Just Typical Girls? An Exploration of Older Women's Construction and Maintenance of Punk Identities.

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Abstract

This thesis examines the construction and maintenance of punk identities by ageing, or older, (punk) women. Recent scholarship on post-youth subcultural involvement demonstrates some evidence of exploring the interplay between age, gender and subculture yet still lacks any research which solely focuses on the experiences of older punk women. Historically, women have been marginalised in subcultural scholarship and this has been more so the case for ageing, or older, women. In line with the feminist research values, this thesis therefore gives voice to a previously marginalised sample.

The research utilised a methodology informed by a feminist and inductive approach. Data was analysed from 16 semi-structured interviews (one paired) and 5 e-mail interviews. A set of common punk values were raised by the research participants which in turn informed, not determined, their relationship with dress, music and gigs. These punk values were also important for how the women negotiated punk identities as they aged. A career model is proposed for understanding how ageing women construct and maintain punk identities. This demonstrates the emergence of three main identity categories across the research sample: the 'toner downs', the 'consistent punks' and the 'never massively outrageous'. Reflecting on punk in their lives 'then' and 'now', the women demonstrated tensions between agency/structure with gender and social ageing highlighted as potential constraints on their construction and maintenance of punk identities.

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Last but certainly not least I would like to dedicate this thesis to my darling Islay. May you continue to make me smile with your quirky ways, and may you forever remain strong willed. And may you maybe, just maybe someday, come with mummy to a punk gig.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Commonly, punk was theorised as both a male-dominated subculture and one which was 'youth' centred (Hebdige 1998). There is now growing recognition of the presence of women within punk (see, for example, Leblanc 2002). Additionally the association between punk and youth has begun to change with research on older punk fans within the wider context of 'post-youth' subcultural work (Bennett 2006, Bennett and Hodkinson 2012). This reflects an increasing academic interest in the ageing popular music audience more generally over the last twenty years (Bennett 2018). Bennett notes that:

> "the notion of, for example, the aging rocker or the aging punk has attracted significant sociological attention, not least of all because of what this says about the shifting socio-cultural significance of rock and punk and similar genres – which at the time of their emergence were inextricably tied to youth and vociferously marketed as "youth musics"" (2018: 49).

Rather than understanding such individuals as 'clinging onto their youth' or 'refusing to grow up', a cultural ageing perspective on this phenomena can serve to show instead that such youth cultural identities can "provide the basis of more stable and evolving identities over the life course" (Bennett 2018: 49). Informed by such an approach, and indeed this academic justification, there has been some consideration of the ageing punk (Bennett 2006, Bennett 2012, Bennett 2013). However, the very limited inclusion of older punk women in such research samples (discussed further in Chapter 2) means knowledge produced can be critiqued as being 'malestream' (Gurney 1997, Oakley 1998). Existing theoretical and conceptual understanding of punks fails then to consider the interaction between ageing, gender and subcultural affiliation and leaves various questions unanswered - what punk means to older punk women, the role punk plays in their everyday lives and their identification, how punk has intersected with their experiences of gender and ageing, and so forth. This thesis fills this academic gap by exploring older punk women's construction and maintenance of punk identities and is the first study to solely focus on this.

Punk is often viewed within the context of 1970s Britain, with the *Sex Pistols* 'Anarchy in the UK' playing in the background. Punk has been extensively written about outside of academia and continues to hold a public presence. This can be demonstrated, for example, by the celebration of 40 years of punk across London in 2016 (Fox 2016). However, the public's view of punk is probably a very narrow view of contemporary punk. This often revolves around the ideas of punk being at its height in the late 1970s, the band *Sex Pistols* representing the punk movement musically, and the attribution of a particular iconic punk 'look' (Perry 2018). From insiders' points of view, however, whilst punk involves first and foremost an affiliation to a particular style of music it can also involve particular ways of thinking as well (Clark 2003). Punk, for example, is most commonly associated in academia with a particular range of political viewpoints (notably anarchism or radicalism) (Cogan 2008, Dunn 2008, Simonelli 2002) as well as lifestyle preferences (the D.I.Y ethic in particular) (Dale 2010, Dunn 2008, Relles and Clemens 2018). However, a strict definition of punk was not adhered to at the start of my own research in order to recognise that punk can have subjective definitions, varying from one person to the next – this is particularly relevant when thinking about ageing punks and how their definition may change over time or be different to the definitions offered by those still in the 'youth' bracket. Therefore, part of the research presented here for the reader explores what the participants themselves saw punk to mean (this is the focus of Chapter 4).

Initial work by the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) conceptualised youth cultures, or subcultures, as bounded, homogenous groupings of committed youth (Hall and Jefferson 2006, Muggleton 2000) and this is where punk as a topic for academic enquiry really emerged (see Hebdige 1998).The CCCS' neo-Marxist framework understood these subcultures as "collective responses by post-war working class youth to their contradictory and subordinated position in post-war UK society" (Hodkinson 2016: 630) with such groups sharing behaviours, musical tastes and stylistics choices (Clark 2003). Whilst CCCS scholars claimed to emphasis agency, Sweetman (2013) notes that these subcultures were largely understood through a structural-functionalist analysis with (sub)cultures seen as responses to material/social conditions. Punk was subjected to a semiotic analysis with items worn by subcultural participants (such as safety pins) seen as a way of offering some resistance to mainstream culture/society (Hebdige 1998).

However such theorising on subcultures by the CCCS has received various criticisms. Firstly work by the CCCS received criticism initially for the absence of girls/women in its analysis (McRobbie with Garber 1991). Subcultural work since has endeavoured to consider the experiences of both genders across various subcultures - from work exploring gender in the metal subculture (Hill 2016, Nordström and Herz 2013, Vasan 2011) to that which considers women in hip-hop (Berggren 2014, Mohammed-baksh and Callison 2015, Muñoz-Laboy et al 2007). Secondly the concept of 'subculture' utilised by the CCCS has been critiqued as holding little relevance to current youth culture (Bennett 1999). Such critique has come from the development of post-subcultural approaches in which notions of fluidity, reflexivity and temporality are central (Muggleton 2000). Here discussions are located in the context of high or late modernity with identity being viewed as changeable and unstable (Giddens 1991), therefore having implications for the nature of 'subculture'. Debates concerning subculture and 'post-subculture' are well documented (see, for example, Hodkinson 2016) and discussions concerning the most relevant way(s) of conceptualising subcultures (including punk) continue. My belief is that such conceptualisations should be grounded in emic understandings rather than the more etic approach taken by, for example, the CCCS. The research presented here therefore contributes to these ongoing discussions concerning how to conceptualise subculture through the particular example of punk, focusing on the participants' conceptualisations. Related to this point, the CCCS' approach that only trained researchers could decode the meaning of subulturalists' style (Williams 2011) is problematic. Such an approach locates the researcher in a privileged position and is not grounded in the experiences of the individuals within the subcultures.

Hodkinson highlights how researchers have now started to explore ageing and youth cultures; contextualising (sub)cultural affiliation "within broader lives and biographies" (2016: 641). Examples cited include Holland's (2006) study of ageing 'alternative' women and Bennett's (2006) work on older punk men. Yet Hodkinson (2016) also notes that research on ageing and youth cultures is still in its infancy. The research presented here on older punk women therefore contributes to this developing area of research. In addition to this, as Schilt and Giffort (2012) note, there remains an absence of literature on women's subcultural participation when it comes to ageing (exceptions to this include Gregory 2009, Holland 2006 and Holland 2012) and I would argue that there has been very limited exploration of *gender,* age and subcultural affiliation. As

noted earlier, my research therefore fills this gap by providing ways of conceptualising the relationship between age, gender and subcultural affiliation.

My Personal Motivations

My commitment to being both reflexive and transparent leads me to introduce here the more personal motivations and reasons for this research which sit alongside the academic ones described above. My own personal punk journey started in my childhood, with bands such as *The Clash* featuring in my parents' vinyl collection and often being played by them. Accompanying this were the photos we were shown of my dad as a young punk; hair various colours, always stuck up tall, whilst his clothing fit the typical stereotypical look associated with British punk in the 70s and 80s – rips, safety pins, band t-shirts and leather jackets. As I began exploring music more in my early teens, I began developing my own collection (albeit it with tapes and CDs rather than vinyl) within which punk bands featured. At the age of 15 I began playing bass guitar in what became described by fans, gig promoters and music press as a punk band. Punk still holds significance in my life, whether this is through music I enjoy listening to or watching 'live' or the way I feel punk has shaped my outlook on everything. Just before I embarked on my PhD I was in my late twenties and becoming increasingly interested in how my relationship to and with punk seemed to be changing as I aged. And in turn I was interested in exploring the lived experiences of ageing punk women. The feminist values I hold are also important to my perusal of this research topic and there are ways feminism has shaped the research process behind this thesis, something I detail further in Chapter 3.

Research Overview

In total for this doctoral research I spoke with twenty-two older punk women through a mixture of semi-structured interviews and email interviews (further details of the sample are provided in Chapter 3). I begin the research process with four key themes that I wanted to explore in relation to older punk women: subcultural identification, ageing, embodiment and resistance. I saw an exploration of gender as inherent to all of these. Key questions behind this thesis arsing from the four key themes were:

- What does punk mean for post-youth punk women? How do these women enact a punk identity? How does their punk identity interact with other identities they

hold? How do they articulate punk as still significant in their lives? Do they encounter any barriers or limitations on this articulation?

- How is 'being' and 'doing' punk negotiated alongside the experience of age/ageing? How is it managed with regards to societal expectations concerning (ageing) women? What relationship has their punk identity played with life events significant to these women? How is the body used in the construction of a punk identity and how do these women respond to the ageing body?

- In the context of post-youth punk women, is the subcultural concept of 'resistance' still relevant and if so, what form does this take? Does resistance play a role of these women's lives? How is such resistance articulated? Does resistance take different forms? How does resistance interact with issues regarding ageing and femininity?

It is worth noting here that my research initially utilised the expression 'post-youth' in order to distinguish from the punk youth research had predominantly focused on and at the same time avoid any offense the term 'older' might cause. My sampling method (as I will outline in Chapter 3) avoided either expression, instead specifying a minimum age. I did, however, use both 'post-youth', 'older' and also 'ageing' as expressions within interviews with participants to gauge which term sat best with them. There was no challenging of my use of 'older' and 'ageing', yet the 'post-youth' expression caused some laughter amongst participants. I decided from there I would have 'older' punk women as the predominant phrasing in the write-up of my research but that all three could be used interchangeably.

Chapter Outline

Chapter 2 presents a review of relevant empirical and theoretical literature, highlighting the ways subcultures more broadly have been theorised before looking at how subcultural scholarship has been dealing with incorporating age into its theorising. Further to this attention will be given to literature surrounding gender, ageing and the body, and the complexities around the concept/theme of resistance. I situate my research within the growing body of post-youth subcultural work and identify how there has been no in-depth exploration of older punk women academically prior to my research, therefore demonstrating the contribution to knowledge my thesis makes. I

highlight how there has been limited research which brings together ageing, gender and resistance within a subculture and how some existing conceptualisations of resistance more broadly have been problematic. The concept of career is critically explored and the relevance of this in understanding ageing subculturalists noted. I finish this chapter by looking at the 'bringing in' of the body and the tendencies of subcultural studies which have a limited scope of exploration.

Chapter 3 provides a detailed outlining of the inductive, feminist methodology which underpinned my research and a reflexive consideration of the methods and sampling employed. I detail the suitability of an inductive approach for exploring older women's construction and maintenance of punk identities and justify my thesis as a piece of feminist research and myself as a feminist researcher. Justification for this will be outlined in terms of the particular values underpinning my research and the way I approached the research process. I argue that, despite criticisms aimed at qualitative methods, the quality of my thesis can be justified by my engagement with Peshkin's (1993) and Tracy's (2010) criteria for doing quality qualitative research. I highlight ethical considerations in the context of this research. In offering a reflexive account I will also in Chapter 3 reflect on some methods that did not go to plan.

From here the thesis moves into five data chapters. Chapter 4 begins by considering my research participants' subjective meanings around what punk is and establishes a common core set of values they perceived to be punk: subversion, DIY, community and political consciousness. I begin to introduce here the idea of punk as both processual and relational through an exploration of how definitions of punk changed over time and the importance of understanding punk through what punk was not. This idea of punk as processual sits with the proposal of understanding punk through the concept of career and this will be something developed further in the next couple of chapters.

Chapter 5 moves into one way of 'doing' punk that participants highlighted – dress. Discussion will look at initial entry into punk and impact on dress, the role of dress for participants presently, and the use of punk cues. This chapter continues my argument for needing to understand punk as processual/relational. I explore the participants' appropriation of objects into their punk dress, drawing attention to how this did not operate in the same class-based framework as identified by the CCCS (Williams 2011). The chapter demonstrates how the relationship between 'being' punk and dress was not homogenous, nor static, for my research participants, with reflexive consideration given to their choices. Here attention is given to the interplay of agency and structure.

Chapter 6 and 7 further consider ways of 'doing' punk – music and gigs respectively. Chapter 6 reflects on music in the context of initial entry into punk as well as 'now' and highlights how it is not merely about the *listening to* music. It explores ways music is constructed to retain significance for the women I spoke with. Music's key role in most of the sample's exposure to, and arguably subsequent entry, into punk and the part emotional responses played are discussed. The gendered nature of how my participants were exposed to punk music will be discussed in the context of understanding punk careers as gendered. Such a discussion speaks too of the structural constraints felt by the women I spoke with.

Chapter 7 focuses on gigs – motivators; barriers to attendance; gig positioning; alcohol consumption and gig etiquette. This chapter highlights how the women were not 'aged out of venues' as Fonarow (1997) suggests. Social dynamics is identified as the main motivator for gig attendance but the chapter illustrates how attendance was often complex, with a process of weighing up push/pull factors suggested by my participants. Relationships between the core punk values held by the women I spoke with and their gig attendance emerge and again a negotiation of structural constraints is seen.

The last data chapter, Chapter 8, focuses on ageing, adulthood and punk. Here I look at societal expectations concerning age and gender, the concept of adulthood and discuss employment as a marker for adulthood. The value of taking a social constructionist approach to ageing is highlighted. In this chapter I consider also the subversion some of the women engaged in and the importance of seeing such things in the personal and 'everyday'. The findings discussed contribute to my ongoing argument that punk is relational though an exploration of the women's awareness of societal expectations. In this chapter I present three identity categories (part of the punk careers) and two strategies for 'successful' punk ageing.

The thesis finishes with the concluding Chapter 9 which draws out the key findings of this research and presents a working model concerning the punk careers of older punk women. I reflect upon the limitations of this thesis, consider its implications, and suggest future areas for research.

Chapter 2: "All Girls to the Front!"?:
a review of empirical and theoretical literature

Introduction

As noted in Chapter 1, punk has traditionally been theorised within cultural studies and sociology as a male-dominated subculture within which women are marginalized (Leblanc 2002). This idea of punk as a male-dominated subculture may have been merely reinforced through the publication of work focusing either exclusively on male punks (Hebdige 1998, Bennett 2006) or looking at groups of punk which feature a disproportionate number of women compared to men (Baron 1989, Bennett 2013) – both of which perpetuate the notion of male dominance or the male punk as norm. Punk has additionally been commonly theorised as a 'youth' subculture (Hebdige 1998) but this has begun to change with research on older punk fans within the wider context of 'post-youth' subcultural work emerging (Bennett 2006, Bennett and Hodkinson 2012, Bennett 2018). This critical review sets out the context for my research via a consideration of gaps in relevant literature. This chapter will begin by looking at 'resistance', a concept which runs through the key areas of ageing, gender and subculture that this research considers. I will explore critically some key existing conceptualisations of resistance and set up discussion which will continue within the other substantive areas of this literature review. Next I consider literature on gender and subcultures more broadly before specifically looking at the, somewhat limited, existing research on female punks and then giving attention to the continuing subculture/post-subculture debate. Problems with the term 'subculture' are highlighted, and the level to which this and some of the alternative terms that have been offered are capable of taking age and ageing into consideration. Thought then turns to existing research which concerns itself with older punks, picking up on Andes' (2002) use of the concept of 'career' and situating this in its original use by those such as Becker (1966) and Goffman (1961). From here, gender and ageing will be considered, acknowledging the relevance of perspectives on ageing and on the body to the research.

Resistance

'Resistance' has held an important part in subcultural scholarship since early CCCS work (Haenfler 2004) and, is also a significant area for discussion in relation to the area of gender, by feminist theorists, and in relation to the area of ageing. Resistance, then, retains a significant role in scholarship concerning three key themes in which this research sits – ageing, gender and subculture. Whilst it is not entirely always possible (or indeed necessary) to clearly separate out these discussions of resistance in these three ways, I will start here by considering resistance as a concept which has been drawn upon by subcultural theorists and whilst moving through this discussion the relevance of resistance to the study of age and gender will also emerge.

The concept of resistance in subcultural theory is synonymous with 'counter-hegemony' according to Williams (2011) and this owes much to the early subcultural work by the CCCS. The common explanation of subcultures amongst the CCCS came from Clarke et al (1976) who argued that such groupings could only be understood in relation to the cultures of which they were a sub-set. The post-war working-class subcultures were, therefore, sub-sets of a subordinate working-class 'parent' culture which in turn was a sub-set of a 'hegemonic' dominant culture (Clarke et al 1976). Whilst subcultures were distinctive (e.g. in terms of certain activities, values and use of material artefacts), Clarke et al stated "there must also be significant things which bind and articulate them with the 'parent' culture" (1976: 7). Across work by members of the CCCS, resistance was often conceptualised as stylistic (demonstrated through clothing and behaviour, for example) but also illusory, or 'magical', failing to really produce any change in relation to the dominant class-based culture it sought to oppose (Brake 1985, Clarke et al 1976, Hebdige 1998). As Clarke et al noted:

> "...their highly ritualised and stylised form suggests that they were also
> *attempts at a solution*...a resolution which, because pitched largely at the
> symbolic level, was fated to fail" (1976: 35).

Resistance as conceptualised in work by the CCCS (e.g. Hall and Jefferson 2006, Hebdige 1998) was therefore seen as the challenging of hegemony through the appropriation of mainstream cultural material (Williams 2011). The CCCS have drawn critique for ignoring participants' subjectivity (Haenfler 2004), something which Leblanc's (2002) work on female punks counteracts by recognising resistance as

including both subjective and objective components. Because of the exclusion of girls in analysis (McRobbie 1991) and the focus on class, it can also be said that the CCCS' conceptualisation of resistance is unable to consider gender and its relationship to/role in resistance. Work by the CCCS on subcultural resistance has additionally been criticised more broadly for the way they define resistance (Haenfler 2004) - a critique which has been aimed also at academic work on power and resistance more generally (Weitz 2001) and will be discussed further below.

