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Abstract *Antisocial Justice Warriors: Utilising Punk in the Pursuit of Social Justice*

Punk is not so much a genre of music as it is “a political stance, [...] a social movement, [...] and [...] a lens of critical appraisal.” (Roderick, 2013). It has typically been a place for society’s misfits, in part as it presents both a place to call home and a voice to assert discontent with society’s fixed power structures (Kristiansen *et al.*, 2010). It “channel[s] adolescent anger and frustration into positive and inclusive feelings of belonging. [It is] an island of lost toys [...] where the kids [make] the rules and the hateful, hurtful world of drunk dads, preps, jocks, [...] meathead campus police, racist[s], and flat-topped Korean War vets [are] overturned” (Roderick, 2013).

However this has recently been brought into question. Post-Millennial punks— younger, seemingly more socially progressive, and campaigning for social justice (Lamb, 2017)—might be changing what it means to be punk. Perhaps as a consequence, some have been accused of trying to turn punk into a ‘language-policed Safe Space,’ which itself is part of a ‘wider PC assault’ on the community (King, 2017). There are clearly arguments to be made regarding whether punk is still relevant in the fight for social justice, but these tend to be at best inadequately scholarly (Cadwallader, 2017), and at worst somewhat unsophisticated (King, 2017).

This paper seeks to investigate links between contemporary social justice movements and their connection to freedom of expression and what one might term modern ‘punk’ outlooks on life, and forms the initial stages of a PhD project commencing in 2020. Fundamentally, can punk provide a distinctive way through which social justice can be sought?

Keywords Freedom of expression, punk, self-censorship, social justice, campus politics

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