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From 1940s zoot-suiters and hepcats through 1950s rock 'n' rollers, beatniks and Teddy boys; 1960s surfers, rude boys, mods, hippies and bikers; 1970s skinheads, soul boys, rastas, glam rockers, funksters and punks; on to the heavy metal, hip-hop, casual, goth, rave and clubber styles of the 1980s, 90s, noughties and beyond, distinctive blends of fashion and music have become a defining feature of the cultural landscape. The Subcultures Network series is international in scope and designed to explore the social and political implications of subcultural forms. Youth and subcultures will be located in their historical, socio-economic and cultural context; the motivations and meanings applied to the aesthetics, actions and manifestations of youth and subculture will be assessed. The objective is to facilitate a genuinely cross-disciplinary and transnational outlet for a burgeoning area of academic study.

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Paula Guerra · Pedro Quintela
Editors

Punk, Fanzines and DIY Cultures in a Global World

Fast, Furious and Xerox

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FOREWORD: THE ATTRACTIONS OF THE FANZINE

When I was starting out as a scholar in the early 1990s, my youthful punk rock, anarchist, free festival and squatting years from the late 1970s on gave me a gift I was not expecting and had not anticipated: a subject to write about. To be accurate: a subject to write about *again*, for I had already kept a daily diary from around 1979–1980.

In my first book, *Senseless Acts of Beauty: Cultures of Resistance Since the Sixties* (1996), I tried to make sense of the culture I knew, such as Crass and Stonehenge Free Festival, by tracing strands of and connections between the counterculture in Britain from the 1950s and 1960s onwards. In that book's kind of companion collection, *DiY Culture: Party & Protest in Nineties Britain* (1998), I aimed to bring together key voices in the then newest version of countercultural protest, from underground 'rave' culture to road protest and radical environmentalism. In *Senseless Acts of Beauty*, documents and ephemera such as record covers, and self-produced music and politics magazines, leaflets and flyers appeared as both primary sources and evocative visual illustration. But by the time of *DiY Culture*, there were chapters dedicated to alternative and independent media production, from underground magazines to alternative news videos.

The history and practices of alternative media were becoming of greater interest, not only to veterans who had been involved in various media scenes from the Sixties underground press onwards, but also to new generations of media activists. There was in the 1990s an energy around media innovations (discuss) such as subverting, the Zapatistas

and Indymedia which needed explaining and historicizing. In a British context, the timely and important work of Chris Atton I found pivotal here—starting with *Alternative Media* (Atton, 2001); Atton helped to make a critical and theoretical space available for the study of such radical ephemera. In my own university I designed and taught a new course called Alternative Media, which politically-minded students from Media Studies, Cultural Studies and American Studies enrolled on eagerly.

For these students, there was nothing quite like handling and reading the small collection of original *Oz* and *IT* underground magazines from the 1960s, and fanzines such as *Sniffin' Glue*, *Kill Your Pet Puppy* and *Toxic Graffiti* from the 1970s, that I would distribute for seminar discussion. They would have very much enjoyed and found usefully informative a book like this one, a rich and vibrant collection. Its innovations are plural, headed by the international perspectives the chapters offer, as well as tracing the (perhaps surprising) continued influence and sense of relevance of punk fanzines over decades now. Chapters show how fanzines can be inclusive (as social, queer or intersectional text) as well as exclusive (*this* music only). The sheer range of images contained is a further asset. I like that the title contains the word 'fanzine' rather than, common today, 'zine'—it maintains, in my view, the centrality as producer and consumer of the fan, a term which is, as Adorno tells us, 'short for fanatic' (1967: 123). I congratulate the editors, Paula Guerra and Pedro Quintela, and all the contributors on their efforts and hope other readers will find its illuminations to be both as detailed *and* as wide-ranging as I have.

Few of the punk singles from back in the day that I still carry with me from one house or job move to the next have had much of a listen in recent years—when someone from a band dies I dig them out for a spin. But the fanzines—those I look at, I could say cherish (though what have I done with my now precious copies of *Sniffin' Glue*? All I can find is my flexi-disc of Alternative TV's 'Love Lies Limp', given free with the final issue. I hope to find them in a dusty folder sometime). Some of the best band interviews were to be found in the informal space of fanzines, as well as some of the best and/or worst punk graphics. As a teenage punk I always liked the idea that the fanzine was just stapled together, that the writer or maker really could have been, well, someone like *me*, a boy in a provincial town, feeling it deeply. The fanzine seemed even more accessible in punk than being in a band or making a record, even though each of these core activities had itself been greatly demystified

and democratized by punk. As Atton would explain to us later, the fanzine knocked the hierarchy of access. Also it was public culture —unlike the private diary-writing I was starting to do, fanzine production was for public consumption, it was part of the gig. I remember at one concert a punk selling his fanzine with the disarming slogan: ‘Buy this. It’s shit but it’s cheap.’ It really was cheap, too, though I remain to this day uninformed as to its quality. I never did buy that one, not even for the five pence demanded. I wish I had.

Norwich, UK

George McKay

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Paula Guerra
Pedro Quintela

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