Reviewing literature on resistance from various disciplines, Hollander and Einwohner (2004) pinpointed that core elements of resistance commonly included opposition and action. However they also note a disagreement amongst scholars concerning whether resistance must be intentional and/or recognised (Hollander and Einwohner 2004). Similarly Weitz (2001) notes that due to resistance remaining a loosely defined term, some will define actions as resistance only if there is some impact, whilst others focus on an action's intent and whether that action is to reject subordination. Both definitions, says Weitz, are problematic and she instead offers a narrower definition of resistance as "actions that not only reject subordination but do so by *challenging the ideologies that support that subordination*" (2001: 670). Based on his ethnographic research with straight-edgers Haenfler (2004) concludes that whilst resistance can be broadly defined as 'political behaviour' participants held both individual and collective meanings of resistance; expressed resistance via personal and political methods; and consciously enacted it at macro, meso and micro levels (Haenfler 2004). From this it is evident that resistance is far more complex than envisioned by the CCCS – take, for example, the way Haenfler (2004) found resistance emerging against other subcultures and even those within the same subculture and not just against a mainstream/'parent' culture (see also Leblanc 2002). Haenfler (2004) highlights, too, the importance of everyday acts of resistance which Weitz (2001) argues have been pushed to the margins in sociological studies of power and resistance by the focus on explicitly political acts. But as Weitz notes resistance (and accommodation) "lie buried in everyday activities" (2001: 667) and therefore a focus on the purely political fails to offer deeper understanding. As noted too by Widdicombe and Wooffitt in their consideration of youth cultures, "oppositional narratives do not [necessarily] invoke radical activities or public displays of resistance; rather, they are fashioned around the routine, the personal and the everyday" (1995: 204). Feminist theorising offers further consideration on how to define resistance whilst again highlighting the need to consider the everyday. Munro

(1999), for example, questions what she understands as a 'traditional' conceptualisation of resistance, one in which resistance in defined through a patriarchal understanding of power which highlights the political/public and excludes women's forms of resistance. Munro argues that this:

> "...reflects my concern with not wanting to reproduce notions of the
> individual and change based on a masculinist narrative that romanticizes
> women's lives by merely recounting great deeds performed by women.
> Such exemplary narratives cloak the often silent and hidden operations of
> gender and leave untouched traditional assumptions about the very nature
> and categories of resistance and gender – rather than asking us to reconceive
> of these" (1999: 430)

Again, the importance of that which is personal and everyday rather than merely political and 'exemplary' is highlighted whilst adding a feminist critique of dominant understandings of resistance.

In discussions of resistance it is also important to give attention to the concept of 'accommodation'. This Weitz defines as ""actions that accept subordination, by either adopting or simply not challenging the ideologies that support subordination" (2001: 670). In relation to resistance, Weitz notes that it is wrong to see this and accommodation as polar opposites, instead being "coexisting variables" (2001: 670). An understanding of their interplay is therefore important (Weitz 2001). In her research on women and their hair, Weitz (2001) argues that it was possible to gain a more nuanced and richer understanding of social life by considering accommodation and resistance in such a way. This appreciation of how accommodation and resistance can coexist has also been highlighted in work on female bodybuilders. Richardson (2008) notes how much existing academic literature on female bodybuilding has situated this act as feminist resistance to traditional ideas of femininity, challenging the assumed stable sex/gender continuum. Yet St. Martin and Gavey (1996) highlight how female bodybuilding can involve resistance to traditional ideas of femininity whilst simultaneously accommodating them – the way, for example, the bodybuilders offered a challenge to the essentialist idea that men are physically strong yet spent time and effort on their hair before shows which would be something traditionally associated with femininity. This further demonstrates the danger of seeing resistance and accommodation as polar opposites and begins to consider resistance as something which

is relational, something which is an "ongoing process[es] rather than [...] static" (Emirbayer 1997: 289).

Amongst the plethora of academic literature from organizational studies which considers resistance (e.g. Ashcraft 2005, Ezzamel et al 2001, Mumby 2005, Wieland 2011) there too is work towards conceptualising resistance as relational (Hughes 2005, Wilhoit and Kisselburgh 2017). In their study of bicycle commuting in the American mid-west, Wilhoit and Kisselburgh found resistance to have a relational ontology:

> "[The] bike commuters were not motivated to bike to work because they wanted to defy power. Rather, their actions came to communicate resistance as they existed in contrast to dominant practices. Through this association, certain activities can be made to speak as resistance and others as power" (2017: 2).

The authors highlight their conceptualisation of resistance as different to that found within other organizational studies because of the way the latter sees resistance as conscious and intended (Wilhoit and Kisselburgh 2017). Instead Wilhoit and Kisselburgh (2017), as they openly acknowledge, look at 'externally defined resistance' – resistance which is identified by them the researchers and not known to the individuals comprising the research sample. This, however, is problematic and evokes the same critique made in Chapter 1 of the CCCS concerning the privileged position afforded to the researcher(s) (Williams 2011).

The complexities involved in conceptualising resistance are also highlighted in the context of ageing, gender and the body by Twigg (2004). Twigg (2004) highlights some of the different ways of approaching resistance, bearing in mind different approaches to understanding gender, ageing and the body, and the complexities which arise from these. If one is to take the social constructionist (and some feminists') suggestion that there is no natural body and therefore no natural way to age, Twigg (2004) demonstrates how this makes the idea of resistance complicated and often contradictory – if there is no natural way to age then how can we resist that? In addition Twigg (2004) sees postmodern conceptualisation of resistance as difficult due to its focus on agency and choice which might not be options for everyone and ignores structural constraints. Mask of ageing theories, for example, which see people trying to mask the ageing process (Woodward 1991), may be guilty of such ignorance. Ballard et al (2005) also question the mask metaphor which has been employed in relation to ageing. Their interviews with women in their fifties revealed that these women perceived physical, visible ageing

as irreversible indicators of ageing – this felt irreversibility deterred them from participating in age-resistance (e.g. physically altering their appearance) (Ballard et al 2005). This research concluded that most women in their fifties wanted to project a socially acceptable image that reflected their subjective sense of growing old (Ballard et al 2005). This again questions the making of the ageing process argued by Woodward (1991) and research which has seen bodily or physical ageing as masking one's inner identity (Featherstone and Hepworth 1989, 1991).

Currently there is no academic literature which specifically considers resistance in the context of ageing or older punk women and bar Leblanc's (2002) work, which is discussed below, academic insight into punk girl's/women's resistance has been limited. In research by Baron (1989) resistance amongst female and male punks is highlighted with female participation being observed to be less 'severe' than the males. Baron (1989) explains that what the subculture serves to provide for female and male participants differs - this then translates into differing resistance. For males, because of the decline in manual work, the punk subculture can provide an alternative source of status (Baron 1989). For females, however, who are not experiencing this decline in employment opportunities the punk subculture operates as a social vehicle (Baron 1989). This difference is further exacerbated by the greater parental supervision experienced by the females (Baron 1989). I would argue, however, that this is a rather simplistic consideration of resistance and gender (differences) which in part reflects Baron's (1989) (problematic) conceptualisation of subculture in terms very much like those of the CCCS with more power being given to the more visible acts of resistance. A key focus and issue for Leblanc (2002) in her study of punk girls/women is that of 'resistance'. It is understandable why this concept would be a driving force behind her research because of the importance given to resistance in existing subcultural work (as discussed above). I would also argue that it seems logical to consider resistance in a study of female participants within a male-dominated/masculine subculture given that their motivations for participating might automatically be deemed as gender resistance. The conclusion from this research is that these 'punk girls' (author's phrasing) engage in strategies of resistance which arise from the conflicting expectations concerning femininity (from mainstream 'non punks' and also from male punks) that they experience due to their gender (Leblanc 2002) - this results in the 'girls' constructing their gender to actively resist both of these expectations. There is the critique that the driving force behind Leblanc's (2002) research is the concept of 'resistance' and this

might act as somewhat of an epistemological straitjacket. Whilst research on punk and subcultures more broadly has often pursued this issue (see above), such a focus might potentially limit the exploration of other relevant issues, particularly when the concept of resistance in relation to punk is often conceptually framed through 'youth' (Hebdige 1998) as is the case more broadly in subcultural literature (Wilson 2002). Additionally, Leblanc's (2002) limited inclusion of participants over the age of thirty means resistance, whilst framed in terms of gender, lacks any consideration of the impact or role of age. Despite the issues with the concept of resistance identified this is still something I consider in my own research though this is pursued from more of an emic perspective than an etic one.

Gender and Subculture

In the critique of the CCCS located in Chapter 1 I highlighted the criticism the centre received for the absence of girls and women in its analysis. As I have noted above, this could have consequences in terms of how resistance was conceptualised and envisioned, namely it may result in being gender-blind. Through a feminist re-reading of the work of Willis (1977) and Hebdige (1998), McRobbie (1991) argues that such pieces structurally excluded women through their concepts, adhered to patriarchal meanings in their analysis, and failed to explore sexual divisions (even as they played out in the studies themselves). In early work concerning girls and subcultures McRobbie (1991) sought to move away from the almost exclusive interest in boys found in such 'classic' work of the BCCCS (e.g. Taylor, Walton, & Young, 1973; Willis, 1977). It can be argued that this interest in boys (in turn decreeing invisibility of girls) was not reflective of girls' actual non-presence. Girls were present but perhaps compared to their male counterparts their subcultural involvement was different in form and arguably, where present, their subordination was retained and reproduced (McRobbie with Garber, 1991). Moving away from the classic conceptualisation of subculture as oppositional or creative can be a way of recognising that girls have alternative ways of organising their cultural life which may offer them different possibilities for resistance (McRobbie with Garber, 1991).

Walby's (1989) concept of private patriarchy is relevant here. Private patriarchy is a type of patriarchy which "is based upon the relative exclusion of women from arenas of social life apart from the household" (Walby 1989: 228). This notion of private

patriarchy emerges through McRobbie and Garber's (1991) work on girls and subcultures in which they suggest young pre-teen girls have less access to public freedom than their brothers and therefore create bedroom cultures rather than participating in street cultures outside of the home. The second type of patriarchy identified by Walby is public patriarchy which "does not exclude women from certain sites, but rather subordinates women in all of them" (1989: 228). This happens through six different structures of patriarchy, one of which is patriarchal culture (Walby 1989). Patriarchal culture concerns the way "discourses on femininity and masculinity are institutionalised in all sites of social life [...] which have cultural production as a central goal" (Walby 1989: 227). This links to the way punk has typically been conceptualised as a masculine subculture (Leblanc 2002) which may make punk less appealing or even accessible to girls/women. Attention will now turn to academic consideration of female punks.

Female Punks – Playing A-Minor?

There has been an increased focus on females within subcultural literature more broadly since the critique made above, including research on girls/women in Goth (Brill 2007), metal (Hill 2016), hip-hop (Vasan 2011), rave (Pini 2001) and skateboarding (Pomerantz et al 2004). Despite this, research on punks predominantly focuses on males (e.g. Bennett 2006) or disproportionate number of females will be included as part of a wider generalised sample (Andes 2002, Baron 1989, Bennett 2013). There is also a lack of literature on post-youth punk women with research focusing predominantly on punk girls/women in their teen years or twenties (see the discussion below). With these two issues in mind, then, it could be said ageing/older punk women experience double invisibility within punk academia. Bar some exceptions discussed below, there is still a lack of empirical research focusing solely on female punks' voices and as yet, there is none which considers solely older/post-youth punk women and their experiences. Literature concerning female punks has tended to revolve around three broad areas – female punk musicians (Berker 2012, Cohen 2001, Denim 1977, Kennedy 2002, Reddington 2007), females punks as a minority within a male-dominated subculture (Griffin 2012, Leblanc 2002, Roman 1988), and females in relation to riot grrrl (which could be conceptualised as an offshoot of punk) (Davis 2001, Monem 2007, Piano 2003).

As shown in a 1977 issue of *Spare Rib* women were active participants in the emerging UK punk scene whether as musicians (for example Patti Smith, Siouxsee Sioux, Gaye Advert, Debbie Harry, Poly-styrene, The Slits) or as part of band management teams and so forth (Denim 1977) and this is supported by recent work by Reddington (2007). Where attention has been given to female musicians the justification for doing so tends to be because of their previous marginalization and invisibility within the history of punk (for example Reddington 2007). This relates to the aforementioned idea of punk females existing within a male-dominated subculture. Another approach has been to consider female punk musicians in relation to performance and gender which might include Cohen's (2001) discussion of popular music (more broadly), gender and sexuality; Berkers' (2012) work on female punk performers in the Netherlands (1976-1982) and the performance of femininities; or Kennedy's (2002) examination of the punk performer Joan Jett within the context of female masculinity. It could be argued that there has been more focus on women punk musicians rather than women punks per say, because of the increased visibility of the former. This could be a criticism of existing academic work concerning punk women in that women punks have most commonly be seen through their participation in the more visible aspects of the scene (playing in a band), ignoring those who support the music for example. My research, however, focuses on non-musicians. This is not to say that there are no musicians in my research sample, rather, the primary criteria for involvement in the research was self-identification as a punk, rather than as a punk musician.

Where academia does focus on female punks rather than female punk musicians, the attention is usually framed by the fact these punks/punk musicians are seen as a minority within a masculine subculture (in terms of males participants out-numbering females and punk being seen to rest upon particular notions of masculinity) (Griffin 2012, Leblanc 2002, Roman 1988). The most notable piece of work which considers punk females comes from Leblanc (2002) whose research considers how these individuals negotiated gender within a subculture which is typically, as noted above, coded as male (in terms of the themes, behaviours and so forth).

As discussed at the start of this chapter, a key issue for Leblanc (2002) is the place of resistance in female punks' lives with the conclusion being that 'punk girls' (author's phrasing) construct their gender to actively resist conflicting expectations concerning femininity (from mainstream 'non punks' and also from male punks) (Leblanc 2002). Leblanc (2002) argues the punk subculture is masculinist and that this can be seen in

several ways - first this is apparent in a quantitative sense, with numbers of male punks being significantly higher when compared to numbers of females, and secondly, the codes/norms of punk are heavily masculine. Thirdly, as found in her study, male dominance occurs through male punks' expectations of and interactions with female punks – through things such as abuse, chivalry and sexual pressures – all of which involve contradictions being placed on the punk girls (Leblanc 2002). Exploring how punk males' relations with punk girls construct the masculinism of the punk subculture in these ways allowed Leblanc (2002) to see how this in turn affected the punk girls' constructions of femininity and punk identities (the main aim of her research). Her findings demonstrated that punk girls challenged dominant, or mainstream, culture by identifying as punk and additionally challenged the masculine norms of the punk subculture by combining discourses of femininity with those of punk – they adopted established, masculine punk style yet juxtaposed this with feminine aspects in both their style and behaviour (Leblanc 2002). Whilst these findings shed a light on the construction of femininity and resistance amongst punk women, it would be interesting to explore such ideas further with the added aspect of age/ageing – something which Leblanc (2002) failed to consider.

Leblanc (2002) does speak to exposure and entry into punk and the subsequent process of learning which offers something in way of a temporal consideration though this is fairly limited. Participants' initial entry into punk being facilitated by the media, friends and family is noted (with parents' role in this highlighted as a rare exception), along with punk girls' involvement in other subcultures prior to punk and the importance amongst participants of always having felt 'different' (Leblanc 2002). Punk's attractiveness was understood by the participants as due to its rebellious quality (against their parents) and its rejection of mainstream culture; through their attraction to punk's lifestyle, music and style; a felt affinity with punk's political ideologies; or their desire to seek out an alternative source of support and/or status (Leblanc 2002). Identifying with punk overall "required both an attenuation of their commitment to mainstream institutions [...] and their belief in mainstream values and norms [...], and a subsequence commitment to subcultural style [...] and ideology (Leblanc 2002: 88). Entry into the punk subculture initiated a learning process through which punk girls' commitment (e.g. to punk ideas and values) deepened and interest in 'superficial' aspects lessened (Leblanc 2002). However this learning process is not unpicked by Leblanc (2002) or

explored further. Again this is where a more temporal analysis of those who identify as punk, particularly women, would benefit.

Whilst Leblanc's (2002), research does in part fulfil its aim to give these female punks 'a voice', there are still limitations and gaps, then, where subsequent research could delve. I have highlighted the issue concerning Leblanc's (2002) focus on resistance already. In addition to this Leblanc (2002) focuses on those she terms 'punk girls' and this is reflected in the demography of her sample with only two participants out of forty being aged thirty years and above. Therefore, as argued above, there is limited scope for considering the relationships between punk, gender *and* ageing.

Space has also been considered in research focusing specifically on female punks (Griffin 2012, Roman 1988). To date, Griffin's (2012) is the only known study which includes UK participants. Applying geographical theories about gender roles and performing gender, Griffin (2012) focuses on the context of a local UK 'do it yourself' (DIY) punk scene finding that the space was made less inclusive for women due to a reinforcement of the public versus private gendered dichotomy (with males being the public musicians, promoters/organisers) and the importance given to masculine body performances (e.g. through dancing). The research is underpinned by an auto-ethnographic approach and there is little reflection of participants' feelings and perceptions within the study; something at odds with the approach in my research and something which limits theorising. My research focuses on how older punk women 'be' and 'do' punk, something that would be impossible to explore without a consideration of these women's feelings and perceptions. Otherwise the danger is that theorising falls into the same trap of putting the researcher in a privileged position capable of 'reading' participants' true intentions as seen with the CCCS (Williams 2011).

Straight—edge (sXe) can be seen as a subgenre of punk and therefore relevant to my research. sXe emerged in U.S.A in the 1980s from the existing East Coast punk subculture as a response to punk's often nihilistic ways (Haenfler 2004). It advocated a "'clean-living' ideology, abstaining from alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs, and promiscuous sex" (Haenfler 2004: 409). There has been some academic consideration given to women within sXe (Haenfler 2006, Mullaney 2007) which supports the proposition that women within punk can be subjected to particular expectations or treatment because of their gender. Haenfler (2006) found that though sXe women felt pressure within the scene not to look mainstream (for example, by wearing make-up) they were still having to fulfil certain subcultural gender expectations and subjected to

more scrutiny than sXe males. Mullaney (2007) considers gender within what is considered the third, most recent, wave of sXe – which is argued to have moved away from the masculinised first and second waves to instead promote a gender-progressive image. However, this was not found to be the case in interviews carried out by Mullany (2007). Instead, men were seen as more capable of doing key elements which the sXe identity relied on - namely 'doing hardness' and the 'non-doings of control' abstinence (Mullaney 2007). As Haenfler (2006) found, women within the straight-edge scene who were interviewed felt their motivations for being sXe were under more scrutiny by other sXe members (particularly men) and respondents of both gender seemed to equate sXe men with lifelong commitment whereas for women it was seen more as a phase (Mullaney 2007). From existing research concerning gender within sXe, then, it can be seen that women's presence within this subculture does not mean their experience will mirror that of sXe men. Unequal gender relations are still maintained. Whilst the research outlined above considers interplay between sXe and gender, there is no analysis as yet of how age intersects with these elements.

