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Digging up the Dead Cities: Abandoned Streets and Past Ruins of the Future in the Glossy Punk Magazine

Abstract - This article excavates, examines and celebrates the short run of the magazines Punk's Not Dead! (a single issue printed in 1981), Punk! Lives (11 issues printed between 1982 and 1983) and Noise! (16 issues in 1982) as a small corpus of overlooked dedicated punk literature – coincident with the UK82 incarnation of punk - that takes the form of a pop-style poster magazine. This revisiting is undertaken with three key aims: to re-assert these resources back into both the punk historical canon and the general history of pop music literature, to provoke a critical discussion of what their existence might imply, and to take a more detailed look at the iconographic construction of the images in what are essentially photograph-driven poster magazines within a wider music-media climate of carefully crafted images. In examining the images it identifies three predominant themes: the street, the apocalypse and the graveyard, respectively mapped across from the genres of Oi!, street-punk/UK82 and positive-punk/goth that are covered in the magazines.

Key words: discourse, print media, spectacle, photography, UK82, Oi!

Introduction

Glossy magazines consisting of a predominant image format (evolving into pin-up posters) are part of the history of post-war subcultures and pop music. At a more immediate level they exemplify the tensions between an apparent autonomy of direction and the co-option into wider realms of commercial exploitation and disarming of the potential for critique or resistance. They also embody both a synchronic and diachronic aspect. Firstly, at any point in time they indicate what can be considered generically as 'pop', and secondly they contour the trajectory of a particular subculture from its beginnings as a movement amongst activists through to a commercial product sold to potential participants in the form of a catalogue. These magazines flourished within the commercial mod movement of the 1960s (*Rave, Fabulous*), the glam scene and the general youth-oriented pop scene (titles such as *Popster* and *Music Star*) with specific reach to the teen-girl market (*Boyfriend*). In reviewing three contemporary metal magazines in the glossy vein, Brown (2007: 643) indicates how this type of publication, in terms of layout and journalistic content, has been denigrated as 'the unthinking other' against more serious music coverage resources such as *Rolling Stone*, and argues that (for his target group of metal magazines) there is the 'public conformation of various kinds of youth identities (for) actual and would be participants in music scenes'. A consequence of this is that very little research has been undertaken on these glossy magazines, and the recognition of their existence tends to centre around specialist collectors with dedicated outlets and online auction sites.

With the much hyped, confrontational and 'year zero' attitude and praxis of punk, immortalised in both the recent 40-year anniversary celebrations and within essentialist readings of anarcho-punk taken from any number of start points in and around the late 1970s, the presence of a glossy poster format magazine dedicated to punk might be considered as something of an awkward encounter, to be either laughed off or deliberately overlooked in punk's history. However, in late summer 1981 punk fans in the UK were presented with such a situation; a single issue of *Punk's Not Dead!* followed by 11 issues of the title *Punk! Lives* between 1982 and 1984, as well as a mixed genre publication *Noise!* running fortnightly in the latter half of 1982. These magazines appeared as the

ideal form of the glossy magazine with a presumed aim to attract and hold a wide circulation of punk fans through a predominance of posters.¹

With many valuable readings of punk that focus on activist, protagonist and subversive agendas, the glossy magazine has been erased from the historical and archival purview of the punk movement, such that it is tacitly assumed that the producer (and possibly readership) of such items falls short of a 'correct' or 'worthwhile' position in history.² The wider argument that a fuller history of the punk subculture should include aspects that do not conform to specific activist and confrontational agendas has been developed in a number of articles around issues like out-and-out punk humour (Bestley 2013, 2014) and the upfront auto-ethnographical work discussing the smutty content of Sex Pistols lyrics as a force for drawing an interest into the subculture (Osborne 2015), and it is within this area that a further contribution will be made through a study of the punk glossy magazine.

Reporting and Writing Punk and Post-Punk

In much the same way that a straitjacketed and uncritical discourse can cluster around anarcho-punk, at times performing an act of prestidigitation that draws in a discursive trajectory for the punk subculture per se, then the critical consideration of punk's contemporaneous published output tends to focus on the fanzine format.³ This allows for a duplication of the prioritisation of punk protagonist (acting as mainstream cultural antagonist), romanticising the DIY ethic that forms one of the pillars of the punk structure. Of course, the DIY fanzine (alongside the call for bands to also do-it-themselves and create the DIY music, record labels, distribution mechanisms and venue infrastructure) does dissolve the barrier between those on the side of defining (or making capital from) a subculture and those consuming a subculture, but a punk fanzine is still an object to be consumed alongside the mainstream printed resources. Though outside of my scope here, I will tentatively venture that there is not an isomorphic mapping between how the fanzine and music producer (band or label) relate to their dominant equivalents in terms of their relative outputs, consumption and effects, and I can say with certainty that the DIY punk fanzine did not map across the divide and dedicate its writing to DIY punk music.⁴ Channelling the 'privileging of self-expression' (Hodgkinson 2004: 226), the fanzine allows a multitude of amateurisms to flourish that would not find column space in a mainstream publication, and so it is not necessarily a case of the mainstream printed media failing to capture a certain energy or diverting things in a certain way. Overall, the punk fanzine reports on the music scene, reviewing gigs and records and scripting standard interviews with bands, and it is this 'business as usual' angle that is overlooked in the historical celebration of the fanzine format.⁵ As Toynbee (1993: 291) suggests (somewhat diametrically)

¹ The term glossy counterpoints the term inky, itself used for the 'serious' newspapers covering music.

² Glasper (2014) is an important exception, even though his extensive and passionate 450-page ethnographic exegesis of the UK82 scene devotes only a couple of pages to the glossy punk media of the time. [+return to Glasper's work later in the article.](#)

³ See Triggs (2010), Bestley and Ogg (2014), Kugelberg and Savage (2012), Mott and Inglefield (2010).

⁴ Harman (2011) draws on Heidegger's *das Geviert* to create his own 'quadruple object', effectively built around the crossing of paired concepts. Here the concepts of DIY media and DIY music cross over in that the media (DIY or otherwise) report on the music (DIY or otherwise). Atton (2001: 29) flags up such a structure in his study of prog rock fanzines, whilst Grimes (2016) considers the content of zines but focusses specifically on the (anarcho) content of anarcho-punk zines.

