation and relevant to this investigation. However its prominence has rendered it part of the dogma of Punk which is at odds with the evidence provided by fanzines

Greil Marcus's and Nils Stevenson's placing of McLaren as Punk's auteur elevates British Punk over American. But although marketing and media had elevated the *Sex Pistols* to notoriety, American Punk had predated the British scene. The tracing of its antecedents via the counter-cultural movement of the 1960s to the Beats was less tortuous than sourcing a connection back from British Punk to the avant-garde. An avant-garde connection, though significant in the marketing of Punk, was absent from Punk fanzines, although it was present in alternative magazines also housed in the Archive.

Manchester's *City Fun*, for example, detoured Bugs Bunny (see illustrations, *City Fun*, Volume II, number one) in order to comment on the music industry (and the musician as dupe). But many fanzines, such as *Sniffin' Glue*, would frequently feature a band or musician's photograph on their front page (see illustrations, *Sniffin' Glue*, number eight).

Lenny Kaye of the New York based *Patti Smith* group, when interviewed, described the antecedents of American Punk and its connections with The Beats and associated literature. It was also apparent that 1960s counter-culture had influenced American Punk. Both antecedents were investigated.

Following comments by Lenny Kaye on the tribal nature of British Punk, I researched newspapers housed in the British Library which reported the rise of gangs and the emergence of an identifiable sub-culture as far back as Victorian times. There is evidence to suggest that a sub-cultural template had been in place for some time.

Further interviews and meetings followed. Barry Miles' description of the counter-culture in 1960s Britain and in particular the launch of *IT* magazine was highly significant. Many of the archival magazines were influenced by work of the counter-culture.

Liz Naylor and Bob Dickinson, both of whom were writers on *City Life* magazine of Manchester in the late 1970s, shared their experiences with me at Urbis. Each had a different opinion on what a fanzine was and what defined Punk.

What came under the heading of fanzines in the archive could be separated into two factions: alternative papers and fanzines. The alternative papers were more likely to have counter-cultural connections and be politically informed. The fanzines were not.

What became apparent after some investigation was that the fanzines were more informative as cultural and social documents than as visual or seditious paraphernalia.

Paul Morley and Anthony Wilson have both discussed the phenomenon of Punk in my presence and in the company of a large audience at Urbis, Manchester. The audience input was more enlightening as it demonstrated the sometimes parochial nature of Punk.

The Manchester based audience were vocal in their praise of the Manchester Punk scene, and equally scathing of the London based music press; revealing not only the subjectivity of personal definitions, but also a surviving north/south grudge.

Meetings with Jon Savage and Jamie Reid have been invaluable. Jon Savage, in particular, has been extremely helpful.

Methodology

At the start of this thesis several questions were raised about the role of Punk fanzines and their importance in defining a youth phenomenon at its birth. Subjectivity, shifting agendas and passing time have shaped memories of the period so an objective and primary source such as *England's Dreaming: The Jon Savage Archive* is invaluable.

Fanzines were a national and international phenomenon. For the purposes of clarity it was necessary to focus on British fanzines and the British Punk scene. American, European and Australian fanzines were produced at the same time but the flashpoints of the phenomenon were initially New York and London.

The politics of resistance were not necessarily directed at authority figures. The music press are the *bete noir* of the fanzines. Fanzines came about directly as a result of dissatisfaction with the music press. Mark Perry in *Sniffin' Glue* called for others to write their own fanzines and many did, creating a nominally independent community.

The definition of Punk was problematic and was interpreted in different ways, by different factions. A north/south divide is apparent. Northern based fanzines are suspicious of London centric fanzines such as *Sniffin' Glue* as they are too closely involved with the London scene and a London based music press. Northern fanzines frequently accused Londoners of being *poseurs* rather than real Punks.

The evidence of contemporary fanzines does not corroborate the mythology of Punk. A ‘situationist scam’, should it be true, would have appalled fanzine readers who railed against manipulation and control by the media. The media were despised for, amongst other things, talking down to their readers; the fanzines were seen as an egalitarian voice.

Evidence in the fanzines also questions the notion that counter-cultural change filters down. Fanzines harnessed a remarkable energy of tribal loyalty and were responsible not only for reporting on a phenomenon, but for disseminating it. Their importance in the propagation of a sub-culture has not, until now, been addressed. However, there was a divergence between Punk the *sub*-culture and Punk the *counter*-culture, with fanzines championing the former rather than the latter.

The unique facility of *England’s Dreaming: The Jon Savage Archive* was the primary source of my research. Other sources were investigated subsequently, but the initial stages involved familiarising myself with the fanzines preserved in the archive. The phenomenon of Punk was international but as New York and London were crucial to its inception, the first fanzines studied were from those areas.

The fanzines initially presented as a visual phenomenon. I investigated the context of Punk, from sources within the archive and external to it, and the influences of notable people involved. The Punk style of graphics was an integral part of the movement’s branding in Britain, so it was important to understand the source of visual influences. As

Punk was also considered political and as that had played a large part in informing Punk style and attitude, seditious art and related ideologies were also investigated.

Punk has acquired mythologies since the late 1970s, so an investigation into different definitions of Punk, preserved in archival material is highly revealing. The visuals of early American Punk magazines suggested the influence of 1960s counter-culture. An interview with guitarist Lenny Kaye of New York based *Patti Smith* group confirmed that American and British perceptions of Punk differed. British Punk, and British sub-culture in general was more tribal and less tolerant of differences than the American version. (He uses the example of hair style and its importance to British sub-cultural identity).

American Punk, in spite of counter-cultural influences apparent in its early art work, was not considered political. The counter-cultural branch of British Punk was more politically informed than its sub-cultural counterpart, but both factions united against a perception a state brutality. Punk was politicised in that it was pro-active; producing *Rock Against Racism* and the *Anti-Nazi League* which united thousands of young people at rallies and concerts, and was successful in raising awareness of racial oppression. But some of Punk's branding was at odds with apparent left-wing sympathies. The swastika was ironically appropriated in punk fashions and graphics as an icon of outrage, but 'Oi' music – rooted in working class Punk - was later to have more literal connections with the right wing. Punk is not a homogenous term and all apparent paradoxes required investigation.

The British style of Punk graphics, devised by Jamie Reid, is later present in American fanzines which eventually jettison counter-cultural illustration in favour of the ripped and torn montage associated with his work. Although Punk music has been described as ‘defined by America’² it was successfully refined in Britain. .

Artistic and political influences on Punk graphics were evidenced in many Punk publications, but were not necessarily evident in the archival fanzines. It became apparent that the term ‘Punk’ was not universal and also that fanzines differed greatly.

Jamie Reid created the art work associated with Punk band the *Sex Pistols*. He explained in interview that he was influenced by Dada and the Situationists. The understanding of many commentators of Punk was that many British participants also were and that would be evident in fanzines.

The home made archival magazines reveal differing criteria. Some writers did plagiarise the avant-garde and demonstrated an understanding of their papers as actively cultural. They referenced an interest in music but did not focus on it. Other magazines might eschew illustration but be entirely focussed on music. Although the producers of both styles of publication could refer to their papers as fanzines, I have focussed on the latter group. As much has already been written about an avant-garde timeline to Punk, it was necessary to investigate other aspects of the phenomenon.

The fanzines demonstrate a type of Punk which is mainly proletarian; the roots of later 'Oi' music. They demonstrate the north/south divide which was prevalent at the time with northern fanzines displaying hostility towards the comparatively affluent south. There is evidence of a battle for ownership of Punk which is reactionary to change – paradoxically as its participants envisage themselves as young rebels.

Lenny Kaye's comments on the tribal nature of British Punk and the apparent factions within it suggested a further line of research in the British Library's Newspaper collection. The conservative nature of urban streets gangs and their hierarchical structures parallels the proletarian model of Punk, with its parochial template, evident in fanzines.

Punk made fashionable an urban aesthetic. It embraced different classes but paradoxically, class identity still informed definitions of Punk and certain factions of it were reactionary. An investigation of archival fanzines provides an opportunity to define Punk's different factions, and to find out why ownership of the phenomenon was so problematic.

Hard wired for heroes: a study of Punk fanzines, fandom, and the historical antecedents of the Punk movement.

Introduction.

Were fanzines merely a by-product of Punk, or did they contribute its creation? They embody perfectly the oft quoted DIY ethos of the mid to late 1970s; a victory of youthful enthusiasm over experience, but their ephemeral nature has led to their significance being overlooked.³ This thesis investigates the cultural significance of early home made Punk fanzines and examines their role in Punk's propagation.

England's Dreaming: The Jon Savage Archive is a unique collection of research material compiled by Jon Savage and used as the primary source for his book *England's Dreaming. The Sex Pistols and Punk Rock*. The archive contains music papers, contemporary publications, photographs and taped interviews relating to the Punk period of the mid to late 1970s. Also contained within the archive are Punk fanzines. No other collection as complete and comprehensive as *England's Dreaming: The Jon Savage Archive* exists elsewhere.

Punk in general has been the subject of much analysis but the received history of Punk is predicated on an incomplete genealogy. The study of fanzines presents an opportunity to study the beginnings of Punk, and to understand how it was interpreted and enacted by a community of fans away from the media spotlight. Fanzines demonstrate a driving force of sub-culture which up to now has not been fully acknowledged. But before determining how significant they were in the dissemination of a sub-culture, it is necessary to define

them and their cultural and social context. Fanzines were home-made publications produced by enthusiastic amateurs but a plethora of magazines were produced around the period that could equally be defined in the same way. Bob Dickinson⁴, one of the team of writers responsible for producing the Manchester based *City Fun* magazine, has said that a detailed history of fanzines would be impossible to compile as they are too many and varied. During a group discussion on Punk Fanzines at Urbis,⁵ in Manchester, which he and fellow *City Fun* writer, Liz Naylor were conducting, it was generally agreed that even defining a fanzine was problematic. However, most of the people present during the discussion, had been directly involved in producing fanzines in the Manchester area, and it is revealing that many of their anecdotes revolved around personal encounters with Punk musicians and memorable gigs. It is true that many archival magazines do vary enormously but though definitions are problematic, certain identifiable criteria recur, primarily a focus on music.

Claiming that a fanzine focuses on music may appear to be stating the obvious, but many publications which have come under the same heading, have had broader concerns. Their differing agendas reveal how confusion has arisen over the origins of Punk and why there has been continuing debate over class ownership of the phenomenon. The fanzines under investigation focus on music, and also demonstrate their writers' assumptions about the class and affluence of their readership - which is presumed to be under-privileged and unemployed. They display an almost reactionary response to the interventions of the music press, and of perceived cultural appropriation of 'their' movement. They reveal the naïve fervour of the fan, and the energy of a sub-culture, rather than the artistic awareness

and experimentation of a counter-culture. For the purposes of this investigation, the criteria referred to above indicates a 'true' fanzine; a vehicle of fandom, which by definition was primarily concerned with music, but which strove for autonomy and attempted to disseminate a version of Punk's ideology untainted by commercialism and free from the manipulation of the music press and the mass media.

Punk fanzines were a product of a *sub*-cultural version of Punk with an ideology grounded in the working class, but other magazines reflected *counter*-cultural Punk. The latter group were concerned with music but understood it as a slice of a cultural whole. Their agendas and ideologies tended to be broader, and were more similar to those of the underground press of the 1960s than to 1970s fanzines. A magazine like Manchester's *City Fun* is more accurately described as a counter-cultural alternative paper than a fanzine. It was not aggressively proletarian. Rather than being reactionary (as the fanzines tended to be having chosen their mode of rebellion) *City Fun* was anti-establishment. Its writers condoned the use of illegal drugs, sympathising with alleged police harassment, but still strove to engage their readers in broader cultural concerns by promoting plays as well as Punk bands, and including short stories as well as reviews.

Personal testimony has played a large part in contributing to the story of Punk, but while oral histories have a valid place in research they are prone to subjectivity. Similarly, defining a timeline for its evolution is also highly subjective. An 'either/or' argument tends to emerge. Punk was either initiated in America or in Britain; Punk was either a working class phenomenon or it was a product of the art school; Punk was either 'year

zero' or it plagiarised the past. Such reductive definitions are unlikely to be accurate as any youth movement will borrow (knowingly or otherwise) from historical and contemporary sources. What has been missing from Punk's history is the objective and contemporary primary source provided by fanzines. They demonstrate how zealots of a new movement perceived the phenomenon of Punk when it happened and how they strove to retain a sense of ownership and identity in the face of commercial and intellectual appropriation. Fanzines evidence an almost evangelical desire to keep Punk unadulterated by mass media influences.

The 'true' fanzines apparently focussed on music and musicians but fanzine writers also considered themselves self appointed guardians of the cause. Their overt agenda was to provide for their readers an unmediated analysis of their heroes' prowess without the intervention of a distrusted music press. But whilst advocating free-thinking and a non-adherence to the shallow demands of fashion, they set their own parameters of Punk and were puritanical about those who transgressed. Although universally critical of the music press' power to make or break a star, fanzine writers could be even harsher critics. They monitored their heroes rigorously, ever watchful for evidence of a band or performer 'selling out'. As a band's commercial success was viewed with suspicion, there was a paradox present in fandom.

Richard Schickel describes the 'monomyth' which defines the role of the hero in three parts. In the first act there is drama and separation; in the second there are initiatory trials, and in the third, there is the triumphant return and reintegration with society.⁶ The

pattern, he asserts, is one repeated in all classic tales, but it can also be related to the travails of an up and coming Punk star. He removes himself from his home group by joining a band; he achieves (quantifiable) success after undergoing trials and tribulation, but it is the 'triumphant return' which is difficult for a newly proclaimed Punk hero. If he remains distant from his fan base (materially and ideologically) he has abandoned them and they have lost ownership. But material success is tantalising for the rising star.

Fanzines demonstrate a strong sense of community, their group identity based on a common love of specified bands and musicians. The underground status of the musicians bound the fanzine community together. Commercial success was perceived as a betrayal of Punk's supposed integrity. Similarly, the same paradox hung over the writers who edited or contributed to fanzines. A fanzine writer who gained too high a profile, could be accused of selling out or betraying the fan base.

It is remarkable how many fanzine contributors are anonymous. Sometimes their anonymity was an expedient as many of the writers would have been in receipt of social security benefits. However, even in the draconian times of the mid to late 1970s the risk of benefit fraud was not overwhelming, as many of the fanzines ran at a financial loss or barely broke even.

Fanzine editorials frequently commented on how much money their publications lost - as a testimony to their selfless devotion to their community of fans. Any fanzines teetering on the brink of financial success could risk losing credibility amongst the fanzine

fraternity, as demonstrating business acumen was not the primary motivation – although a degree of entrepreneurial skill had to be present to produce a paper. Fanzines were not a vehicle for personal ambition; their agenda was to create a trustworthy source of information, and a positive ideology of inclusion. Making too much money compromised the mission statement.

Many of the contributing writers were forgettable rather than anonymous. There was a call for readers to contribute and although the motive may have been egalitarian, it did not necessarily make for good copy. The more ambitious writer could be accused of being an aspiring music journalist, but the music press was reviled (although still read) by the Punk community. Punk, as defined by fanzine writers, did not have a template to cope with success.

Editorial examples survive of un-named writers with a passion for their cause, calling on other believers to contribute articles and reviews to particular fanzines. Fans were devotees and the fanzines were votive offerings and the religious parallels are difficult to resist. Fanzines defined a fundamentalist Punk and the further they were away from London, the more resistant to London fashion they tended to be. London was perceived by many northern fanzines as the home of *faux* Punk; a place where fashion rather than free will dictated tastes. Based on an analysis of the *England's Dreaming: The Jon Savage Archive*, there is much evidence of a north/south divide.

In my research it has been important to make distinctions between types of publications. A fanzine must not be confused with an alternative magazine, though some fanzines evolved in that direction. Alternative magazines of the 1960s were concerned with counter-cultural issues and although music featured and played a primary role in defining counter-cultural loyalties, they were not music magazines. The underground publications of the 1960s onwards were intellectual. Not in the sense that they were intentionally exclusive, but in the sense that they were written by educated people with the desire to raise awareness of the hypocrisies and injustices of the establishment. The counter-cultural era of the 1960s produced a blossoming of alternative mags which were associated with every aspect of the scene including music but they were not proletarian publications.

Fanzines, on the other hand, were an important part of the street culture of Punk though some were undoubtedly influenced by the alternative press and mainstream music papers. *City Fun*, a Manchester based magazine is a good example of how an amateur publication evolved into something far more sophisticated, fundamentally changing the nature of the magazine in the process. The progress of the magazine charts the journey from Punk to post Punk as the early issues, where a zealous egalitarianism is apparent, have more in common with fanzines. *City Fun* began with an ethos of collective responsibility. Their production team took no individual credit for articles submitted as they operated a no-by-line policy for some time. A similar egalitarianism was extended to their external contributors who were always included; neither group was privileged over the other. The *City Fun* team originally considered that if a contributor had thought it worthwhile to

write, then they must consider it worthwhile to publish; a policy of unquestioning inclusivity which features in most fanzines. Music reviews featured heavily, as did advice for new bands. The doctrine of helping the youth community extended to sharing experiences of alleged police harassment (a significant part of *City Fun*'s concern). However when the magazine was re-launched in 1979 after a lull in production, their former policy of printing contributions from the public was rejected. It was now considered by the (named and sometimes combative) writing team that relying on contributions allowed people with 'nothing to say' having articles included.⁷

City Fun was a culturally significant magazine produced with ambitiously creative production values and by 1979 its cultural remit was too broad for it to be considered a fanzine. However, J.C. – one of the regular team of writers – said that *City Fun* had never intended to be a fanzine, even though it was frequently regarded as such⁸ implying that even at the outset, the paper had higher aspirations.

Fanzine writers of the Punk period tended to gravitate towards a presumed common denominator which was poor and proletarian. Much of the Punk collective was from an under-privileged background but a side effect of Punk's success meant that it was fashionable to adopt an urban pose. Fanzine editorials could be censorious about buying Punk fashion off the peg as there was a wariness about commercialisation but the look could be acquired by wearing an eclectic mix of charity shop chic, and customising one's old clothes. Advice on cheaper ways to acquire the look also helped spread the idea of

assembling something new from cast-offs, so, in spite of their ambivalence towards fashion, fanzine writers helped to promote it.