The last common theme which emerged from existing literature is the consideration of females and punk in the context of riot grrrl[1]. There is a growing body of literature which focuses on riot grrrl (see for example Monem 2007 and others cited in this section). As it is seen as a subgenre or off-shoot of punk (like sXe) it is relevant to my own research. As noted earlier punk is often considered a male-dominated subculture. Whether in show attendance numbers or in band participation, punk women have themselves said they continue to feel under-represented in punk (Davis 2001). Downes points out that despite punk initially appearing to offer women a space for subcultural resistance, "punk women's resistance was constrained by hegemonic gender relations that leaked into punk subcultures" (2012: 208). Such feelings may have contributed to the emergence of the riot grrrl movement. Some argue that the feminist-indebted riot grrrl movement helped women to counteract the subordination they felt they experienced within both the punk subculture and mainstream culture/society (Downes 2012, Dunn and Farnsworth 2012, Rosenberg and Garofalo 1998) – it gave them the opportunity to be musicians, express themselves through 'zines and use DIY as a feminist tool (Piano 2003).

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[1] Riot grrl is best defined as a 'feminist punk movement'.

Due to riot grrrl being another offshoot of punk, my sampling was open to the inclusion of 'older' riot grrrls. The nature of my sampling (detailed in Chapter 3) allowed for this as the definition of what counted as a punk woman was left open to subjective interpretation and not specified. Because of the explicit feminism underpinning riot grrrl I planned to consider them a sub-group within the overall sample which could of lent itself to an examination of any differences in findings between them and those who identified as specifically *punk* women (the same could also be said for any sXe participants). However, none of my research sample self-identified as riot grrrls or sXe.

'Alternative' Women
As highlighted above, Leblanc's (2002) research is of obvious significance to this thesis given its focus on punk women yet poses some limitations in terms of the absence of older participants in its sample. Beyond this, however, there is another key piece of literature which stands out in terms of being significant, despite not taking punk women as key focus, by Holland (2006). Holland's (2006) qualitative study of alternative femininities explored a sample of twenty women who identified as 'alternative'; their definitions and practices of femininity, and how the body, age and identity were interwoven in these. Holland (2006) focuses on being alternative in terms of appearance; women who dress 'differently' or in opposition to mainstream fashion/style. Though Holland (2006) acknowledges that her sample do not fit neatly into subcultures (according to how subcultures are often conceptualised), I argue that those who are punk (just as those who or goth, metal and so on) might too consider themselves 'alternative' more generally, therefore signifying an overlap with this thesis. Whilst femininity was not something my thesis set out to explicitly explore and though my focus also extended beyond just participants' appearance, Holland's (2006) consideration of ageing amongst her participants (who ranged in age from 27 to 48 years old) is particularly relevant. Her participants were aware of cultural and societal expectations concerning ageing women, the notion in particular that women are expected to 'dress down' as they get older, yet her research participants stressed that they were going to age 'differently' (Holland 2006). Despite this, the women in Holland's (2006) study were "increasingly aware of the limiting power of age categories" (152) and narratives concerning 'toning down' were common. This toning down was accompanied with the assertion of them still being the same alternative

person they had always been – being alternative was understood as a way of life (Holland 2006). Their overall sense of being alternative was therefore not impacted when life changes forced their commitment to their appearance to fluctuate with such changes seen as temporary (Holland 2006).

Whilst the common ground between my research and Holland's (2006) should be apparent from the detail above, there are some key differences as well as some gaps which this thesis fills. As previously stated, femininity is the key concept driving Holland's (2006) work with a focus on appearance and whilst this is something my research considers I go beyond a focus on appearance in looking at punk and what this means to women in terms of values as well as practices e.g. style. Rather than just looking at ageing in the context of being alternative, my focus is narrowed down to women who self-identified as punk – how might ageing as a punk woman then be different and/or similar to ageing as an 'alternative' woman? The next section will explore literature which focuses more so on ageing within specific subcultures after first exploring the shift from subculture to post-subculture.

Subculture to Post-Subculture

As Chapter 1 notes initial work by the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) conceptualised youth cultures, or subcultures, as bounded, homogenous groupings of committed youth (Hall and Jefferson 2006, Hebdige 1998). These groups of youth were viewed as sharing behaviours, musical tastes and stylistic choices (Clark 2003). However such theorising by the CCCS has been criticised. Chapter 1 drew attention to such critique, for example, the absence of girls/women in CCCS' empirical studies. The CCCS' conceptualisation of subculture has also been criticised for possessing limited relevance in understanding contemporary youth cultures, leading to the development of 'post-subcultural' approaches (e.g. Bennett and Kahn-Harris 2004). Weinzierl and Muggleton (2003) suggest that a post-subcultural approach is able to recognise the existence of complex stratification whereas the CCCS merely saw a subculture as existing in opposition to a 'parent culture'. A post-subcultural approach may therefore be particularly relevant when thinking about age and ageing subculturalists. Particularly as this 'parent culture' envisioned by the CCCS would literally involve adults (and parents) meaning it has limited applicability for when subculturalists themselves become adult and/or parents. There is, however, no explicit

mention of age or 'post-youth' participants by Weinzierl and Muggleton (2003), nor indeed that of gender.

In this post-subcultural context, alternative terms to describe the youth cultures existing from the 1990s onwards, such as 'tribes', 'neo-tribes', 'lifestyles' and 'scenes', have emerged. For example, Sweetman's (2004) work offers one attempt at offering an alternative theorising of youth cultures. Sweetman (2004) suggests approaching the increasingly fragmented nature of 'subculture' through bringing together Maffesoli's (1995) notion of neo-tribal sociality as well as ideas of reflexivity proposed by theorists such as Giddens (1984). Whilst both approaches would view shifts in society as causing a loss of secure ideological forms of identity, they propose different responses to this. With regards to reflexive approaches, this loss leads to a process of individualization in that rather than the "creative play" indulged in within a postmodern society, reflexivity is seen as an "attempt to ground one's identity in a coherent lifestyle that accords with the reflexive narrative one has chosen to adopt" (Sweetman 2004: 82). When a person adopts a subcultural style, therefore, they are not seen as expressing strong affiliations but an individualistic identity, giving outward substance to a particular narrative of self. However, Sweetman (2004) acknowledges that individuals can still come together in groups which provide them with a both a sense of group identification *and* individual identity. It is here Sweetman brings in the concept of 'neo-sociality' whereby instead of individualization one experiences 'disindividualization' where the self is lost into a collective subject (Maffesoli 1988 in Sweetman 2004). In a neo-tribe, rather than a commitment to particular (ideological) beliefs importance is placed on the members' shared feelings and experiences. Whilst particular behaviour or things might act as markers of group recognition and strengthen group ties, neo-tribes are viewed as "informal, dynamic, frequently temporary alliances" (Sweetman 2004: 86). Sweetman (2004) argues that this approach, therefore, has the strength of moving away from early semiotic subcultural work to instead considering what it is subculturalists (those partaking in a subculture or subcultures) actually do.

Sweetman (2004), therefore, responds to the changing nature of society and criticisms of CCCS conceptualisations of subculture by proposing two post-subcultural types of contemporary subculturalists. Sweetman offers the metaphorical types, 'travellers' and 'tourists', which allows one "to view certain contemporary 'subcultural' practices and formations as manifestations of both a reflexive process of identity-construction and of a resurgent sensuality or neo-tribal sociality" (2004: 89). So whereas the traveller

displays Gidden's (1984) concepts of individualization and reflexive consumers, seeking authenticity, the tourist embodies neo-tribalism and celebrates superficiality. As Sweetman illustrates "both groups inhabit the same metaphorical space, but where the tourist playfully celebrates, happily rummaging in the dressing-up-box of past subcultural styles, the traveller chooses a costume and sticks to it – at least for a short while" (2004: 91)

Whilst Sweetman might indeed be accounting for some shifts in society and the changing nature of identity, it is worth highlighting some gaps in Sweetman's (2004) theorisation of subcultural types. Firstly nothing is offered to clarify who partakes in which role and why – are they interchangeable for instance? Can someone be at one time a traveller and then another a tourist? This is one area which lacks full explanation. Secondly the *length* of the journey of those travelling is also something which is not considered fully, meaning such a concept may be inadequate for considering the issue of age/ageing, the relationship between this and the journeys, and perhaps even ignores the longevity of some subcultural members which research (outlined elsewhere in this chapter) suggests exists. Thirdly, and particularly significant in situating the significance of my own research, there is no consideration of gender by Sweetman (2004).

Whilst Sweetman (2004) offers an alternative approach to understanding contemporary subcultures such theorising of such groups as fluid and, at times, temporary may also be open to critique. Kahn-Harris (2004) refers to the extreme metal scene in arguing that subcultures can still involve high levels of membership commitment. In this particular example, members (women and men) ensured a balance between their non-scenic and scenic lives to ensure a stable, continuing scene and avoid the possibility of the extreme metal scene destroying itself through shifting to the spectacular nature of such subcultures identified by the CCCS (Kahn-Harris 2004). It might also be worth considering that such fluidity implies a plurality of choices available to individuals and this plurality of choice may not exist. In the case of ageing women, for example, choice might be constrained by age or gender. This does not appear to be fully examined in Sweetman's (2004) work and this neglect of structural constraints such as age/gender could be a criticism of approaches underpinned by postmodernist ideas. Gibson's (2012) ethnographic research on older rock music fans (women and men) in the UK, for example, also supports the argument that a post-subcultural approach might not be able to accommodate an examination of ageing subculturalists or consider age adequately.

This research considers the changing nature of older rock music fans' behaviour at gigs and concerts as they age. In particular, a focus is on how these fans' experiences of the ageing body shape their rock music subcultural involvement. The older rock fans changed their behaviour to reflect age appropriate discourses and the limitations of bodily ageing (for example in where they would stand at gigs) and whilst some still very much adopted a particular rock fan style, the majority appeared to have internalized their commitment as they aged and avoided dramatic displays of subcultural identification (Gibson 2012). Gibson (2012) concludes that this research appeared at first to support postmodern theories, such as the 'individualisation' thesis (Giddens 1984). However, it is also noted that elements shown (such as the restraint placed on the participants because of age/gender) suggests that postmodern theories fail to recognise the complexity of older music fans[2] (Gibson 2012), therefore some post-subcultural ideas may not be adequate in analysing this demographic.

A number of post-subcultural theorists, including Sweetman (2004), suggest approaching youth cultures using alternative concepts to 'subculture'. However, others are not as quick to dismiss the concept altogether. Hodkinson (2004) contributes to the future of subcultural theory in his ethnographic work on the goth scene in Britain (a study of women and men) but instead considers a *reworked* notion of subculture by focusing on what author terms 'cultural substance'. With goth Hodkinson (2004) found movement in and out of the subculture, variation in levels of commitment, the development of individual 'versions' of the goth style and a lack of shared participant meanings embedded within clothing/music/lifestyle practices. For these reasons, goth, Hodkinson (2004) argues, does not fit into the CCCS conceptualisation of subculture. There is also the difference in that the CCCS saw media marketing/packaging of a subculture only emerging after the subculture itself had emerged, but with the goth scene it was directly/positively constructed and facilitated by media/commerce (Hodkinson 2004). But as Hodkinson's (2004) ethnographic research suggested, goth additionally did not fit *post*-subcultural theorising of subculture and this is where the notion of 'cultural substance' emerges. Hodkinson defines cultural substance as "a relative quality that can be contrasted with cultural fluidity, and which might be identified primarily through evidence of group distinctiveness, identity, commitment

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[2] This particular piece of research utilises the term 'fan'. There is a greater discussion of fan culture as a related field to subcultural theory in Patrick Williams' (2011) *Subcultural Theory: Traditions and Concepts.*

and autonomy" (2004: 136). If a group has significant levels of cultural substance they will be, rather than characterised by movement and fluidity, relatively bounded and stable. Four indicators are utilised in assessing a group's level of cultural substance – consistent distinctiveness in groups' tastes/values; a strong sense of shared identity; a practical commitment among participants; and a significant degree of autonomy in the facilitation/operation of the group (Hodkinson 2004: 141-2). With 'cultural substance' Hodkinson (2004) hopes to suggest that the qualities implied by the traditional concept 'subculture' (of homogenous groups with distinct values and committed members) should be considered as relative, rather than essentialized qualities. This relates to Hodkinson reworking the concept of subculture through the concept of cultural substance rather than dismissing the term altogether. He notes that applying alternative post-subcultural concepts such as neo-tribe/scene/lifestyle to goth would be inaccurate as "the level of hetereogenity amongst the group was not comparable to the significant levels of (sub)cultural substance exhibited by the group in respect of the four indicators outlined" (Hodkinson 2004: 142-3). For example in terms of consistent distinctiveness in groups' tastes/values despite participants talk of 'individuality', observation showed that similarities and overlaps outweighed the more subtle differences (Hodkinson 2004). A strong sense of shared identity was demonstrated by the participants being very conscious of their group identity and a sense of belonging to the goth scene (Hodkinson 2004). In terms of practical commitment, on average participants displayed extremely high levels of practical immersion, shown in their socializing, consumer and media patterns and a number even combining goth participation with a career (Hodkinson 2004). Lastly, a significant degree of autonomy in the facilitation and operation of the group was evident in the way the goth group relied on operations and services run by themselves (Hodkinson 2004). Hodkinson's (2004) work perhaps then suggests that whilst the associated ideas with it may be reworked, there is perhaps no need to completely abandon the term subculture and that the increasingly fleeting nature of such groupings and their participants proposed by other theorists might be exaggerated. With regards to post-subcultural and postmodernist approaches, it has been said that their contribution to the subcultural/post-subcultural debate has often been grounded in theory, whilst lacking empirical studies (Greener and Hollands 2006). Hodkinson (2002) has also proposed that it is wrong to assume *one* theoretical approach might be utilised in explaining *all* youth cultures. Empirical work on psytrancers, for example, reveals elements of both the subcultural *and* post-subcultural approaches, suggesting

that such a stark dichotomy between the two may not exist (Greener and Hollands 2006).

Subculture = Youth Culture?

Up to this point, the movement away from the CCCS' conceptualisation of subculture has been considered in light of, amongst other factors, changes in wider contemporary society. Another problem with such earlier theorisation of subcultures lies in the emphasis on youth. Within subcultural theory and literature concerning youth cultures, there is an increasing awareness of subcultural members who fail to fit into the youth life stage and an emerging body of work concerning older/ageing subculturalists 'post-youth' (see Bennett and Hodkinson 2012's edited collection, for example). For the purpose of space and relevance, attention will be given mainly to that which focuses on post-youth punks though there will be some discussion of the discipline of fan studies and their contribution to theorising ageing after this. It is worth noting here that such post-youth work tends to consider those who 'retain' their involvement, suggesting that post-youth theory seems to be framed by the idea of continuing involvement in ageing participants and potentially ignores those who 'join' a subculture in middle or later life. Initial work on ageing punks suggested that scope for maintaining a successful punk identity as one ages is limited. In Andes' (2002) consideration of ageing punk women and men, it was argued that their punk identity ceases to be unless they can retain their subcultural involvement through a creative or organisation role e.g. gig promoter or record label owner. This is supported by Davis (2006) who examines the reasons for this taking place through four typologies of ageing punks and argues that this needs to take place so they do not 'stagnate'. However Bennett (2006) argues that older punks can maintain a punk identity through adulthood by modifying aesthetic/discursive practices, for example, engaging in a level of accommodation when it comes to the punk style and internalising 'punkness'. There are limitations with Bennett's (2006) work and such limitations may suggest gaps in the theorisation of older punks which my research fills. Bennett's (2006) sample comprises only of older punk men so an in-depth exploration of older punk women has yet to be considered. This might have had implications for the conclusions drawn from Bennett's (2006) research – would it have been the case, for example, that the older punk women would have also internalised their 'punkness' and no longer displayed it through a visual style once pertained in their youth? This focus on style by Bennett (2006) might also be seen as problematic and

ignores other areas of discussion, such as the interplay between 'being punk' and societal expectations of this demographic (employment, parenthood...). A discussion of expectations might be particularly interesting with older punk women if one believes they are subjected to greater societal expectations than men (or as Sontag 1972 notes, they experience a double standard in ageing). If it is the case as Bennett (2006) muses that older punk women may have now privatised their fandom and therefore no longer attend gigs, for instance, that would also be relevant to an exploration of how older punk women construct and maintain a punk identity.

Andes (2002), using qualitative data from participant observation and interviews with punk women/men, proposes a developmental model for understanding 'growing up punk'. This developmental model reflects the 'punk career' and is composed of four stages, each involving a consideration of how the individual defines themselves/punk, who the reference group are, associated behaviour and the core values held. For example, the first stage 'pre-disposition' involves a perception of themselves as different from 'normal others' (who are the reference group), defining punk as outside of standard youth categories but at this point does not self-define as a punk. Andes points out that it is not necessary for an individual to fulfil the requirements of each stage entirely but they "must pass through at least an awareness of changes in the definition of what constitutes a punk identity at each stage before he or she can progress to the next stage" (2002: 221). These stages are developmental. It does appear they are also grounded in chronological stages which may pose limitations. For example the pre-disposition is implicitly affiliated with younger individuals/youth – the reference group is peers/parents. These stages therefore may be unable to consider those that join the punk scene 'post-youth'. There is also the assumption in Andes' (2002) punk career that once an individual reaches stage three ('transcendence') – which would be later in life – the reference group moves from 'punk others' to the self, and there is typically a dissociation from the punk subculture, unless at a creative/organisational level (e.g. as a tour manager or record label owner). However, Holland's (2006) research on alternative women[3] suggests that 'others' still hold an important source of reference in the construction of identity as alternative women age and, as already noted, Bennett's (2006) work suggests ageing punks can continue their subcultural participation in ways aside from participating in a creative/organisational capacity. In addition to these points

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[3] Alternative women are those who consciously display an appearance which is seen as counter-culture e.g. piercings, tattoos, dyed hair or particular clothing.

as the interview data utilised by Andes (2002) comes from nine punks aged between the ages of eighteen and twenty-seven there is only a limited exploration of post-youth punks.