⁵ A powerful mainstream music newspaper or magazine is an arbiter of taste and a suppressor of scenes or sounds, through its arrangement of news, reviews, opinions and coverage of events. [As I indicate later, it is the](#)

regarding the punk fanzine against its precursor in the underground press: '(it) became a supplement, rather than an alternative, to the inkie's'. This potential grey area remains underdeveloped; instead we see a fetishizing of the format of construction and a championing of the cut-and-paste aesthetic that has now ironically become part of the mainstream onslaught of stylistic totalitarianism.

It is within this wider mix of historical directions that I wish to consider the brief flourishing of the glossy punk magazine. I will interweave a variety of contexts throughout the article: a critical understanding of the extant printed media forms (both inkie's and glossies) that co-existed with the glossy punk magazine; a position of analysis that centres upon punk as a consumed subculture that works with an audience looking for formalist clues and guides around attire, image and belonging; the wider flux of competing music sub-genres and niche hyper-stylisations in a limited consumer market; and the relationship to a nascent anarcho-punk scene that had been set in motion within the first wave of punk.

The punk fanzine emerged within the first wave of the punk subculture, dovetailing with a call for a DIY activism and a perceived recalcitrance of the four mainstream music newspapers (*New Musical Express (NME)*, *Sounds*, *Melody Maker* and *Record Mirror*) to fully document (and endorse) the sudden onrush of the punk movement combined with its deliberately internecine subcultural tendencies.⁶ There were, however, clearly avenues of support for the punk scene and its various postures and calls to arms with pre-existing subcultures and the music business per se, with the new journalism of the *NME* (signalled by the recruitment of Charles Shaar Murray) looking to cover the scene for artistic potential, whilst the rock journalism of *Sounds* saw more of a musical lineage via scenes like pub rock. The construction of punk as a subculture to be consumed (through record buying, attendance at gigs and acquiring the correct clothing, hairstyle, argot, comportment, etc) and punk as a subculture to be engaged (becoming-activist as musician, fanzine writer, political and cultural subversive) flowed throughout the newspapers and fanzine movement, without an obvious demarcation between consumption/engagement evident across the media types. *Sounds* regularly offered centrefold posters in the newspaper, and a further takeaway visual consumption artefact flourished in *NME* albeit with a typically more artful branding under the guise of visual features by modernist photographers such as Anton Corbijn and Kevin Cummins.⁷ In addition, punk – like all youth subcultures – was predicated on marketing and products, from picture sleeves and coloured vinyl to Seditonaries clothing etc.

As the first wave of punk mutated to various commercial avenues, opportunistic new wave and nihilistic burnout to quickly herald the first wave of post-punk⁸ – commonly linked to the 1979

[recalcitrance of these newspapers to support the 1981 revival of punk, and the Oi! Scene, that led to the appearance of the glossy punk magazines studied in this article.](#)

⁶ Prominent examples include *Sniffin' Glue*, *48 Thrills*, *Strangled*, *Panache*, *Chainsaw*, *Ripped and Torn*, *London's Burning*

⁷ Punk features occurred in other 'glossy' outputs such as a Peter York article in *Harpers and Queen* and would also have featured in the Sunday supplement magazines which – from their inception in the 1960s – have often been drawn to photographic features on subcultures. A survey of such work is beyond the scope of this article. Similarly, I have opted to neglect possible punk features in the numerous female-oriented teen-magazines such as *Jackie* and *Mates*.

⁸ I argue later that post-punk must also be classified in waves, by virtue of the idea that we consider punk in waves.

releases of Joy Division's *Unknown Pleasures*, PiL's *Metal Box* and Gang of Four's *Entertainment!* – all of the newspapers shifted emphasis and began to stake more or less unique positions in the fracturing, bifurcating and rapidly evolving scenes. Into the mix came two publications pioneered by the ex-*NME* editor Nick Logan that switched to the glossy format; *Smash Hits* and *The Face*.

Smash Hits launched in 1978 to prioritise what we might class as a pop-centred and appropriately dumbed down approach to format and content, drawing upon a heavy emphasis of visual consumption enmeshed in the poster format, a textual content consisting of increasingly banal and trite articles, and a pop art finish that carried through the magazine to give it the feel of coming upon, preparing and consuming one of the novelty ready-meals of the time. Certainly *Smash Hits* tends to get fingered when we look for the aforementioned 'unthinking other' of music media,⁹ though I will briefly present more of an accurate picture here based upon an inspection of the magazine for the years 1981 and 1982 (coincident with the birth of the punk glossy). In terms of content, the magazine dipped into the more successful remnants of the first wave punk scene with features, lyrics or posters of bands such as XTC, The Clash, Generation X, the Stranglers, Public Image Limited and Siouxsie & the Banshees, as well as having small ads for clothing suppliers offering 'Clash gear', indicating a punk possibility for the prevaricating *Smash Hits* reader and pop fan.¹⁰ Throughout 1981 there is also a regular page entitled Independent Bitz which delves into some of the obscure corners of the post-punk scene, and by 1982 many of these acts were making an impact on the charts and garnering dedicated features in the magazine as post-punk artists such as ABC, The Associates, Human League, Soft Cell, Depeche Mode and Dexys Midnight Runners achieved success.

In May 1980, two years after launching *Smash Hits*, Logan unveiled *The Face* which upgraded the content of *Smash Hits* from printing lyrics and trivial insights to the more structuralist and post-structuralist pontifications that populated the *NME* at the time. However, *The Face* was clearly set out as a visual celebration of the numerous post-punk subcultures that were starting to impact on mainstream culture, and featured heavily with full page photographs. In addition, the magazine gave new designers such as Peter Saville, Neville Brody and Malcolm Garrett opportunities to forge links between high-end design and post-punk music. Key within this presentational mode, as a kind of adjunct to the semi-surreal nature of mainstream pop giving way to the new pop forged from a contrary post-punk, was a vehement assertion of style culture cascading down from bands to new 'street' and club cultures such as the new romantic scene. Every new pop band had an increasingly contrived (and odd) image which changed from month-to-month – for example Orange Juice as superannuated boy scouts, Dexys as travelling tinkers, ABC as a landed gentry shooting-party and Heaven 17 as city bankers.¹¹ Whilst this might not seem important to the nascent second wave punk scene that forms the focus of this article, what I am impressing here is the new mode of presentation and consumption; rules of engagement that, in my opinion, cascaded into the punk scene and demanded a response.

⁹ For example, Frith (2001: 43), in contoured the pop industry and process, suggests that a 'new boy band is put together as a television show and *Smash Hits* spread before a record is released'.

¹⁰ For the anarcho-punk archival completist, Crass were featured in a bizarre double page article in June 1981, the journalist (recycling material from an *In The City* fanzine article) writing in a strange third-person style not so much about Crass, but about that fact that a successful band called Crass existed.