Punk was mythologised by the music press in the early days with 1976 being described as year zero⁹ but journalistic intervention and the shifting emphasis of personal testimonies can sometimes muddy the waters rather than clarify. A prevalent myth is that Punk was ‘invented’ by a few significant people. At its most extreme, the conceit is that Punk was a situationist experiment orchestrated by Malcolm McLaren and Jamie Reid when McLaren launched the Sex Pistols in 1975, but American Punk predated British Punk.¹⁰ Simon Frith and Howard Horne observe that ‘McLaren’s importance was to make pop situationism the most convincing explanation of the maelstrom in which the *Sex Pistols* found themselves.’¹¹ So that rather than being a total shambles, the *Sex Pistols* were successfully subverting ‘a culture of commodities’.¹²

Such contrivances are compelling but questionable. Punk music was something that was bubbling under the British and American scenes in 1975. The terminology was American vernacular,¹³ and although there was a synchronicity of sorts on either side of the Atlantic, America must take the first credit for producing Punk. The American garage bands of the 1960s embodied the energy of the psychedelic era¹⁴ and Punk could be construed as a reprise. John Peel argued that Punk’s influences went back further still claiming that Punk ‘restated the truth of 1950s rock and roll and 1960s beat.’¹⁵ Punk was not a new musical art-form (more radical musical experimentation was to follow) and the

Sex Pistols' success, according to Simon Frith and Howard Horne, was due to 'the old fashioned rock quality of a hard rhythm section and Johnny Rotten's charisma'.¹⁶

Nor were the musical influences within the band particularly radical. Anthony Wilson revealed that at the time of their success, the favourite band of the *Sex Pistols*' guitarist Steve Jones, were middle of the road rockers *Boston*.¹⁷ Add to this Jon Savage's debunking of the myth about McLaren as a Svengali figure responsible for the formation of the *Sex Pistols*. Savage reveals that it was Steve Jones' persistent pestering of McLaren, which resulted in the latter's involvement.¹⁸ The situationist scheme then begins to appear more like ingenious damage limitation following the debacle of the band's infamous appearance on Thames Television's *Today* programme in December 1976.¹⁹

The music scene may have been compromised by commerciality somewhere in between, but the basic energy of the 1960s was reprised by the pub scene in the UK and the Punk scene in New York. The packaging of Punk is British, but it is the nature of the packaging which has created the most confusion about Punk's origins; which is where a systematic examination of fanzines throws some light into the darker corners of Punk's history.

The initial explosion of Punk was documented as it happened. Punk fanzines were written by young people in that moment of heightened awareness; the passionate watershed of adolescence, when allegiances are formed and all authority is challenged. It is not always

an easy time of life to evaluate retrospectively, as youthful intensity often seems daftly inappropriate from the dizzy heights of a certain age. But while juvenile heroes may have become a little tarnished over time what can be recalled is the energy, and it is the selfless energy of the newly converted zealot which can fuel social change. What separates the fanzine from the alternative magazine – earnest and intellectual though the latter may be – is a notion of tribal identity and intense loyalty. The editorials generate a sense of comradeship which over-rides personal ambition. The fanzine writer wants to be involved in the buzz of the new thing; the alternative magazine writer is more likely to have intellectual and professional aspirations.

Punk was in many ways a new episode of counter cultural change begun in the 1960s. A significant proportion of the magazines which have, until now, come under the convenient term of fanzines, are descendents of *IT* magazine or *OZ*. The provenance of the fanzine was intellectually weak and populist but as with many publications that have historically flown under the radar, still revealing of their times. Alternative magazines of the Punk period, with their historical association with the intelligentsia and the avant-garde, were the manifestation of cultural evolution. Punk fanzines, with their youthful ideals of camaraderie and their despising of personal ambition and the star system were not so much new as unsullied by experience. Far from being nihilistic, Punk, and all other youth movements before and since encompass an energy, which can extend itself into social change.

Frith and Horne relate sociological assumptions about 1960s hippy culture and 1970s Punk; that hippy youth culture was a middle-class response to affluence and Punk was a working class response to decay,²⁰ which suggests that Punk was a counterpoint to the 1960s counter-culture. But 'hippy culture' and Punk were both fragmented and open to interpretation and mediation.²¹ Concerns about packaging and image construction pre-date Punk, but with Punk, the packaging has been overly interpreted, and class provenance is obscured. Fanzines under investigation reflect a largely working class origin, but that could equally reflect the fractured nature of a youth movement.

Punk fanzines, as Bob Dickinson observes,²² are so many and varied that the compiling of a precise history is problematic. But there are recurring themes that distinguish fanzines from their counter-cultural cousins, the alternative press. Fanzines are unburdened by intellectual pretension; most of their writers eschew egotism - though individualism is crucial, it tends to be subsumed in tribal identity; and they demonstrate a touching lack of cynicism in their peers. Most significantly they demonstrate the heartfelt passion of the true fan. However intellectually valid the motives of the key celebrities of Punk may have been, it would not have been such a phenomenal success had it not been for its popular appeal. It is possible to argue further that it was already an urban reality and was emerging from London pubs and clubs, before it was appropriated by the *fashionistas* who claimed and packaged it.

Mark Perry, in issue number one of *Sniffin' Glue* printed in July 1976, depicts the tastes of the London scene. *The Ramones* are the most prominently featured band. *The Sex*

Pistols appear, without any undue prominence alongside other high energy rock bands then playing on the small pub and club circuit, such as *Eddie and the Hot Rods*, *The Damned*, *The Stranglers* and *Roogalator*.²³ (*Sniffin' Glue* number one was published several months before the *Sex Pistols* appeared on *Today*). Perry's appeal to his readers to contribute to the scene rather than be passive consumers inspired many fans to vie for autonomy by producing their own fanzines, but the media furore which followed the *Today* programme skewed the setting.

When investigating a counter-cultural flashpoint such as Punk, maintaining objectivity can be problematic. The growing cultural credibility of the phenomenon and its continuing resonance can make eye-witnesses unreliable in their retrospection. The intellectualisation of Punk established academic 'truisms' one of the most persistent being that though Punk was commonly perceived as a working class phenomenon, it was a product of the middle class art school. The association was largely due to the *Sex Pistols* chaotic emergence into the public gaze and Punk subsequently becoming synonymous with that band and its manager's alleged plan. The anecdotal evidence of other witnesses who disputed that provenance was dismissed as being erroneous. There was allegedly a meaning at the core; some were privileged to the knowledge and others were not. However, the assertion that this street movement was, for example, part of an ingenious situationist stunt is not corroborated by evidence found in contemporary fanzines. Had it not been for the energy and enthusiasm of fans (Punk fans and not specifically *Sex Pistols* fans) whose agenda was viscerally inspired rather than cerebrally, the movement would never have succeeded.

The context of the mid to late 1970s created a pessimistic environment – a stark contrast to the optimism of the 1960s - which had already informed urban style and attitude prior to the term ‘Punk’ being coined on this side of the Atlantic. The word was first used to describe a musical genre emerging from New York’s CBGBs club. Legs McNeil and John Holmstrom started the New York based *Punk* magazine in the winter of 1975, which showcased the new music. CBGBs manager Hilly Kristal had wanted to call it the music ‘street rock’ but the word ‘punk’ defined the moment and quickly caught on.²⁴ What had added to the swiftness of propagation was its distribution by 7-11 stores²⁵ and owing to late night shopping venues stocking it, *Punk* magazine almost immediately had a circulation of 30,000 per issue. The British music press reported on the new music and *Punk* was also available in the United Kingdom.

For counter-cultural changes to occur, ideas may be assimilated from any strata of society, but to be embraced and to thrive they must emerge organically from the environs. A culture cannot be imposed; it must evolve. Fanzines demonstrate how cultural change can be promulgated by the simplest of media, with no ammunition other than youthful passion, when conditions are right and the will for change is present.

But crucial to Punk’s success was the charisma of Punk’s stars as suggested by Frith and Horne above. Entertainers have historically had a dysfunctional relationship with society at large and Punk entertainers were marginalised further by being on the cultural fringe and also by being young. Punk heroes, therefore, were more likely to present as

mainstream rogues. But the celebration of subversion is not new and British populist culture has always evidenced a liking for the charismatic scoundrel. The *Penny Dreadful* of the Victorian era, for example, celebrated the lives of notorious individuals such as highwayman Dick Turpin and thief and gaol escapee Jack Shepherd. When they were boys, infamous 1960s villains, Ronnie and Reggie Kray kept a scrap-book of their heroes; successful gangsters, boxers and military men, to which they eventually started adding newspaper cuttings of their own exploits.²⁶ Many fanzines are reminiscent of community scrap books; cataloguing the exploits of their chosen heroes.

Finally as this thesis demonstrates, Punk fanzines were also attempting to suspend the development of Punk at some imaginary point of perfection just before commercial success corrupted it.

Chapter 1: Gangs, Fans and Anti-Heroes

The first issue of Punk fanzine *Sniffin' Glue* came out in July 1976. The concept of the fanzine was not new but what was original about this magazine was its authorship and production. Around the same time a spate of home made music magazines, written and produced by enthusiasts, appeared. They were distributed by various means; sometimes in local record shops and often they were sold in pubs or at gigs. The cover charge may have paid for production costs, but frequently they were produced at a loss. Financial gain was less important than gaining autonomy. The assertion that you can 'do it yourself' if you want to - was disseminated by fanzines. They encouraged their readers to form their own bands, and they also encouraged them to write their own fanzines. Not many original fanzines have survived, but a unique collection is preserved in *England's Dreaming: The Jon Savage Archive*. Taken as a collection they may be broadly described as amateurish, but in both form and content these fanzines are a social document which attests to the energy and drive of a youth or sub-culture.

Punk differed from preceding youth cultures in that it was the product of a class clash; a fusion of fashionable counter-culture and street smart. Working class behaviour has been interpreted in a heavily biased manner- a fact particularly well documented in Victorian times – and defiance to authority was interpreted as a sign of low intellect or even criminality. The Victorian societal system was based on hierarchy. A notorious, and now omitted, verse in the popular 1848 hymn 'All things bright and beautiful' confirms a prevailing belief in a natural order: *'The rich man in his castle, the poor man at his gate,*

He made them, high or lowly, and ordered their estate'.²⁷ A controlling middle class interpreted any working class attempts at autonomy as being anti-social and amoral, and punished any miscreants severely. Oral histories of the late nineteenth century demonstrate a resentment of the system and express joy at occasionally baulking it.²⁸

Nineteenth century populist literature catered for a working class and lower middle class audience. Charles H. Ross, a *Penny Dreadful* author, created the earliest successful comic character of *Ally Sloper* in 1867. Sloper, illustrated by Ross' wife, using her professional name of Marie Duval, appeared in the magazine *Judy* published by Gilbert Dalziel. In Victorian slang, a sloper was someone who 'sloped off' when the landlord came to call for the rent. Sloper was drunken, lecherous and dim; depicted with a large red nose and battered top hat and was probably the inspiration for W.C. Fields' comic persona.²⁹ Sloper's character was given his own monthly magazine, *Ally Sloper's Half Holiday* in May 1884³⁰, and its success led to the appearance of many similar publications.

The middle class panicked about unsuitable literature falling into the hands of children. In particular the lurid *Penny Dreadful* was blamed for crimes committed by working class youth. It was believed that a child accustomed to reading such bloodthirsty tales 'cannot fail to develop many ferocious traits.'³¹ Comics of the 1890s were not written for children and many adults considered them to be as corrupting as the *Penny Dreadful*. *Larks!* published in 1893 features a gang of toughs called the *Ball's Pond Banditti*. Oral histories of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries recount how such comics would be confiscated and how girls in particular were not allowed to read *Larks!* because of the

strong language used by the gang.³² The appearance of populist literature was significant in engendering social change. Copy-cat gangs such as those featured in the popular comics, appeared around the country in the 1890s and a causal connection seems to be evidenced.

Working class ‘culture’ as Stephen Humphries has argued³³ is not read as such and a biased and pejorative reading has contributed to its significance being overlooked. This chapter will demonstrate how very early street culture has informed and influenced the apparently disparate and historically remote Punk movement. It will argue that the laudatory reaction of the young towards rogues and mischief-makers – society’s anti-heroes – is not a modern phenomenon; and finally, why the events of 1976 were to act as a catalyst producing the cultural hybrid of Punk.

Punk fanzines celebrate music and musicians - awarding the latter with heroic status; they are the leaders and the fans are the followers. Rogan Taylor³⁴ asks, ‘why do superstars of show business appear to possess the charismatic powers of religious prophets? Why are popular singers worshipped sometimes to the point of hysteria by their fans? Could it be that show business has become the real religion of our times?’³⁵ Marginalised social groups have always celebrated subversion with Church and State being primary targets.³⁶ The stage became an arena for irreverent lampoonery and satire from the seventeenth century onwards, creating an environment both secular and morally contentious (a condition which has contributed to its dubious reputation) and also providing an ideal

platform for the development of the cult hero. In a largely secular and youth biased society, such as that of the 1970s, talent, youth and charisma inspire religiosity.

In traditionally marginalised groups, those who baulk authority are admired by their peers. Hero-worship and lionising of certain individuals in larger social groups is a pattern of parochial behaviour writ large, and when there is a pervading sense of powerlessness or injustice, the desire for a people's champion would seem to be innate. The mocking of the establishment; the lampooning of those in power, may be a natural reaction to authority – and there appears to be much evidence of historical precedents that suggest this is so. Dialectically opposed to the alpha group, an *omega* group; of rogues, villains and mischief makers, may exact even more admiration from less advantaged quarters. The anti-hero has a history as long as his more illustrious protagonist and his role is cathartic. For example in 1875 a Welsh miner is quoted as saying that the real heroes of the working class were robbers like Jack Shepherd, Dick Turpin and Charles Peace³⁷, 'whose *Penny Dreadful* biographies we knew by heart'³⁸.

In the eighteenth century the public could find out about the antics of villains, popular and otherwise, via a fourpenny pamphlet called *The Old Bailey Sessions* – a journalistic account of crimes and evidence given in court. A true life precursor to the Victorian *Penny Dreadful* it was sold on the street and at various outlets around London. Later on, from the 1760s, similarly lurid information was supplied by *The Newgate Calender* – otherwise known as *The Malefactor's Bloody Register*³⁹.

Eighteenth century villains, such as the thief Jack Shepherd, could acquire celebrity if they bucked the system. Shepherd escaped from Newgate Gaol three times and by the time he was eventually hanged in 1724 he had become a folk hero with thousands lining the route along Oxford Street to cheer him to his execution at Tyburn⁴⁰. Satirist John Gay took advantage of Shepherd's popularity and based a character called Macheath on him in his play *The Beggar's Opera*, which opened in 1728. Macheath's adversary was a character called Peachum who was satirising the then Prime Minister Robert Walpole. Gay, was part of a group of writers calling themselves '*The Scriblerians*', who used the printed word and the medium of the stage to satirise the hypocrisies of a corrupt government. The play's hero is a highwayman – more glamorous than a common thief – but still a criminal. Celebrity status is also awarded to the previously unknown actor playing Macheath; Thomas Walker. Walker became a star, with local rakes about town copying his swagger and toasting his health.⁴¹

Satirical sniping from the sidelines may seem innocuous enough but negative propaganda can have political consequences. Walpole was aware of the damage done to his political reputation by Gay's satire and banned the sequel to *The Beggar's Opera* - a play called *Polly*. The influence of satirists, even if initially mischievous, does eventually affect public opinion and has a real influence on the balance of power especially if broadcast in a populist arena. A template for sub-cultures and the more politicised counter-cultures, including Punk, is established at this point. What is also evident is our fascination with a roguish hero; the power of personal charisma, and the importance of the cheap populist pamphlet in spreading the word.

Other motifs of dissent or rebellion can enter common parlance via literature and folk fears. John Gay's play *The Mohocks*, written in 1712 though never performed featured the exploits of a notorious gang who were certainly active at the early part of that century, and possibly before. The gang, who named themselves after an American tribe from the eastern seaboard, were not from the same social class as the usual assortment of street ruffians. They were more likely to be wealthy amoral libertines. John Gay writes:

*Come fill up the glass,
Round, round let it pass,
'Til our Reason be lost in Wine:
Leave Conscience's Rules
To Women and Fools,
This can only make us divine.
The a Mohock, a Mohock I'll be,
No Laws shall restrain
Our Libertine Reign,
We'll riot, drink on and be free⁴².*

Upper class villainy is even more invidious than lower class thuggery, in that its well connected perpetrators may have had less to fear from the law than the lower orders. An awareness of upper class hypocrisy and the exquisite display of good manners employed by Gay's motley cast of villains and ne'er do wells in the *Beggars Opera*, probably

contributed to its success. The catharsis of mockery, as we have seen, is a perennial, but underpinning the need for mockery is fear. Londoners were fearful of the inequalities of the system, but on the streets, the system failed them completely. In John Gay's London, the streets were full of gangs. This poem suggests that the Mohocks were well known and feared, as were their contemporaries the *Scowrers* and the *Nickers*.

*Now is the time that rakes their revels keep,
Kindlers of riot, enemies of sleep:
His scattered pence the flying Nicker flings,
And with the copper shower the casement rings;
Who has not heard the Scowerers' midnight fame?
Who has not trembled at the Mohocks' name?⁴³*

Gay was not the only contemporary writer to refer to the activities of the Mohock gangs. Francis Grose in his dictionary of slang, *The Vulgar Tongue*⁴⁴ originally published in 1785, makes several references to the anti-social activities of the Mohocks.⁴⁵ The Mohocks as bully-boy rakes became glamorised over time. They were reprised in 1960s cult television programme *The Avengers*⁴⁶ and also featured in a 1968 *Avengers*' comic strip.⁴⁷ Called *young bloods* by contemporaries, a term which was diminished to *bloods*, there is some suggestion that the term *bloody* can be traced back to the Mohocks⁴⁸. Their relative freedom from the law due to their class allowed them to be brazen and highly visible criminals referenced in literature but their bloody behaviour is a part of folk memory.

The Mohock, otherwise known as the Mohawk or Mohican had also become a part of the collective memory via another means. James Fenimore Cooper's book *The Last of the Mohicans* was published in 1826 as part of a group of five 'leather-skin tales' of the American frontier⁴⁹. The story remained popular both in the USA and in Europe and in 1920 it was made as a silent film, directed by Jacques Tourneur⁵⁰. In August 1942 the story appeared as an American comic book⁵¹ and by now the Mohawk or Mohican haircut; with hair plucked from the sides of the head leaving a strip along the centre, was recognisable to both American and British audiences. Familiar also was the Mohican dress mode of moccasins, leggings and buckskin kilt. The image of the Mohican, thanks to Fenimore Cooper's story line, is far more positive and heroic in this context.

It was shortly after the publication of *The Last of the Mohicans* in comic book form that Robert Capa (1913-1954) took what is alleged to be the first photograph of the cultural appropriation of the Mohawk haircut. (fig. 1) The photograph, taken on March 23rd 1945, shows a group of US paratroopers with heads shaven (not plucked) with a remaining strip of hair down the centre of their heads. They were due to go into action in Germany and all had the haircut for 'luck and *esprit de corps*'.⁵² The American Mohawk was the antithesis of the English Mohock – the latter being the worst and most fearsome of many⁵³ contemporary hobgoblins. The 'Red Indian' motif recurs in both gang and sub-culture and could be morally ambivalent⁵⁴.

Violent anti-social behaviour is as old as society but as Geoffrey Pearson argues⁵⁵ there is an ongoing perception that the young are more badly behaved than their predecessors; that contemporary crimes are more violent and that urban spaces become increasingly more dangerous. He argues that this perception has always been with us and that the predominantly middle aged view of the recent past being a safer place is simply wrong. However, equally wrong is the cyclical assumption of successive generations that they are the inventors of bad behaviour⁵⁶. Pearson's premise is that society has always feared youth-led moral and social breakdown, and that each generation believes its young thugs to be the most villainous to date. Evidence suggests that a nostalgic view of the recent past as being more ordered and less violent is consistent, but wrong. Pearson demonstrates that the perception of moral decay is cyclical.

Adolescence is a turbulent time and the peak age for criminal offence reflects this. The age can be influenced by external factors however. When the school leaving age was raised from fifteen to sixteen in 1972, for instance, statistics indicated that the peak age for criminal offences shifted accordingly. More crime was committed by sixteen year olds during the transition between school, work, or dole.⁵⁷ Similarly, other external factors can influence the nature of sub cultures. Post war affluence had a dramatic affect on youth culture but changes of half a century earlier made a significant impact on urban life which led to the introduction of an embryonic youth style.