In a related area, Haenfler (2012) interviewed older straight edgers[4] (one woman and nine men) to explore their meaning of style as they aged. For most, straight edge (sXe) became "less of an embodied stylistic display and more of a personal philosophy or expression of lifestyle politics" (Haenfler 2012: 10). Still, there were 'periodic' and 'strategic' displays of straight edge affiliation to communicate their longevity in the scene, to set an example for younger members or to symbolise their continuing resistance to conventional norms (Haenfler 2012). In terms of style, only a minority of the sample consistently continued to boldly display a sXe identity and Haenfler (2012) suggests an internalization such as that found in work by Bennett (2006) and Andes (2002) with ageing punks. They therefore identified with the sXe subculture but this identification did not necessarily entail participation – sXe had become more personal and the research showed a variety of meanings the older straight edgers constructed around style (Haenfler 2012). They "re-emphasised individuality while honouring their roots, an individuality *professed* in their youth but *lived* in adulthood" (Haenfler 2012: 23). Haenfler (2012) demonstrates the ability of older subculturalists to create lives beyond the music scene, which again contradicts Andes' (2002) finding. These at times conflicting pieces of research coupled with the absence of an explicit examination of ageing female punks support the need for further exploration of older punk women.

In Bennett's (2006) work on older punks he advocates the use of 'scene' as a more useful concept than 'subculture' when considering post-youth participants and related to this is his use of the concept of 'lifestyle' (Bennett 2013) as proposed by Chaney (1996). Lifestyle is taken to mean "clusters of cultural practices, and attendant aesthetic sensibilities, within which reflexive identities are grounded" (Bennett 2013: 49). They draw upon commodities, images and texts which are widely available (for instance, this might include a punk record or CD) but may also "converge to the point where they form the basis for new forms of collective cultural identity" (Bennett 2013: 49). Scenes then enable this collective cultural identity through shared participation in material

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[4] Straight edgers are followers of 'straight edge' (sXe) which began as a musical subgenre of 1980s hard-core punk and, based on the band Minor Threat's lyrics to their song of the same name, promoted 'clean living' (no drugs, no alcohol) with some extending this to abstaining from promiscuous sex and adhering to a vegetarian/vegan lifestyle. As sXe is seen as a genre of punk it will be included in a discussion here of punk more broadly.

culture (Bennett 2013) – so, for example, this might include attending punk gigs or participating in an online punk forum. This concept may be useful then in understanding the variety of ways punks maintain their punkness and in particular, how post-youth punks might adapt how they 'do' punk as they age as suggested by Bennett (2006). However the concept 'scene', alongside 'subculture' and 'neo-tribe', has been criticised by Hesmondhalgh (2005) for its implicit link between popular music studies and youth; which might mean limited application to post-youth.

Post-youth cultural studies are underpinned by an approach to youth as, rather than a life stage, a state of mind (Bennett and Kahn-Harris 2004) which allows the inclusion of such participants in theorisation of 'youth' subcultures. This then recognises the on-going commitment into adulthood of some subculturalists for whom participation is often negotiated to work alongside adulthood and associated commitments (Bennett and Kahn-Harris 2004). This supports the general acceptance within the sociology of age that ageing, the process of growing up and growing old, is socially constructed (Phillipson 2013, O'Donnell 1985). However, it is not always made explicit within the discipline of post-youth cultural studies what perspective of ageing the research is being informed by. It could be assumed, given the rejection of youth as a fixed life stage, a life course approach is being utilised here. However, I would suggest that there is still a feeling of determinism as 'youth', despite it now being able to be accessed by those post-youth, is still ultimately being conceptualised as a particular time-based category. Hareven (1994) is most commonly linked to the concept of the life course and suggests that this approach does not just look at merely life stages, as in the earlier life cycle perspective, but how social actors experience the transitions between these different stages (Hareven and Adams 1982). This approach therefore recognises the variation that is disregarded by taking a life cycle approach and would be relevant in considering post-youth individuals participating in what was once assumed to be youth cultural activity. As previously mentioned, post-subcultural approaches have utilised late- and post-modern concepts but such perspectives might not be suitable for theorising post-youth subculturalists. There are some similarities between life course theory and late-post-modernist theories. For example, postmodernists would disagree with the notion proposed by a life cycle approach that in contemporary society people still progress through clearly distinguished life stages (Hunt 2005), a sentiment also shared by the life course approach (though they would see this as operating within a modern society). Therefore, within a postmodern approach, age stages are seen as blurred, with

traditional age stages declining in importance (Hunt 2005). An alternative argument is that society has not entered postmodernity but late, or high, modernity. For late or high modernists, the emphasis is on individualism and choice and as noted by Giddens (2001), the 'self' becomes a reflexive project. Such a degree of flexibility and choice ignores external constraints. But these are considerations which can be accommodated within a life course approach. This is important when considering post-youth subculturalists who, whilst on one hand could be seen as engaging in a reflexive project of self (constructing an identity once traditionally reserved for 'youth'), may have their choices constrained because of real and/or perceived implications of their age (see for example, Bennett 2006 or Gibson 2012). A similar idea is developed by Featherstone and Hepworth (1991) through the 'mask of ageing'. This is the suggestion of age as a mask, which hides inner feelings and beliefs, and supports the notion of the physicality of ageing impacting on the individual.

Moving away from subculture/post-subculture, there have been attempts to consider ageing and fandom from the discipline of fan studies. Lee Harrington and Bielby (2010) suggest approaching fandom via a life course perspective in order to better understand fandom in later life, as well as continuing (long-term) fandom. One approach they consider is utilising work by psychologist Erikson (1959) to consider the interrelationship between ageing and fandom (Lee Harrington and Bielby 2010). This would mean considering intimacy versus isolation (early adulthood), generativity versus stagnation (mid adulthood) and integrity versus despair (later life). They note studies which already invoke such concepts – for example, the aforementioned Bennett's (2006) work on older punk fans (there is also evidence of these ideas in Andes' (2002) punk career). A life course perspective to fandom would include a consideration of age norms, for example, and the impact of these on older fans; the importance of age role modelling; and changing fan objects (as time changes, so do these). An approach such as this may be valuable in moving away from theorising older fandom merely as an extension of the fandom people begin in their youth. This is similar to the move away from theories which propose older subcultual members as clinging onto their youth, or refusing to 'grow up' (as perhaps seen in Anderson's (2012) ethnographic research on adult female Duran Duran fans, where their continuing involvement is linked to a view of them reclaiming their youth for a sense of 'euphoric empowerment'). Support of the importance of fandom amongst older individuals is offered by Lee Harrington et al (2011) who argue that in the context of contemporary society, media fandom may

actually offer the 'emotional anchoring' for these fans to help them in dealing with the nature of ageing in the twenty-first century which could be understood as confusing, fragmented and unstable. Whilst work on ageing and fandom might appear to be of relevance to my research, care must be taken when considering the underpinning ideas of some such work. Reference to Erikson (1959), known for his life cycle framework, can be seen as problematic since theorising about ageing, as I have already noted, has moved away from such an approach . The life cycle approach was grounded in biology and developmental psychology and Hunt states that simply this approach "can be reduced to a developmental model or models which outline the social and psychological change encountered as a person passes through the major 'stages' of life" (2005: 10). Here ageing is predominantly a universal biological process with these biological stages linked to psychological repercussions (Hunt 2005). Such an approach has been criticised on a number of issues. The concept of the life cycle ignores variation in ageing experiences, for example, and places emphasis on age as a means of social stratification at a risk of ignoring other factors in this such as class, gender or ethnicity (Hunt 2005). The assumption of universal developmental stages is also problematic and can be critiqued using the body of research from post-youth cultural studies.

Career

As highlighted above, there has been debate concerning the best way to conceptually and theoretically understand subcultural affiliation/involvement and ageing. Literature cited above demonstrates contributions from postmodern theorists and the life course approach, for example. Andes' (2002) research on punks, which was also described, offers the concept of career as another route to understanding continued involvement in a punk subculture. The concept of 'career' has a long history within sociology (Thomas 2003) and despite its origins in literature from Hughes (1937) concerning occupations/work, this concept has been more fully developed in Becker's (1966) work on deviance and Goffman's (1961) research on mental illness. As 'career' is commonly used to explain the relationship between an individual and 'an institution, practice or process' (Thomas 2003). Reflecting on aspects of Goffman's (1961) and Becker's (1966) conceptualisations of career leads Thomas to offer the following definition: "[career] focuses on the changes in a person's definition of the situation over time, together with the timing of factors and contingencies" (2003: 386).

Despite career's origins, Goffman (1961) suggested that this concept not need be applied merely in an occupational context but could instead be drawn upon in the context of any form of social progression. He therefore defined career as "any social strand of any person's course through life" (Goffman 1961: 127). Goffman's (1961) conceptualisation of career sees individuals (e.g. members of a social group) experiencing common change despite their social differences – each career stage possesses its own specificity with the social self becoming a sum of phased changes (Thomas 2003). Becker (1966) too takes a sequential approach, specifically in the case of deviancy, and also recognises how members of a social group can experience common change, stating how: "The career lines characteristic of an occupation take their shape from the problems peculiar to that occupation" (Becker 1966: 102). Related to this is the idea of career 'contingencies'. These are factors which determine or influence progression from one career stage to another and can include "both objective facts of social structure and changes in the perspective, motivations and desires of individuals" (Becker 1966: 24). For musicians, for example, certain career contingencies can arise because of the family, an institution said to demand conventional behaviour of the musician which in turn can create conflicting pressure (Becker 1966). Becker (1966) found that in some cases musicians' careers had ended as a result of this.

Becker (1966) notes that committing a deviant act (whether intended or unintended) is the first step in most deviant careers but highlights too, the importance of public labelling in the development of a deviant career. From these first steps deviant interests and motives can develop leading to a more sustained pattern of deviancy. Becker states: "The individual *learns,* in short, to participate in a subculture organized around the particular deviant activity" (1966: 31). The final step in a deviant career is membership in an organized deviant group/subculture (Becker 1966). As well as musicians, Becker (1966) draws upon the example of marihuana users in his work on the deviant career. The career of the marihuana user consists of three stages, each involving a shift in the user's relationship to society's social controls and to the subculture they reside (Becker 1966). These are: beginner, occasional user and regular user (Becker 1966). Social control can prevent movement between stages if it remains effective, or it can become less effective as the user moves from one stage to another (Becker 1966).

Matza's (2010) *Becoming Deviant* is also understood as contributing to the sociological work on career and here, similar to Becker (1966) the concept represents a process of

phased social learning (Jderu 2015). Matza (2010) identifies three phases to becoming deviant (the deviant career): affinity, affiliation and signification. Affinity refers to how individuals "develop predispositions to certain phenomena, say, delinquency, as a result of their *circumstance*s" (Matza 2010: 90-91). This affinity should be understood as "a natural biographical tendency borne of personal and social circumstance that suggests but hardly compels a direction of movement" (Matza 2010: 93). A consequence of affinity is being willing to do a thing, it permits 'self-ordination' (Matza 2010). Proceeding affinity, then, is affiliation, the "process by which the subject is *converted* to conduct novel for him [sic] but already established for others" (Matz 2010: 101). It is like the "adoption or receiving of a son [sic] into a family, and, by gradual extension, to the uniting or attaching in a close connection those who were previously unattached" (Matza 2010: 101). After affiliation comes signification which can stand for various things such as being assigned to a category (e.g. through labelling or classification) or experiencing derogation or 'putting down' (Matza 2010).

Whilst Matza (2010) is focusing on deviants there is no reason why such ideas could not apply in other contexts. Jderu (2015) has, for example, applied Matza's (2010) concepts to motorcyclists. Looking at entry into the motorcyclists' social world revealed a social learning process with an affiliation stage for bikers which involved social learning from existing bikers and gaining membership into the motorcyclists' world (Jderu 2015). The three phases identified by Matza (2010) could be useful for further understanding older punk women (who may/may not be considered deviant) in the context of them ageing and could work alongside a life-course approach. Furthermore, the way the relationship between circumstance(s) and direction of movement is suggestive (Matza 2010) rather than deterministic means that free will of individuals is being recognised. However it is important to recognise potential limitations of Matza's (2010) ideas in the context of subcultures such as punk. It is suggestive in Matza's (2010) work that these social worlds which individuals can gain membership into through a process of social learning entail a set of collective beliefs, values etc in order for members to pass these on. As the discussion of post-subcultural and postmodern influenced approaches to subcultures suggested above, subcultures such as punk may not entail a stable collective of individuals with clear, shared values. With that in mind, this would question my earlier point concerning Matza (2010).

Gender and ageing

Though career may be a useful concept for developing an understanding of ageing subculturalists and specifically ageing punks, there appears no real consideration of gender in the theoretical frameworks discussed above. To consider next then approaches drawing attention to the importance of gender in the ageing process, it is important to note the growing number of gerontologists who are analysing ageing and old age through feminist frameworks (Abel 1991, Garner 1999, Gulbrandsen and Walsh 2015, Holstein 1992, Richardson 1999). Such an approach helps to further examine the relationship between gender and age by, for example, looking at power differentials across groups (Hooyman et al 2002) and grounding work in women's voices is common (Twigg 2004). Feminist gerontology has also drawn further attention to the importance of the body too within ageing, whilst still acknowledging its socially/culturally constituted nature (Twigg 2004). These approaches are relevant to my research not just because of the focus on ageing women, but also because of the focus on the body often pursued by subcultural theorists (whether in the early CCCS work on 'spectacular style' or post-youth cultural work on consequences of the ageing body on subcultural participation). Furthermore, Hooyman et al (2002) note how feminist gerontology integrates two distinct, yet overlapping, areas: critical gerontology and life course approaches. As suggested already, a life course approach could be useful in gaining a deep understanding of ageing punk women.

Gender, ageing and the body

As Twigg notes "the aging body is (...) not natural...but fashioned within and by culture" (2004: 60) and points to a cult of youth which underpins our contemporary, consumer culture. Twigg (2004) recognises that this will impact on ageing, emphasising the greater negativity for women than men. This supports the need for an exploration of post-youth punk women to consider *their* experiences (which will differ to post-youth men) in order to give a fuller, in-depth consideration of older punks.

As already seen, the body has been either explicitly discussed or alluded to, in much (post-) subcultural work. The focus is often on style and the appearance subculturalists enact. However post-youth subcultural work has begun to consider the interplay of the ageing body and subcultural participation (e.g. Bennett 2018, Gibson 2012). Coupled with the increasing academic attention given to the body and ageing more generally

(e.g. Faircloth 2003, Martin and Twigg 2018, Twigg 2004), a consideration of ageing punk women cannot be undertaken without acknowledging and exploring the body.

In discussing the changeable nature of identity, post-subcultural approaches often utilise Giddens' (1991) ideas regarding the self becoming a project. The body, within such an approach, is seen as something which can be changed, modified or 'worked on'. It might be said therefore that age becomes fluid and changeable as a result – the age one feels, or indeed even performs, does not necessarily have to reflect chronological age. Related to this, Kaufman (1986) speaks of the 'ageless self' with individuals feeling that their chronological ages do not correspond to their felt ages or identities. Despite an individual feeling, for example, younger than their chronological age, it might be rash to take the position that their identity and body is a project as the physical body may limit their agency. This could be seen in Gibson's (2012) research whereby the older rock fans found that their behaviour needed to be adapted accordingly to restraints posed by their ageing bodies. It could also be said that older bodies are policed more by society, further restricting their opportunities when shaping their identity. Such late-modern theorising on the body, such as Giddens (1991), which emphasises agency and fluidity might therefore be more adequate in theorising youth subculturalists than ageing subculturalists. Such theorists fail to embed the body within their theories of late modernity and, as already suggested, do not engage with debates concerning the constraints placed upon us by our (ageing) bodies.

Instead Laz (2003) argues that 'embodiment', in which the body is seen as both a subject and object, is crucial in making sense of age/ageing. Such an approach has also been commonly supported by feminist theorists, who have been seen by many as the forerunners in bringing academic attention to the body (Davis 1997). Feminist approaches to the body, despite their variability, have generally centred round the problems of difference, domination and subversion (Davis 1997). With regards to difference, attention is given to how this is embodied as the "body is central to how dominant cultures designate certain groups... as other" (Young 1990: 123). This designation might be based upon age or sex and feminist theorists have considered the 'other' as regularly conceptualised as woman and/or elderly. In light of my research focusing on ageing/older punk women, such a concept and focus may therefore be extremely relevant. Feminists have also considered the possibilities offered by the body for subversion of gender norms (Davis 1997). This could be a relevant approach, then, to my research since older punk women might be perceived (and may even perceive

themselves) as subverting gender norms in that they identify with a subculture often viewed as masculine and that in doing so they are also moving away from societal ideas of what it means to be an ageing women.

Exploration of the body in relation to ageing subculturalists may contribute to some existing ideas concerning age and the body. Gullette (1997) suggests that research on older bodies has largely centred on a narrative of decline and such a focus could reflect an emphasis on youthful appearance in Western society more broadly. An exploration of older punk women, therefore, given that subcultures often involve active participation, might help to counteract such research.

The Final Strum

This chapter has considered relevant literature and concepts to this thesis' research whilst situating research on older punk women. As shown by existing research, there is a clear gap whereby an in-depth exploration of older punk women has yet to be pursued. My own research is therefore giving such women 'a voice' and offering them visibility in academic work on punk and subcultures more generally. Moving beyond this justification, however, there are various additional conceptual and theoretical gaps I have identified as I have moved through this chapter which my thesis addresses. Resistance has been identified as a key concept which runs throughout the main areas of my research – ageing, gender and subcultures. Yet there is a lack of research which brings all of this together in its analysis e.g. ageing, gender and resistance within a subculture. And whilst it is evident in my discussion that theorisation of resistance has began to move towards more of a relational understanding, such an understanding could be further developed though an analysis of how ageing and gender interplay within this. An exploration of ageing punk women's resistance therefore fills such gaps. However, I endeavoured to approach an exploration of resistance in such a way as to avoid the epistemological straitjacket effect of resistance I identified with Leblanc's (2002) research. It was not assumed that resistance was an inevitability of a (youth) subculture such as punk - there were no questions/notes on the interview schedule concerning resistance specifically and it was not something I referred to by name in the course of interviews. This allowed for resistance to emerge from interviews where participants saw fit and meant resistance was conceptualised from their understandings and experiences, moving away from drawing upon an externally defined resistance. This

also meant I did not start the research process with a clear-cut definition of resistance in mind e.g. as only political which could close off possibilities for analysis.