¹¹ There was also a short-run magazine *New Sounds, New Styles* that tried to mimic *The Face* without the more intellectual content – Malcolm Garrett was the chief designer for *New Sounds*, whilst Neville Brody tended to monopolise *The Face*, with style guru Robert Elms active in both publications.

Concurrent with the launching of *The Face* was Terry Jones' new project *i-D*. Jones previously worked as art director for high-end fashion magazine *Vogue*, and created an elusive hybrid that straddled between a punk fanzine and a design object that utilised an approach of the 'straight up' - that is the picturing of everyday subculturalists on the streets of our towns and cities.¹² Two further publications were also central to this post-punk journalistic milieu; the longstanding magazine *ZigZag* which had undergone one of its regular reincarnations in 1977 with Kris Needs aligning it to the punk movement (it would remain operative until 1981 and then lapse into another hiatus), and the new magazine *Flexipop* formed by a breakaway pair of journalists from *Record Mirror*.¹³ *Flexipop* launched in December 1980 and ran monthly until summer 1983, however the magazine had what we might now consider as a very avant-garde and playfully provocative stance in the spirit of situationist detournement.¹⁴ It took the format and appearance of a glib pop magazine in both a percentage of its coverage and its apparent structure, with features like 'lifelines' which consisted of the standard banal question and answer sessions of favourite colours, meals, etc. *Flexipop's* key was in bringing in outsider elements from scenes such as punk and Oi! and juxtaposing them with mainstream figures that extended back from newly minted post-punk popstars to household artists like Abba and Dollar. It played with fire and, at times, endangered its own survival as a profitable glossy magazine - such as receiving a distribution ban by key company WH Smith following complaints after issue 24, which featured the affable pin-up Nick Heyward on the cover only to include a very graphic photo-strip story featuring psychobilly band Meteors.¹⁵ The aforementioned 'lifelines' pages quickly mutated to include awkward questions and then deliberately oppositional juxtapositions.¹⁶ *Flexipop* was clever in that it drew in what might be considered as unrepresentable within the pop magazine format and threw it against the pop material that formed the insipid and uncritical backbone of this milieu. Though it never stated its intentions, the feeling it gave out was that it was happy to drag acceptable pop into a kind of situationist 'realisation and suppression of art', rather than promote the fringe elements of punk subculture onto a mainstream platform as a kind of bid for equivocality.

The arrival of the punk glossy

With the absence of any dedicated glossy punk magazine in the first wave of punk, and the commercial remnants of that scene featuring in the extant glossy magazines such as *Smash Hits* and the deliberately unclassifiable *Flexipop*, the Autumn 1981 arrival of the mohicaned Wattie Buchan of The Exploited staring out from the cover of a new glossy magazine entitled *Punk's Not Dead!* comes

¹² With the digital archiving of issue 1 from 1980 now complete, it is possible to see how this magazine captured the dizzying essence of the post-punk look and mentality. See https://i-d.vice.com/en_us/topic/issue-1 Accessed 5 January 2017. Jones' work with *i-D* has a lineage from Isabella Anscombe's important 1978 publication *Not Another Punk Book*.

¹³ The title was extended to include an exclamation mark after a number of issues but I refer to it in its original construction for this article.

¹⁴ It is now archived at <http://www.flexipop.com/> Accessed 5 January 2017.

¹⁵ These photo strip stories were a key part of the magazine and generally included Oi! and punk bands such as Cockney Rejects and Blitz in ridiculous costume dramas, partly lampooning the costume drama essence of the new romantic scene by adding a *Carry On* element and also drawing on the tradition of photo strips in comics and teen magazines. Issue 14 (January 1982) is listed as a 'punk special' and coincides with the rise of what we now call the UK82 scene.

¹⁶ The classic example is the juxtaposition of Berni Nolan (from Nolan Sisters) and Jello Biafra, whose answers to the question 'what would you change about your appearance' were 'my legs would be slimmer at the top' and 'substituting alligator claws for my fingers'.

as a bit of shock. The magazine, which would not [survive](#) beyond the single issue, includes within its opening contents a rationale for coming to be. Before examining the magazine in a formalist method to engage a deeper insight into subcultural consumption and visual structures, I will historically situate its arrival through both the content included and from the privileged position of drawing upon a dispositif of punk history as it stands assembled in the current time. The Foucauldian term *dispositif* is deliberately chosen as Foucault draws our attention to powerful knowledge structures situated in wider frameworks that may dissolve into conceptual, critical and analytical blind spots, often rooted in mutations of knowledge from previous structures that become overwhelmed and secreted as archaeological sediments. It is only when we start digging that we can equip ourselves with new critical tools to understand both the past and present.

What we now call the second wave of punk was nurtured in 1981 as the genre street-punk, to flourish the following year (and in modern times to acquire the alternative moniker of UK82 taken from a song by The Exploited).¹⁷ [Closely](#) connected is the Oi! scene, and Worley (2014) digs in the unfashionable vein of Oi! and documents how it responded to a certain dissemblance within original punk around its claims, and generic structuring, of being a working-class movement.¹⁸ In turn, Oi! proclaims a true heritage of coming from the streets where the working-class are confined, and structures its lyrics and imagery in this arena. With key Oi! compilation albums, under the direction of *Sounds* journalist Garry Bushell, emerging in 1980 and 1981, the reassertion of the street in a new regime of punk developed on a parallel front with the sudden commercial success of The Exploited and the hit single 'Dead Cities' in late 1981.¹⁹ Key events also include the Apocalypse Now tour that evinced a contorted angle of life mirroring art as it thread its way through the riot-torn UK in July 1981, consisting of The Exploited, Chron-Gen, Anti Pasti and Discharge (plus the Anti Nowhere League at the London show), and the culmination of 1981 with the Christmas on Earth punk festival at Leeds Queens Hall. The scene had major label backing with Oi! albums on EMI and Decca, and also the usual tactic of a major label (EMI) resurrecting a smaller imprint (Zonophone) to gather in some of the punk scene leaders.²⁰

Comment [RB1]: I think the bulk of footnotes 17 and possibly 18 could come into the main text here.

¹⁷ There is terminological territorialism here that I don't want to get into. As with the first wave, various contested terms existed, from street punk to new punk, real punk and hardcore punk. Glasper disputes the notion of second-wave, and quite rightly states that it was more an example of the original scene manifesting itself in the provinces as a delayed response rather than an instance of subcultural atavism. Even though many of the second wave bands formed before 1981, it would be around this time that the scene snowballed and at the same time responded to the social and political themes that had developed since the original punk years. For further clarity, the term UK82 is post-hoc nomenclature, replacing (and combining) the terms street-punk and Oi!.