Eric Hobsbawm writes of the transformation of urban life in the last few decades of the nineteenth century. Alluding to the increased availability of such things as fruit and

vegetables, the fish and chip shop and railway seaside excursions, he describes what is usually thought of as being the traditional working class life–style. But these staples of working class life had been made possible as a result of a marginal increase in working class affluence between 1870 and 1900⁵⁸. The comparative affluence allowed the working class more choice in clothes, food and a readier access to entertainment – pre-figuring the cultural changes that were to happen in the post-war period. Geoffrey Pearson argues that the young working class then adapted the clothing that was available in order to create their own style.⁵⁹

Ironically, given the nostalgia associated with a supposedly traditional working class way of life, at the time it was viewed with some alarm. All aspects of low populist entertainment then available to the comparatively affluent workers were regarded with suspicion by a controlling middle class. The *Penny Dreadful* – cheap sensationalist literature which preceded comics - were considered by the middle classes to encourage crime and immoral behaviour⁶⁰, and the Music Hall received harsh criticism for lowering standards of decency and encouraging crime. Populist entertainment (not considered culture, low or otherwise) was seen as being complicit with youthful bad behaviour. Anything which might disturb social order needed to be quelled. The arena of popular entertainment was considered a catalyst for moral decline⁶¹.

Concern about urban moral decline was raised by the media in late Victorian England. During the hot summer months, street people; the young pre-marrieds and the jobless, are highly visible, and during the Bank Holiday of August 1898, unusually large numbers

were out. Very many were brought before the courts for criminal behaviour such as drunkenness, robberies, and attacks on the police. The collective name for gangs of thugs was *hooligan*: familiar now but only coming into popular use at the time. The word was Irish in origin and came from a music hall song of the 1890s performed by comedians O'Connor and Brady, about a fictitious Irish family:

Oh, the Hooligans! Oh, the Hooligans!

Always in the riot,

Cannot keep them quiet,

Oh, the Hooligans! Oh, the Hooligans!

They are the boys

To make a noise

*In our backyard.*⁶²

The term 'hooligan' first appeared in London police reports and newspapers in the summer of 1898. Within weeks it had acquired several compounds including *hooliganism*, *hooliganesque*, and the verb *to hooligan*. H.G.Wells included it in his novel *Tono-Bungay* in 1909: 'Three energetic young men of the hooligan type, in neck wraps and caps.' Several suggestions about its origin link it to the Irish family name variously spelt *Hooligan* or *Hoolihan*. However a book by Clarence Rook named *Hooligan Nighst*⁶³ published in 1899 claimed that the word derives from a Patrick Hooligan, a small time bouncer and thief who lived on the south side of the River Thames. With his

family and a small gang of followers he was a regular customer at the Lamb and Flag public house in Southwark. Mr Hooligan murdered a policeman, was put away for life and died in prison. Etymologist, Earnest Weekley, said in his *Romance of Words* of 1912: “The original Hooligans were a spirited Irish family of that name whose proceedings enlivened the drab monotony of life in Southwark about fourteen years ago”.⁶⁴ It would seem from other evidence that *spirited* and *enlivened* are euphemisms.

Street ruffians were considered atypically English. *The Times* of August the 17th 1898 referred to the sudden rise in disorderly behaviour in the streets as ‘something like organised terrorism’, a pre-figuration of contemporary fears. The article goes on to question whether there was a causal link between the hot weather and the rise of gang activity. The piece was called ‘The Weather and the Streets’: ‘It is curious that simultaneously with reports of excessive heat should come the record of an unusual number of crimes and lawless violence ... Does the great heat fire the blood of the London rough or the street arab...?’ *The Times* article went on to question if there was a more pragmatic reason for the link between hot weather and crime; whether heat and thirst led to excessive alcohol consumption as, compounding the discomfort of the hot summer there was also a water shortage. *The News of the World* of August the 28th, 1898, had blamed youths for wasting the water by ‘larking around with street taps’.

The lawlessness of the street was reported in many national newspapers. Some, like *The Echo* of August the 11th, 1898 suggested that some of the stories were exaggerated. Others, like *Reynolds’s Newspaper* of August 14th 1898 said that the current panic

demonstrated the moral neglect of inner city dwellers at a time when missionary zeal was at its height. Such was the fear of street barbarians that *The Times* called for an armed police force. *The Clarion* had a slightly different take on the affair. In a response to *The Times*' article of August the 17th 1898, 'The Weather and the Streets', on August the 20th 1898, *The Clarion* printed a poem written in colloquial English, called, 'Hot Weather and Crime':

*I scarcely can fink
That 'ot weather and drink,
Is sole causes of murders and priggins,
And I'll tell you my views
(Which the same mayn't be news)
Wot I frequent relates to Bill 'Iggins*

*I'm one of the group
Of pore cowves in the soup
I knows wot the treadmill and clink is;
I ain't quite t-t
For I'm boozed frequentlee
So I knows wot the evils of drink is*

*Us chaps drink a lot
When the weather is 'ot –
That statement I will not deny it;*

*But it ought to be told
That we drinks when it's cold
And when e'er we can steal it or buy it*

*We lives and we dies
In foul dens and styes
Without any fun or hexcitement
Like sparrers in cages –
'Ard work and low wages –
Till we figgers vithin a hindictment.⁶⁵*

Without the heatwave of 1898, the numbers on the streets and the subsequent mischief making may not have attracted media attention and copy cat behaviour.

In Britain, the Punk summer of 1976, was also exceptionally hot. A causal link between events such as the beginnings of Punk or the emergence of hooligan gangs and hot weather is difficult to prove, but such unusual heat was enough to bring people out. Jon Savage observes that in very hot weather, 'Life takes to the streets and English isolation melts'.⁶⁶ Savage also quotes Jonh Ingham's comments on the weather of 1976: '...because it's sunny and warm ... there's this great *joie de vivre*. The weather had a lot to do with everyone's positiveness.'⁶⁷

In the 1890s sympathy, and even admiration, for criminals was not uncommon amongst the British working class. Not that this was a new phenomenon as we have seen, but thanks to media reporting, the perception of growing criminality grew. It is probable that media coverage not only contributed to the visibility of criminals and gangs, but that it also resulted in imitation. The gangs that came to public attention during the heat-wave of 1898 had chosen to dress in a certain way. The *Daily Graphic* reported on November the 16th, 1900: ‘The boys affect a kind of uniform. No hat, collar or tie is to be seen. All of them have a peculiar muffler twisted round the neck, a cap set rakishly forward, well over the eyes, and trousers very tight at the knee and very loose at the foot. The most characteristic part of their uniform is the substantial leather belt heavily mounted with metal. It is not ornamental, but then it is not intended for ornament.’ Newspaper illustrations intending to lampoon the hooligans’ dress code provided a template for other youngsters to copy in different parts of the country.

Manchester had gangs called ‘Scuttlers’, taken from the colloquial term ‘scuttling’ meaning fighting.⁶⁸ Rival gangs would war over territory, with the rival gangs’ local ale-house being the most valued prize. Not surprisingly the ale-house was also known as the ‘blood-house’ or the ‘blood-tub’.⁶⁹ Charles Russell, writing in *Manchester Boys* in 1905, describes the Scuttler:

‘You knew him by his dress. A loose white scarf would adorn his throat; his hair was plastered down upon his forehead; he wore a peaked cap over one eye; his trousers were of fustian, and cut – like a sailor’s – with bell bottoms...the most distinctive feature of his attire and make-up.’⁷⁰ The homogenous youth style of bell-bottoms, scarf, heavy belt and

cap, also appeared in the midlands worn by a Birmingham street gang known as the 'Peaky Blinders'.

The Hooligans, the Scuttlers and many other gangs also wore heavily buckled belts. These served as weapons, but also bore customised designs punched into the belt with metal pins. 'Rockers' or 'greasers' of the 1960s and 1970s would similarly customise work clothing such as denim, with punched patterns and studs. Style, however thriftily acquired was important. A later Manchester gang the 'Ikes' or the 'Ikey lads' may have been thus called because of the dress-styles made by local Jewish tailor shops. Latter day working class groups such as the *Teddy Boys* and *The Mods* are possibly pre-figured here.

A popular 'hooligan' hairstyle was known as a 'donkey fringe'⁷¹ would sometimes be customised to add a touch of individuality. *The Daily Graphic* of August the 6th 1898, recounts a youth's appearance in court. 'The appearance of the witness caused some amusement in court. His hair had been clipped as closely as possible to the scalp, with the exception of a small patch on the crown of the head, which was pulled down over the forehead to form a fringe'. Pearson points out that this was probably no more than an exaggeration of the 'donkey fringe' which was the standard hooligan cut, but that it sounds remarkably like the mohican cut – popular with some Teddy Boys in the 1950s and Punks in the 1970s and beyond. Pearson writes, 'here was a youth so far ahead of his time that if he had turned up on the streets of London sixty or seventy years later, he would still have been recognised as a sure sign of an alarmingly unrivalled degeneration among the young,'⁷²

The mohican cut could have a provenance dating back as far as the eighteenth century. Francis Grose⁷³ refers to a hair style known as the *tyburn top*. This was a wig with a forelock pulled down over the eyes, employed by villains of the time, presumably in an attempt to make identification more difficult. It seems very possible that this early street-style was a fore-runner of the later hooligan donkey fringe, with its central exaggerated forelock.

The popular papers of the day may have contributed to a synchronicity of style, but what also may have influenced street gangs in their choice of clothing and attitude were the characters portrayed in *Comic Cuts*. The characters of *Area Sneaker* and *Chokee Bill* (fig.2) are shown in full hooligan gear of hobnail boots, flared trousers, caps and mufflers. Their names are jokes: ‘sneaker’ means thief – and ‘area’ was the space in front of a town house where the tradesman could access ‘below stairs’. Chokee is slang for prison. The reader empathises with the villains, and the policeman – *Fairyfoot the Fat Cop* – is the fool.

Comic Cuts was first published in May, 1890 by Alfred Harmsworth. (*Larks!* – produced by Gilbert Dalziel in 1893 –was launched in the same month). Most comics sold for one penny but *Comic Cuts* was sold for less– with the tag line ‘a hundred laughs for half a penny’.⁷⁴ Harmsworth, later Lord Northcliffe, managed to undercut his rivals by using cheap paper. His choice of artist helped to keep costs down too. *Comic Cuts* artist Tom Browne, then aged twenty, had devised a simplified graphic style which relied on bold

line instead of cross-hatching, which was easier to reproduce. Frank Holland, who illustrated *Area Sneaker* and *Chokee Bill*, used a similar style. *Comic Cuts*' target audience was lower middle class and working class men. (It was not until after the First World War that the comic was associated with a childrens' market). Harmsworth went on to found *The Daily Mirror* (originally intended as a paper for women) and *The Daily Mail* with profits made from comics.⁷⁵ There are echoes of *Area Sneaker* and *Ally Sloper* in *The Mirror's* *Andy Capp* – a cartoon character featured in the paper from 1957. He is dressed exactly the same way as the *Comic Cuts* characters, but he is represented as married, hen-pecked and drunk.

The language of the traditional British comic still retained some currency in the 1970s when Steve Jones, guitarist of Punk band *The Sex Pistols* spoke of his friend Paul Cook, the band's drummer, as 'not being a bounder for villainy'.⁷⁶ He also famously referred to television presenter Bill Grundy as a 'rotter'.⁷⁷ Jones also performed at least once⁷⁸, wearing a handkerchief on his head, knotted at four corners – another pervading image from populist culture. His choice of language could be lifted straight from the pages of *Larks!* or *Comic Cuts*. Jones was an uneducated street kid of the 1970s; barely literate, comics were likely to be the only source of literature with which he was familiar.

The plight of nineteenth century street kids, publicised by contemporary media, raised awareness about urban living conditions of the working class but also aroused fears of moral and physical decline and eroding values. Charles Masterman in *The Heart of the Empire*, written in 1902, describes the 'physical type [of the] town dweller [as]: stunted,

narrow chested, easily wearied; yet voluble, excitable, with little ballast, stamina or endurance'.⁷⁹ An American journalist called Jack London also commented on the physical and moral decline of turn-of-the-century urban youth. In *The People of the Abyss*, also written in 1902, he expressed the belief that it was, 'incontrovertible that the children [in the city] grow up into rotten adults, without virility or stamina; a weak kneed, narrow chested, listless breed,' he described them as "a new race [of] street people". He believed that the traditional reserved Englishman had passed away and concurring with Masterman said that, 'The pavement folk are noisy, voluble, high-strung, excitable'.⁸⁰ Arguably, the 'reserved Englishman' has never been anything other than a myth, and 'street people' were not a new phenomenon. However, street people – owing to the intervention of the press – became highly visible at the end of the nineteenth century. It could also be argued that this new breed of displaced urban degenerates - a bi-product of a gradual shift from country to town dwelling – were perfectly placed to embrace a new kind of 'otherness' – an alternative urban culture. Excepting reports such as these, the working class remained invisible for a large part of the nineteenth century. The heatwave of 1898 served as a catalyst in raising the visibility of street people. What could have remained a local issue became a national concern. Media intervention promulgated the idea of rampant hooliganism and described how it might be recognised.

Similarly the heatwave of 1976 was a cultural flashpoint. Unemployment; particularly amongst the young; racial tension due to sudden demographic change, and draconian policing policies had created urban unrest. The energy of urban youth played a large part in the creation of Punk. Word was spread from person to person, outdoors. Fanzines were

distributed on foot. Had the pavement folk of the 1970s been less 'noisy, voluble, high strung or excitable', then enthusiasm for a new urban music may not have spread so successfully. Punks were the street arabs of their day and Punk might not have been so successful had 1976 been a wet summer.

By the 1970s street culture had broadened out to encompass the taste and technology of a mass market. Urban youth had been enthusiastically embracing a kind of otherness for many years by then, one which placed music and group identity at its core. Youth culture embraced tribal loyalties but still retained the inverse values of the street, with its admiration of the marginalised bad boy. When *Larks!* first issue introduced the *Ball's Pond Banditti* voting for their captain and swearing an oath of allegiance it was replicating the everyday behaviour of urban youth. In the long view of urban culture the tendency remains the same and a hard wiring for heroes appears fundamental. A charismatic performer; a Steve Jones or a Johnny Rotten, was integral to a band's success.

Chapter 2: Politics, Art and the Alternative Press.

I saw Punk as part of an art movement...with roots in Russian agitprop, Surrealism, Dada and Situationism.
Jamie Reid.

Never mind the bollocks. Steve Jones⁸¹.

Punk is alleged to have historical connections with the European avant-garde. The most articulate connective case was made by Jon Savage in 1991. In *England's Dreaming, the Sex Pistols and Punk Rock* he describes the influences of Jamie Reid, a former student of Croydon Art School, who produced the promotional artwork for British Punk band *The Sex Pistols*. Reid created a brand identity which, due to the high profile of the band, became synonymous with Punk and was widely plagiarised. His artwork contributed significantly to the visual vocabulary of the late twentieth century. But though Reid may have successfully branded British Punk, he and other individuals associated with the *Sex Pistols* did not invent it. It does not follow therefore, that an investigation of Reid's artistic and philosophical influences is an investigation into the provenance of Punk. This revisionist study challenges existing assumptions about Punk's origins and how it became successful.

A significant political event of May 1968, demonstrates the potential influence of the printed word. The phenomenon of student unrest and demonstration was integral to the counter culture of the 1960s (culminating in the shooting of students by the National Guard at Kent State University, USA, in 1970) as the western post war generation of baby boomers had high expectations of their governments. In France the student population had increased tenfold since the pre-war era⁸² and there was a prevailing dissatisfaction with poor resources and an over-centralised bureaucracy. A pamphlet, originally printed in 1966 by the University of Strasbourg and

Internationale Situationiste, called *On the Poverty of Student Life*⁸³ was distributed to students at the Sorbonne in Paris. It argued that the system was failing them and it inspired the already discontented students to stage a protest sit-in. The rector called in the police to move them out, but the police reacted to resistance with batons and tear gas. Due to the prevalence of television, the heavy handed response was observed at home and abroad but the consequences in France were dire. Due to media attention unrest spread to other universities throughout France and also crossed over to industry. Ten million people went on strike and the nation was paralysed. The entire incident had been instigated by a pamphleteering campaign.

Jamie Reid was a student at the time of the Sorbonne sit-in and it is well documented that he and fellow students, including later manager of the *Sex Pistols* Malcolm McLaren, staged a copy cat sit in at Croydon Art School. Discontent with the staff and structuring was expressed, after some prevarication, by pulling down partition walls. The incident is remembered differently by those participating; Robin Scott recalls McLaren's apparent indifference. When the opportunity arose to improve the system, he had left. Jamie Reid, on the other hand, describes it as a life changing experience, which made him feel connected with portentous events happening elsewhere in the world. But this is where the spin on the situationist connection begins. Neither McLaren nor Reid had been in Paris at the time of the Sorbonne sit-in, but they went there later in the year in order to claim that they had been.⁸⁴

The situationists were a great influence on Reid's work. The power of the detoured image as used by the them in their poster campaigns, and their cryptic sloganeering were both techniques used by Jamie Reid in the *Pistols*' publicity campaign. Because

of its acknowledged influence on Jamie Reid, situationism became central to the canon of Punk. A belief in its integral significance was reiterated by Nils Stevenson in 1999⁸⁵ when he described the *Sex Pistols* as a 'situationist scam' devised by their manager, Malcolm McLaren. Punk's avant-garde pedigree remains unchallenged by Stephen Colgrave and Chris Sullivan in 2001⁸⁶.

It would seem that the situationist/avant-garde roots of Punk had been accepted as a given, as is, by implication, the authorial role of Reid and McLaren. This is questionable. Jon Savage now asserts that the role of situationism has been over-emphasised⁸⁷ and the notion of an authorial role must also be questioned.

The notoriety surrounding the *Sex Pistols* followed their appearance on the live television programme *The Today Show*, on December the first, 1976⁸⁸. Goaded by the programme's host Bill Grundy to say something controversial, they obliged. The ensuing public outrage at hearing street vernacular in their living rooms changed the band from young hopefuls to folk devils overnight. But though they became - as drummer Paul Cook describes it - public enemy number one, they also became heroes for many young people⁸⁹. Nils Stevenson in describing the band as a scam⁹⁰ implies the chaotic events surrounding the *Sex Pistols* were orchestrated but this was not true. In this case the outcome of the last minute interview could not have been predicted and McLaren was, according to Cook, totally shocked. But, due to the publicity, the Punk scene became a national phenomenon and one that was perceived as delinquent.

Whilst the mass media were busy vilifying Punk the music press was creating a cult around it. Greil Marcus points out in *Lipstick Traces*, (1989) that 'everybody said

Punk was like Dada, though no one said why or what that meant'⁹¹ Dada, he alleges, was something of a 'buzz' word of the time but as Marcus comments, though the music press were happy to make a superficial association between Dada and Punk it was never explained or understood. It is plausible to suggest that the media helped make Dada a fashionable term. There was an attractively outré artiness by association which was then embraced by the emerging sub-culture.

Reid's montage techniques knowingly referenced Dada but once his work was in the public domain it was available for others to plagiarise without being aware of its pedigree. Contemporary archival graphics evidence an assimilation of ideas. It cannot be assumed there was a uniformity in art education –many personal recollections suggests there was not⁹² – so the concept of an art school sensibility is, therefore, contestable. What would seem more likely is that contemporary graphics were influenced by eclectic sources. Art school students (and the better educated) were privileged in being able to access information about historical visual sources.