A consideration of ageing punk women also contributes to the ongoing development of post-youth subcultural studies. Whilst there has been some successful application of a lifecourse approach to the study of ageing subculturalists, there is limited consideration of the role of gender within this - a feminist gerontological approach could go towards redeeming this and this can be done through a critical consideration of ageing subcultural women e.g. punks. As has been noted in the discussion of literature, the concept of career has emerged as a potential way of understanding ongoing subcultural affiliation/membership or specifically continued punk affiliation. However, there is to-date one study (Andes 2002) which explores this and it lacks any analysis of gender. In addition to this limitation, Andes' (2002) research and the conclusions it draws concerning older punks is questionable as this predominantly rests on the views of younger participants. My research therefore explores career as a concept for understanding gendered subcultural involvement as one ages, developing this further as another way of conceptualising post-youth subcultural affiliation.

The last area of focus within this review of literature was that of the body in relation to ageing and/or gender. Whilst there has been an increased 'bringing in' of the body into work on ageing and/or gender more broadly, post-youth subcultural studies have a tendency of focusing on the body in terms of ageing and subcultural dress or in the context of gig attendance. By taking an inductive approach with my research, I endeavoured to avoid merely retracing these steps and instead allow for other embodied experiences to emerge from the interviews with research participants in order to contribute further to these discussions.

Chapter 3: "I want to tell you a little story" – Methodology and Methods

In this chapter I begin looking at the epistemological, ontological and methodological underpinnings of my research. This will start with a discussion of the inductive approach, in particular grounded theory, before looking at key elements of feminist research. From here I explore the appropriateness, then, of carrying out qualitative research. Focus will then move into the specificities of the research process itself, beginning with sampling. After detailing the steps taken in achieving the research sample, I will introduce the research participants. The research undertaken, which forms the basis of this thesis, utilised semi-structured interviewing and email interviews to further understand older punk women's construction and maintenance of a punk identity. The next step then will be to critically reflect on these two research methods before outlining my approach to data analysis. Attention is given to the ethical considerations I engaged in prior to and during this research, moving then to how I justify this thesis as an example of 'quality' qualitative research. In keeping with my reflexive approach I finish the chapter reflecting upon a data collection method which I used but do not draw upon in this thesis as well as a planned data collection method that never bore fruit.

Induction and Grounded Theory

Induction can be defined as "a bottom-up approach through which a researcher analyses data in order to construct a theory or model" (Constantinou et al 2017: 573). An example of induction is grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967). Grounded theory is 'grounded' in the perspectives of the research participants and focused on how they experience and resolve their everyday problems (Gibson and Hartman 2014). My exploration of the construction and maintenance of identity amongst older punk women is grounded in their perspectives. During the research process I applied some principles of grounded theory and I will now critically discuss the exact nature of this. Grounded theory's influence on how I analysed my data will be discussed in a separate section. Gibson and Hartman (2014) identify some core aspects of grounded theory, including openness, discovery and an interactive research process. The latter will be discussed

further in my methods and analysis sections. Openness involves the researcher being aware of preconceived notions and not using them when collecting and analysing data (Gibson and Hartman 2014). There should be no application of preconceived theory/theories, for example. This was perhaps made somewhat easier for me given the absence of any substantial pre-existing literature on older punk women – it was not the case, therefore, that I would fall foul of applying preconceived notions of older punk women based on existing research. Gibson and Hartman suggest that any preconceived notions should be "bracketed" (2013: 36). A way I bracketed any preconceived ideas I held concerning how 'punk' was defined was through not specifying what counted as a 'punk woman' when advertising for research participants.

Whether such openness is ever fully achievable is a criticism made of both a grounded theory approach and induction more generally (Hodkinson 2009, Morse and Mitcham 2002). Reflecting on his own experience of carrying out PhD research, Hodkinson (2009) points out how, like most PhD students, he was advised to carry out an extensive literature review prior to researching which no doubt had an influence. Like Hodkinson (2009) and most PhD students, I was advised on these same lines. Indeed, an awareness of existing relevant literature was something I had to demonstrate as part of my application to start a PhD. As I have already noted, there was no literature specifically focused on older punk women's construction and maintenance of identity when I came to do this review. But, it would not be plausible to suggest that reading literature concerning ageing in subcultures more generally did not bear some influence on, for example, the formulation of my research questions. The argument here is that the literature review was necessary due to the nature of PhD research and has been used instead to justify gaps which this research might address, rather than allowing it to completely determine the questioning used within the interviews. The semi-structured nature of the interviews also went some way in minimising preconceptions by allowing the participants a degree of control and autonomy. The overall research question being addressed by this thesis ('older punk women's construction and maintenance of punk identities') is also open in its style to avoid preconceptions. My commitment to practicing reflexivity throughout the data collection, analysis and write-up has also attempted to regain a sense of neutrality.

The emphasis on 'discovery' in grounded theory refers to how rather than "building a theory out of logical reason, it involves working out a theory that is 'grounded' in the perspective of those in the field" (Gibson and Hartman 2013: 37). How analysis is

carried out and the notion of 'theoretical sampling' helps in ensuring this (Glaser and Strauss 1967). Theoretical sampling is "the process of data collection for generating theory whereby the analyst jointly collects, codes and analyses his [sic] data and decides what data to collect next and where to find them, in order to develop his theory as it emerges" (Glaser and Strauss 1967: 45). Theoretical sampling may however have to involve a purposeful selection at the start of the research process (Breckenridge and Jones 2009) as, to draw on a common expression, everyone has to start somewhere. My decision to focus on older punk women and recruiting a sample which fulfilled particular criteria in terms of age, gender and self-identification as punk would therefore be seen as an example of purposeful sampling. Whilst I did not theoretically sample in terms of participants over the course of my research, there were other ways theoretical sampling occurred. These will be detailed when I discuss my analysis later in this chapter.

Whilst my approach took influence from induction and, in particular, grounded theory, I am not claiming here that my research falls purely into such categorisation. As Gibson and Hartman (2013) argue there can be both weak and strong versions of grounded theory and I am comfortable in describing mine as a 'not strong' version. I was also committed to engaging in research underpinned by my feminism and this too shaped the research process. It is detail on this which I now turn to.

Feminist Research

I detail now the feminist approach that has shaped this research throughout and justify my consideration of this as feminist research. What this entails needs to be explored through a discussion of epistemology and methodology. Feminists have generally been united in the observation that the history of knowledge production can be seen as masculine, being largely produced by men, accessed by men, and according men a higher status (Letherby 2003). However, feminists diverge after this initial point in their views concerning the construction of knowledge. Three main feminist epistemologies can be identified: feminist empiricism, feminist standpoint epistemology and feminist postmodernism (Letherby 2003, Tuin 2009).

There have been various critiques from feminists of the scientific ideas underpinning much work within the social sciences. Feminist empiricism, however, does not critique the notion of scientific principles informing research into the social world but how these

scientific principles have been enacted. Therefore feminist empiricism advocates a foundationalist approach, upholding that there is a "single universal social world where truth exists independently of the knower" (Letherby 2003: 4) and that knowledge can be gained by experience, or gaining evidence. Feminist standpoint epistemology can be viewed, akin to feminist empiricism, as a 'successor science' (Letherby 2003), taking experience as the starting point in knowledge production. Whilst this too is a foundationalist approach, with truth existing independently of the knower, in feminist standpoint epistemology the focus is on *women's* experience. It entails women voicing their experiences (Ramazanoglu with Holland 2006) and rests on the assumption that these voices reflect an objective reality. Whilst this may seem relevant to research focusing on the *experiences* of older punk *women,* there are a number of limitations posed by such an approach. One criticism of feminist standpoint is that it might imply that women's perspectives are more real and 'better' than others, merely replacing male supremacy with female (Letherby 2003). Secondly, feminist standpoint epistemology risks research being used to over generalise to women or support binary positions e.g. the female/male dichotomy with certain attributes given to all women, others to all men and perhaps reinforcing gender inequalities (Letherby 2003).

Feminist postmodern epistemology is a departure from the others, signalling a move to a relativist approach. Feminist standpoint claims that an objective reality based on women's experiences exists. Feminist postmodernism, on the other hand, rejects the suggestion of there being one reality. It dismisses an over-arching category of 'women', and focuses on the construction of 'truth' and knowledge through discourse (Letherby 2003). Unlike feminist standpoint, a feminist postmodern epistemology seeks freedom from binaries, essential identities and universality (Ramazanoglu with Holland 2006). Such an epistemological approach could be relevant to an understanding of the role of the body in my research as it also endeavours to access freedom from material embodiment (Ramazanoglu with Holland 2006) which is in keeping with the idea of the body being socially constituted (see previous chapter).

At the start of my research I considered my own position in relation to these various feminist epistemologies. My association of empiricism with positivism and my belief that such an approach could therefore not offer an in-depth understanding of older punk women's construction and maintenance of identity meant feminist empiricism was not appropriate. In relation to the criticism of feminist standpoint epistemology that it potentially promoted female supremacy (Letherby 2003), despite my acknowledgement

that punk women, and in particular older punk women, have previously been side-lined in research on punk (therefore justifying a woman only sample), it is not my desire to suggest their experiences are any more real or accurate than punk men. Also my study intended to recognise diversity amongst older punk women (whilst simultaneously recognising areas of similarity) rather than merely seeking large generalisations to the cohort as a whole, therefore a feminist standpoint epistemology was not suitable. Conceiving feminist epistemology as three distinct strands, however, does perhaps risk an over-simplification of such approaches and fails to acknowledge others. Whilst I recognise some of value of a feminist postmodern epistemology, I side with Letherby (2003) in her argument for a midway position: an epistemological approach which acknowledges the importance of collectivism between women yet is capable of recognising the diversity amongst women. This move perhaps demonstrates a shift to what Tuin describes as "third-wave feminist epistemology" (2009: 18) which entails feminist reflection grounded in "relational, non-dichotomous thinking and social practices" (Prokhovnik 2002: xi in Tuin 2009: 18).

Feminist methodology might only be characterised by the way it is "shaped by feminist theory, politics and ethics and grounded in women's experience" (Ramazanoglu with Holland 2006: 16) and that was the position pursued in my research. The singular criteria for feminist research appears to be that it is completed by a feminist, which I consider myself to be, and it is no longer deemed necessary for it to consist of a women only sample (Stanley and Wise 1997). Literature unpacks this further in relation to certain key issues central to feminist theory (Nagy Hesse-Biber and Leckenby 2004, Nagy Hesse-Biber et al 2004, Stanley and Wise 1997). Stanley and Wise (1997) state that feminist research rests on the belief that women are oppressed; a belief that the personal is political; and a belief that a feminist consciousness exists, allowing new ways of viewing the same reality. The exact nature of these beliefs (e.g. how the oppression of women is actually conceptualised or theorised) will vary. This reflects the existence of many feminisms; which also serves to explain the conflicting views that exist about feminist research (Nagy Hesse-Biber et al 2004).

One common element of feminist research is the focus on women's, and 'other' marginalised groups', lived experiences (Nagy Hesse-Biber and Leckenby 2004). As Nagy Hesse-Biber et al note: "A feminist approach to knowledge building recognises the essential importance of examining women's experience" (2004: 3). This is in part a response to the way the (social) sciences have historically been "androcentrically (male)

biased" (Nagy Hesse-Biber et al 2004: 3). The research I have undertaken focuses on older punk women's lived experiences. It also challenges a literature base concerning punk which can be seen as male, and youth, biased rendering older punk women virtually invisible, something which I illustrated in Chapter 2. This focus on lived experience is also aided by taking a grounded theory inspired approach.

Feminist research also attends to questions concerning power dynamics throughout the research process (Nagy Hesse-Biber and Leckenby 2004), aiming to not replicate the oppression research participants might be subject to outside of the research (Olesen 2007). Feminists have criticised positivism, for example, in its creation of hierarchies between researchers and research participants (Nagy Hesse-Biber et al 2004). Researchers are "taken for granted as the knowing party" (Nagy Hesse-Biber et al 2004: 12), leading to unequal power relations. An example being the way research participants' only input into a study being the responses they provide to researcher's pre-determined questions (Nagy Hesse-Biber et al 2004). This is where an inductive approach, such as grounded theory, can also benefit as it allows for themes and foci to emerge from the participants. Ensuring integration of researchers and participants in the research process has been noted as a common element of both feminist research and grounded theory (Olesen 2007). Further discussion of challenging unequal power relations between the research participants and I will follow below in the context of the specific research methods I used.

Another common element of feminist research which often allows for being aware of power dynamics is practicing 'strong reflexivity' throughout the research process (Nagy Hesse-Biber and Leckenby 2004). I have endeavoured to be reflexive throughout the research process, from considering the role of my personal interests for pursuing this topic (Chapter 1) to critically reflecting on my position within the data collection (see below) and analysis. A promotion of reflexivity has been pointed out as something shared by both feminist research and grounded theory (Olesen 2007). Yet Olesen suggests that grounded theory has lessons to learn from feminist research as "feminists have been more thoughtful in presenting accounts of difficult, ethically strained research projects" (2007: 428).

The research reported on in this thesis can therefore be seen as feminist research as it was completed by a feminist who has incorporated core aspects referred to above into the research process. Despite the move within feminist research away from women only samples, the rationale for a focus solely on older/post-youth punk women was justified

through an examination of existing literature on punk and the notable absence of a consideration of specifically older/post-youth punk women (see previous chapter).

Qualitative Methods

Though qualitative methods could be utilised in a deductive as well as an inductive approach (Constantinou 2017), there is the argument that because of their flexibility, they are more so suited to an exploratory, inductive approach (Hodkinson 2009). In terms of pursuing feminist research, this does not dictate a particular method and instead it is more the core values underpinning the research process (as argued above) and the appropriateness of the chosen method(s) (Nagy Hesse-Biber and Leckenby 2004). The focus on older punk women's construction and maintenance of identity meant methods which produced qualitative data were most appropriate for my research. As Bryman (2004) notes, qualitative methods are suitable when participants' understandings of the social world are looking to be explored. Whilst initially I proposed to make use of two research methods, one key method was pursued in the end. Semi-structured interviews were used to generate qualitative data. The interviews were a route to exploring the participants' biographical journeys and the use of interview stimuli (Barton 2015), when relevant, were used to explore the emotional/affective (discussed further below). In addition to sixteen semi-structured interviews (one of which was paired), five participants answered questions by e-mail. Data collection occurred over a period of sixteen to eighteen months.

Sampling

In order to begin 'advertising' for research participants, I created a brief 'call out' which stated I was carrying out PhD research and was looking to interview women, 30 years and above who identified as punk. I asked anyone interested to get in contact (providing my e-mail address) and also asked people to pass the information on to anyone they thought might be interested. This was then posted on my personal social media accounts (Instagram, Facebook and Twitter) and I re-posted this on these accounts a few times from the beginning of sampling to when I ceased data collection. There were good reasons for sharing the call out on my own accounts. As a number of my friends/followers on these platforms had some form of affiliation with punk it could have a snowball effect in that they knew women who may be interested. Also because

all three of these platforms allow a user's post to be shared, e.g. someone can share another user's post to their own wall on Facebook if the post's settings allow, it could increase my reach. On Facebook I also shared the post in groups I belonged to including a UK one for 'punky moms', a baby-wearing discussion group, a punk studies group, a regional LaDIYfest one and a group for an alternative music venue. I did not want to restrict the groups I posted in e.g. by just using ones with 'punk' in their title/description or by using ones I saw as punk, as I felt that would be imposing preconceptions concerning what punk was.

With the focus of this research being older punk women, a minimum age of thirty was originally decided as appropriate when considering a sample in order to distinguish these 'post-youth' women punks from the younger women which previous research has concentrated on (Andes 2002, Leblanc 2002). In this sense the sampling method would be considered purposive. A key factor in the sampling was also the starting definition of 'punk'. As discussed in Chapters 1 and 2, things such as clothing are often not a reliable indication (as indicated by the literature review of material on older punks which shows an internalisation of punk identity) and I did not want to impose my own definition of punk onto the sampling (see my earlier note on openness in relation to induction). Participants were therefore individuals who self-defined as 'punk' as it can be the case that people may listen to punk music and be a fan of punk but not define themselves as a punk per se. One thing I did find with the age criteria was that a few women contacted me saying they wished to be involved but were just shy of being 30 years old. In these cases I replied with the fuller research information sheet which gave the context of the research as being about older punk women and let them decide if they still wished to take part. Where they did I endeavoured to include them in the sample as they clearly felt they were separate from punk youths. This highlights complexities around age/ageing with it being difficult to objectively identify old versus young, for example because of people's subjective experiences and sense of age/ageing (Kaufman 1986). In addition to this, my call out specified UK women but I had interest from women who, whilst originally born in the UK, were currently based/residing elsewhere. I did not omit them because of where they were currently living.

Whilst in some way (mentioned above) the sampling method was purposive, snowball sampling ended up being a key method for generating a research sample. When contacting me it was not unusual for women to say they had seen my call out for participants because someone they knew had shared it or someone they knew had spoke

to them about it. In addition to this I also utilised some of my few existing contacts (who, ironically, are all male) in passing on the call. Snowballing was a suitable sampling method in this particular case because it has been said to be useful when sampling concealed populations (Atkinson and Flint 2001). In a sense, post-youth punk women might be a concealed population as there is no sampling frame present and also punk fandom might be for some a personal and therefore private affair.

In total I received between forty and fifty expressions of interest to the 'call out' process. When potential participants contacted me to express interest in being involved I e-mailed them an information sheet (see Appendix 1) with further details. This detailed how they were invited to bring material culture to interviews which they felt helped in their discussion of what punk meant/means to them as well as explaining how all participants would be invited to create a one-sided 'zine page after the interview on the meaning of punk to them. In the e-mail this further information was attached to I asked them to respond if they were still wishing to be involved. From there we made interview arrangements. The women I spoke with face-to-face were given control over where they felt most comfortable with the interview taken place as long as this entailed a public location so I could also uphold my own safety (as noted in my later discussion of ethical considerations). This was commonly a cafe or restaurant. For participants interviewed by telephone or Skype they did so from their places of residence. One participant, however, did chose to Skype from her place of work for practical reasons but they chose to also do so after working hours to provide privacy from colleagues.