¹⁸ Further to the footnote above, it is, at times, difficult to distinguish musically between street-punk and Oi! and Glasper (2014: 134) in his interview with Angelic Upstarts indicates how some bands never saw a delineation. However many bands did choose a camp and there was a distinctive mode of presentation. The assumption that the terms are interchangeable, as suggested by Brown (2004), is thus disputable.

¹⁹ The single was performed on the UK charts programme *Top of the Pops*, the occasion immortalised on YouTube which also revives and amplifies a debate about whether such punk music should collaborate with such commercial avenues of output. See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OEvh3BRvSRU> and the associated 500 comments. Accessed 7 January 2017

²⁰ EMI had largely steered clear of punk groups since their troublesome experience with the Sex Pistols in 1976, though they did sign a number of more polished new wave acts (X Ray Spex, Rich Kids, The Flies, Revillos). Decca was taken over by PolyGram in 1980, shortly after the death of longstanding Decca Chairman Sir Edward Lewis. The label had only marginally touched on punk in the 1970s, releasing the debut singles by Slaughter & the Dogs and Adam & the Ants, but little else of note.

The editorial of *Punk's Not Dead!* set out Bushell's rationale: that the original punk musicians had all sold out, that the music press had declared the scene dead, and that the promise of bands such as Sham 69, UK Subs, Angelic Upstarts and The Ruts to give the working-class youth a music and scene to unite behind was under threat. Bushell made his case: 'punk has got to stay the poison in the machine'. The magazine has backing through *Sounds* brought across by Bushell; there is an 'all time' punk top 100 as voted by its readers, a selection of letters from Discharge fans, and a double spread of punk merchandising that would also regularly populate the back pages on the newspaper (tee-shirt companies producing band logos, FANS clothing). All four of the bands involved in the Apocalypse Now tour are featured in the magazine, with a format than runs with a double page poster and double page feature on each performer. It is here where the nascent scene is formulated into a glossy consumer format, something new to the punk scene. The magazine consists of 48 glossy pages of which 20 are taken up with colour posters, clearly a phase change from previous modes of coverage in the weekly newspapers and a move towards a new environment. Certain bands listed on the cover (for example Theatre of Hate) feature only as a poster (even though the magazine doesn't state it is primarily a poster magazine), inviting a deconstruction of the emergent mode of representation of this scene.

The cover of the magazine (figure 1) is a good place to start, and this reveals a number of key codes and signatures. Wattie of Exploited is the obvious feature that draws in the eye, a head and shoulders (and all important hair) photograph of the singer in a highly performative manner. He presses the index finger of his upturned left hand into his left ear, a makeshift safety pin earring evident in a partially gleaming silhouette. Wattie cocks his head to one side, allowing the masthead of the magazine to occupy the top left corner with a block print capital in yellow ink. The inclusion of Wattie's protruding finger is balanced by a litany of 13 band names from the punk scene with no indication of how and why they are featured. A small block of text signals the inclusion of the top 100, and the only other text is the numbering and price (there is no date on the cover or within the magazine). Wattie is seemingly lit by either the photographer's flash or a street light – he is cropped to fill the frame and we can make out the gloss red paintwork and dull panels of a UK telephone box in the immediate background. This serves two purposes; to emphasise the street nature of the moment, and to set into priority Wattie's hair. His mohican is perfectly formed in both aesthetic colour and architectural structure, and so becomes an exemplar or imprimatur for the new punk movement, as much as the red telephone box signals the British street. His skull is closely shaved and we see the bony indentations beyond his temples exaggerated by the glare of the light, leading down to his pallid skin and poor complexion. His mouth is agog offering an unseemly and Bataille-esque glimpse of the inside, his blue eyes pierce back towards the viewer, celebrating being Wattie and inviting you to join him in proclaiming that punk's not dead, with what Hacking (1995: 11) calls 'the subtle dialectics of the human gaze'. He is adorned in a leather biker jacket with painted/sprayed red aspects on the reverse of the collars, augmented by a patiently applied barrage of conical studs in clumps and lines. Three badges are in evidence; the first is indistinct and blurred, the second is Sid Vicious in cartoon mode with his own leather jacket and swastika, the third is a presumably purloined British Rail badge which would be part of a punk fashion to adorn yourself with badges mocking authority and convention (prefect, army badges, etc). Images of punks wearing badges depicting punks invites a mise-en-abyme, and this is carried on with Wattie's tee-shirt depicting Sindy Job (as seen on the reverse of the UK Subs single 'Tomorrows Girls'), herself adorned in a leather jacket with a tee-shirt underneath.

Punk's Not Dead! did not survive to a second issue, however, in 1982 a pair of glossy magazines arrived with *Punk! Lives* and *Noise!*. Examining the former first, there is no date on the cover here, but there is a proposal of the magazine being monthly and a strapline stating 'the unacceptable face of modern music', with the magazine launched by *Record Mirror* journalist Alf Martin.²¹ The cover star reverts back to first wave punk with the classic image of Sid Vicious squinting towards the camera with an arm outstretched in a vague gesture of crucifixion, his hair spiked on end, a chain and padlock around his neck, wearing a tattered Westwood 'cowboys' tee shirt (figure 2). The cover adopts an equally retro feel with clumsy punk lettering invoking the DIY stencil aesthetic with letters offset at angles redolent of the Sex Pistols iconographic identity set. As for the previous magazine, bands are listed in a column down the left-hand side but using a deliberate style of cut out letters. As before, the magazine is a glossy 48-page format, and this time 18 pages are taken up with full posters, with features on the bands also tending towards pictorial construction.

Following the cover, an editorial by 'Art Attack' sets out the background and intention for *Punk! Lives*. The magazine will offer a 'blast of over the-top chaos and craziness, 'cause that's what *Punk! Lives* is all about'. The apostrophes and street slang abbreviations continue with words such as 'gonna' and 'lotsa', replicating an aspect of punk that reached out to the general punters: for the average working class youth punk music spoke to them, of them and like them.²² The editorial continues and sets out a relationship to the current state of the music press, offering a 'great recipe for all the legions of fans who have had to put up with piecemeal coverage of their favourite music, tucked in between great wads of dross in the national music press'. A projected demographic glimpse is offered with the urge for readers to 'spare a few pence from your dole money', linking the audience of the street-punk scene to the dole culture that allowed you to survive in the interstices of wider society.²³ Finally, a rallying call is issued such that 'the system won't grind you down, there's too many of us for that to happen, they can't ignore it any longer, it may've been hiding for a while but now PUNK LIVES!'.