The music press had used the term Dada to describe bands before the Punk era and evidence suggests that could have had more to do with contemporary events. The Manchester band, *Alberto Y Lost Trios Paranoias* were regulars on the rock circuit in the early 1970s. Their brand of anarchic comedy rock was described as 'Dada Cabaret' in their first ever review in the *Melody Maker* in 1974⁹³. The band's frontman C.P.Lee recalls being flattered at the time as they 'hadn't been to uni', (and as far as he was aware neither had the writer of the article, Allen Jones). Lee took it as a compliment. He remembers Dada being 'all over the colour supplements, as Magritte was still alive and Duchamp had only recently departed'.⁹⁴

The term 'dada' crops up elsewhere too. *The Bonzo Dog Dada Band* was a group of art students who began performing between 1962 and 1965. But, according to band member Neil Innes they, 'soon got tired of trying to explain what a turn of the century art movement was'⁹⁵ and they changed the name to *The Bonzo Dog Doo Dah Band*. Bonzo the Dog was a cartoon character created by George E. Studdy in the early 1920s who frequently appeared on seaside postcards.⁹⁶

Jamie Reid had played a major part in Punk's branding but he was anonymous at the time and his personal influences unknown. Nevertheless a superficial connection with Dada and Punk had been made by the press. Dada was a term imbued with cultural and intellectual resonance, which was associated with the more radical or outrageous bands, but which was not necessarily fully understood. Information about Dada was there for those who cared to look and that was not limited to art students. C.P.Lee says that information about Dada was freely available at his school, where pupils were encouraged to think 'outside of the box'⁹⁷

What does seem to be apparent is that there was an early process of intellectualisation associated with Punk, which was less about literal associations between it and the avant-garde, and more about labelling. The music press were not without an agenda and were not autonomous. The mainstream press, with their vilification of Punk, sold papers. The music press with their acclamation of Punk sold papers.

Ben Watson argues that Punk's controversial past has been re-written subsequently and questions the validity of its presumed authorship. In the millenium issue of *The*

Wire, he quotes Walter Benjamin's famous dictum that 'history is written by the victors' – the victors in this case, he suggests, were those immediately surrounding Malcolm McLaren and the Sex Pistols. But he doubts if theirs is necessarily the whole story. Watson's main gripe is that no subsequent book has successfully captured the feel of the time claiming that 'Punk's defining proletarian nihilism...[has] been cauterised...in a web of self-serving myth'.⁹⁸

The self mythologizing on the part of Malcolm McLaren and Jamie Reid began when they claimed to be present at the Sorbonne sit-in. With the ubiquity of the Sex Pistols and the subjectivity of their accounts, how is it possible to side-step personal agendas and expose the myths? An investigation of alternative autonomous publications provides a further insight into the influences of an emerging subculture as it happened.

To see where independent publishing of the 1970s came from it is necessary to look at the publications of the 1960s. Underground publications appeared in the west during the mid 1960s. With the higher expectations of the baby boomer generation of the 1960s, the methodology of the marginalised was adopted as a means of counter cultural commentary. The term underground suggests secrecy and subversion, reminiscent of Russian *samizdat* publishing, originally a way of covertly disseminating a sometimes radical politic. But young westerners were free to critique their governments – within reason - and the underground magazines were brash, confident and often luxuriously illustrated in the psychedelic style of the era. But there were boundaries of acceptability and a magazine called *Oz* transgressed. *Oz* magazine was originally produced in Australia – hence the name – and appeared in

the United Kingdom around 1967⁹⁹. It was a left-wing, anti-establishment publication, whose remit included the promulgation of sexual freedom and drug experimentation, but it was primarily a political publication. Influenced by *New Statesman* and *Private Eye*, *Oz* was intended to be a magazine of dissent. It is ironic then that the biggest furore was caused by the publication of *Oz* number 28; the schoolkids issue.

Oz's editors, Jim Anderson, Felix Dennis and Richard Neville, were tried for obscenity in June 1971, after publishing a cartoon strip which featured a detoured Rupert Bear's head montaged onto a sexually explicit Robert Crumb cartoon. The obscene publications squad raided *Oz*'s offices and the editorial team were charged with conspiracy to corrupt public morals. What added to the outrage was that the montage had been devised by (mostly public) schoolboys. The person responsible for the X rated Rupert was fifteen year old Vivien Berger. (The schoolboys had been drafted in after criticism that the magazine was out of touch with the young. Another boy involved was Charles Shaar Murray - later a notable music journalist).

What is interesting from an historical perspective is that it was a reference to sex that caused public outrage rather than politically commentary. Also interesting is that the sexuality alluded to in *Oz* was a male construct and one that would not be acceptable now. However, *Oz* was perceived as a vehicle of free speech rather than one of sexism, and counter-cultural luminaries such as John Peel, Caroline Coon and Marty Feldman, appeared for the defence.¹⁰⁰

Possibly one of the most shocking images of the *Oz* trial is of the defendants after their verdict. Initially found guilty they were taken to prison with their heads shaved.

At a time when so much counter cultural identity was invested in hair, and before rebellion could be expressed in a plurality of styles, shaving the heads of the defendants was a cruel act akin to symbolic castration. (There was a contemporary parallel in the treatment of the Charles Manson family in the USA –but there is hardly parity between cases and the severity of treatment meted out to the *Oz* defendants seems extreme). The defendants appealed against the verdict and were eventually acquitted (they wore long wigs at the appeal trial). It was claimed many years later that a deal had been done with Lord Widgery the Chief Justice, which offered an acquittal in return for giving up *Oz* demonstrating the extent to which an underground magazine had become a thorn in the side of the establishment¹⁰¹.

An earlier underground publication, linked to *Oz* by the occasional sharing of contributors, was also highly significant in its defining of the counter culture. *International Times*, co-founded by Barry Miles¹⁰² and John ‘Hoppy’ Hopkins, subsequently known as *IT*, was launched on October the 15th, 1966 at a Pink Floyd concert. Miles also co-founded *Indica* bookshop and gallery along with John Dunbar – then married to Marianne Faithful, and Peter Asher – brother of actress Jane. Prior to opening *Indica* (where John Lennon and Yoko Ono first met) Miles had organised a poetry event at the Albert Hall, London in 1965 headlined by Beat poet Alan Ginsberg. Film footage of the occasion still exists. The evening developed into a happening; complete with drugs and dancing it was a defining moment of the beatnik/hippy counter-culture.

Miles, a former art student from Cheltenham, as well as being involved in the promotion of literary events had broader cultural interests. *IT* – as its launch event

suggests – was concerned with all the arts and particularly with music. The opening Pink Floyd gig was such a success that John Hopkins arranged to open a nightclub, called UFO, on Tottenham Court Road. This too was a great success.

It was brought to the organisers' attention that similar events in the USA were accompanied by posters, so artwork was also organised. Two artists, Michael English and Nigel Waymouth, working originally under the name of *Hapshash and the Coloured Coat*, and later *Osiris Visions* designed posters for the UFO club. Barry Miles and his associates were a counter cultural tour de force.

The producers of *IT* magazine belonged to a drug taking alternative culture and the end result could be a little hap hazard. Distribution methods were not entirely reliable either. It was sold on the street, but it was also distributed to national and international outlets occasionally without the correct remuneration. But profit was not the motivation- *IT* was promoting an alternative culture, one that embraced literature, politics, art and music.

Barry Miles and his associates were at the centre of cultural change. They had the confidence that accompanies class, a good education and youth. They also had the confidence of naivety. *IT* gained expertise empirically and its producers had the good fortune to be perfectly placed and extremely well connected.

Barry Miles' first four music interviews for *IT* were with Paul McCartney, George Harrison, Mick Jagger and Pete Townshend. Jon Savage describes Miles' 1967 interview with Townshend as a turning point in the role of the alternative press.

Townsend, known for his on stage guitar smashing, was asked by Miles for his opinion on his 'auto-destructive art'. Pete Townshend, like Miles, was a former art student, having attended Ealing Art College. Townshend had been influenced by a lecturer at Ealing called Gustav Metzger – a member of the Fluxus movement and a leading exponent of auto-destructive art¹⁰³. Pete Townshend attributed his guitar smashing to the influence of Metzger (although the first incident was possibly accidental).

The interview is significant for several reasons. It is highly revealing about the artistic and intellectual aspirations of rock musicians, and the changing nature of music writing. The underground press was treating music as a serious art form and had become the mouthpiece for what Jon Savage describes as 'messianic music'.¹⁰⁴ Not only does the interview explain the intellectual aspirations of the counter-culture and its spokes-people, but it elevates the *artiste*, and to some extent, validates the idolatry of rock.

The music interviews and reviews in *IT* catered for the connoisseur rather than the casual consumer. The alternative magazines of the 1970s, such as *City Fun*, looked less psychedelic than their predecessors but they shared many of the same concerns. As with *IT* and *Oz*, several of its contributors went on to careers in mainstream journalism and the media. One of its contributors was Bob Dickinson who continued a career in writing and is currently a BBC Radio Four producer. Dickinson considered that the first phase of Punk had burnt itself out by 1977, and the period known as post Punk started about 1979. Though late by his estimation the first phase of *City Fun*

mirrors the energy of Punk and is concerned with promoting music and establishing of a sense of community. The second phase is more ambitious.

(fig.3) *City Fun*; October 1978 number one. Like contemporary fanzines this issue focussed on music and features a Manchester band called *The Distractions*. The front cover is an illustration by one of the regular *City Fun* contributors – known only as J.C. – of the band's bassist. Instead of a face, the figure has a question mark. There was no mystery about the bassist's identity; her name was Pip Nicholls. *City Fun* writer Liz Naylor¹⁰⁵ suggests that the question mark in place of her face could be a reference to her androgynous appearance but she is not entirely sure as editorial decisions were occasionally unilateral. The creative process operating behind the scenes at *City Fun* was frequently volatile, but both Liz Naylor and Bob Dickinson suggest that the magazine was the more creative for it. But it had begun as a very egalitarian project.

As with many early fanzines, there was a powerful sense of community and for a while *City Fun* had a policy of inclusion. They printed anything that their readers sent in on the basis that if they had gone to the trouble of writing, then the *City Fun* team should go to the trouble of printing. As the euphoria of the new waned, the pitfalls of this system became apparent. Issues of quality and professionalism led to a reappraisal and the subsequent launch of Volume II.

The shift in production values is apparent when comparing the very early issues of *City Fun* with the later more sophisticated ones. In the early issues, illustrations are rudimentary and the paper generally bears a strong resemblance to student rag mags

but the content still marks it out as a music magazine. The text is a mixture of block type, some blocks of upper case text only with handwritten headings. There is a cover price of ten pence and a free classified section for bands and prospective band members to advertise their services.

(fig.4) *City Fun*, September 1980 Volume II, number one. In a joint interview the writing team stated that the revised *City Fun* would no longer be 'compromised' by public contributions (although they still offered readers a chance to contribute but the editorial team could decide what was interesting or relevant). They intended to be more professional and reject the 'rubbish'¹⁰⁶ that was sent in. A sentiment at odds with the ethos of the fanzines but in keeping with that of a magazine concerned with quality and journalistic consistency. The editorial policy was still nominally egalitarian when the magazine re-launched and the writing team would take turns to edit the paper. They also had a policy of anonymity and articles were printed without a by-line.

But as Liz Naylor points out, editorial decisions were not always a joint decision of the writing team, and egos surfaced. Though all contributors cared deeply about the creative process, they did not necessarily agree. Liz Naylor confesses to hijacking a copy of *City Fun* on the way to the printers – Rochdale Alternative Press - and substituting her own. The ideals of the collective – especially a creative one - did not always translate to reality.

The new *City Fun* appears far more slick and professional than its earlier counterparts. The front cover illustration features a Punk Bugs Bunny. He wears shades, has a

pierced floppy ear and a cigarette dangling from his lips. He is dressed in what appears to be a zipped and studded leather jacket with the collar turned up *a la* mode. He has an anarchy arm band – a capital A in a circle, and an electric guitar slung over his shoulders. Underneath his jacket may be glimpsed part of a *Sex Pistols* T-shirt. There is a fishing rod like stick appearing on the right of the frame with a bunch of carrots dangling from it. Around the carrots orbits a collection of pound and dollar signs and a few stars. *City Fun* is commenting on the music industry and aspiring musicians. It may be read as subverting Bugs Bunny – dressing him in an iconic outfit of rebellion –but is probably more accurate to say that this is a comment on musicians’ lack of integrity and the pitfalls of commercialism. There is a tag line underneath the illustration which reads ‘The Human Condition’. The illustration is interesting in that it reflects a shift in attitude from the starry eyed beginnings of Punk.

(fig.5)Vibes, Autumn 1978. What is also interesting is the acquisition of the imagery. Bury fanzine *Vibes* was produced by Vibes records, and also printed by Rochdale Alternative Press. In September 1978, they celebrated the first anniversary of the fanzine and the shop. As is usual with fanzines, the editorial invites contributors, even offering to set up an interview with a local band if a would-be contributor was short of subject matter. The front cover features a montage of photographs, and cartoons. The Buzzcocks are there as is the soon-to-be Ed Banger of Ed Banger and the Nosebleeds (complete with the bandaged head injury which gave him his name). Kermit the Frog announces ‘that was the year that was’, and on the right side of the page is a Punk Bugs Bunny. This Bugs holds a chain in his left hand and an aerosol paint can in his right. He wears drainpipe jeans and trainers, topped by a leather jacket with the collar turned up. His T- shirt reads ‘Punk’.

Vibes and *City Fun* were both produced in Greater Manchester and both used the same printers. They may have shared distribution outlets (although *Vibes* had the advantage of a house magazine for a record shop). A car featured behind Bug's back has 'sniff glue' on it, which could either be a reference to Mark Perry's *Sniffin' Glue*, or just another part of an amalgam of Punk pastiches. It implies a communal sourcing of ideas, a sharing of influences - and a little communal plagiarism.

The *City Fun* cover and the *Vibes* cover suggest that Punk had acquired recognisable motifs and, after 1977, had become more cynical. Style wise there is no suggestion of a specific artistic influence in *City Fun*'s second volume – other than straight forward plagiarism. Bugs Bunny is a children's cartoon character and is a universally recognisable image. *Vibes* had already played with the persona. There was no narrative sense in his casting, but as a comment on the music industry the rabbit and carrot analogy works well. The musician is a dupe, tempted by music industry charlatans with their promises of stardom to sign a worthless contract.

The inside of Volume II *City Fun* still references student rag mags. The earlier hand written headlines have been substituted by type-written ones and some type-face is in the style of handwriting. Within the paper the layout varies from perpendicular columns with some blocks of text randomly angled. The text blocks are interspersed with images which have no apparent association with the narrative. And the images at first inspection seem to have nothing in common with each other. There are several soft porn images; a dominatrix and a femme fatale. A copy of a Roy Lichtenstein woman crying is an overt reference to fine art but this inclusion seems as arbitrary as

the others. A photograph of Rita Tushingham and Colin Campbell is featured in a still from the 1963 film *The Leather Boys*, on the same page as many photos of Harpo Marx. It is doubtful whether any editorial philosophy dictated how and why such images were used.

The images are random; the dominatrix, the 1960s rockers, the madcap Harpo Marx. Bob Dickinson had described how soft porn had been a feature of very early science fiction fanzines but there is no historical link here. What has been collected is a playful assemblage of images with an off-beat, counter-cultural flavour.

City Fun had by this time adopted a more didactic narrative. It had ceased to function as a community message board and was now commenting on, amongst other things, the lack of local jobs and the mispending of government funds. It continued to feature reviews of Manchester bands and gossip about the Manchester scene (with wry comments about the ambitions of Anthony Wilson of Factory Records). Also included in this issue is a users' guide to recreational drugs and a price list, presumably to inform its readers of an approximate price to help avoid their being ripped off. Underneath this list is a statement declaring that *City Fun* does not supply any of the illegal drugs mentioned; probably not a necessary statement but as a recurring feature of the paper concerns the alleged brutality and corruption of Greater Manchester Police, the editorial team were probably wise to avoid any misunderstandings.

City Fun aligned itself with the popular concerns of urban youth. It had never set out to be a fanzine, but it was involved with the music scene, and included gig guides

band reviews and cautionary tales of rip-off recording studios, and record company parasites.¹⁰⁷ *City Fun*, like the fanzines focussed on in the next chapter, was also antagonistic about the music press. An unnamed journalist from *Record Mirror* is quoted: 'The thing about writing for the music press is that it's so limited – *Record Mirror's* safe, *Melody Maker's* intellectual, *NME's* hip. The *City Fun* tag line reads, 'straight from the horses mouth.'¹⁰⁸

Bob Dickinson argues that the alternative magazines that were being produced around this time owed a debt to the earlier work of Claude Cockburn. Cockburn was a journalist on *The Times* in 1936, but he left owing to political differences. He went on to work on a magazine called *The Week*. The latter looked like a fanzine, in that it was less professionally produced, but its content was political and it was circulated covertly – in keeping with the *samizdat* tradition of the politically subversive press. Cockburn went on to work for *Punch* and *Private Eye* in the 1960s. Dickinson believes that the alternative magazines of the 1970s and eighties are part of his legacy. But magazines like *City Fun* also continue the tradition counter-cultural magazines of the 1960s like *Oz* and *IT*, particularly in their sharing of concerns about Police corruption.

City Fun had a non partisan, but broadly left-of-field, approach to politics and a similarly non-partisan approach to the use of artwork; there was no editorial consistency. An element of mischief was adopted occasionally. Bob Dickinson had been involved in the production of another paper called *Manchester Review*, and *City Fun* staff would sometimes detourne or deface the cover of the *Review* for their own paper. Many of the front covers of *City Fun* were montages of images borrowed

from populist sources (films provide a common source) overlaid with text. Jon Savage also suggests that the influence of pop art has not been credited enough. Linda Sterling, Jon Savage and Richard Boon were responsible for a lot of the artwork, much of it experimental, and some ideas were employed with greater success than others.

(fig.6) *City Fun* Volume II, number six. The cover of this magazine from January 1981 features a photo of a New York skyline with blackmail style lettering montaged over it. The choice of lettering could be incidental. Its criminal associations were apt in this instance as the front page referred to the shooting dead of John Lennon, on the eighth of December 1980. However the commentary indicates the lettering could be used in a (by now) retro Punk context to convey a certain amount of irreverence, and some cynicism about the projected public response. The passage reads ‘The city mourns the death of a deserter. ...Give him your respect but buying his records won’t bring him back’. Perhaps John Lennon was seen as a figure outside of *City Fun*’s cultural environs – a rocker of the old school who had become part of the establishment.

To a large extent the alternative magazines of the 1970s shared the same concerns and production values as those of the 1960s, though each decade was influenced by the fashions and ambiance of its context. The ‘can do’ ethos of Punk was pioneered several years earlier by the producers of underground publications like *Oz* and *IT*. Although artist Jamie Reid was unknown when he collaborated with Malcolm McLaren and produced the *Sex Pistols* publicity material, owing to the media frenzy surrounding the band, his concept was duly disseminated. Reid’s artistic background

and influences are integral but Punk was only ‘something about dada’¹⁰⁹ owing to his intervention, and not to a direct sourcing of dada itself.