In terms of sample size, I intended to gather a sample of twenty to twenty-five participants for practical and theoretical reasons and in total I acquired a research sample of twenty-two. This was acquired in two stages. First I drew upon a sample of seventeen women in the completion of sixteen semi-structured interviews (one was a paired interview). After their completion I then drew upon a sample of five women with whom I carried out e-mail interviews. In terms of practicality, twenty-two was considered a manageable number of interviews to complete, transcribe (where semi-structured) and analyse in the required time frame; especially with some interviews being particularly lengthy due to the semi-structured format. An in-depth exploration was allowed by this sample size and this sampling method also led to participants emerging from a variety of backgrounds and locations as seen when I introduce them below. If a deductive approach was being pursued then perhaps a large, representative sample would be required in order to 'test' the initial theory. By taking an inductive

approach, any theory or themes or concepts which emerge from the data are being seen as representing the experience of the women interviewed and the value of that in-depth data is believed to be more important than the generalisability (Tracy 2010).

Introducing the Research Participants

Below I introduce the twenty-two research participants and provide some brief socio-demographic detail where known. These are details correct at the time of the interviews. I also highlight what format their interview took e.g. face to face, telephone, Skype, instant messaging or e-mail. As some of the women I spoke with wished for their real names to be used (something I discuss further in the ethics section of this chapter), I have stated where pseudonyms were used. Inconsistencies in 'Additional Information' (for example, the way it states for some but not others whether or not they have children) reflects the differences in information provided by participants. I did not have particular questions in the interviews concerning things like marital status, employment and so forth so references to such things instead emerged within the interviews (or not). To avoid any assumptions being made concerning the ordering of this introductory list, I will present this as an alphabetical listing.

Briony (30), originally from the U.K but been based in Germany for some years. In employment, in a relationship, has one child. Interview: Skype.

Ces (27), Midlands. In employment. Interview: face to face.

Cheryl* ("middle aged"), location unknown. Interview: e-mail.

Christine (30s), South of England. In employment, married. Interview: face to face, paired.

Deedee* (38), Midlands. In employment. Interview: face to face.

Elizabeth (30), Midlands. In employment, in a relationship. Interview: face to face.

Grace* (52), location unknown. In employment. Interview: e-mail.

Hester* (51), location unknown. In employment, has children. Interview: e-mail.

Jen (early 30s), Midlands. In employment. Interview: face to face.

Jess (31), Midlands. In employment. Interview: face to face.

Katie (early 30s), Central England. In employment. Interview: Skype.

Kristianne (mid-forties), South of England. In employment, one child. Interview: face to face, paired.

Lindsey (44), Scotland. In employment, studying. Interview: telephone.

Milly* (51), North England. Married, has children. Interview: Skype.

Morag* (49), location unknown. In employment, in a relationship, no children. Interview: e-mail.

Myfanwy* (53), location unknown. In employment. Interview: e-mail.

Naefun* (early forties), South of England. In employment, in a relationship. Interview: Skype.

Naja (44), originally from the UK but currently residing outside of the UK. In employment, married, no children. Interview: Skype.

Rebecca (early thirties), Midlands. Studying, married, no children. Interview: face to face.

Sam (late forties), Midlands. In employment, in a relationship, has children. Interview: face to face.

Sharon* (52), Wales. In employment, in a relationship, has children. Interview: face to face.

Suzy (33), Northern England. In employment, in a relationship, no children. Interview: instant messaging.

*indicates where a pseudonym was used.

Now that I have briefly introduced my research participants, I will move into a reflective discussion of the specific research methods.

Method 1 – Semi-structured Interviews

As noted in this chapter's introduction, I separate out discussion here on the different format of interviews I carried out. I will discuss first of all the sixteen semi-structured interviews which occurred in 'real-time' as opposed to those carried out by e-mail which will be detailed below separately. These semi-structured interviews comprised of nine which were face-to-face, five carried out using 'Skype' (a telecommunications application), one which was by telephone and one which utilised the real-time messaging service provided by Skype (due to technical difficulties). The interviews varied in length but generally lasted around forty-five minutes. Their semi-structured nature complimented an inductive approach - there was no strict interview schedule but there were some 'core' questions. This element will be discussed in more detail below. The interviews were recorded using an electronic recording device and then transcribed in full without the aid of any transcription software. In the case of the semi-structured

interview which took place using the Skype messaging service, this format allowed for instantaneous recording and transcription. All recordings and transcriptions have been stored securely under password protection. Recognising that the use of pilot interviews can highlight any issues or practical considerations, I treated the first interview as the pilot interview still, however, incorporating the data generated into the wider data body. No strict interview schedules were used which relates to the induction approach taken by grounded theory (Gibson and Hartman 2013, Hodkinson 2009). The following questions, however, guided the pilot interview. The ordering changed dependant on the interview itself but it was planned that the initial opening question would always remain the same (for reasons explained below):

1) When and how were you first exposed to punk?
2) How do you define punk?
3) How did you express your punk identity when you first began to consider yourself punk?
4) Do you think punk has changed since you first got into it?
5) Does being punk have an impact on your appearance or style?

It was hoped the initial question would invite participants to begin a biographical narrative, or journey whilst also giving them a fairly broad opening to take in the direction they next felt important. Reflecting on when and how they were first exposed to punk could also allow for exploration of differences between then and now. Whilst I planned for the first question above to open each of the interviews this did not necessarily work in practice and this reflects the agency and control offered to the participants to be collaborators in these interviews and there were therefore a few exceptions to this. I was mindful of this and would return to that question at an appropriate point.

An important aspect of this research is how the punk women I spoke with expressed a punk identity. The remaining questions therefore related to this, whilst also allowing an exploration of the ageing process. In addition to exploring these themes, question five also allowed for consideration of the body. Drawing upon grounded theory, I reflected upon each interview, thinking about additional areas for consideration. I will further explore this process of ongoing analysis and data collection later in this chapter.

The use of semi-structured interviewing was a suitable method for recording subjective experience and as already noted these interviews were capable of considering the participants' biographical journeys. It is a method utilised in existing academic work

looking at subcultural members (for example, the work on older punks by Bennett 2006). Rapley (2002) suggests there are two approaches to interviewing: interview data as resource or interview data as topic. The latter refers to the understanding that interviews reflect a reality jointly constructed by the interviewee/interviewer whereas the former suggests the data more or less reflects the interviewees' reality outside of the interview. The interviewees in this research are referred to as participants and this reflects that the interview is being understood as a reality jointly constructed by researcher and participant. Whilst I am recognising that the data was jointly produced, I use the interview data as a resource to draw conclusions about how older women construct and maintain a punk identity.

The use of semi-structured interviewing can also be seen in keeping with the feminist underpinnings of the research. Whilst contemporary feminists may employ a variety of methods (Nagy Hesse-Biber and Leckenby 2004) there are reasons to uphold interviewing as being sympathetic to feminist beliefs. Firstly, whilst semi-structured interviews allow particular issues to be addressed they also provide the participant a degree of autonomy and power. The use of 'reciprocal' interviewing (Edwards 1993) can also aid this by reducing the researcher-researched power difference via the researcher also disclosing their experiences. It is likely such an approach helps build rapport with the participants (see below for a further discussion of rapport in relation to ethics). With regards to my own disclosure of experiences, I was careful not to foreground this in the interviews themselves as the interviews were ultimately not about me. Instead I would refer to my own thoughts or experiences if it was felt that they supported or were in line with what a participant was describing (therefore contributing to rapport) or, in some cases, as a prompt for further discussion. The first of these instances is seen, for example, here in an interview with one of the participants, Deedee, when conversation turned to what could be considered people's etiquette at live shows (gigs):

> **Deedee:** I've noticed there is less kind of interest, less kind of engagement with you know, it's not like people aren't necessarily interested in the music it's kind of like...they're not really bothered to be there or not be there, am I making sense?
>
> **Laura:** Yeah yeah I think it's, it reminds me of the scenarios where you get people at gigs recording things through their phones for some reasons it just reminds me of that....

> **Deedee:** ...yeah, just put it down!
>
> **Laura:** They're not actually watching it, and you're watching it through their screen**...**
>
> **Deedee:** ....Yeah I know, it's really frustrating... "Put the phone down!" (both laugh) "Enjoy the gig!"...I actually walked out of a gig fairly recently um because I don't know whether this [is] like fact of my age but...

I would also answer any questions posed by the participants concerning my experiences or thoughts. Most commonly I was asked by the interview participants about the reasoning behind doing the research with quite a few also wanting to know what my link, if any, to punk was. One of the participants, Sam, illustrated this nicely when she asked about why I was interested in why I wanted to do the research. As Sam wondered: "are you going to turn up and you're going to be a young punk or was your mum a punk or I don't know?" Whilst my call for interview participants had detailed that this research formed the basis of my PhD thesis and gave indication of the research themes/research questions, I did not offer any rationale for the research. I was not surprised that the participants might have wondered about the reasoning given, as Sam identifies, the 'niche' nature of this, but I did also wonder whether their questioning also reflected an element of surprise at attention being given to their experiences as punk women. I can only, however, surmise this and this is not to say that was necessarily the case but it could speak to the marginalisation of women in punk (see Chapter 2).

Interviewing can also be seen as fulfilling the feminist value of 'giving voice' to the women involved, understanding that these voices reflect these women's experiences (Kitzinger 2002). The themes being explored in my research and the use of semi-structured interviewing means this research method was biographical in nature. If a biographical method is taken as meaning "research which utilises individual stories or other personal documents to understand lives within a social...and/or historical frame" (Merrill and West 2009: 10) then the approach here is clearly sympathetic to this. It is also worth noting that biographical research is often associated with 'giving voice' and research which is committed to the marginalised (Merrill and West 2009) and this is certainly the case pursued here in this research on older punk women and is in keeping with the underpinning feminist ethos.

Interview Stimuli

As noted above, participants were asked to 'bring' selected material culture (whether objects, photographs or otherwise) with them to their interviews which they felt were significant to telling the story of punk in their life. These were then used as stimuli during the interview whilst also providing secondary data and helping to tap into the emotional aspects of their relationship to/with punk. This suggestion was taken up by ten out the seventeen research participants.

Photo elicitation has been recognised for its potential of reducing awkwardness in an interview situation as it acts as a neutral third party (Collier and Collier 1986) so the same could be said about material culture more generally. Material culture can in itself be seen as an important source of cultural data (Miller 2001) and the use of a variety of data is in keeping with grounded theory (Gibson and Hartman 2014). It also fits with the feminist values underpinning this research, for example as a way of offering more control to research participants over the focus and direction of the interviews. This can be a way of breaking down unequal power between researcher and research participants (Olesen 2007, Nagy Hesse-Biber and Leckenby 2004), giving participants a greater voice (Walker and Widel 1985).

Two key issues arose with this method. Firstly, the degree to which research participants took up the opportunity to bring material culture to the interview as it was more often the case they did not. Of course whilst I was slightly disappointed there was not more of a positive embracing of this element of the research, I had to recognise this was something which was voluntary as well as acknowledging that the participants were already giving up time and so forth to join me for the interview itself. Secondly, whilst the material culture selected by my research participants did indeed prompt some discussion, the degree to which they did varied considerably. One participant, for example, talked at length around the items she had brought to the interview and I felt these helped greatly in the generation of detailed understandings. Yet others just stated what the item was and even commented they did not really know what to say about it/them. I feel this reflects my own lack of experience with using stimuli in interviews as in these cases my prompting was not strong enough to sustain in-depth discussion around them.

Telephone and Skype Interviewing

It was initially planned for all interviews to be conducted face-to-face to distinguish from the internet research I also proposed to carry out (outlined later in this chapter). Face-to-face interviewing has been said to allow for greater awareness of body language/cues, may be more fruitful in building rapport (Cannell et al. 1981) and it was assumed it could also allow more easily for the use of stimuli. The nature of my target research population, however, meant participants were very geographically dispersed and as a part-time student with employment (and later childcare) commitments I did find myself limited in how far I could travel for interviewing. In light of this I did make the decision to complete interviews using Skype (a video telephone service) or some alternative means when face-to-face interviewing was not possible. Skype was still preferential to telephone interviewing due to the video conferencing element allowing some of the advantages of face-to-face interviewing noted above to be captured. There were limitations, however, with Skype as it firstly requires internet access and a webcam (for both participant and researcher) and naturally, there can be technical issues which might arise when using technology.

It has been suggested that qualitative research literature has a tendency to position telephone interviewing as inferior to those which take place face-to-face and there has been an increase in literature seeking to question this distinction (e.g. Holt 2010, Novick 2008, Vogl 2013). This label of inferiority could also be said to have been given to other interviewing modes which are not face-to-face, such as online interviewing using software like Skype and again, such attributions have been questioned (see, for example, Deakin and Wakefield 2014).

Nearly half of the semi-structured interviews were completed by telephone and Skype. Such interviewing offers a number of things to this research. Taking a position of 'methodological pragmatism' in which reflective choices are made regarding methods (Lamont and Swidler 2014), these modes of interviewing can be seen as being pursued for their value to the research at hand and not just as secondary modes to face-to-face interviewing. For example, telephone and Skype interviewing increase the scope of a research sample since both modes deal with geographical disparities (Deakin and Wakefield 2014, Holt 2010) which was beneficial given that my potential participants are not from one particular geographical location. This was also relevant because of the research being self-funded with limited money available for travelling as well as travel

not always being practical due to employment and then additionally childcare responsibilities.

Where telephone or Skype interviewing were used they can also be seen as allowing for particular feminist values which underpin this research, particularly concerning the degree of control which is given to the participants. It is much simpler to withdraw from a telephone or Skype interview (by merely replacing the receiver or clicking 'disconnect') and they can also control the privacy of the interview more (Holt 2010). Telephone interviewing can also guarantee a level of anonymity (Novick 2008) though Deakin and Wakefield (2014) point to the fact that with Skype interviewing you also do not need to have the participants' telephone number. However, this 'distance' generated by not meeting participants face-to-face has been said to increase the likelihood of participants withdrawing from the research with no or little notice (Deakin and Wakefield 2014). I did not, however, find that to be an issue with any of the research participants who set up interviews via telephone or Skype.

Another criticism of telephone interviewing has been that rapport may be impacted or limited. This potential problem may be due to the loss of visible cues concerning class, gender and ethnicity (Holt 2010, Stephens 2007). On the other hand this might have the capacity of limiting potential for power issues which might arise due to such social positioning (Holt 2010). It could be that there is the possibility for more rapport to be gained in telephone interviewing compared to face-to-face as differences might not be fore-fronted due to a lack of visible cues. In addition, interviewer bias could be minimised (Vogl 2013). Skype can allow for the presence of visible cues with its video aspect. To aid in building rapport with any participants who are interviewed by telephone or Skype, e-mail exchanges beforehand are seen to be beneficial (Deakin and Wakefield 2014) and this was done as part of the standard process of arranging interviews (see earlier section on sampling). With regards to the point made above concerning rapport, I did not find any differences across the three modes of interviewing utilised.

On a similar note, data from telephone interviewing has been accused of lacking quality due to the loss of contextual and non-verbal data (Holt 2010, Novick 2008). It could be argued, however, that this mode generates richer data due to its more focused nature (Vogl 2013) and, in the absence of non-verbal cues, everything having to be articulated by researcher and participants (Holt 2010). Skype has the potential of excluding those without/who are not familiar with the software or are uncomfortable with being filmed

(Deakin and Wakefield 2014) but Skype was not the sole mode being utilised and the power to decide whether to use the video element or whether they would prefer to speak over the telephone was given to participants.

A problem with telephone interviewing which is particularly relevant here is that it prevents visual aids being used in the same way as in a face-to-face interview (Vogl 2013). For example, being face-to-face with the participant would allow the researcher to produce visual aids to them and vice versa. Even though the interview stimuli I suggested participants to bring to interviews could be considered visual aids, these were provided by the participant rather than the researcher meaning they were in front of participant so still serving the purpose of prompting them/helping them. In interviews where video calling was present I could see the material culture if participants held them up to the camera (which they did). This was not possible in the telephone or Skype interviews where the video element was not present/used for whatever reason. Out of those, only one participant had taken up the offer of 'bringing' some material culture to the interview – this was the telephone interview carried out with Lindsey. Whilst I was not able to see the material culture in this case, Lindsey described these items to such a degree I felt the absence of visuals did not limit my understanding.

A key problem with Skype, and one experienced in this research, concerns the technical issues that might arise (Deakin and Wakefield 2014). The first interview that took place (with Naefun) had been arranged as a Skype interview at the request of the participant. Due to the strength of the internet connections using the video element of Skype made the sound quality poor. In light of this we decided to use only the telephone element of Skype. Naefun was one of the participants who did bring some interview stimuli and we tried to switch the video element on for when she was discussing this but the sound quality was impinged upon and the recording of this part barely decipherable meaning the data was mostly lost. Ultimately, then, the interview with Naefun became a telephone interview. Another interview planned to be carried out using Skype failed to due to technical issues, resulting in us using the instant messaging service provided by the platform. These two aside there were three Skype interviews which successfully utilised both the telephone and video element.

Method 2: Email Interviews

A second data collection method was utilised whilst I was carrying out the research which I had not planned for but which emerged as I was recruiting participants for semi-

structured interviews. As data collection using semi-structured interviews progressed and I was increasingly aware of the geographical restrictions and time constraints which limited the amount of interviews I was able to carry out face-to-face, I began suggesting to those expressing interest the possibility of them answering questions via email. Five women volunteered to do so. The same questions which were used for the pilot semi-structured interview (and detailed earlier) were used for these.

Bowden and Galindo-Gonzalez (2015) suggest that email interviews should be utilised when the researcher(s) can justify them as useful, the target population appear to be open to them, and justification of use supports the theoretical methodology/ies held by the researcher(s). They proved useful to my research mainly because of their ability to overcome geographical barriers, time constraints and absence of research funds (Bowden and Galindo-Gonzalez 2015, Hawkins 2018). By responding to my original interview call out by email, potential participants were suggesting they would be open to email interviews and this was confirmed by those who volunteered for them. Had I planned to use email interviews from the outset of this research, however, a consideration of whether the target population were open to them would have been more of a concern.

Email interviews were capable of generating additional qualitative data in line with the methodological approach I was pursuing. Additionally they sat comfortably within my feminist values as a researcher – they could offer more control to participants over their level of participation (Hawkins 2018) for example. Bowker and Tuffin (2004) note as well the empowering possibility of email interviewing through the way they offer participants control regarding when, where and how they respond. Such elements might also in turn produce more thoughtful, relevant data (Bowden and Galindo-Gonzalez 2015, Hawkins 2018). Ethically email interviews could be seen to prioritise participants' comfort (Bowden and Galindo-Gonzalez 2015), could offer anonymity, and could allow participants to remove themselves from the research more easily due to the absence of a physically present researcher (Hawkins 2018).