The figurehead and emergent poster boy of the scene, Wattie, opens proceedings with a double colour spread focussing on the pristine mohican, followed by a feature on the band which demarcates them from other scenes such as new romantic ('suck in your cheeks and pose like a pansy in a foamex Spandau Nancyboy outfit') and also draws a clear line between the original punk bands who have betrayed the working class fans: 'the movement started by art school boys who'd traded in their bondage strides for fistfuls of cash and synthesisers, had simply fallen into the hands of the working-class to be ignored by the press and the arbiters of chic.'

If Wattie is the poster boy then Beki Bondage is clearly the poster girl, featuring as a reference in issue 1 (as 'Vice Squad nymphette'), and then taking over the cover duties for issue 2 in her seemingly compliant manner to personify a somewhat fantasised version of a sultry punk female.

²¹ The initial editor is given as Neville Wiggins, possibly an alias. A letter in issue 2 attempts to out Wiggins as Garry Bushell, though no response is offered. Martin is listed as editor from issue 3 onwards.

²² Ethnographic studies into 1960s London street gangs and subcultures such as Daniel and McGuire (1972) brought such language into the academic arena.

²³ See Free Association (2016) for more thoughts on this interstitial dole existence and the punk scene. [I can testify to such dole culture from my own punk youth, and a parallel dole culture that I found in the rock-climbing scene when I moved to Sheffield in 1984. Curiously the debut song by Wham! in late 1982 celebrated the freedom and apparent positive sociality of signing on itself — again, from my own experience, I couldn't get out of the dole office quick enough.](#)

Over the course of the magazine Wattie and Beki become the twin behemoths of the second wave punk scene – a kind of punk *Hart to Hart* – and embody the trajectory towards pure pin-up poster material. Meanwhile, new journalists are listed in the editorial and the addition of charts and reviews attempts to add some easily digestible words to the magazine, but the predominance is once again glossy full-page posters. The inclusion of a letters page hints at a multiple dissociative personality within the scene between first wave punk acts that are deemed to have sold out, authentic second wave punk acts such as GBH and Anti Nowhere League, and more progressive acts working within and around the scene such as Theatre of Hate who draw some scorn because ‘they don’t sound or look like punks’. This statement suggests that how you look is important and so emphasises a new role of magazines, and this clearly underpins the agenda of *Punk! Lives*.

Issue 3 features more mohicans on the cover, with Joe Strummer milking a frantic year of publicity stunts (missing band members, new haircuts), and *Punk! Lives* quickly slipping behind its promise of a monthly publication. Interestingly a steady stream of new writers are recruited from the first wave of punk fanzines with Mick Mercer (*Panache*), Richard North (*Kick*), Tom Vague (*Vague*) and Tony D. and Alastair Livingston (*Kill Your Pet Puppy*), and this eventually pushes the direction of the writing in a number of different paths, notably towards the evolving genre of positive punk / goth scene and a retrospective recognition of the anarcho-punk scene. At the same time, the structure and focus of the magazine remains rooted in a poster driven barrage of second wave punk bands, with issue 3 bringing in what is almost a stylistic mimicking of the 1980s glamour model format. Wattie fills this role in issue 3 with him relaxing on some kind of bollard structure in the outdoor sunshine, Beki Bondage obliges for issue 4, and Gavin Whyte of One Way System provides visual glamour in issue 5 in a topless pose in front of some incredibly odd wallpaper; as figure 3 shows, these images were then further marketed as purchasable posters.

By issue 5 we are into mid-1983 and the magazine is performing a number of contradictory and divergent functions of scene representation. A pen-pals page is added which covers two pages and provides some qualitative data on the everyday lives of participants within the scene, with a number of punks writing from distant postings through serving in the armed forces.²⁴ In addition, we see the inclusion of a fanzines review page, documenting the continued proliferation of this scene beyond the first wave of punk and into post-punk and anarcho-punk genres, such that most of these zines evade the historical reconsideration and aesthetic fetishizing that currently proliferates. As a test case issue 5 exemplifies the multiple personality of *Punk! Lives*, with a garish cover image of Mark Wilson of the Mob desperately trying to keep a serious slant on his band’s anarcho-punk pretences but at the same time fulfilling the unlikely role of poster-boy with his bright red dreadlocks and squat aesthetic.²⁵ He is depicted on the cover alongside a blue star that proclaims 16 pages of colour, and the magazine plods on with bookended poster features of Charlie Harper and Gizzard Puke (the Sid Snot equivalent character created by comedian Kenny Everett and his move from ITV to BBC on UK television). The letters pages reflect this contested ground with old punks, anarcho-punks and positive punks struggling to assert claims of authenticity and heritage, what Hacking (1995: 226) might consider as a ‘fractional personality disorder’ when multiple bodies fight for a single personality. This is a microcosm of the overlapping multitudinal punk scenes around in 1983, and an

²⁴ Wattie served briefly in the army and many early Exploited songs critically recall this part of his life.

²⁵ The semi-derelict backdrop is the start of the Black Sheep Housing Coop at 103 Grosvenor Avenue (thanks to Tony D for this information).

indication of how they were set out and navigated through subcultural modes of styles of clothing and hair, expressions, hang-outs, etc.

Whilst issue 6 makes a temporary return to the street scene of UK82 punk, heading for King's Road to photograph the perennial punks from the various co-existing manifestations of punk in their natural habitat, issue 7 rehashes various posters from earlier issues and moves towards a *Smash Hits* feel and layout, including reprinted lyrics, quick question and answer profiles, and a poster section entitled 'hunky punky'. Strategies to prolong the magazine are tried from here on in. Issue 8 reverts to Beki Bondage as a cover star, however by now she has aligned herself to a new band (Ligotage) and is appearing amidst a group wearing what *Punk! Lives* originally called 'foamex Spandau Nancyboy outfits'. The second strategy is a new focus on skinhead bands, with features on 4 Skins and laddish punk bands such as Peter and Test Tube Babies, and the letters page includes a lengthy rant from Garry Bushell declaiming the whole scene and the magazine itself. Bushell's influence may well have infiltrated the next issue with extended features on the Oi! scene and movement. Advertising pleas are launched around this time, and the offer of buying large size posters are mixed with more serious features such as a report on the September 1983 Stop The City anarchist protest written by members of Crass separated by a few pages from a feature on right-wing skinhead Oi! band Combat 84. *Punk! Lives* ends with Issue 11, again undated, though there is the possibility that it made it through to the start of 1984. There is a last flourish for a final few hastily conceived proto-goth bands (Flesh for Lulu, Skeletal Family, Actifed) and a double page by Garry Bushell on what is wrong with things and what could be right, before signing off with a poster of Newtown Neurotics.