The Situationist ethos was similarly several stages removed from source and not necessarily the seditious backbone of a youth movement. Malcolm McLaren was familiar with its journal *Situationist International*, but freely confesses to only looking at the pictures¹¹⁰. Jamie Reid was more directly involved with Situationism. In 1970, he and several friends started a magazine called *The Suburban Press*; a seditious and ‘shit stirring’¹¹¹ publication, featuring Reid’s graphics and Situationist texts. Although Jamie Reid had proven his political pedigree, Malcolm McLaren was less than zealous. Reid had arguments with McLaren as the latter initially wanted the *Sex Pistols* to promote his King’s Road shop, *Sex*. McLaren also wanted to try and milk the *Bay City Rollers* phenomenon. Reid goes on to say that ‘Vivienne Westwood and Malcolm weren’t happy about the band being political and didn’t respond to the *Anarchy* flag...I just kept quiet and got the artwork to the printers’.¹¹² With or without the machinations of McLaren, The Sex Pistols had a fall back position of Situationism, owing to the work of Jamie Reid.

Oblique references to Situationism made by a knowing few were intimidating and excluding of some people, as contested by Mark Perry of *Sniffin’ Glue*¹¹³ (a fanzine with fewer cultural pretensions than contemporary alternative papers). But if the man at the centre of the situationist/Punk theory only read the pictures, situationism was functioning more as a buzz word than an actual philosophy and has gained more currency because of the attention paid to it by Jon Savage. Savage now believes that its importance has been overstated (although he suggests that founding situationist

Guy Debord's *Society of the Spectacle* is more relevant now than it was in the 1970s)¹¹⁴.

A notion of intellectual consistency, inferred by the music press of the time, was recognised with the publication of *England's Dreaming. The Sex Pistols and Punk Rock*, but nevertheless remains contentious. Mark Perry suggests that the music press was overstating Punk from the outset in describing its emergence as signifying a 'year zero'¹¹⁵ an idea which even he and fellow *Sniffin' Glue* writer Danny Baker refute in spite of their vital role in Punk's dissemination.

A new youth-led movement or faction may consider itself original, whilst assimilating existing ideas. Was Punk avant-garde? Or is the suggested time line a contrivance? The writing of Jon Savage and others¹¹⁶ has helped to create a convention. Despite the transient nature of youthful sub-cultures, Punk even now manages to retain counter-cultural currency and continues to be influential on music and fashion. Because of that prominent individuals involved in the early British Punk scene, were not averse to aggrandising their own significance at the time, and, subsequently.

How important was the role of the art school and was there such a thing as an art school sensibility in the 1970s? Anecdotal experience of 1970s art school suggests that it was still a relatively privileged environment. The majority of students in the 1970s studying art were likely to be middle class or to have middle class aspiration (even if that was to be manifest in a counter-cultural arena). The art school did not provide uniformity of education. When Ian Dury when recalling his own experience of teaching art admitted that he bluffed it and 'just let 'em get on with it'.¹¹⁷ But the

art school provided a privileged arena of debate even if the standard and style of lecturing varied. It was also a relaxed environment with a lenient attitude towards the use of recreational drugs, owing presumably to the supposed link between drugs and creativity which was a part of the counter-cultural philosophy of the 1960s. An art school sensibility was more about a willingness to experiment than an informed understanding of avant- garde pedigree, but that same sensibility could be engendered out of the art school system, as was experienced by C. P. Lee. And, as Frith and Horne comment, although the art school could act as a catalyst for musical and artistic creativity, most pop musicians did not go to art school and entered their profession through the traditional routes of pub and club circuits.

The style, attitude and content of alternative Punk magazines of the 1970s, were more immediately influenced by the counter-cultural papers of the 1950s and 1960s than by the early twentieth century avant-garde; the former still being within anecdotal memory. They shared concerns of personal freedom, fair government and policing policies that did not victimise the marginalised. Alternative papers of the 1970s were published by the young for a young readership so were concerned with contemporary issues such as music and personal freedom.

The inspiration for their graphics could come from as many historical and contemporary populist sources that make up our collective visual vocabulary. Artistic influences *per se* are frequently several stages removed from source. Contemporary exhibitions, for example, might be more influential via their dissemination in the Sunday supplements, rather than by first hand experience. Other styles present in contemporary magazines or on posters or album covers, also inform the collective

vocabulary. As alternative papers were not produced by professionals their styling was often a matter of expedience. Added to this was Punk's irreverence and perception (misguided or otherwise) of itself as new. The juxtaposition of images irrespective of origin or intrinsic meanings, and the ripping up and reassembling of images was in keeping with the ethos of a movement which was striving to break from its past.

Aspiring writers were attracted to alternative magazines and might be expected to have a more informed opinion about culture at large than their fanzine counter-parts. Many writing for 1970s alternative papers went on to full time writing and media careers (this also happened with fanzines but less frequently). Significantly the counter-cultural magazine has played a large part in establishing a notion of musical genius; creating a *raison d'etre* for both the alternative paper and the fanzine.

Alternative magazines played a crucial part in defining Punk as politicised, irreverent and artistically engaged. They picked up the baton of political crusaders from their predecessors but the concerns of the 1970s differed from those of the previous decade. Individual freedom and sexual mores were still of great interest to many young people but the grittier issues of the 1970s; unemployment, immigration, and race riots, were too big to ignore. There was a non-party-political awareness in the 1970s which was created by an imbalance of power towards the economically vulnerable and the racially segregated.

Chapter Three: Fanzines and Fans

Punk fanzines were an expression of antagonism towards an over authoritative and unrepresentative music press. Bank clerk and music fan Mark Perry produced his own home-made magazine called *Sniffin' Glue* (fig.7) in the summer of 1976. He used a child's type-writer and the end product was photocopied by his girlfriend on the Xerox machine at her place of work. In his first editorial, Perry disparages the established British music press, accusing them of not understanding the Punk scene, and also of talking down to their audience. Perry's editorial urges people to stop 'drooling' over the scene in New York¹¹⁸ and recognise that something more exciting was happening there in London. Significantly, he urged others to write their own fanzines; a call to which many responded.

The ensuing proliferation of fanzines undoubtedly did help to promote a thriving music scene in London and elsewhere. It also established a sense of community amongst the fans that formerly did not exist. Whereas the music press allegedly talked down to their readers, fanzine writers and readers talked to each other. Fanzine editorials frequently express exasperation at the music press' defining and appropriation of Punk and the fans, via the medium of the fanzine, were attempting to reclaim ownership.

Perry's utilitarian approach to magazine production established a style. Fanzines were hand typed or hand written and the availability of the photocopying machine successfully democratised the printing process. It was a style of expedience inspired by a love of music. But Perry was not a rank amateur as he had already had an article about the *Sex Pistols* printed in *Time Out*.¹¹⁹

He had also met *Sex Pistols*' singer Johnny Rotten backstage at the *Electric Ballroom* in Manchester. Perry, unlike many of the fanzine writers he inspired, was ambitious. He socialised with other writers and musicians, and generally strove to attain a high profile. But though ambitious he promised that S.G. 'would never join the establishment'.¹²⁰

The established music press of the time was only made up of a handful of publications sometimes known as the 'inkies'.¹²¹ The *Melody Maker* had been in print since 1926. By the mid 1970s it was more associated with progressive rock music whereas rivals, *New Musical Express* (established 1952) and *Sounds* (established 1970) battled for the cutting edge of the music market. These were the big three and, according to Jon Savage – who wrote for *Sounds* in the 1970s – they were a male enclave and also something of a closed shop.¹²²

An attempt was made to extend their readership with varying success. *Sounds*' team included Jane Suck- the only out lesbian in the music press at the time¹²³ - as well as Jon Savage. The *NME* had Charles Shaar Murray (formerly a junior contributor to *Oz*), Julie Burchill and Tony Parsons – the latter being the target of most vitriol from fanzine producers. Fanzines cut out the corporate middle man and attempted to provide an unmediated version of events.

Mark Perry was well placed to document and influence the changes in the London scene and because he was a little older than many music fans (he was nineteen in 1976) he had a better understanding of the music scene and its influences. A rock fan originally, he had witnessed the London rhythm and blues revival, and its influences

on Punk. He was unusual amongst fanzine writers in that he was ambitious and he became well known – though initially as Mark P. As we saw in Chapter One some fanzine writers were coy about their identity because they were in receipt of government benefits, others because they had been liberating paper and photocopying facilities from unwitting employers. Most writers never sought or achieved the high profile that Perry's fortunate location, his force of personality and his perception, allowed.

Perry's call to arms to other Punks to make their own fanzines was successful and many fans responded. Fanzines appeared all over the country most with the same agenda of promoting music and an ideology that was independent of corporate and cultural pressures. *Sniffin' Glue* and other fanzines were successful because they were fulfilling a need for first hand information but they also tapped into a remarkable energy, which would otherwise have remained fragmented.

Fanzine writers, buoyed by their missionary zeal, were inclined to adopt a moral high ground towards music journalists. As purist torch bearers of Punk, they were not motivated by money and wrote and distributed their magazines for the good of the community; frequently incurring financial losses. A meeting between a fanzine writer (probably Johnny Waller) and *Sounds* journalist Jane Suck is recounted in *Kingdom Come*¹²⁴. She, unimpressed with him or his paper said 'you too could be rich if you stopped writing for some poxy magazine.' Waller retorts in his article, 'well if wealth was my main aim I wouldn't be doing this....Examine your priorities Jane'¹²⁵.

Waller's sanctimonious reply implies that Jane Suck's priorities are dubious in that she writes in order to become rich. Waller, on the other hand, wishes to inform the

community. The exchange exemplifies what many Punks despised about success; that acquiring it required the sacrificing of integrity.

Another successful music journalist on the receiving end of much criticism from fanzines was Tony Parsons. *Next Big Thing* (fig.8) continued to snipe at him for months on end and he is accused of being a poseur and a follower of fads¹²⁶. Parson's reliability, and by implication the reliability of the music press, is questioned because of his former musical allegiances; mainly the fact that he had any at all rather than being a fundamentalist Punk. The term 'hip' in fanzines is inevitably pejorative. Paradoxically, the followers of the new fad of Punk were suspicious of change and evidenced a stubborn resistance to any amendments on Punk being floated by a London based music press.

Lindsay Hutton had sent Tony Parsons a copy of *The Next Big Thing* which included a critique, to which Parsons responded. Fanzine writers were amateurs and as such, were unaware of journalistic conventions. (Although, as the fanzines were intended to be an egalitarian vehicle, it is quite likely that conventions would have been disregarded anyway). Articles are written in the vernacular and frequently coloured by expletives particularly when expressing impassioned opinions about the conventional music press. Tony Parsons chose to disregard standard journalistic convention and replied in the language of the fanzine. His reply was reproduced in the 1978 summer issue.¹²⁷ It is a testament to the influence of the fanzines that Tony Parsons bothered to reply at all let alone with such passion, although as *The Next Big Thing* had been persistently criticising him for months, and had sent him offensive articles, he had been forced to become aware of it.

Hutton's agenda may not have been completely purist. He had caught the eye of a notable music journalist, and may have had aspirations for music journalism. In the editorial in which Tony Parsons' reply is printed there is also a comment from another fanzine, called *Chicken Shit* which accuses *The Next Big Thing* writers of being 'aspiring rock journalists'.¹²⁸ It may be significant that *Chicken Shit's* editorial is anonymous whereas Hutton's name is featured prominently.

The biggest criticism of Tony Parsons is that he abused his position of power¹²⁹. He allegedly helped to establish bands by giving them positive reviews, but then once the band has gained a good reputation, he destroyed that by then giving them a poor one. Lindsay Hutton calls it his 'build 'em up and knock 'em down' act - the implication being that Parsons' is fickle and arbitrarily promoted or criticised bands.

Issues of integrity are frequently referred to in editorials. There is a dialogue between fanzines about the meaning of Punk and what constitutes the genuine article.

Ambition is frowned upon and any success is viewed with some suspicion. *Sniffin' Glue* is mentioned in *Chicken Shit* (undated) as Mark Perry's attempt to provide an alternative to popular music papers, *Sounds* and *N.M.E.* but Perry's credibility suffered with his paper's success. *Chicken Shit's* unnamed author accuses some fanzine writers of forming an elite sect though it is only Mark Perry and Ronnie Gurr (of *Hanging Around*) who are mentioned by name. Mark Perry's apparent ambition was perceived as a betrayal to the egalitarian ideology of Punk, as – according to *Chicken Shit* - rock journalists considered themselves more important than the bands.

Gun Rubber (undated) also accuses *Sniffin' Glue* of selling out. After an editorial complaining about too many middle men making money out of Punk, the article goes on to make acerbic comments about how many issues of *Sniffin' Glue* were then being sold¹³⁰ and speculating on the mark up.

The acceptable parameters defined by fanzines were rigid. If they succeeded they could be accused of journalistic elitism or simply of selling out. In the early days of fanzines, rivalry was rare but if a paper achieving even modest success could be criticised. If a fanzine acquired a high profile it then could become as much of a target as a mainstream paper. *Sniffin' Glue* and the Punk genre was parodied by Manchester based comedy rock band *Alberto Y Lost Trios Paranoias*. They brought out a mock fanzine was called *Kill It. For Snuffing Glue Freaks*. (fig.9). The band parodied Punk in a stage play called *Sleak* (about a rock star persuaded to commit suicide on stage). *Snuff Rock* was an EP of songs from the show. (Bob Dickinson notes that they may have parodied the fanzines genre too effectively as Greil Marcus quotes from it in *Lipstick Traces*)¹³¹.

But in the early days of Punk, criticism between fanzine writers was rare and there was a strong sense of community. The 'all contributions welcome' attitude of many fanzines is one of its defining criteria. The fanzines railed against an imposed and spurious hierarchy of the music press. Every fanzine editorial contains an invitation: the pages of *Kingdom Come* are open for 'anyone who fancies a bash at writing/drawing/whatever'.¹³² *Jungleland*,¹³³ announces in its editorial, 'all articles are welcome...any original local bands want a bit of coverage, get in touch'.

Johnny Waller's mission statement in *Kingdome Come*¹³⁴ is typical. He says that the main purpose of the fanzine is to communicate, and that should be a two-way thing. He invites contributions from readers and also recommends other fanzines and asks for them to be supported too.

Fanzine writers frequently reminded their readers that Punk was about music, rather than the adoption of behaviour described in the media. They were against copy-cat behaviour and stereo-typing. A recurring example involves spitting. Scot Lindsay Hamilton comments on the reported spitting at a *Ramones* gig at London's Roundhouse, on the fifth of June, 1977, and he is not impressed¹³⁵ and claimed that it would not happen in Scotland. Johnny Waller of *Kingdom Come* is also exasperated by spitting. 'Idiots gobbing; this has got to stop. If you're not going to gigs for the music then just fuck off'.¹³⁶ There are two implied criticisms: firstly of Punks behaving as badly as the media expected, and secondly of Punks not having music as their first focus.

Entire audiences spitting on bands became one of the most unpleasant practices of Punk. It may have been due to John Lydon's problematic sinuses,¹³⁷ though he claims that he never spat at the audience. It was probably more due to the mainstream media's vilification, but the spitting of beer and phlegm became commonplace. What exasperated fanzine writers more than the habit of spitting itself was Punks conforming to type, particularly when the type was a media construct. 'People thought that being a Punk meant dressing up like a car crash once a week and spitting a lot'.¹³⁸ Fanzine writers urged their readers to 'think for themselves'¹³⁹ but at the same time

there was a pressure to look and behave as though they belonged to a particular youth group.

Another recurring theme which concerned fanzine writers was selling out and many express fears about the over commercialisation of Punk fashions. The underlying fear was about loss of ownership if the look was appropriated by high street fashion stores. To retain individuality and kudos as a sub-culture, it was important that the look was not too easily available in high street outlets or in the more expensive boutiques. Originality was necessary to retain credibility – and avoid looking like a chain store Punk. Some offered helpful hints on acquiring the look¹⁴⁰. ‘You do need straight trousers: flares or bags are definitely out. If you can spare a few quid it’s worth a visit to a jumble sale...Almost any shirt will do; just splash it all over with ink or paint colours...make up your own slogans and scribble it all over ya shirt. Don’t worry too much about shoes - anything will do...It’s surprising what you can do with your old clothes, so have a scout round and sort some out. When you see these Punks dressed in stuff from Boys [expensive Punk boutique on King’s Road] just laugh up your sleeve – you’ve done something original!’

There was a dangerously thin line between Punk and poseur, and fanzines were the self appointed guardians of Punks’ integrity. They dutifully warned their readers against the evils of commercialism and of falling prey to fashion. The main offenders, in the judgement of northern fanzines, were from London. An editorial in *Gun Rubber*¹⁴¹ points out the irony of *The Clash*’s wearing expensive battle fatigues ‘that would take you a month to save up and buy’ and of fashion designer Zandra Rhodes Punk inspired diamond studded safety pins. An Irish fanzine called *Heat*¹⁴² also refers

to Zandra Rhodes' appropriation of Punk ideas. Her collection was called *Conceptual Chic* and *Heat* claimed that her diamond studded safety pins would 'set you back several hundred pounds'. Punk, as fanzines kept reminding their readers, was not about conspicuous consumption

A battle over ownership was being waged against increasingly overwhelming odds. A fanzine called *Deviation Street* (undated from the North East) rails against commercial exploitation. It urges its readers not to buy T shirts with band names printed on them. The editorial by Ronny Clocks argues that 'it may be *The Damned* today but it was *Deep Purple* yesterday. The faces that sell...are the same...Don't be bought.

Band wagon jumping happened on a more mundane level also. *Wrong Image* (undated fanzine produced in Fort William) features a genuine advert for Punk jewellery, with the tag line 'Can you show you're Punk enough? Well it's possible now!!!' The advertisement goes on to describe the 'latest copper jewellery engraved with the word Punk'. Hand written over the advert is, 'why have you not bought one? Are you not Punk enough?' The fanzine's title is a comment not only on the alienation of young people striving for an identity of their own, but on their commercial exploitation.

Ownership of Punk was not just about resisting commercial exploitation. London audiences were frequently considered poseurs anyway, by some northern fanzines and thought to be too easily swayed by fashion. The *Next Big Thing*¹⁴³ was scathing about the dictates of fashionable opinion on what bands were 'hip to like'. For instance, it

was not hip to like *The Damned* but it was acceptable to like *The Clash*. Such conformity was, in Hamilton's opinion, 'a load of shit. We like what we like...it seems that a lot of London audiences are more into posing than the music.'¹⁴⁴

London affluence and commercialism is particularly targeted by Bert Vinyl of *Gun Rubber*¹⁴⁵; '...goin' down to London to buy yer plastic skins [fashionable fake leatherette and leopard-skin] takes about as much imagination an' originality as smokin' French fags. C and A's better anyway'. Vinyl has another dig at London *faux* Punk: 'so if you're one of those silly c*nts who thinks all there is [to Punk] is a blank expression, a mohair jumper, tight trousers, and knowing which end of King's Road is where it's at....fuck off'. Trendy shops are attacked again in *City Chain*¹⁴⁶ 'It wouldn't damage some of these Punk shops to lower their prices a bit so that real Punks can buy something now and again'. People who can afford to shop on the Kings Road are not true Punks in *City Chain's* opinion, as 'Punks ain't rich'.