Bowden and Galindo-Gonzalez (2015) argue that another advantage of email interviewing can be the way it can reduce the 'additional stories' told by participants (within face-to-face/telephone interviewing) that are not relevant to research questions. I would question whether that is necessarily always the case and additionally whether that is always desired. As I will detail below, the email interviewing I carried out fell prey to receiving short and concise responses from participants – which could be considered the

polar opposite of responses containing these additional stories which these authors refer to. And whilst additional stories did emerge in many of the semi-structured interviews I carried out face-to-face/by telephone, my approach was not to see these as problematic. Instead, given that my research was largely inductive, I saw such additions as potential avenues I had not considered or anticipated. This was in keeping with my view as a researcher that it was not entirely my place to decide what data was important and reflected the level of control afforded to my participants.

Despite the advantages posed by implementing email interviews in addition to the semi-structured interviews referred to above, limitations of this method did emerge. Bowden and Galindo-Gonzalez (2015) note how email interviewing is often a marginalised research method used when face-to-face is not possible, therefore coming to be seen as a 'second choice'. Unfortunately this was the case with my own use of email interviewing and my focus on the semi-structured interviewing meant the email interviewing did suffer as a result. One example of this was my limited active engagement in dialogue (Bowden and Galindo-Gonzalez 2015). When participants volunteered to answer questions via email I sent them a list of questions to start the ball rolling, so to speak (these mirrored the key questions which informed the semi-structured interviews as detailed earlier). From there I awaited the participants' responses before asking further questions concerning their responses. I did not proceed beyond this however and therefore a continued dialogue was minimised. In addition to this, some participants failed to respond to the further questioning. James (2016) notes how in creating time and space for participants to think there can be a delay in response. It might also follow, then, that this reduces momentum and may have contributed to participants discontinuing the emerging dialogue. Related again to focusing my energy and time into the semi-structured interviewing I also failed to be consistent in sending reminders to participants to re-engage them or help sustain momentum.

Whilst some of the limitations described above are not necessarily characteristic of email interviewing per se, but often more a reflection of my particular use of them, Hawkins (2018) does highlight how this method has the potential for participants providing short, concise answers which in turn limit the collection of in-depth, exploratory data. It was certainly the case when comparing the answers received from semi-structured interviewing with those received from email interviewing that the latter were less detailed and more concise, even when prompts were used asking participants to explain further. This may reflect the absence of rapport being developed in the email

interviewing (Bowden and Galindo-Gonzalez 2015). Nevertheless, the data gathered was still seen as valuable and was used in partnership with that gained from the semi-structured interviews.

Data Analysis

Mason (1996) suggests three approaches to analysing qualitative data (literal, interpretive and reflexive), acknowledging that many researchers will use a combination of these. The two predominantly pursued here were the literal and reflexive approaches. A literal approach to analysing qualitative data reflects my earlier point concerning interview data being treated as resource (Rapley 2002), recognising that the data more or less reflects the research participants' reality outside of the interview and using the data to draw conclusions about how older women construct and maintain a punk identity. I also demonstrate a reflexive approach (Mason 1996) to analysing the data, trying to make sense of the participants' accounts whilst reflecting on my own place within the creation and analysis of data. A flexible approach was employed throughout the coding and analysis process which was generated in part to the influence of grounded theory.

Inspiration was taken from grounded theory meaning that analysis of data occurred on an ongoing basis and was interactive; 'feeding' back into subsequent interviewing (Gibson and Hartman 2014). My collection and analysis of data were therefore intertwined and not separate, successive stages. Initial notes were made after carrying out interviews, further reflections were noted down as I mulled over interviews in the weeks that followed, interviews were listened to numerous times during transcription, notes were made of emerging comparisons and ideas and reflections fed into subsequent interviews with regards to themes/foci. Such an approach led to a felt immersion in the data I was collecting as well as achieving a saturation of data, demonstrating rigor (Constantinou et al 2017, Tracy 2010). The process outlined above allowed me to get to a point at which I felt I had data of sufficient detail and depth to stop arranging further interviews.

This was carried out in conjunction with continued making of notes, or memo writing as known in grounded theory (Lempert 2007) as well as the creation of diagrams and mind-maps. Lempert (2007) notes that memo writing is: "*the* fundamental process of researcher/data engagement that results in a 'grounded theory' (245). This memo

writing aided my generating of categories, comparisons and contrasts, as well as highlighting things for further consideration (Lempert 2007). In these memos I also began to draw out links to literature which I had consulted in my literature review (seen in Chapter 2). Discovery, a key aspect of grounded theory (Gibson and Hartman 2014), and theory development can be aided by diagramming as this can lead to more abstract thinking (Lempert 2007). The use of diagramming and mind-maps are something I have used throughout my academic life as a student. I personally find that these methods benefit my processing and analysing of information and so it seemed logical to employ these in my data analysis.

This also relates to my decision not to use NVivo to aid data analysis. I had completed training in NVivo during prior postgraduate study and again at the beginning of my PhD but I felt it created a distance between the data and I. I have always struggled with reading and processing information on an electronic screen, always preferring to print out physical copies of material. Additionally the process of re-writing snippets of interviews by hand, colour-coding them and so forth led to a real felt immersion in the data. Related to my discussions below concerning the 'goodness' of qualitative research and moving from concepts such as validity and reliability as judgement to others such as quality or rigor (Tracy 2010), it has been said that using software in qualitative data analysis might add rigour (Richards and Richards 1991 in Welsh 2002). This might be the case, however, a diary of the data analysis was kept in order to reflect upon this in order to counteract the criticism of qualitative data analysis often lacking detail and scrutiny of how it is carried out (Welsh 2002) and to promote quality (Tracy 2010). Coding of data occurred during as well as after the completion of interviews. This did not entail the exhaustive line by line coding often found in grounded theory analysis (Hodkinson 2009) and would be one of the ways my research did not follow a strong grounded analysis approach (Gibson and Hartman 2014). The coding was grounded in the perspectives and words of the women I spoke with. Some open coding occurred to discover what main concerns were (Gibson and Hartman 2014) and coupled with the "careful reading and re-reading of the data" (Rice and Ezzy 1999: 258) that my inductive approach involved, I began to identify themes within and across the interviews. The resulting analysis could therefore be defined as thematic with the "search for themes that emerge as being important in description of the phenomenon (Daly et al 1997)" (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane 2006: 82). These themes then became categories for analysis (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane 2006) and acted as core categories

such as those found in a grounded theory approach (Glaser and Strauss 1967). With these core categories, sub-categories were identified (Glaser and Strauss 1967) and through constant comparison and immersion in the data, relationships between categories and sub-categories, sub-categories and sub-categories, were established leading to the development of substantive theory (Gibson and Hartman 2014) concerning older punk women's construction and maintenance of identity.

Ethics

My research was subject to ethics approval from the University of Leicester which was approved. What follows is an account of the ethical considerations involved in my study and how I addressed these. Giving attention to and being reflexive concerning the ethical dimensions of my study is, according to Olesen (2007), a defining feature of feminist research. Watts (2006) proposes that an ethics of care model has developed within feminist methodologies. This model: "draws close attention to such matters as exploitation of subjects, integrity of representation of subjects' views and experiences, and openness about research aims that has mutuality inherent within the process (Watts 2006: 387). Such ethical considerations will be included in my discussion below but will not be limited to these. I will point out, however, that I do not agree with Watts' (2006) use of the term (research) 'subjects'. As already demonstrated in my thesis, I draw upon the term (research) 'participants' to reflect their active involvement rather than a term such as 'subjects' which has connotations of passivity and the research being 'done to' them.

Ethical Issues and Interviewing

As highlighted by Watts (2006) above, a feminist ethics of care approach to research entails being open about research aims. In my 'call out' for participants (described earlier in this chapter) there was no attempt to mislead readers as to what my research was focused on and the information sheet provided to women who expressed an interest in being involved detailed my research foci further. The call out, information sheet and consent form were all expressed in very clear, straight-forward language. Whilst I was being open about what my research was about, I did not make any reference to my feminist values which underpinned the research. Watts' (2006) choice to not refer to feminist aims and debates when recruiting participants was out of concern for jeopardising their research because of "feminism's negative reputation" (Ramazanoglu

and Holland 2006: 157) and there was a degree of that in my own thinking. I also felt, however, that my focus on purely women might imply my position as a feminist. The sampling method lent itself to participants participating voluntarily coupled with them being aware of their right to withdraw at any point of the research (see the information sheet and consent form, Appendix 1 and 2 respectively). This was outlined in the consent form (Appendix 2) which also provided details of the research itself, leading to the consent being informed. Interviews were digitally recorded and participants were made aware of this prior to the interview taking place. They had the choice to withdraw if they were not happy to be recorded. Seibold (2000) highlights whether asking for a signed informed consent form prior to interview is adequate as the extent to which consent prior to the interview is truly informed can be questioned. My consent form, for example, would not have been able to specify the exact nature of the interview questions beforehand (Watts 2006) because of the inductive approach being pursued and the inclusion of semi-structured interviews. Again, this would have impacted on consent being truly informed. A way I tried to address was by giving the research participants their interview transcripts to read through (something in keeping with feminist research according to Seibold 2000). This, coupled with providing a right to withdraw at any point, meant the process of the interview itself and reflection on this could assure them of their consent being informed.

Confidentiality and privacy, where required, were promoted a number of ways. The storing of data was given consideration and care was taken to ensure protection of this. The interviews were recorded either on a recording device for sole use by the researcher for the purposes of the research or on my personal mobile phone which was password protected. Once these recordings were transferred from the device/mobile phone onto my password protected personal laptop they were deleted permanently from the former. Electronic files (e.g. transcripts) were password protected as already noted. Participants' privacy was respected during the interviews themselves by not pressing them for information they were not open to revealing and by allowing them to choose a place they were felt comfortable with for these to take place. This was also in keeping with feminist ethics concerning sharing control over the research process with the participants (Watts 2006). Something I did not consider to give the women I spoke with more ownership, as well as control, over the research process was asking them to set some ground rules concerning the interviews (Watts 2006). On reflection, this is an element I would certainly like to incorporate where relevant in future research projects.

There are also ethical issues concerning the use of the stimuli being used in the interviews. Where possible I did try to document the material culture by photographing and in some cases participants sent me or gave me photographs. These will remain property of the participants and they reserved the right to ask for these not to be included as part of the data collection process. With regards to the photographs, there might also be the case that some might feature other people in them and thought was given to protecting their privacy.

Though anonymity is considered part of ethical research practice, Downes et al (2013) acknowledge how this might be problematic with research concerned with DIY cultures (e.g. punk). Due to the activist nature of some DIY cultures, research participants might wish to be known or named. Downes et al note that the "practice of imposing pseudonyms and removing identifiable information can undermine participant labour, power and agency" (2013: 108). Such a position is also in keeping with feminist thinking. Participants were, therefore, asked if they wished to be anonymous. Where they did, pseudonyms are used and any identifying details are not referred to. In the case of those who *did* wish to be named (or 'known'), care was still taken with regards to identifying details which might remove anonymity of others. More participants than not said they wished to be named. When presenting data I honour these decisions and as shown in the introduction to the research participants earlier in this chapter, I highlight where pseudonyms were used.

Avoidance of harm was also taken into consideration. By carrying out the face to face interviews in a public space (for example a cafe), I aimed to minimise my exposure to harm and also reduce the possibility of compromising situations. Professional conduct was followed at all times. In terms of psychological or emotional safety, I decided that interviews would be stopped if anything appeared to be causing discomfort to the participant, and they would be rescheduled. This was not an issue that emerged, however, over the course of the interviews. A benefit of sharing the interview transcripts with the participants for 'checking' was that one participant was able to request that something was not included in the data due to its personal nature. The prospective sample was not deemed a vulnerable group per se nor did any of the participants disclose anything which would suggest this.

It would be wrong for me to assume that as a white woman speaking with a sample of predominantly white women, there would be no differences in power. I reflected upon how my position as a researcher itself could denote a particular power status, and

considered ways I could give more control over the research process to the participants
(detailed elsewhere in this section and something which might be intrinsically part of an
inductive approach). I also acknowledged that it would be wrong for me to assume any
similarities between the participants and myself on the basis of ethnicity and/or gender
and/or age would automatically benefit rapport. As suggested much earlier in this
chapter, there are ethical implications to the notion of rapport building within
interviews. Rapport tends to be viewed as a skill employed by the interviewer in order
to generate more detailed, perhaps valid, information from interviewees. It has been
noted that it is naive to equate rapport with trust (Duncombe and Jessop 2002).
Duncombe and Jessop (2002) suggest that researchers must consider the ethical
implications of rapport in that it can be seen as 'faking friendship' and that this rapport
might lead interviewees to disclose things they perhaps wouldn't otherwise on the basis
of false trust. It was therefore deemed important during the interviews themselves to
build rapport without 'faking friendship' hence self-disclosure during interviews
becoming important. Reflexivity during the research process and subsequent analysis
would help in confirming this and the checking of interview transcripts by participants
might have also acted as a way 'taking back' anything they would rather not share.
Reflecting on the interviews afterwards I did not at any point feel I was 'faking
friendship' with the women I spoke with and have in fact continued to remain in contact
with some of the participants. The way participants also asked questions of me in the
interviews demonstrated rapport and serves as evidence of a non-hierarchical
relationship between us (Watts 2006).

Central to my responsibility as a researcher, and indeed as a feminist researcher, was
presenting my participants' voices without distortion (O'Shaughnessy and Krogman
2012) in order to maintain "integrity of representation of subjects' [sic] views and
experiences" (Watts 2006: 387). Acker and Esseveld (1983) even suggest that feminist
research is 'adequate' if the actives voices of the women are heard in the write-up of the
research. There were several ways I have endeavoured to uphold these points. I took
care in the recording and transcription of interviews in order that I produced
transcriptions as true to the interview itself as possible (recognising that at times there
can be technical issues which impinge this and so forth). These transcriptions were
returned back to the research participants for checking. One or two participants
corrected parts of their interviews where speech had cut out, another explained some of
her points further (with no prompting from me). Throughout my data chapters which

follow next, the voices of the women I spoke with are present and guide my discussions – the use of quotes here is essential in ensuring the presence of their active, undistorted, voices.

Ensuring Quality Qualitative Research

Qualitative research is not without critique but Peshkin (1993) suggests that the 'goodness' of research has tended to be judged according to outcomes which have derived from a (positivist) tradition which focuses on testing hypotheses, producing generalisations and is driven by theory. Instead, Peshkin (1993) suggests that this conceptualisation of 'goodness' needs to broaden, to encompass a variety of outcomes which would therefore recognise the quality of qualitative research. Such outcomes which can arise from qualitative research, for example, might be description (of processes, relationships, people); interpretation (such as the development or elaboration of concepts); verification (of assumptions of theories, for example) and evaluation (Peshkin 1993). If the criteria of good research can therefore move away from criteria generated by the positivist tradition, this raises the ability to recognise value in qualitative research which is often critiqued on the basis of positivist ideals. This is not to say that quality is unimportant within qualitative research but, as Seale (1999) highlights, paradigm shifts within research have meant modernist (and perhaps positivist) concepts such as validity and reliability have lost some of their relevance and the criteria of how we judge 'goodness' of research has broadened. This is one way I justify the goodness of my own qualitative research, recognising the value of Peshkin's (1993) outcomes rather than those associated with the positivist tradition. The outcomes of description and interpretation (Peshkin 1993) are particularly significant in this thesis.

In addition to this, Tracy (2010) suggests eight criteria which could be considered in pursuing 'quality qualitative research': worthy topic, rich rigor, sincerity, credibility, resonance, significant contribution, ethics and meaningful coherence. These were considered throughout the research process and justify this as a piece of quality qualitative research. The topic being explored is worthy according to the characteristics identified by Tracy (2010). It is significant for the reasons identified in Chapter 2 but it can also be considered worthy in that it is a topic grown from my own personal biography as a woman who has been 'involved' in punk for nearly twenty years.

Rich rigor refers to whether there is enough data to support the claims made by the research, or, is there a "rich complexity of abundance"? (Tracy 2010: 841). This has been achieved through my use of methods which generated an abundance of in-depth qualitative data, the use of an appropriate sample size and allowing adequate time for the research with the data collection occurring over a period of 12-18 months. Sincerity has been gained by being reflexive throughout the research and transparent regarding research collection and analysis (e.g. with clear documentation) and this is demonstrated throughout this particular chapter. Tracy (2010) also suggests sincerity can be helped by reflecting upon motivations and biases prior to the research and these were outlined in my introductory chapter.

Credibility can be gained, for example, through thick description, triangulation or crystallization, multi-vocality and partiality (Tracey 2010). As will be demonstrated in the data chapters, thick description is achieved through 'showing' rather than 'telling' to demonstrate the complexity of the data gathered (Tracy 2010). As outlined further below, triangulation is in part achieved through the different data sources – semi-structured interviews, interview stimuli and questioning of participants by email. Tracy notes that though triangulation has been criticised for not improving accuracy, such things entail the consideration of different facets which deepen understanding and triangulation "encourages consistent (re) interpretation" (2010: 843). My research hoped to address multi-vocality through participant collaboration throughout the research process and this too reflects the feminist values I explored earlier in this chapter. This also relates to ethics (Tracey 2010). Clarifying interview transcripts with participants, for example, could be seen as ethical in order to avoid misrepresentation (Tracy 2010). Ethical issues have been considered in much greater detail already in this chapter.

Resonance refers to the ability of the research to evoke feeling amongst an audience (Tracy 2010). This might be achieved by being clear and comprehensive, engaging an audience through the writing style, and the research being thought of as relevant to other contexts/situations (Tracy 2010). These are qualities I have borne in mind in writing this thesis. I have also given consideration to achieving meaningful coherence through sensitively connecting the literature review with research findings, and ensuring the style of how the research is represented is in keeping with the goals of the research (Tracy 2010). I hope some meaningful coherence was also achieved by: choosing methods that partnered with the theories/paradigms being adopted (feminist, inductive),

making clear links between the literature review and research foci/methods, and having research questions which are grounded in said literature (Tracy 2010).

Tracy's (2010) last criteria for quality qualitative research is that the research makes a significant contribution, whether of a theoretical, heuristic, practical or methodological nature. Even prior to completing and concluding this research it is hoped the potential significance is indicated by my discussion of gaps in literature in Chapter 2. For example, my research's potential to extend current theoretical assumptions regarding concepts such as 'subculture'. As will be demonstrated, however, in my concluding chapter of this thesis my research does indeed make significant theoretical contributions.

Planned, Attempted, Rethought...