Noise! is slightly different to *Punk! Lives* in that it is not solely dedicated to second wave punk and Oi!, and that it is also set out as a fortnightly publication clearly to imitate *Smash Hits*. This is evident from its original masthead promising to bring 'hit songs and hot pix', though its internal pages reveal numerous *Sounds* journalists such as Garry Bushell and Bev Elliott with columns such as 'punk/herbert news'.²⁶ The inclusion of printed song lyrics draws it near to *Smash Hits*, though there is a certain strangeness to seeing Anti Nowhere League's 'I Hate People' laid out alongside ABC's 'Look of Love'. The magazine is vaguely segmented and granularizes into metal and rockabilly scenes, with punk regularly taking a front seat. Issue 3 follows the trend of *Punk! Lives* and features Beki Bondage, describing her variously as a 'comely front-runner' and 'punk buxom barmaid or country wench'. Gasper (2014: 440) in his consideration of *Punk! Lives* records GBH vocalist Colin Abrahall's memories of being on the cover obscured by a free packet of Dentyne chewing gum, and as figure 4 shows, this was actually in issue 10 of *Noise!*, with the singer inadvertently mimicking a parallel punk universe equivalent of the advertising *moment* for miracle hair products. *Noise!* proceeded to issue 16 and promptly announced a merger with *Record Mirror*, though there is little evidence that the parent magazine suddenly adopted a new punk sensibility.

Constructing images

As stated above, the climate of poster format magazines and the construction of unique images in genres like new pop put a certain pressure on punk to play the game. Punk's response wavered

²⁶ *Noise!* was launched by *Sounds* editor Alan Lewis, an ex-mod with an apparent encyclopedic knowledge of soul. He later went on to be editor of *NME* in 1987, a time when the newspaper was drifting and prevaricating in its genre coverage (indie, hip-hop). His appointment saw the demise of the 'old school' of punk and post-punk journalists at the paper.

between a subtractive strategy – turning against the construction of images – and an additive strategy – adding a theme that might possibly buttress the punk cause, though the difficulty in constructing an image that somehow nullifies image construction is not easily achieved. I will now return to the corpus to examine three visual trends that define three emergent genres.

1. The street

In his typically divergent assessment and reconfiguration of our social and cultural terrain, Scott Lash sets out his new modernity by revisiting Walter Benjamin's search for the paradigmatic figures of the city. Lash (1999: 80) identifies 'the stockbroker, the drug dealer, the punk, the advertising executive' as key personas, though we are intriguingly denied an insight into how it fits together. Perhaps Lash has seen too many bad American movies featuring cartoon punks, or perhaps he has a memory of *Punk! Lives*, but, to him, the city is characterised by the punk.

In Bushell's initial publication *Punk's Not Dead!*, Oi! bands Infa-Riot and The Business form a split poster page in a symmetrical arrangement (figure 5). In contrast to the gurning Wattie on the cover, both bands adopt similar poses and appear nervous whilst attempting to look menacing, and the emphasis here switches to Oi!'s celebration of the street as a source of both roots and habitus. The fuzzy and contradictory politics that became attached to Oi! stem in part from this emphasis on the street as a kind of precursor to class and what we might like to think as a natural escape route – class struggle. Instead the street is romanticised as the space of making life exciting and worthy, through rucks with other subcultures or the ubiquitous football violence that pervaded the early 80s. Many football grounds were positioned in semi-derelict working class areas with a maze of streets making passage to the game itself somewhat precarious and exciting. The photographs of Infa-Riot and The Business show each four-piece lined up in the plane of the photograph looking both into and beyond the camera. Whereas Wattie engages in a punk intersubjective inanity, these Oi! bands look hard and serious, offsetting Wattie's anti-normative theatricality with an anti-theatrical normativity. Both bands wear everyday and ubiquitous clothes of the street punk or skinhead, nothing theatrical or spectacular. They seem ill at ease, tight in their shoulders and unsure what to do with their hands; making a vaguely threatening fist, hooking a thumb into a belt loop, holding a cigarette. Both photographs indicate a rootedness to the street, with Infa-Riot posed in a mundane fashion above a road sign pointing to (pre-gentrified) districts of the East End, whilst The Business line up against a weathered brick wall. The utilisation of grim bricks as a backdrop is an established trope of signifying the harshness of the street that encloses the subject, linking back to early Victorian philanthropist photographers and seen in images such as John Thomson's *The Crawlers* (c1877, London) and Thomas Annan's *Old Closes and Streets of Glasgow* (1868), and a punk trope from The Ramones to The Clash et al. The iconic second wave punk image of a brick wall would be the Discharge photograph with three of the band members lined up against a wall and the fourth with his back to us showing a leather jacket embossed with massed studs and the band logo across the bottom edge.

In issue 8 of *Punk! Lives* the centrefold poster of Oi! band 4 Skins revisits the importance of the street and its association to the scene (figure 6). Photographed by Tony Mottram, the quartet are depicted in a derelict and condemned street such as might surround any football ground, or connote the dispersal of the working class from old neighbourhoods into new housing projects. There is a deliberate sense of menace, the angle of perspective twisted away from an obvious vanishing point vista and the band members standing as a mob in the middle of the road, turning to assemble in

perspective for the camera. They have perfected the menacing glare and avoided the previously uncomfortable stance, their arms limp and their hands holding cigarettes – though the unlit nature of these form a punctum to the photograph by recalling (for me) candy cigarettes that were popular through the 80s.²⁷

2. Apocalypse and ruins

Snarling and gobbing and falling around
I really enjoy the freedom I've found
My mates besides me lying on the ground
His ears are bursting with the volume of sound (Exploited 'Dead Cities')

"He no longer belongs to the world of men in any way; he does not even belong to the threatened and precarious world of the camp inhabitants who have forgotten him from the very beginning. Mute and absolutely alone, he has passed into another world without memory and without grief."
(Agamben 1998: 185)