The fanzines are peppered with references to class and privilege – or the lack of privilege. They (nearly all) assume an equality of readership and a common resentment of wealth and privilege which allowed some young people to buy into Punk as a fashion, rather than as a way of life. *Sniffin' Glue* number eleven of July 1977, comments on the *Harpers and Queen* article about Punk which followed a visit from style writer Peter York. The resulting *Harpers'* article is mocking, claiming that fanzines can say 'fuck' but little else, and are terrified of sounding *interleckshul* (sic). *Sniffin' Glue's* article also refers to the Zandra Rhodes Punk chic look as 'the sickest thing...which our privileged cousins are now able to buy'.

So pervasive was the idea that true Punks were economically disadvantaged that those who were better off could be reticent about admitting it. Attitudes had changed since the days of the rock aristocracy. Conventional snobbery about one's background had been replaced by an inverted snobbery. It is well known that Joe Strummer of the *Clash* came from a privileged background but he adopted a faux cockney accent. Similarly Rat Scabies of the *Damned* recalls his astonishment at Siouxi Sioux spending several hundred pounds on bondage gear, before the band's success.¹⁴⁷ Siouxi also came from a privileged background, he claims. And yet it was *de rigueur* to adopt a working class, anti-establishment pose.

Why was a society magazine like *Harpers and Queen* interested in a supposedly working class phenomenon? Why was being middle class viewed with suspicion? What aided changing fashions in the mid to late 1970s, with real privations at one end of the social scale, was that those on the dole were not perceived as scroungers (the terminology invented by the Conservative party later, and propagated by the tabloid press). There was a positive and defiant urban aesthetic in the mid to late 1970s. Unusually, being working class was temporarily fashionable. However, it was still a construct. Singers in Punk bands may have jettisoned the mid-atlantic accent required for rock, but it had for the most part been replaced by a faux cockney.¹⁴⁸

Pete Price, in Irish fanzine *Heat* (October/November 1977) comes out about the difficulties of being a middle class Punk. He questions some clichés of supposedly bona fide Punk – of being poor, unemployed and unable to play and asks, 'why are people hiding their social backgrounds and pretending they're from poor families and ashamed of their qualifications?' Since Pete Price wrote that article, Punk has shifted

from being understood as a working class phenomenon, to being considered a middle class one with the art school playing a central role. But in reality it was a hybrid.

On class collision, Bernard Rhodes, manager of *The Clash*, argued that a mix of class was needed within a band to make it work.¹⁴⁹ Jon Savage explains that Malcolm McLaren was fascinated by *Pistols'* guitarist, Steve Jones, because he was a street kid, and goes on to say that it was Jones' plan rather than McLaren's to put a group together. Without Steve Jones there would never have been a band. Punk was a hybrid, free to straddle class boundaries but it chose to express itself in proletarian language.

Cultural changes of the 1970s could not have come about without the events of the previous decade. Jon Savage asserts that the radical cultural changes of the 1960s were not instigated by the masses, but were introduced by a few 'cultural vanguards'. Street culture existed in the 1960s as it had done at the turn of the century but in a hierarchical, class ridden society much of it still flew under the cultural radar and was not seen as being a part of culture *per se*. The cultural vanguard of the psychedelic era emerged from the middle classes and was visible, relevant and influential because of that.

The 1960s had been a period of full employment but the post war euphoria was cut short by the knock-on effect of world events that took place in the early 1970s. As a consequence of the oil shortage in 1973 and a miners' strike of the same year, petrol doubled in price and inflation soured. Power was rationed; the nation suffered power blackouts, and a three-day working week was introduced¹⁵⁰. Unemployment,

especially amongst the traditional working classes, was rife. It is no coincidence that at this time a trash aesthetic was being introduced in New York

Concurrent with the rise of the New York scene was the revival of R and B in Britain. The musical style that predates and informs British Punk appeared on the urban pub rock circuits around the mid-1970s. Rhythm and Blues, or R and B, had been bouncing back and forth between Britain and the United States since the post war period and it became hugely popular in this new incarnation, around 1975. This time around it was a blend of energised R and B and early 1960s British beat music performed with an urgency peculiar to its time.

Post war working class sub-cultures often only acquired visibility because of public concerns, when there were fights between mods and rockers, for example. But working class music and fashion was thriving in Britain in the 1960s. There were *Mods*, *Soul boys*, *Teddy Boys* and *Rockers* and many other street tribes, all strictly adhering to their own codes of dress and behaviour; and all inherently conservative. R and B had absorbed some of the working class values of urban culture; its strictures on dress and some of its recreational drugs, particularly amphetamine or speed. Punk, crucially the branch of Punk described in the fanzines, also absorbed conservative values of working class urban culture.

By 1975 something about the edginess of the new pub rock scene was encapsulating the moment. Mark Perry describes how the music scene changed around 1975 with the growing significance of the pub rock circuit. He cites *Dr Feelgood*, *The Kursaal Flyers* and *Eddie and the Hot Rods* as being leading lights of the rising R and B boom

- special because of the energy and excitement they generated. The venues they played were much smaller and far more intimate than the major league gigs and Perry notes that Punk bands not only played the same venues but that they also adopted the same energetic approach to their music. It was the pub circuit, claims Perry, which laid the foundations for the Punk scene to follow¹⁵¹

The use of smaller venues had the additional effect of helping fanzine producers access an audience, and spread new ideas. Youth movements can happen spontaneously when ideas shift from one group to another and emerge as something different. Frenetic R and B; a deference to the style and sound of the 1960s, an urban aesthetic imported from New York; all contributed to the emergence of Punk. The choice of small venues, as opposed to large concert stadiums, also made the music more accessible to the less well off.

Punk is perceived as being political and unemployment and draconian policing policies did raise political awareness in some quarters. Contemporary alternative magazines such as Manchester's *City Fun* campaigned against police brutality, for instance. But there was not necessarily a universal understanding of politics other than recognising an inequality in the treatment meted out to members of different classes. Some societal groups had even less power than the white working class.

Cross-class allegiances were aided by a (predominantly) youthful reaction to the social injustice of racism and heavy-handed policing policies. This came about following an infamous remark from rock guitarist Eric Clapton at a gig in August 1976, when he sympathised with Enoch Powell about his proposed repatriation of

Afro-Caribbean and Asian people.¹⁵² Young musicians and promoters reacted to perceived establishment racism by founding *Rock Against Racism*- an attempt to demonstrate multi-ethnic solidarity via the medium of concerts and festivals – at a time when racial tension and right-wing rhetoric had resulted in the rise of neo-fascism¹⁵³.

Rock Against Racism had its own fanzine called *Temporary Hoarding*; a publication which utilised blackmail style lettering and a hand made aesthetic. The editorial proclaimed: ‘we want rebel music, street music ... crisis music. Now music... Rock against racism. Love music, hate racism’.¹⁵⁴

Syd Sheldon, the founder of *RAR* is interviewed in an American fanzine called *I Wanna*. He describes what happened after Clapton’s remark; how bands were coming out with ‘fantastic political statements’ such as Joe Strummer of *The Clash*, who claimed they started out against the National Front. Sheldon explains ‘The kids where you live (USA) and I live realised that...all *The Eagles* were singing about was Hotel California and that was nothing to do with real life. Kids spent their dole money in order to say something...Punk and *RAR* grew up together. ...soon there were ten *RAR* gigs a week, mixing reggae and Punk. Before this [May 1st 1977 at the Roundhouse] Punks were not playing reggae. It was the strategy of the *NF* to win power on the streets. We decide that when the *NF* called for a march in south London that we would put out a call to confront them...Forty thousand people turned up.’¹⁵⁵

Music proved to be a galvanising and unifying influence and was also surprisingly politically effective. Organisations such as *RAR* and the *Anti-Nazi League* did, at the

very least, highlight the unease with which the rise of the right wing was regarded, and, by doing so, contribute to its downfall. Although informed political awareness was not necessarily an important part of the equation that produced Punk, people were 'politicised' in that they were motivated to react. This kind of politicised thinking introduced a notion of egalitarianism which also aided cross-class unity and a demographically broadened fan base.

There was an ambiguity to the symbolism adopted by some Punks. Although many were motivated by *RAR* and the *ANL* the nazi swastika was, paradoxically, part of Punk's iconography. New York Punks *The New York Dolls* occasionally used the swastika and explained it as being a statement of 'how bad you are' rather than one of political persuasion.¹⁵⁶ It was used in the same way – as a shock tactic – by Scottish fanzine *Chicken Shit*, (fig. 10) which portrayed a swastika on its front cover. It would suggest that in the early days of Punk there was not a consistent politic. Young Punks, suggests Tony Jackson in *Deviation Street*, understood politics as control, and being a Punk (that is free-spirited and independent) was a means of defying control. The individualism of Punk allowed the wearing of the swastika in spite of the inconsistencies it implied. Its use of shock props like the swastika further riled the media. The irony was that a group so vilified, and politically naive, had helped to quash the rise of neo-nazi groups and awareness raising of *RAR*'s and the *ANL*'s activities was aided by fanzines.¹⁵⁷

It has already been argued that 'youth culture' though widely considered a by-product of the comparatively affluent post war years, had existed prior to that but the

comparative wealth of post war, and successive generations created a substantial and highly visible youth market.

When Rock and Roll music became popular in the United States, it caused something like moral outrage because of its association with Black musicians and sexuality, but the demand – and the spending power of those demanding – was great enough to overcome its prohibition. Indeed it could be said that attempts to ban rock and roll music and its subsequent incarnations only made it more attractive by labelling it as being morally dangerous. A Glasgow fanzine called *Hanging Around*¹⁵⁸ features on its front cover a montage of tabloid headlines such as the ‘frenzy of Punk’ and ‘sinister threat to our children’. Punks had taken over the role of folk devil formerly attributed to *Teddy Boys* (and earlier still, hooligan gangs). Headlines assigning Punks the role of outlaws, although hysterical and exaggerated, were more likely to recruit than to deter.

Fanzines writers frequently remind their readers that Punk is about music but the musicians and performers were important and if they were being demonised by the press, so much the better. The media played a large part in the instant mythologizing of *The Sex Pistols* and Punk would have failed had it not been for the presence of these and other charismatic individuals and the passion they inspired in their fan base. McLaren’s rhetoric, and Reid’s graphic presentation – although significant -were no more than marketing. A charismatic few were responsible for its success. McLaren’s recognition of Steve’s Jones’ and John Lydon’s charisma is deserving of credit.

Our need for heroes – particularly during the transitory stage of adolescence – seems to be hard-wired. The stars of Punk were lionised by their fans who frequently regarded them with a quasi religious fervour. Paradoxically, even with that implied distance, the fans also demonstrate an attitude of ‘ownership’ of their heroes, writing to them, and of them in familiar terms as if the fantasy relationship were a real one.

In the predominantly adolescent world of fandom, the X factor was charisma.

Sexiness (a highly subjective and shifting term) can figure strongly in shaping the relationship between bands and fans. It can be at the core of a cult of personality and determine whether a sub-culture is successful or not. The charismatic individual or group can be attractive to young people of any gender of sexual persuasion.

The urchin look was considered sexy in the late 1970s. Malcolm McLaren plagiarised an urban look of cropped hair and slashed clothes that New York musician, Richard Hell, was wearing in the mid 1970s. The sexy urchin look was right for an urban aesthetic replacing one of excess. There was a synchronicity of styles on both sides of the Atlantic. Dr Feelgood’s guitarist Wilko Johnson had a completely outré image of savagely cropped hair and ill fitting, old fashioned suits. Ian Dury, another extremely significant London musician, was wearing a razor blade earring long before they became a necessary Punk accessory. Ian Dury was not conventionally sexy but he was charismatic. Wilko Johnson of *Dr Feelgood*, on the other hand, and New Yorker Joey Ramone, were not. According to Jon Savage, Joey Ramone was simply too weird to be truly charismatic¹⁵⁹.

Fans were, by definition, motivated by a love of the music, and specifically by the new generation of young turks who were playing it. There was a cynicism evidenced

in the fanzines that the music press and the music industry were out to dupe the punter. It was important for the community of fans to elevate who they thought appropriate to the role rather than having that choice made for them; to gain control and ownership of the phenomenon. But male and female fans could differ in their understanding of ownership.

When investigating fanzine editorials and *The Sex Pistols*' fan mail, a gendered profile of the fan base emerges. It appears to be a truism that it is young men rather than young women who develop an expertise in rock (although the notion of expertise is probably a male construct). Jon Savage argues that this is why the music press has always been male dominated¹⁶⁰. The developing of expertise is reflected in the interests and concerns of the fans, as evidenced in *Sex Pistols*' fan mail. Male fans tend to be collectors – compiling knowledge in a very pragmatic way, but with females the connection is more overtly emotional. It is not inappropriate to use the analogy of relationships when describing the bond between the fans and their music.

The Sex Pistols' fan mail suggests that the male fans want to join the band's gang and the female fans want to sleep with them, suggesting active and passive relationships between fans and bands. There is an overt interest from both sexes in joining a fan club, but concern is expressed by some male fans that such a thing is not very 'Punky'¹⁶¹. The term fan was at that time more often associated with teen acts such as the *Bay City Rollers* or *The Osmonds*; female hysteria, and tacky marketing.

The typical male fan is a collector but communicates in the 'matey' tone of faux familiarity established by earlier light entertainment and pop papers. The girls are not so coy. The overt sexual overtones of female fan mail are in keeping with the Punk ethos of (according to Mark Perry) 'not giving a shit'.¹⁶² Real Punk girls, he implies, were sexually active anyway and their greatest aspiration was to become a groupie. In spite of the prominence of some women on the Punk scene, it was still easier for men to take the active role in the forming of bands and the writing of fanzines.

The 1970s, in spite of rhetoric about empowerment, were misogynistic times. Mark Perry's opinions on women fanzine writers are unknown but he hated female rockers. 'Rock 'n' roll's for blokes and I hope it stays that way. Girls are good for one thing and for one thing only –going shopping for glue'.¹⁶³ Although Perry's remark (presumably tongue-in-cheek) is dismissive of women, they still made up a large part of Punk's fan base even though their role tended to be more passive.

Fandom has been described as a dysfunctional condition given that most fans of either sex are in their mid teens when first smitten, and therefore emotionally immature. The highly charged sexual interest of female fans in a fantasy relationship with their pop/rock heroes could be construed as less precarious than being in a real relationship - assuming that this is a transient stage of development that will pass. In most cases it does, but what is apparent from archival evidence is that both sexes are emotionally charged during this period. Mark Perry was passionate about Punk and mature enough to appraise the scene and harness the passion of others: 'We've got to make something real happen here. Most British rock is past it, but the Punk scene isn't.

Let's build our own bands up...but it's all up to you the kids (and of course, the guys who feel young). London Punk is great, so let's go!¹⁶⁴,

The continuing reputation of the *Sex Pistols*; the mythology surrounding them, and the art work of Jamie Reid have all focussed attention on the central role of the art school. But even without an informed viewpoint, the idea of ripping up and reassembling was particularly apt in a time when young people felt they were disposable and certain ideas had been in the public domain for many years prior to Jamie Reid's work.

As influential on late twentieth century graphics as Jamie Reid was, his influences are not particularly prevalent in the fanzines. Their criteria is the spread of information and the claim of ownership, and if it is possible to generalise at all, their graphics owe more to the conventional 'inkies' and to student rag mags. There are exceptions.

1960s Counter-cultural artist, Robert Crumb is referenced. *Gabba Gabba Hey* (tag line: 'yes it's another *Ramones* rip off' fig. 11) features a trippy, Robert Crumb style zippered Punk face, complete with Punk adornments of swastika, safety pin, padlock and chains. The figure raises a clenched fist wearing an iron cross ring. Tiny cartoon figures are present in the picture which, judging by the speech bubbles, has been copied from a French illustration¹⁶⁵. The letters page evidently uses *lettraset*¹⁶⁶ in its title – as a hand-written message by the column header points out a miss-matched letter S. Liverpool fanzine *More or Less* (undated) has a more obvious Robert Crumb comic strip called '*The Sound of Muzak*' (fig. 12) which mocks all contemporary music.

A frequent layout method involves a montage of photographs interspersed with lettering, frequently hand-written, but sometimes typed or stencilled. *Jungleland*¹⁶⁷ and *Another Boring Fanzine*¹⁶⁸ (fig. 13) both feature a montage of photographs on their front pages, with the text in between listing the bands inside. The graphic style of both is reminiscent of the gig guides found in the back of the regular music pages.

Punk/Jamie Reid style graphics are referenced in a fanzine called *Away From the Numbers*¹⁶⁹ (fig. 14 named after editor Brian Hogg's favourite *Jam* song). Blackmail style lettering and a montage of Punk stars, including *Iggy Pop*, *Generation X* and *The Clash* are photocopied on a background of telephone pages. The editorial explains that the magazine is an 'outgrowth of *Bam Balam* – a mag written round 1960s pop and new releases'¹⁷⁰ which would explain its comparative professionalism.

Jamie Reid and Malcolm McLaren had been interested in situationism in their college days, so that was referenced too in the *Sex Pistols* packaging. Punk fans would appropriate the use of slogans as part of an iconography of rebellion but it was frequently a cosmetic appropriation, along with other potentially shocking accessories and an attempt at expressing an ill-defined individuality rather than a philosophy.

Jamie Reid's packaging, contemporary art exhibitions – specifically the John Heartfield Exhibition in 1976,¹⁷¹ a newly politicised youth, and the energy released by class collision - these were the things that created the vibe. And most importantly, there was the desire to control their own youth movement and to resist pressure from the music media to conform to a notion of Punk which it had created.

Most of the fanzine writers were, and remain, anonymous, and their magazines were contemporary, dealing with contemporaneous issues and essentially ephemeral.

The fanzines were successful disseminators of Punk because they were generated by enthusiasm and were egalitarian in the way they communicated to their readers and consequently, their readers were more inclined to relate to the fanzines rather than to the more ambitious independent publications.

Being ephemeral their importance has been overlooked but fanzines played a vital role in the growth of a sub-culture. They helped to create a socially cohesive and yet paradoxically conservative paradigm of rebellion.

Conclusion.

As I hope this thesis has shown, fanzines demonstrate the paradoxes with which Punk is peppered. That they played an enormous part in the propagation of Punk is undeniable. They helped Punk to straddle boundaries of class by democratising the spreading of information. But a fanzine which progressed and embraced a notion of success and ambition, ceased to be a fanzine. It was then aspiring to be something else and its ambition precluded it from the narrowly defined parameters espoused by Punk's proletarian wing.

Sniffin' Glue not only inspired others to do it for themselves, it identified a need for autonomy and exposed a resentment of appropriation by the music media. Once an opportunity of ownership presented itself, music fans embraced it. The energy realised helped to spread Punk, but even from the outset, Punk was a mutable term. Fanzine editors strove to define it and claim it as their own; music journalists had a different take on it; fashion houses appropriated street chic and high street chain stores did their best to cash in. The fanzines take on Punk is perhaps the most surprising.

Young Punks embraced the movement with enthusiasm; wrote and produced their own magazines and then, having defined what Punk was to their own satisfaction, many resisted change as passionately as they had once embraced it. Fanzines were 'of the moment' in more ways than one. They were attempting to arrest any development which moved Punk away from its raw beginnings.

There is no ambiguity evidenced in the fanzines about the predominant class in Punk. It was assumed in fanzine editorials that the readership was not privileged. They were addressing a community and presumed equality, and that most of their readers were on the dole. The occasional middle class opinion was raised about the anomaly of being a Punk and employed. But most of the fanzines investigated assume they are communicating with a group who are passionate about music and who struggle financially to be involved in a scene.

