

P3 Discussion of the weaknesses of 'Being punk in higher education: subcultural strategies for academic practice' by Tom Parkinson¹

Richard Temple-Purcell

My confidence in the quality of the peer review process for this article was undermined by a spelling mistake ('a more critical plain' (*sic*)), and the use of Harvard referencing alongside footnotes without any superscript indication in the text.

The actual thesis of the article has limited direct value for my research but provides incidental support in the quoted motivations for the countercultural pedagogies identified. The author's stance that punk is defined by 'anti-institutional antagonism' and anti-capitalist views is supported by his exclusively US source material, but he fails to examine why his own UK based research does not identify similar 'identity schisms'² in his subjects. Recognising this omission has helped me to hone my own argument, since it reveals an ideological contrast between British punk and its American predecessor, which is central to my thesis, but Parkinson does not acknowledge this.

Parkinson recognises that punk ideology has been extensively studied but argues that since most researchers have identified as punk themselves, their conclusions may be 'reflective rationalisations of their own practice'. While that is valid, his position as an outside observer leads him to ask the wrong questions. Despite quoting Gordon who states 'the ideological heterogeneity of punk defies attempts to assert a set of common, core ethics'³ his premise relies on the misapprehension that punk is inherently anti-capitalist and has a common political ideology.

¹ Parkinson, Tom. *Being punk in higher education: subcultural strategies for academic practice*. (Canterbury UK: Teaching in Higher Education, Routledge, 2017)

² Winter, Richard. *Academic manager or managed academic? Academic identity schisms in higher education*. (UK: Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management, Routledge, 2009)

³ Gordon, Alastair. *The Authentic Punk: An Ethnography of DIY Music Ethics*. (Loughborough UK: Loughborough University Institutional Repository, 2005)