The abandoned street of 4 Skins does not indicate a devastation of sorts, more a case of neglect and betrayal of the working class. We can, however, move forward as the ruin of the physical fabric for the working class with the rise of the ghetto is interchanged with the ruinous landscape of the class war riot, which then bleeds into the ruin of everything through capitalist apocalypse. The theme of war and destruction pervades the imagery of the UK82 scene, not least with the key tour of Apocalypse Now representing an uttered urgency.... apocalypse, now. In his dizzying survey and interweaving of punk forms and total devastation films, fiction and artworks, Evan Calder Williams (2011: 132) identifies four modes of punk war that bring on the desired apocalypse: self-destructive solipsism, micro-communal withdrawal and abstention, corrosive and engaged negativity claiming the 'no future', and finally an apocalyptic politics of the end with punks as both agents and actual manifestation of the end.²⁸ The symmetry between UK82 (with Wattie as archetype) and the post-apocalyptic film *Mad Max 2: The Road Warrior* (1981) bears this out in an obvious fashion, though Williams also focuses on films such as Dan O'Bannon's *Return of the Living Dead* (1985) with a dumb punk cohort becoming zombified.

The end of the world loomed large in society, which would be vehemently and passionately argued within the anarcho-punk scene (phrases such as 'fall out with Thatcher' adorning placards alongside Peter Kennard's collages), though UK82 punks equally played the part as some kind of apocalyptic remainder.²⁹ Imagined through films such as *Mad Max* as Giorgio Agamben's *homo sacer*, they became the living dead with 'dead' as the active word – an unwanted and unaccountable surplus that cannot be ruled out. Exploited's 1982 album *Troops of Tomorrow* has an illustration of the band leading an array of punk mutants through a recently devastated city, the band as an effluent of

²⁷ Mottram rates this picture as one of his best and feels that stark subcultural contrast of the band members gives the image its alluring power (telephone interview 24 January 2017).

²⁸ Williams sets out the political arc of his work as the replacement of total destruction with the 'destruction of totalising structure' (Williams 2011: 4).

²⁹ I'd add here a consideration of Nigel Kneale's seminal and brutally forlorn 1979 TV drama *Quatermass Conclusion* and the apparent desire of the writer to have a more punk feel amongst the remnant hordes of the derailed society. The final episode features a cameo appearance by Toyah. There is also a conceptual and spiritual link to Laura Oldfield Ford's 'hauntological' graphic work *Savage Messiah*.

critical theorist Paul Virilio's dromocratic consciousness and acceleration of 'pure war'. Virilio maps the war to a geographical space, and we can consider both a topological element (a shape with a boundary or border) and a topographical element (a distinctive interiority).³⁰

A striking poster is included of the band GBH, themselves not on the Apocalypse Now tour but by now acting as a key player in the scene (figure 7). The band are photographed in what appears to be neglected or vandalised country garden, stridently posing as a quartet all with immaculately spiked hair standing to attention in rigid soaped spikes. This photograph is from a set already used for a smaller image in *Punk's Not Dead!*, and also reappears a few months later in issue 3 of *Punk! Lives*, and it is clearly deemed as being seen as another authenticating image for the scene. The group stance and shared look resembles a small phalanx of post-apocalyptic survivors, with the individuals on the extreme left and right flanks seemingly looking out, their postures signify both battle weariness and battle readiness. The clothing here has migrated from overt punk shock-value and instead connotes the scavenged, rugged, salvaged and functional, a glimpse of what the 'remainder' might look like after society collapses.

3. Graveyard shift (you're already dead)

The graveyard forms a natural conclusion to the sequence of street, its ruination and the sign of the apocalypse, the punk iconography of Heidegger's 'being towards death'. Whilst a handful of UK82 bands were depicted in graveyards, a new genre of goth and positive punk began to assert itself with a natural inclination towards to the solitude and abandon of the crypt or tomb. A disputed and contested history - there remains a gothic sensibility in both punk (Siouxsie & the Banshees and Adam & the Ants being the obvious examples) and post-punk (Factory Records bandied the term around) - the majority of goth bands formed in the slipstream of second wave punk.³¹ This also coincides with what was christened as positive punk with visual bands such as Blood and Roses and Brigandage dominating proceedings and taking up pages in *Punk! Lives*, *Noise!* and *Flexipop*.³²

Comment [RB2]: Consider moving some/all of footnote 31 into main text.

Figure 8, from *Punk! Lives* issue 4, shows Sex Gang Children in a typical graveyard pose. Here we see the difficulty in presenting an image of *doing something*, as the bands in a graveyard usually want to put across an aura of either the occult, the abyss or some kind of connection to the after-life. This amounts, here, to effecting a dream-like stare away from the camera with one band member immersing himself into the ground of what appears to be a sunken plot. Other photographs are constructed in larger crypt spaces and generally involve candles or pseudo-sacrificial paraphernalia to connote some kind of black-mass activity.

³⁰ This futuristic and mythological bounded area of a punk carnival of survival would continue through to the rave era with album artwork such as on the Prodigy's 1994 *Music for the Jilted Generation* depicting a raver giving the finger and cutting the rope between a smouldering police state and a field of sound systems.

³¹ This situates the protagonists of goth as directly post-punk in regard to the second wave of punk, and not as some kind of belated adjunct of post first wave punk or an iteration of original post-punk. The repeating time frame of punk into a second wave creates new repetitions of (second wave) post-punk that may well overlap into post-punk, a situation that is not acknowledged in the proliferating work on post-punk.

³² Richard Kick, under the name Richard North, would coin the phrase positive punk and somehow get an article through the strict post-structuralist censors at *NME* in what must have been a slow news week (19 February 1983). A documentary for the television program *South of Watford*, hosted by Michael Moorcock, ran a feature on North's proclamation and the two key bands, arguing that the scene was another rebirth of punk in its art-school format. Mick Mercer would, in 1983, be in the process of taking on the role of spearheading the next incarnation of *ZigZag*, with positive-punk and proto-goth bands prominent in the coverage.

Conclusion / Jigsaw feeling

Writing from the midst of the 1980s acceleration in image culture in a broader attempt to disentangle the crossover between pop and art, Walker (1987: 74) draws on a practical example of *Face* photographer Jill Furmanovsky giving the 1983 hopefuls Swinging Laurels an iconographic makeover.³³ He surmises that the new mode of photography helps to ‘glamorise performers or endow them with fictional personalities’. Almost 30 years later Bestley (2016: 51) fractures a critical silence on punk’s possible implication or encroachment in such methods and isolates ‘a punk convention and visual shorthand that multiplied and grew without much critique or interrogation’. My argument here is that punk’s involvement in playing the image game reached its apotheosis with the arrival of the dedicated glossy magazine, and the article so far has set out a wider understanding of the glossy pop process, a disinterment of a sequence of punk magazines, and a proposal for three modes of presentation (or visual shorthand). In [this](#) conclusion I will set out a number of potential theoretical links and explore essentialist discourses that permeate the field of punk.