According to fanzines, success was equated with selling out and ambition was class betrayal. The energy of street music had been embraced and fanzines had democratised the movement by giving it their voice and energy. The counter cultural vehicles of alternative papers and in some cases, the music press, articulated the phenomenon of Punk as part of an evolutionary process, but many working class Punks resisted change. The middle class embracing of raw Punk appropriated its energy and elevated it to art. Working class Punks, as evidenced in many fanzines, wanted to keep it on the street.

Fanzines were principally the produce of working class Punks. The traditional urban and conservative gang values are evidenced in their editorial mission statements. They were devoted to heroes of the scene but would only tolerate a limited amount of success. Anything else was selling out. The demise of the Sex Pistols maintained their credibility, and Sid Vicious' death has assured his status of cult hero; the perennial bad boy who never got old, and stayed in the moment – which is what all 'true' Punks really wanted to do.

The music press moved on. The rhetoric of originality and breaking away with the old began to be realised with post Punk experimental music. The rock and roll guitar based format made way for electronic experimentation. Fanzines, having defined their mode of rebellion, were reactionary.

Punk has been described in many ways and is not usually considered conservative. When terms like nihilistic are used to describe the period it seems at odds with a movement which encouraged involvement and experimentation. But the Punk mantra of '*no future*' does apply to the branch of fundamentalist Punk espoused by fanzines.

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Appendices

Appendix 'A'

The word 'Punk' is an ancient one with a pedigree of at least six hundred years. It meant prostitute in sixteenth century English and was used by William Shakespeare. In Act Five: Scene One of *Measure for Measure*, Duke Vincentio is questioning Mariana about her marital status. On discovering that she has no such rank, his companion Lucio says, "My Lord, she may be a Punk; for many of them are neither maid, widow or wife."¹

The word continued to mean female prostitute and was still in use as such in the late seventeenth century. Samuel Butler wrote in *Hudibras*, (1672) that the English Civil War had:

*"....made them fight, like mad or drunk
For Dame Religion, as for Punk,
Whose honesty they all durst swear for,
Though not a man of them knew wherefore."*

Hudibras; Canto I, lines 4-7²

The pejorative theme persists but with some variation of meaning. In the local dialect of Somerset *hunky Punk* means a stone carving of an ugly face; a variant of gargoyle, and *Punkie Night*³ is another term for Halloween. I would suggest that, because of the

¹ <http://the-tech.mit.edu/shakespeare/works.html>

² <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Punk>

³ <http://en.wikioedia.org/wiki/Punk>

explicit reference to unattractiveness, there is still probably some link between this use of the word and its describing the lowest form of prostitute.

Although regional variations existed, the underlying sense of a sexually exploited and disempowered individual remained. Overtime it shifted from meaning a female prostitute to a male, but it still remained a pejorative term. In the early part of the twentieth century it could also mean ‘criminal’s apprentice’ but it was associated with the role of catamite: although the meaning was less about homosexuality and more about abused power. Its appearance in underworld slang was first attested in 1904⁴ and from then, became part of prison slang – notably in North America - referring to a male who is treated as a sexual submissive. The word was idiomatically associated with the lexicon of the criminal classes and lower orders and it has been suggested that the location of CBGB’s – a seminal venue of Punk music - on New York’s Bowery, led to the emergence of the term ‘Punk rock’. Allegedly, many of the customers at CBGB’s, were male prostitutes, and therefore Punks. The music was “rock for Punks”⁵

Why such negative terminology was embraced by the British sub culture of the 1970s is questionable but they were not the first. The ‘Beats’ and the ‘Freaks’ are just two more examples of post war sub-groups defiantly defining their ‘otherness’ by embracing the ‘straight’ or ‘square’ insult. However, the subterranean survival of the word ‘Punk’ demonstrates that although a word is not in common parlance, it may still remain influential. It is demonstrable that words, ideas and attitudes of the past retain cultural currency and continue to inform contemporary thinking. Much as

⁴ <http://www.etymonline.com/p.11etym.html>

⁵ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Punk>

marginalised factions of society have always existed, the language of the marginalised remains a powerful part of folk memory.

We have established that the word Punk would have been familiar on Elizabethan streets and that it migrated to North America. With the exception of the Shakespearean theatre, it is doubtful that the term would have been familiar in polite British society and yet it survived. Appropriated terms from the criminal underworld can be inherently powerful – merely by the fact that they stem from the underworld. A censorious public could imbue forbidden words with a certain amount of authority and unwittingly provide a lexical counterpoint to mainstream language. The term ‘Punk’ has been neologised. It was embraced, not without irony, by the Punk movement. While the complete etymology may not have been known, popular American culture is endemic and it would have been understood by anyone familiar with American cinema that ‘Punk’ was an insult. Nevertheless, in the political climate of the time, this apparent nihilism became an integral part of a group identity.

Appendix 'B'

Lenny Kaye Interview: East Village New York, 15th March, 2002.

Q Joan Bimson: were you a writer before you were a musician?

A. Lenny Kaye: Yes, I actually have always been a writer. I was a musician actually, in some ways before I was a writer, I was in teenage bands in new Jersey and when I began writing about rock and roll it was because I felt I had a fairly unique perspective. I could listen to a record as if I was within the band and hear it kind of from the inside out. But I mean I've always written, when I was a young teenager I was very much involved in science fiction fandom, which is not a hundred miles away from music fandom in the sense that they had fanzines, and I published a few fanzines, and corresponded with people, and there was a kind of sub-culture that I found not really that different from the sub culture that comes around music. When I worked as a clerk in a record store in the early 1970s, I got to experience that first hand because a lot of people would come in – it was their way of communicating – they would find a fellow Lesley Gore fan or something- I think Nick Hornsby probably tapped into that quite well in his 'hi-fidelity' book. People come in and buy their Saturday record – but it really always made me feel very warm and connected to people who were fans like that. I remember in the 1970s somewhere I got friendly through correspondence and telephone with the editor of Goldmont magazine, and he passed away in, you know we exchanged tapes – he'd send me over (?) shows, and then one day I picked up Goldmont to find that he passed away, and I'd also found that that he was confined to a wheelchair, and I never knew that about him, and it just

struck me that here was a guy who through the medium of being a fan of music, was able to have an entire social intercourse with somebody.

JB: So you'd say it was a leveller, then?

LK: Yeah, it was a leveller, it was also a way of, a motive of having something to talk about, to be a fan of something. I've always enjoyed sub-cultures, I've been through several of them in my time, and I find that the appreciation of a shared interest is often as firm a way of getting people together in a group as family or class or social grouping.

JB: How different do you think it was from, the 1960s to the 1970s? How different do you think the sub-culture was?

LK: I always see the similarities of things. I think there was probably a different set of overall signifiers, but really you know, if you were a hippy in the 1960s, it wasn't that different from being a Punk. There was the same feeling of belonging to a group that stood outside the mainstream. There was a sense of politics behind both of them – possibly more in the 1960s, where you had certain real social world views, than Punk which was fairly reactionary, and contrary in a certain way, but I think both of those were groups that stood outside the mainstream and took their identity from that. I'd say that in England, there was a much more pronounced and fashion oriented thing. I always like to think that the bands that began around CBGBs in the mid 1970s, they never really had a specific thing. They were all very different from each other. And when the music moved over to England it took on the Ramones template. You had the

motor cycle jackets, you had your chopped eight note chords, you had your very specific way of singing a song, whereas in the mid 1970s – around here – there was a huge amount of difference between a group like Blondie and a group like the Ramones, a group like Television or even us. We were all very different from each other, and not as easily classifiable.

JB: do you think it was fair to classify Patti Smith as Punk?

LK: Yeah why not. It's as fair as anything – I think we had certain Punk aspects, certainly I helped as a writer, and as an anthologist – helped crystalise some of the ideas about Punk.

JB: could you talk about that?

LK: In my revered (laughs) garage band compilation Nuggets, I tended to celebrate what I considered the original impulses of rock and roll, which was this kind of desperate desire to understand yourself through the means of the electric guitar, and they gave a lot of kids who were essentially mutants, not really sports kids and not really intellectual over achievers – these kind of weird kids who didn't have a place to go, it allowed them to find themselves. Certainly in the 1960s the garage band was a way that you could go into there and come out, a rock, quote unquote, star, even if it was in your own mind. That original impulse of having three chords and throwing yourself up on stage, the kind of self transcendence that you did for that at street and very local level, and the simplicity and energy of the music coming foremost. Though some of the stuff that was being theorised not only in Nuggets but among the rock

writer community at the time – and by extension the audience – there was some element of Punk rock as a concept there. Certainly, in some of our early work, we tapped into that energy, but our roots were so broad. We liked hit singles; we liked avant-garde jazz improvisation, we liked great soul and R and B songs. We had a lot of different roots and I think most of the bands, especially out in New York, had those variety of roots. The Ramones were certainly not as mono-syllabic as they appeared- it was a very smart art project in many ways. Talking Heads, as preppy as they looked, still loved Hamilton Bohannon (?) and Al Green, and really liked that soul sound. Television were as much, jazz improvisers as they were Punk. All of these bands had a lot of different elements --which is very New York. I mean, you walk down the street here, and three blocks you're exposed to five different ethnic groups. So it's a very cosmopolitan and a very kind of melting pot society here.

JB: Do you think the English bands didn't really get a handle on that?

LK: Well, they tended to see it very specifically, if I can read English sub-culture myself, there's a real sense of identity. You have your Mods and you have your Rockers; you don't have a Mocker or a Rod. You know, so they're the rigid classifications of what your social group could be. I mean, I was given a lot of stick by The Clash for having long hair. All in fun, but still, if you didn't look a certain way, if you didn't have a certain type of music – here – because it's America, everything is a lot more blurry, and a lot more open ended, and for a group like Patti we wanted it all. We wanted to have a commercial hit single with a great chorus, and we wanted to have a twenty minute field of noise – like Radio Ethiopia. We wanted all the places inbetween. We wanted to do a cocktail cabaret song, you know a great

old fifties standard if we wanted to. We wanted to have freedom of artistic expression – and I would imagine that’s why each album that came out generated as many people who felt that we’d betrayed some vision as, you know, we gained new people. I believe growth is pretty important. A group like the Ramones – they pretty much stayed the same, the entire way, and groups like the Sex Pistols kind of drew a line around themselves, and they couldn’t do something that, for instance, was sentimental and emotional. You know, the more you define yourself, the more limiting you are, and so a lot of the bands that were so anxious to raise the Punk banner found themselves stuck when the music evolved. You know that’s pop culture, and we all like a new favourite group every five minutes and that’s what the top ten is about, but still it was an interesting thing. We really wanted just the freedom to go in any direction. If we wanted to move in a more symphonic direction we could, if we wanted to become spare, there was a way in which we helped define who we were.

....on the other hand, the sub- cultures, like the rockabilly sub-culture, they were so great. They were these people with those long drape coats and stuff, so, like anything, there’s good and bad.

JB: How consciously influenced were you by the Situationists....?

LK: I never heard of the Situationists....a lot of what you do is – maybe someone like Malcolm McLaren, who seemed to have a vision of where to get. He had a certain philosophy. Our band especially grew so organically, it was two years before we made Horses, and we started out as a piano player, and myself chugging rhythm and Patti doing this kind of weird poetry song form, and it didn’t seem to be anything. I

mean, I couldn't even imagine it making a record, so we were so far removed from having a band, that by the time our band developed, it had its own place. We didn't really have a set plan. We didn't even set out to make it.

JB: What inspired you?

LK: Art. You know, the glory of doing some great piece of work. We loved rock and roll; we loved literature, and we loved the great classic figures of our time, and...

JB: What literature?

LK: Patti loved Rimbaud, and we loved the Beat writers, she loved Jean Genet (?). I love James Joyce. We were very much influenced by – I hesitate to use the word new journalism – but that kind of sense of all of a sudden you could manipulate the writing form. In the 1960s to make it a personal vehicle wasn't just like your inverted pyramid of journalism – who, what where and why, and the last paragraph can be cut. I mean, this was a very personal form of journalism which I was inspired by in my rock writing. I mean, I started rock writing because all of a sudden I was reading about writers in Crawdaddy, that were able to look at a piece of artistic work and make a piece of writing that stood next to it artistically, that understood and reflected it. There wasn't a distance, and when I became a rock writer, as it was called then.....

(side two)..... you were equal parts a journalist and a creative writer., and you were given a space, and I'm not sure that space exists in quite the same way now, but , hard to say, but you were encouraged by the magazines to take literary chances; to utilize

the techniques of a Karawak, or a Tom Wolfe. So you had the sense that you could create art within the context of pop culture, essentially.

JB: Would you say that was easier to do in a place like New York – to retain integrity?

LK: Oh yeah. New York is the avant capital, if nothing else because it attracts so many creative people from all over America and the world, and it's such a conduit for ideas. I mean, whatever you're into – music, art – it's here in such abundance. Sometimes it's too much abundance, and one of the things that always held back a New York rock and roll scene was the fact that on any given night you could go see a dozen national, inter-national acts, anywhere in the city, so why would you want to go and see a local band? For a while, especially in the early 1970s, there was no local scene.

JB: What made that change?

LK: The New York Dolls.

JB: What was so different about them?

LK: They started having little parties or performances down town, and they attracted a small core of people who were looking for a local scene – looking for a music that wasn't being represented in any of the other clubs. This sense of garage or Punk rock – they were upstarts. They were reworking the classics and giving it a kind of exotic

new twist. And the twenty or thirty people that started showing up at their shows regularly they were all the seeds of all the bands. And then there was a little glitter rock scene, and for someone who likes hanging out and likes bands, I loved that – just to go out and see the same cluster of people. I imagine it was much the same in London, because when we played the Roundhouse in May of 76 we met the people who would become the Pretenders, and the Clash and the Pistols. When we toured there in that year, you could feel there was something in the air that people wanted a new generation.

JB: Was that a reaction against the glossy conglomerates?

LK: Yeah. I'd say it was also the distance that these glossy conglomerates, you know, all of a sudden you had to be a well trained musician to compete, and where was your entry level position? Where was the place where, if you loved music, that you could get up and learn how to do what it is you were doing? All the groups learned pretty much on stage, you know – how to tune, how to hone their songs. It gave the scene, in a way, a time to develop and I think that's really important that you have a time to develop your own identity instead of being subsumed into the mass – that sense of being outside. I would suspect now might be a similar time where you have a very glossy pop music that's made by professionals, and, where do the amateurs who don't fit into this mould start to find their way? Inevitably, everybody learns how to play, and learns how to have their hit singles and learns how to fight with each other and everything goes through its almost predictable evolution of innocence to decadence to new birth.

JB: What do you think will be the reaction to the manufactured pop now?

LK:I wouldn't pretend to predict it because it's always more unpredictable, than you could. I remember standing outside CBGBs in the mid 1970s, thinking the scene was great but not even imagining that it would be as well known as the other scene that I really enjoyed which was the San Francisco summer of love scene with the Grateful Dead, and that was a really great moment in time, and here I am with forty people at the Bowery and yet now people talk to me as if this was some golden era, and what must it be like to have a beer at CBGBs and, really what it is, is just like it's hanging out. And there's a lot of new tools, and is the new scene going to be even guitar driven? Probably not. My daughter when she's turning the station doesn't really pause on anything that sounds like a guitar, so just like maybe in the 1960s or 1970s, the big bands were not going to come back suddenly. Everything changes and all you can do is just keep your ears open and try to not get into the feeling that your scene was the height of art and nothing else exists. I don't want to be like like one of those swing guys saying aah you know, rock and roll..... I mean I love all music, so if it's great song and it's done with a twist and gets to me, I'll put it on my turntable.

Because to me the impulses are the same; the thing I always felt about Nuggets and that 1960s garage scene was that, you could replicate that in any genre. In the 1970s you had reggae, which was the black music of its moment....but if you look at any of these genres you can see the cast of characters, how it inspires people, and how the music goes from a sudden dawning awareness of its power

¹ <http://www.magforum.com/time.htm>

² Cover notes, *Please Kill me*

³ Other paraphernalia of Punk has survived; recordings of bands, film footage and the personal testimony of major players, but these are only a part of its history.

⁴ Guest speaker at Urbis Punk Event, August 18th, 2005

⁵ August 18th, 2005

⁶ Richard Schickel, p.101, is describing the classic pattern described as the monomyth by Joseph Campbell in *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*.

⁷ Interview with City Fun staff, Vol. II, no. 1

⁸ Interview with City Fun staff, Vol. II, no. 1

⁹ Perry, Mark (2000) p.81, *Sniffin' Glue, The Essential Punk Accessory*, Sanctuary, London

¹⁰ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio1/mostpunk/profiles/ramones.shtml> Highly influential American Punk bands, *The New York Dolls* and *The Ramones* were formed in 1971 and 1974 respectively.

¹¹ Frith, Simon and Horne Howard (1987) *Art into Pop*, Methuen, London, p.132

¹² Frith, Simon and Horne Howard (1987) *Art into Pop*, Methuen, London, p.133

¹³ Originally an English word. Please see appendix A.

¹⁴ culminating the Summer of 1967, sometimes known as the summer of love.

¹⁵ Simon Frith and Howard Horne, p.124

¹⁶ Simon Frith and Howard Horne, p.132

¹⁷ Urbis Punk Event, July 20th 2005 In conversation with Paul Morley and Anthony Wilson

¹⁸ Jon Savage p.71

¹⁹ Jon Savage, p.257

²⁰ Simon Frith and Howard Horne, p.61

²¹ For example, Frank Zappa told the *Rolling Stone* in 1968 that 'hippies don't care what they look like, but freaks cared an awful lot. Their packaging and image construction is a very important part of their lifestyle'. Elsewhere the term hippy or freak (rarely used now) could be read as interchangeable and the niceties of the differences between have been largely lost Frith and Horne, p.99

²² Punk events Urbis, August 18th. 2005

²³ *Sniffin Glue*, Issue number one, July 1976

²⁴ Jon Savage, p.130, 131

²⁵ Interview with Legs McNeil, <http://www.lawgirl.com/interview3.shtml>

²⁶ *Illusions of Immortality*, p.27-28

²⁷ <http://www.preciouslordtakemyhand.com/>

²⁸ Humphries, Stephen (1995) *Hooligans or Rebels? An Oral History of Working Class Childhood and Youth*, Backwell, Oxford p.122 'For working class youth, larking about was an important part of an informal, irreverent and independent street culture, which profoundly influenced the identity of the children and their attitude to authority'.