Firstly, there is a loose fit between my identified themes of the street, the apocalypse and the graveyard within the arc of classic British subcultural theory. The street maintains a link to the early Birmingham school of Gramscian ‘magical’ solutions rooted in class struggle, the apocalypse lends itself to a kind of semiotic end-game studied by Dick Hebdige,³⁴ whilst the goth scene and the graveyard conform to the post-subcultural work of David Muggleton. This latter work (Muggleton 2000) created something of an unnecessary fault-line within subcultural theory, though it does bear some useful insight here. Muggleton is accused of removing meaning from subculture and replacing it with a postmodern pick-and-mix lifestyle fluidity, however what he ostensibly removes is a further meaningful projection of meaning. Thus, subcultures hold importance (hence meaning) with participants, but this meaning cannot necessarily be extended further as either a carrier, or symptom, of something else (for example, class oppression). The post-punk goth dressed in black and loitering in the cemetery is a strong image, a sense of identity and belonging, that can be arrived at via other punk and post-punk images (the Theatre of Hate ‘billy’ look, the UK Decay decadent look, etc). This split between a signifying or performative aspect and a simple case of belonging and allegiance is glossed over in much of the work that pre-dates Muggleton, but can be considered here with regard to aspects such as performed anger in lyrics (‘TV Sketch’, ‘No Government’, etc) and fashions.

This leads to a second point around the hostility between the UK82 scene and the anarcho-punk scene, premised upon ethics but devolving down to image construction and its apparent abhorrence in the anarcho-punk scene. Raposo (2016: 78-79) reports, there were internecine quarrels between Crass and both The Exploited and Discharge regarding ethical standpoints that shows the contemporaneous fault-line between anarcho-punk and UK82.³⁵ Flux of Pink Indians produced a

³³ Swinging Laurels were a Leicester indie band with requisite goatees and zoot-suits – they never achieved a desired hit.

³⁴ Derrida was fascinated with the remainderless event and how this might be marked as an archival moment in the future anterior (see Sprod 2012). The fictional punk horde as both an impossible remnant and a kind of warning interweaves temporalities and invites a potential complex explication.

³⁵ Strictly speaking it wasn’t an ethical fault-line (differing views on something) but meta-ethical (in terms of what might count as an ethical pivot) and para-ethical (should ethics even be involved in music). Crass were also involved in a 1982 spat with the Socialist Worker Party members of the *NME* (mainly Stephen Wells and X Moore, the pseudonym for Chris Dean of the Trotskyist band The Redskins).

graphic within their *Strive to Survive...* album depicting 'Macho Spiteful's Punk by Post' service whereby the rule-governed, purchasable aspect of punk is critiqued. In a similar vein, the much-missed Larry Law and his *Spectacular Times* series of anarcho-situationist pamphlets collaged a graphic from three glossy music magazines to spell out 'Smash the face maker' (figure 9). This anarcho strand of punk disavows any sense of subcultural rule playing – dress, hair, comportment, demeanour, hangout – and paradoxically attempts instructions on refusing instructions in favour of being 'more than music'. Solomons (2016: 31) admiringly recounts Crass and their accidental creation of shapeless, versatile, utilitarian black clothing emerging from a (communal) washing-day disaster, and how they felt that this look was not a fashion look as such but instead some kind visual statement of communality and de-emphasis on fashion itself. But, as Knee (2015: 181) unapologetically shows, the anarcho-punk look was indeed a look, a look associated with a music scene, a look that appealed to, and was adopted by, followers.

Finally, there is the wider placement (or displacement) of the UK82 scene in the punk pantheon. Gasper's work aside, it remains a historical void unconsidered in the fashionable interpretative speculation of 1976, the stylistic endeavours of first-wave post-punk and the metanoic excess of anarcho-punk. As Knee (2015: 209) shows, this was a subculture with a definitive look set out by bands and adopted by followers, which brings to bear the crucial role of the punk glossy magazine. Gasper's essential work on resurrecting the UK82 scene amidst a wider perceived seriousness and righteousness of the parallel anarcho-punk scene touches upon *Punk! Lives* in a two-page appendix (Gasper 2014: 440-441). Two opposing retrospective responses are put across: the magazine as a 'lifeline for young punks stranded in the more remote areas of the country that had little or no access to gigs and, pre-Internet, few ways to tap into the underground network' and the danger that bands gain 'ideas above their station and started to release shit rock 'n'roll records with full colour pictures of themselves on the front covers'. Gasper's book, and the appendix on *Punk! Lives*, avoids the wider nature of strong image direction in the scene, and can thus be seen to acquiesce to the criticisms cast upon the scene by the anarcho-punk faction.³⁶

The UK82 scene arrived and announced itself through a raft of betrayals of punk; a lost sense of anger and rootedness, a selling out to major labels, a 'wrong' way of dressing and posing. The 'glossification' of printed media had engulfed the contemporary post-punk genres that were now knocking on the door of wider success, but was immediately taken up by the protagonists of the new UK82 scene. Consequently, by immersing itself in the image culture of the early 1980s, UK82 was forced to respond with a new image, leading to strange forms of visual constructions and codes. Whilst it might claim to be part of Bushell's 'poison in the machine', this needs to be understood in a broader context away from the essentialist anarcho-punk construct, where the counter-hegemonic becomes a new hegemony. *Punk! Lives* and its ilk, in an autotelic manner, underline the subcultural jouissance of looking good, belonging, and collectively experiencing great music that set itself apart from pop (and other subcultural) norms.

Acknowledgements

³⁶ History has subsequently left Discharge in a strange place, split between 'discore' as the name for the strong musical style and look pioneered by the band, and 'discourse' as they are retrospectively pulled into the anarcho-punk lineage by virtue of their ideological targets and uncompromising style of play and presentation.

Many thanks to Garry Bushell, Tony Mottram and Tony D for their time and patience in gathering memories from their times in and around the publications. Thanks also to [Dr-Russell Bestley](#) for factual additions rooting the art and design, and important record-label details, that give a clearer picture of this complex and overlooked time of punk history. Printed resources were viewed at the University of Cambridge deposit library and I cannot emphasise enough the importance of these services.