²⁹ <http://www.toonpedia.com/sloper.htm>

³⁰ <http://www.britishcomics.com/history.htm>

³¹ Humphries, Stephen (1995) *Hooligans Or Rebels? An Oral History of Working Class Childhood and Youth* 1889-1939, p.6

³² 'Our mother didn't let we girls read the Larks because it had the Ball's Pond Banditti in it...one of the gang Piggy Waffles (we called him the hog) 'ud say damn it all..that was terrible language in them days. When we wanted to read it we had to sneak it from the boys an go to the lavatory with it', Humphries, p.126

³³ Humphries, Stephen (1995) *Hooligans Or Rebels? An Oral History of Working Class Childhood and Youth* 1889-1939

³⁴ Taylor, Rogan (1985) *The Death and Resurrection Show; From Shaman to Superstar*, Anthony Blond, London

³⁵ Taylor, p.11

³⁶ For example, the festival of Saturnalia was dedicated to the Roman god of the harvest, Saturn, and was celebrated in mid-December. During the revelry of gift giving and orgies, slaves were given temporary freedom. Anarchic behaviour seemed to survive and thrive extremely well considering the supposed strictures of the time. Elements of Saturnalia were appropriated by Christianity when that became the official religion of the empire and the decision to celebrate Christmas in December was possibly more influenced by Roman tradition than by Christian theology. Other Saturnalian traits survived in the secular world until the seventeenth century. Rogan Taylor describes the *feast of fools* in medieval Europe which continued the theme of role reversal established by the Saturnalia and temporarily empowered the lowest orders of society. Of the midwinter celebrations, Taylor says, "In response to the feeling that the new year is a magical time when it is appropriate to turn things inside out and upside down, the *feast of fools* provided such an opportunity....It was a chance to exhibit a lot of contrary behaviour. Men dressed as women and women dressed as men. Boys or minor clerics were elected Bishops for the period of the feast and the *Bishop of Fools* later became the *Lord of Misrule*. (Taylor.p93). As well as targeting individuals of rank, the sanctity of Catholic worship was sometimes ridiculed in the most blasphemous manner. Taylor describes: "the ranks of the lower clergy took the opportunity to lampoon various sacred rituals, dressing as women or minstrels and dancing in Church and eating black puddings during holy mass." The latter was a particularly subversive comment on transubstantiation - the belief in the literal transformation of the communion wafer into the body and blood of Christ. Revellers also gambled "before the altar...burning old shoes, rather than incense, to perfume the church." (Taylor, p.91) Despite the sacreligious nature of the festivity (or possibly because of it) the *feast of fools* survived. It was finally expelled from the sacred arena of the church in the seventeenth century but the tradition of lampoonery survived in secular circles as the pantomime. Oral histories of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century (Humphries p.133) attest to a continuity of youthful pranks against the church, involving stink bombs and itching powder (the latter in this case, destined for an unsuspecting preacher's bald head) made more enjoyable because they were performed in a supposedly sacred place, under the noses of those in authority.

³⁷ Rose, Jonathan (2001) *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes*, Yale University Press, New Haven, p. 368

³⁸ The Penny Dreadful was a cheap publication of the late 19th and early 20th century which featured bloody adventure stories. Precursor to comics.

³⁹ <http://tarlton.law.utexas.edu/lpop/etext/completewgate>

⁴⁰ <http://www.open2.net/breakingtheseal/legal/script/scriptp4.htm>

⁴¹ <http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~rbear/beggar.html>

⁴² <http://www.blackmask.com/books69c/mohocks>

⁴³ Trivia by John Gay, 1716. <http://www.ac.uk/encap/skilton/poetry/gay01a.html>

⁴⁴ Grose, Francis (2004) *The Vulgar Tongue, Buckish Slang and Eloquence*. Summersdale Press, Chichester

⁴⁵ Francis Grose describes the practice known as 'sweating'. The Mohocks would surround their victim and continually prick him with their swords, obliging him to spin round to avoid their blades. This was continued until the victim was sufficiently sweated for the Mohocks' amusement.

⁴⁶ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/mohocks>

⁴⁷ <http://www.ardis.co.uk/tvandfilm/avengers.htm> . In a comic strip of 1968 the mohocks pushed their victim over a waterfall in a barrel.

⁴⁸ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/mohocks>

⁴⁹ <http://www.uwm.edu/Library//special/exhibits/>

⁵⁰ <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0011387> Featuring Bela Lugosi as Magua.

⁵¹ <http://www.toonopedia.com/classics.html>

⁵² <http://www.geocities.com/RodeoDrive/3696/Photos>

⁵³ Geoffrey Pearson in *Hooligan, A History of Respectable Fears*, tells us that from the early 1600s the streets of London and other major cities had been terrorised by organised gangs. He names several: the Muns, Hectors, Bugles, Dead Boys, Tytre Tus and also mentions the Nickers, Scowrers and Mohocks. All these gangs “found their amusement in breaking windows, demolishing taverns assaulting the Watch, attacking wayfarers and slitting the noses of their victims with swords, rolling old ladies in barrels and other violent frolicks. If a servant or waiter should happen to be killed in the act of wrecking a tavern, it was said to have been considered a great joke to inform the proprietor to ‘put him on the bill!’ The gangs also fought pitched battles with each other and dressed with different coloured ribbons to distinguish the different factions”. (Pearson, p.188) Thomas Shadwell wrote the following in 1690: ‘I am one of the maddest fellows about the town, I sing, roar, serenade, bluster, break windows, demolish bawdy houses, beat bawds, scower the streets...Ay madam, I am all frolick, how many knockers of doors so you think I have at home now, that I twisted off when I scower’d, guess now.’ Pearson says that John Gay’s play *The Mohocks* ridiculed people’s fears. ‘All the ground covered with noses, as thick as ‘tis with hail-stones after a storm’ (Pearson, p.188) and goes on to suggest that the rumours were so exaggerated that some questioned whether they existed at all or whether they performed the role of contemporary hobgoblins. Exaggerated though the stories may have been, they did exist, and were an odd eclectic mix of classes. Pearson says of the ‘Tityre Tu’ gang that they were unlikely to be ill-educated ruffians as their name came from the opening phrase of Virgil’s First Eclogue. (Pearson, p.188) The Mohocks were similarly privileged and nominally well bred. They were the sons of the landed gentry, wealthy merchants and minor aristocracy with enough wealth and free time to indulge themselves. We can draw a few conclusions from this evidence. The ‘others’ are not necessarily a product of the underclass. Gay’s use of the term ‘rake’ - a dissolute gentleman – suggests the public had as much to fear from the wealthier factions of society as they did from the more traditional criminal class, but the gangs would have a hierarchy of their own. What cannot be disregarded, and what would explain the diversity of backgrounds is the positive appeal of bad behaviour.

⁵⁴ Nineteenth century and early twentieth century populist culture continued to glamorise Native American Indians (as villains rather than heroes) cowboys and other characters from popular comics. A Glaswegian gang initially known as the Redskins abbreviated its name to Skins sometime during World War I. At the same time in Manchester another gang called the Napoo referenced popular comic-book mythology by staging a mock scalping of their victims. The female fashion for girls and young women of the time, was to keep their hair long but to have it tied in plaits. The Napoo, amongst other criminal acts, slashed off girls’ plaits and kept them as trophies. They generated a great deal of fear rather than admiration. Crimes against property were quite highly regarded as a bucking of the system but crimes against the person, especially of one’s own class, were not. The Napoo could be recognised by their pink neckerchiefs and the razor blades that they wore in slits in their cloth caps, or in their waistcoat pockets. The razors were of the cut throat variety – a weapon that remained popular with criminal gangs for several decades to come.

⁵⁵ Pearson. Geoffrey (2002) *Hooligan, A History of Respectable Fears*, Macmillan, Basingstoke

⁵⁶ Even a habit as quintessentially twentieth century in its sub-cultural associations as drug abuse is not a modern phenomenon. The self-indulgent habits of an effete aristocracy are well documented but the lower orders may have also shared a penchant for narcotics which pre-dates twentieth century associations and *fin-de-siecle* decadence. Rogan Taylor makes the association between the anarchic celebrations of midwinter feasts, taking place any time between October and February, and the fruiting cycle of several naturally occurring psychotropic drugs, as the psilocybin mushroom (Taylor, p.93). He suggests that the timing of the celebrations could have come about naturally as a consequence of their harvesting. Should his hunch be true, then the high days and holidays of our western calendar may not have been shaped solely by the grand design of shifting theologies, but also by the availability of certain mind altering substances. Whilst it may appear

absurdly reductive to attribute the structure of the Christian calendar to a fondness for magic mushrooms, the role of serendipity, and its potential cultural significance, cannot be disregarded. The use of recreational drugs has become more democratised since the latter half of the twentieth century and the drug of choice has tended to inform the sub-culture which uses it in some way. An association between drugs and creativity, spurious or otherwise, has been extant for many years, but psychotropic drugs became popular once again in the 1960s. The drug use of popular anti-establishment role models, particularly musicians, exacerbated the fashion. The practices of the sacred and the secular may have shared something of the same provenance, but the *feast of fools* eventually claimed the stage as its forum and the fool refined his role to that of *artiste*.

⁵⁷ Pearson P.224

⁵⁸ Hobsbawm, E.J. (1969) *Industry and Empire*, Penguin, London

⁵⁹ Pearson, p.100

⁶⁰ Rose, p.367 'the Penny dreadful caused moral panic among middle class observers, who were sure that it encouraged juvenile delinquency'.

⁶¹ Although public fear of the rising number of gangs was reported, and possibly engendered, by the media, the incidents illustrate a hostile relationship between the police and large numbers of less well to do. Robert Blatchford provides a contemporary account of a music hall fracas. The audience was watching a melodrama during which, the play's hero was arrested by the police. At that point, "...the audience became quite excited, many of them stood up, and fell into the spirit of the scene – sympathy being manifestly against the law; and when the stage was darkened...open resentment was displayed by the gods, one of whom yelled out...to 'turn up the bloomin' glims an' let's see the bloomin' scrappin' "

⁶² Music Hall and Theatre Review 1898

⁶³ <http://worldwidewords.org/topicalwords/tw-hool.htm>

⁶⁴ http://www.geocities.com/hoolihan_surname/hooligan.htm

⁶⁵ The Clarion, August 20th, 1898

⁶⁶ Jon Savage, p.191

⁶⁷ Jon Savage, p.191

⁶⁸ Pearson, p.94

⁶⁹ Pearson,p.96

⁷⁰ Russell, Charles (1905) *Manchester Boys*, p.51, University Press

⁷¹ Wright,J (19030 *Dialect Dictionary*, Volume 4, Frowde

⁷² Pearson (p.94).

⁷³ Grose, Francis (2002) *The Vulgar Tongue. Buckish Slang and Pickpocket Eloquence*

⁷⁴ British Library Collection

⁷⁵ <http://www.ejmd.mcmail.com/cheaplit>

⁷⁶ Savage, P.73.

⁷⁷ Savage, P.259.

⁷⁸ as featured in *Destroy* by Dennis Morris

⁷⁹ Pearson, p.71

⁸⁰ Pearson, p.72

⁸¹ <http://www.mital-u.eu/Punk/wave/index>

⁸² <http://www.barbelith.com>

⁸³ <http://library.nothingness.org/articles/SI/en/display/4>

⁸⁴ Savage, P.30.

⁸⁵ Stevenson, Nils (1999) *Vacant. A Dairy of the Punk Years, 1976-79*, Thames and Hudson

⁸⁶ Colgrave, Stephen and Sullivan, Chris (2001) *Punk*, Cassell and Co. London

⁸⁷ Jon Savage interview with Joan Bimson July 1st 2005

⁸⁸ Savage, P.257

⁸⁹ Temple, Julian (2000) *The Filth and the Fury*, St. Martin's Griffin, New York

⁹⁰ Stevenson, P.8

⁹¹ Marcus, p.19

⁹² My personal experience of art school education in 1974 and the recollections of other students and lecturers at art schools in the late 1970s suggest that there was no such uniformity, although students were in a privileged environment with access to information about art history.

⁹³ C.P.Lee was unable to be more specific about the date but believes the article was written by Allen Jones (email to Joan Bimson October 17th 2005)

⁹⁴ C.P.Lee email to Joan Bimson October 17th 2005

⁹⁵ <http://www.neilnnes.org/articles/john.htm>

⁹⁶ <http://www.gingergeezzer.net/bonzo.html>

⁹⁷ C.P.Lee email to Joan Bimson, October 27th 2005

⁹⁸ Ben Watson, *The Wire* (2000) double issues numbers 190 and 191, Portland Street, London

⁹⁹ <http://www.nevillfreeman.com/register/richardneville>

¹⁰⁰ http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OZ_magazine

¹⁰¹ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oz>

¹⁰² Tate Liverpool, June 3rd 05

¹⁰³ Tate glossary entry: term invented by Metzger in the early 1960s. 1962: He made work by spraying acid onto sheets of nylon as a protest against nuclear weapons. The procedure produced rapidly changing shapes before the nylon was all consumed, so the work was simultaneously auto-creative and auto-destructive.

¹⁰⁴ Jon Savage at Tate Liverpool, June 22nd 2005

¹⁰⁵ Liz Naylor and Joan Bimson meeting, Urbis, Manchester, August 18th, 2005

¹⁰⁶ Interview with *City Fun* writing team, Vol. II, issue 1. Quote from Andy Zero: Just because somebody hasn't got a good education ... we don't want to discriminate against them. Other magazines do that [and] it's shit. But we've also got to reject the rubbish that's sent to us.

¹⁰⁷ *City Fun*, Vol. II, no 1. referring to the music business as parasites, p 9

¹⁰⁸ *City Fun*, Vol. II, no 1 p.9

¹⁰⁹ Greil Marcus, p.19

¹¹⁰ Jon Savage interview with Joan Bimson, July 1st 2005

¹¹¹ *Up They Rise*, p.35

¹¹² *Up They Rise*. P.55

¹¹³ Perry, Mark (2000) *Sniffin' Glue, The Essential Punk Accessory*, p.58, Sanctuary Publishing, London

¹¹⁴ Jon Savage interview with Joan Bimson, July 1st, 2005

¹¹⁵ Perry, Mark (2000) *Sniffin' Glue, The Essential Punk Accessory*, p.81, Sanctuary Publishing, London

¹¹⁶ For example; Greil Marcus (1989) *Lipstick Traces. A Secret History of the Twentieth Century*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, and Nils Stevenson (1999) *Vacant. A Diary of the Punk Years, 1976-79*, Thames and Hudson, London. While Savage and Marcus were writing in 1991 and 1989 respectively, Stevenson's work of 1999 demonstrates how connections with Situationism and the avant-garde, mooted by Savage, had later become an accepted part of the ethnography of Punk.

¹¹⁷ Frith and Horne, p.28

¹¹⁸ Issue 1, *Sniffin' Glue*, July 1976 Perry was aware of up and coming bands in New York appearing at the Bowery's CBGBs club, as he had read about them in British Music papers. He was also familiar with a New York magazine called *Punk* which first appeared in Britain in January 1976. *Punk*, written and illustrated by Legs McNeil and John Holstrom respectively, looked like a professionally produced American comic book with a mixture of populist, counter-cultural and contemporary influences. Photographs of New York musicians were featured in story boards with speech bubbles. Some illustrations were psychedelic, and other cartoon figures were in the style of 1960s underground cartoonist, Robert Crumb. Production values were high even though the content was irreverent. *Punk* was quintessentially American in style and a music magazine rather than a fanzine but it was influential in raising awareness of the New York scene and of exposing the parallels of the scene then happening in London.

¹¹⁹ *Sniffin' Glue, The essential Punk accessory*, p.32

¹²⁰ *Sniffin' Glue*, p.35

¹²¹ <http://www.popmatters.com/columns/warner>

¹²² Jon savage interview with Joan Bimson, July 1st 2005

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- ¹²³ Jon Savage, p.331
- ¹²⁴ *Kingdom Come*, Issue 4, November 25th 1977
- ¹²⁵ *Kingdom Come*, Issue 4, November 25th 1977
- ¹²⁶ *Next Big Thing*, October 77 and Summer 78
- ¹²⁷ ‘Dear Shit face, Here’s your pathetic shit rag back. Sorry, I wouldn’t wipe me arse on it.anytime you wanna try it [stepping outside] come right up to the NME and I’ll put your teeth down the back of your throat, you middle class turds... what a bunch of wankers you are, fuck off wankers, Tony Parsons. P.S.....good luck with your “writing” Ha! Ha! Ha! Now fuck off shitface’. T.P.
- ¹²⁸ *Next Big Thing* Summer 78
- ¹²⁹ *Next Big Thing* Feb 78 ed. ‘I’d like to put the point about the ‘build em up – knock em down’ that Parsons pulled on the Ramones. The Rezillos have been given good press but who’s to say that the ‘hipper than thou’ set won’t turn on them’.
- ¹³⁰ *Gunrubber*, undated. 5,000
- ¹³¹ Urbis Punk Event, August 18th, 2005
- ¹³² June, 1978
- ¹³³ October 1977
- ¹³⁴ 28th of October 1977
- ¹³⁵ ‘If you c*nts [any visiting southerner in the audience] did that to them (the band) up here you’d get fucking wasted and that aint a threat it’s a promise’.
- ¹³⁶ *Kingdom Come* October 1977
- ¹³⁷ Guardian <http://www.guardian.co.uk>
- ¹³⁸ *Next Big Thing*, Feb 78
- ¹³⁹ *Kingdom Come*, October 1977
- ¹⁴⁰ *City Chain* September/October 1977
- ¹⁴¹ August 1977
- ¹⁴² An editorial in Irish Fanzine, *Heat* (September 1977) defines fanzines as magazines ‘written by the kids themselves, who really like the bands, rather than those who feel obliged to write about it because they have to’.
- ¹⁴³ written by Lindsay Hamilton in June 1977
- ¹⁴⁴ *Next Big Thing*, written by Lindsay Hamilton in June 1977
- ¹⁴⁵ undated
- ¹⁴⁶ September/October 1977
- ¹⁴⁷ <http://www.trakmarx.com/>
- ¹⁴⁸ Accelerators, Liverpool; Gang of Four, Leeds. Many personal recollections of bands’ mockney shouts of 1-2-3-4!
- ¹⁴⁹ Savage p.71
- ¹⁵⁰ Anon (28.11.2000) *From OPEC to Oil Crisis: The Middle East, Oil and International System 1960-80*
- ¹⁵¹ Mark Perry (2000) *Sniffin’ Glue, The Essential Punk Accessory*. Sanctuary Publishing, London
- ¹⁵² <http://www.Punk77.co.uk/>
- ¹⁵³ Repatriation of black people had been a part of the conservative manifesto in 1970; racism was institutional. David Edgar, writing in The Guardian, April 23rd, 2002 comments on the accelerating success of the extreme right wing, peaking around Jubilee Year, 1977. The rise of neo-nazi groups had subsided by the time Margaret Thatcher came to power in 1979. She possibly absorbed the ‘fascist vote’ and became the respectable face of the right wing, but Edgar argues that other factors also contributed to a change in public attitude. “There is no doubt that the Anti-Nazi League, the Campaign Against Racism and Fascism and Rock against Racism provided a cultural and political alternative to NF [National Front] propaganda
- ¹⁵⁴ <http://www.Punk77.co.uk/>
- ¹⁵⁵ USA fanzine called *I Wanna*, undated
- ¹⁵⁶ Savage, p.63
- ¹⁵⁷ *Street Talk*, 1977
- ¹⁵⁸ 1977
- ¹⁵⁹ Interview with Joan Bimson, July 1st, 2005

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- ¹⁶⁰ Interview with Joan Bimson, July 1st, 2005
- ¹⁶¹ Sex Pistols fan mail, England's Dreaming: The Jon Savage Archive
- ¹⁶² Savage, p.216
- ¹⁶³ *Sniffi'n Glue issue 1*
- ¹⁶⁴ *Sniffin' Glue Issue 1*
- ¹⁶⁵ *Gabba Gabba Hey*, no. 3, Middlesborough, undated
- ¹⁶⁶ *lettraset* was a method of home printing. They were sheets of clear plastic printed with letters from the alphabet which could be transferred onto paper by rubbing and then photocopied.
- ¹⁶⁷ Scottish fanzine, January 1978
- ¹⁶⁸ Scottish, October 1977
- ¹⁶⁹ Scottish, October 1977
- ¹⁷⁰ *Away from the Numbers*, October 1977
- ¹⁷¹ 76-77 Nazis Exhumed London ICA