To finish this chapter I will now reflect upon how my initial plans for data collection were not realised in their entirety. I believe it is still important to reflect on these here for several key reasons. Firstly as part of my commitment to transparency (Tracy 2010) it is important to be transparent about the aspects of this research which did not go to plan. Secondly it is important to include these discussions in terms of this research offering something of methodological significance, even if that is in the context of finding methods that were not compatible with the specific topic and sample required. Last, but not least, such reflections demonstrates my reflexivity as a researcher as well as highlighting one of the learning curves experienced during this PhD. First I will look at the initial plan to include participant-generated 'zine pages and how this was reworked before considering the failure to carry out a digital ethnography.

'Zine Pages

The interview participants (and also those who I spoke with view e-mail) were invited to create a 'zine page on 'what being punk means to them' after the interviews. This was outlined to them in the information sheets they received when deliberating whether to proceed to interview. 'Zines are fairly commonplace within punk and riotgrrl. 'Zines are self-made, self-published booklets. Traditionally they would be A5 sized, produced via photocopier, contain a mixture of images and text, and sold or given out at gigs. Usually 'zines are distinguished in terms of 'perzines' (personal zines on whatever topic(s) the producer wishes) or 'fanzines' which centre on the producer's fando,perhaps a band. Because they are self-made and self-published there is no regard

to copyright with producers often using cut-outs from newspapers or magazines. Contemporary 'zines can be more adventurous in design, look and layout (sometimes even being online) but often punk and riotgrrl 'zines maintain the traditional feel as described above.

Whilst various literature exists on 'zines (for instance Chidgey (2006) on per-zines as life story data), there appears to be nothing which considers 'zines which are made as part of or for the purpose of data collecting; potentially signalling a new, whilst also contextually appropriate, research method within punk scholarship. With regards to e-zines ('zines created and viewed online or 'electronically') there has been some acknowledgement of these as a data source with Millward utilising online football fanzines as sites for "the construction of (collective and individual) identities" (2008: 299). With the participants' permission, the proposition was that these 'zine pages would be collated into a 'zine which could be distributed back to them at the end of the research (and potentially distributed more widely), therefore giving something 'back' to those involved and linking to feminist research principles previously noted.

Asking the research participants to produce 'zine pages might be seen as what Banks (2007) refers to as a more recent emerging strand in visual research: the creation and analysis of the 'collaborative image'. This is argued to be part of the more general postmodern turn in social sciences. Such an approach to research is akin to Gauntlett's (2007) argument that one needs to consider people's creativity in order to grasp social experience. In *Creative Explorations*, Gauntlett (2007) is advocating a move from traditional interviews and focus groups when researching identity to instead having research participants making visual things, whether videos or models from Lego, and then asking them to interpret and reflect on these. He argues that this is in keeping with late modern ideas of 'reflexive' identities whilst also allowing the researcher to grasp the individual's unconscious identity processes – something which they are not aware of to reflect and answer questions upon in a traditional setting such as interview.

A difference between how I planned to use the 'zines and Gauntlett's (2007) research is that the process of the creation was not being observed and as I was asking participants to create these *after* the interviews, I was not asking them to reflect upon them in the interview itself. Gauntlett (2007) offers further examples of researchers who have followed an approach akin to his own yet do not appear to have observed the process of creation. For example, Whetton and McWhirter's (1998 in Gauntlett 2007) research asked children to produce drawings which they then reflected upon, or the example of

Horsley (2006 in ibid) who asked participants to produce a front cover and content page of an imaginary men's magazine which was then followed by a questionnaire. Yet, again, these examples were asking participants to create these prior to asking them to reflect upon them. My decision to not invite participants to create 'zine pages prior to the interview was because I was concerned about them feeling I was expecting too much of them - they were already volunteering to give some of their time to speak with me just as I was also then asking them to bring material items to the interview. Additionally I wanted the 'zine page to be given more prominence as a data collection method in its own right, rather than becoming another type of interview stimuli, in order to consider how such an activity/resource could be used as a research method given the lack of academic attention on this.

Out of a total of twenty-two research participants (the seventeen interview participants plus the five women who I spoke with via e-mail) only two took up the invitation to create and submit a 'zine page. On reflection several main reasons emerged for such a low uptake. Firstly, a number of the participants said they were not familiar with 'zines and what they were and said they were happy to partake in the interviews (or e-mail conversations) but would not be creating a 'zine page. Secondly, the extra effort being required of participants caused an issue. Many commented on how they would not have time, for example. I believe as well because of 'zines often being associated with creativity this may have put participants off as they felt it was demanding quite a lot from them. I took the decision in the end to branch out the invitation to create a 'zine page to any women who identified as punk over the age of 30 – advertising this in the same way as I had done for the initial calls for interview participants (detailed above). In addition to the two submissions from the women within my research sample I received six further contributions – I collated these into 'zine format which I then photocopied, sending copies out to the contributors. Due to the nature of this becoming quite different to how it was intended I have not drawn upon these 'zine contributions as data in the context of this thesis. I do plan, however, to return to this in the near future.

Digital Ethnography

The research has also initially proposed to utilise digital ethnography in providing an additional source of data whilst also allowing an examination of the importance of virtual spaces (such as social networking sites, social media) in the lives of older/post-youth punk women. Digital ethnography, put simply, applies new media technologies to

ethnography (Murthy 2011) meaning the researcher will engage in online participant-observation. If interviewing offered a route to considering participants' biographical narrative then digital ethnography could consider the present whilst exploring also the collective/community element of punk. Justification for such an approach rather than merely interviewing participants offline about this comes from Murthy who argues that: "virtual worlds are built and maintained through the implicit notion that residents will not meet each other off-line...Therefore, off-line participant observation and interviewing would not truly capture the experiences, communities, and interactions of virtual worlds" (2011: 160). In addition to this, in a time of late modernity it is now also recognised that individuals can extend and modify their offline identities through online identities (Turkle 2005) and so, given the increasing importance of new media technologies in creating our sense of self it seemed fitting to consider this. Digital ethnography can provide the potential for respondents becoming 'stakeholders' in the research and has the ability of considering a range of data simultaneously, from text to audio (Murthy 2011). In addition to this it can overcome geographical limitations (something pertinent to my research) and it presents new ways of disseminating findings (Murthy 2011).

A digital ethnographic approach has been utilised by Boellstorff (2008) and Kendall (2002), and pursued by Murthy (2010) in the examination of 'Taqwacore', a Muslim punk scene. In the first phase of the research, Murthy (2010) observed Taqwacore-related Facebook and Myspace pages, discussions groups and blogs; conducted participant observation through Twitter and carried out virtual interviews by e-mail, Twitter and Facebook messages. I was proposing to take a similar approach to Murthy's (2010).

Twitter is a social media platform which allows registered users to post statuses, with these statuses being restricted to 140 characters. Users have a profile featuring an image and some basic details. They can 'follow' fellow Twitter users and like, re-tweet or respond to users' 'tweets' (status updates). The emergence of Twitter as a source of data has been noted by Murthy (2012) who, drawing upon work by Goffman (1959), for example, considers these tweets as part of the authors' constructions of self. I believed that examining older punk women's tweets might therefore provide another means through which to consider their construction of an ageing punk identity. Indeed, I felt the searching for such women on Twitter could also provide interesting in itself e.g. do people stress their punk identity as part of their profile? How prevalent is the use of

Twitter amongst older punks? Twitter also has potential as a search tool for examining thoughts on a particular event, for example; it provides access to conversations; and a search for hashtags[5] can return specific content or material on a particular topic (Ovadia 2009). This could be relevant when considering annual punk 'get-togethers' such as Rebellion Festival or provide another way of finding relevant participants. Alongside Twitter, social networking sites (for example Facebook) were to be considered and punk specific discussion boards.

By taken an approach which entailed various online mediums being utilised such as Facebook, Twitter and discussion boards, I was aware this could be criticised then for not having a 'place' as its focus. However, Postill and Pink (2012) consider the way the making of an ethnographic place can emerge through certain everyday routines of digital ethnography practice (Postill and Pink 2012). This involves five overlapping sub-practices or routines: catching up, sharing, exploring, interacting and archiving (Postill and Pink 2012). To try and make this manageable I identified two online discussion boards related to punk I would focus on and planned to also utilise Twitter and any relevant Facebook groups.

The two discussion boards, 'TalkPunk' and 'Anarcho-Punk.net' were selected due to being the most active punk boards online. As well as being regularly used, they have a large number of subscribed members. At the time of planning the digital ethnography 'TalkPunk' had 480 and 'Anarcho-punk.net' 16635 members. Whilst the latter allows non-registered individuals to view discussion boards, the former is viewable only to registered members. Contributing to both discussion boards is allowed by registered members only. It was therefore necessary to register and create a profile on both sites. The username I chose when registering, and which would be used when posting/replying, was a play on a punk band's song title. The username therefore indicated something about my musical preferences whilst also suggesting I played an instrument myself. It was deliberately gender neutral though knowledge of the band's time of existence, so to speak, might lead to some assumption regarding my age.

My first difficulty when I started exploring these discussion boards was that I had a specific criteria in terms of my focus (punk women aged 30 and above) and there was no clear way of identifying who this would apply to. In light of this I decided to create a

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[5] Hashtags are most commonly associated with Twitter. They are used to identify an update on a particular topic or focus and involve adding a hash sign (#) to the start of a word/phrase, for example #punk.

new discussion thread in which I described my research and asked if there were any women aged 30 plus using the boards – this had no replies. On the 'Anarcho-Punk.net' discussion board after seeing that my thread starter had been viewed by over one hundred users I followed up my initial post asking if anyone then would be happy sharing their reasons for *not* replying! Again, I received no responses.

With regards to Twitter and Facebook, digital ethnography proved even less straight-forward and successful, respectively. There were two possible approaches to utilising Twitter: either through focusing on a sample of older/post-youth punk women on Twitter or through focusing on a sample of tweets based on a search tag e.g. #oldpunk. Both approaches were piloted to see if either was practical in the context of this research. It was clear with the first approach that I would need to use my interviewing or discussion board participation to generate participants who were happy to provide, where applicable, their Twitter usernames with me. This was deemed the most appropriate option after trying to identify potential participants through Twitter's search facilities provided unsuccessful e.g. there is no means of searching the age of participants, their gender or indeed whether they identify as punk! As already noted my discussion board participation failed to generate any participants. With regards to the women I interviewed, I asked the first few participants whether they used Twitter and they either did not or where they did, dismissed their Twitter usage. After this (and with the growing pressure on time the interviews were having) I decided to stop asking. Additionally I could find no practical way of utilising search tags on Twitter.

An initial search of Facebook groups with 'old punks' in their title flagged up three in particular that were deemed relevant. Two of these groups were closed meaning membership needed to be approved by an administrator of the group in order to view the group/make posts. A review of the group which was 'open' (meaning anyone can see the group's posts and/or add themselves to the group) showed that the last post was several months old and that posts were predominantly links to videos or promotional posts of bands/gigs so was not considered a suitable choice. On requesting to join the closed groups, one approved the request immediately and whilst more regularly used than aforementioned group, the content again consisted of links and promotional posts. The second of the closed groups never approved my request to join.

Given the practical difficulties with the digital ethnography, coupled with the increasing time and effort required by the process of completing interviews and transcribing these, it was decided to not pursue this method further. My experiences highlight, however,

the complexity of digital ethnography with older punk women and lay the groundwork for its future development.

Conclusion

What has been offered here in this chapter is a discussion of the epistemological and ontological underpinnings of the research and consideration of the research design and methods which were deemed appropriate for exploring the experiences of older/post-youth punk women. The research utilised mixed methods in the form of semi-structured interviewing and email interviews. Whilst qualitative methods may pose some limitations, discussion of how to conduct 'quality' qualitative research has been reflected upon and it is argued that such quality was achieved by bearing in mind the outcomes identified by Peshkin (1993) and the eight criteria proposed by Tracy (2010): worthy topic, rich rigor, sincerity, credibility, resonance, significant contribution, ethics and meaningful coherence. Each of these criteria has been further elaborated upon.

This chapter began by considering what 'feminist research' looks like and drew the reader's attention to my own feminist beliefs. These beliefs, coupled with a grounded theory approach underpinned the generation and subsequent analysis of data. This chapter has presented a reflexive account of how and why I did what I did (or in some cases did not do as I had planned!) The following five chapters will now turn to my findings, grouped around particular key themes which emerged from the data. This will start with the issue of definition(s). According to my participants, for example, what actually is 'punk'?

Chapter 4: Definitions, or, 'what' and 'who' is punk?

How did my sample of older punk women define 'what' and 'who' is punk? This chapter will focus on how the women in my research sample ('insiders') define *what* punk is as well as their definitions concerning *who* is punk with an examination made as to how these definitions were constructed. The complexity in defining punk has been noted (e.g. Dunn 2008, Sabin 1999) and it has been suggested that this complexity in part results from punk's dislike of being labelled/categorised (Beer 2014). It may, therefore, seem contradictory to be looking at definitions and treating 'punk' as a concept capable of being contained within a neat etymology if this is one of the very things punk might be seeking to evade. Yet defining punk has been retained as a point of discussion throughout subcultural literature, whether explicitly in terms of considering what/who comes under the punk label/category or more implicitly within broader discussions concerning punk (see, for example, Hebidge 1998 or Phillipov 2006). Something to consider is that definitions can depend on the source and whether, for example, you're considering the definitions utilised by 'insiders' (e.g. those within the punk scene) or definitions of 'outsiders'. O'Hara (1999) illustrates this by noting that the most popular definition of punk – as a youth trend – is the one most commonly presented in the media, despite this being the least accurate when speaking to punk insiders. Firstly, the prevailing idea of punk being 'different' will be explored before unpacking why it is 'different' in terms of some core values identified by the women. I will then explore any changes in the women's definitions of punk over time which their reflective accounts revealed. Lastly, I will look at the process of defining people (be it themselves or others) as punk (or not!). Such discussions are important to understanding how these women construct their own (punk) identities. It also furthers an understanding of the complexities in these constructions and starts to demonstrate how 'punk' is processual and relational.

Punk = Rebellion

A strong sense of punk being defined as something that was 'different' emerged from the women interviewed. 'Different' was signalled or conceptualised in various ways. Naefun, for example, referred to how punk was "alternative" whilst others spoke of how it was different to what they conceived as 'the mainstream'. A common way this

difference was envisioned was through the recurring concept of rebellion, something discussed further below. This perception of punk as different or rebellious has been noted elsewhere (e.g. Leblanc 2002, Gordon 2014). It was when asked about their initial exposure to punk, that many of the women drew upon this concept of difference and what emerged, then, was how this feeling of punk being different could be central to its initial appeal - this was usually envisioned through punk music. Millie's initial exposure to punk, like many of the participants, came as a teenager and when describing the appeal of punk, she said about finding it (the music) "exciting" - that emotive response might be understood as deriving from her conceiving punk as something that was 'different' to what she had previously been exposed to. Various participants spoke of punk as being something which entailed them rebelling against their parents.

It is important here to also note how my participants' feeling that punk was different should be also understood through a gendered lens. Punk can be understood as not just different because it is different to, for example, mainstream or dominant culture, but in addition it is different compared to mainstream gendered expectations concerning young women. This was found to be the case amongst the punk girls involved in Leblanc's (2002) study. Punk's offer to the women I spoke with of something different in this gendered context can be seen through dress and music - I will detail this argument further in relation to these two areas in Chapters 5 and 6 respectively.

The perception of punk as different and the relationship between that and participants' initial exposure to, and indeed entry into punk, might relate to Andes' (2002) developmental model of the punk career of women/men. In this model, the stages are preceded by a state of mind which Andes (2002) refers to as a predisposition of 'difference'. During this time individuals do not self-define as a punk but they have an awareness of punk as something which is not within the boundaries of standard youth categories (Andes 2002). This, then, is that sense of punk being 'different' as described by the women in my sample when reflecting on their initial exposure or awareness of punk. A central theme of difference was found too by Gordon (2014) when researching punk subcultural awareness amongst his research sample of punk women/men. In Andes' (2002) pre-disposition stage, peers/parents are used as a reference group, with the individual seeing themselves as different from these 'normal others'. This is where the idea of rebellion might emerge, as punk on the basis of being different to 'normal others' becomes something rebellious, just as the individual who chooses to enter punk

is rebelling and this for many forms the central appeal of punk. And, as Andes (2002) notes in her model, after pre-disposition comes the first stage of rebellion. Returning in more detail then to my participants equating punk with rebellion - primarily, rebellion was constructed as an activity or mind-set of youth. This is evidenced by Katie who explicitly made this link, saying (about punk) that "you got into it because it's rebellious, when you're young". Yet in interviews with other women I spoke with, this link was made less explicitly and was signalled instead by a shift in the language being used in women's descriptions. When unfolding their punk biographies, women used new ways of describing this rebellious quality of punk. As described below there was a move to understanding punk through terming it as 'subversion' - rather than 'rebellion' – though arguably the same qualities are being described. So the way participants were conceptualising subversion and rebellion mirrored each other – the only difference was the terminology being used and this association of rebellion with youth. This again demonstrates how rebellion as an expression has connotations of youth and shows one way that the women's definitions of punk may vary according to whether they are reflecting on the past, or the present. As already alluded to, the relationship between youth and rebellion is also echoed in Andes' (2002) model, whereby the first stage of the punk career is rebellion but, again, this is said to take place during a particular time in one's life e.g. when young. Andes says herself how "Most of the people I interviewed had already moved beyond the rebellion stage, but could tell me about the younger kids in the scene" (2002: 223), explicitly linking rebellion to youth and suggesting it was something you grow out of in the course of your punk career. By situating rebellion as a characteristic of youth, or adolescence, this allowed most of the women I spoke with, however, to also position their selves as different to their rebellious youth selves e.g. different in the sense of having since transitioned into adulthood. Participants' characterisation of rebellion as tied to a particular period of the life-course echoes wider discourses which posit adolescence as a period of rebellion (Henderson et al 2007), signalling an internalisation of the common age narratives we are exposed to from an early age (Gullette 2015). 'Subversion' as a concept allowed them to negotiate, however, such punk ethos into adulthood. This was one way most of the women I spoke with demonstrated the process of 'learning ageing' (Gullette 2015); evidencing their internalisation of age norms associated with adulthood.

Punk is a "State of Mind"

Digging deeper, what actually makes punk different? What follows is one way of understanding this. When participants were asked to define punk or explain what punk meant to them now, at this stage in their lives, a common theme emerged from their answers that punk was viewed as an "attitude" or a "state of mind". Whilst the majority of participants' initial interest in punk had been grounded in the associated music (and some had initially adopted what they perceived as a punk style), there was the sense of their punk identity having moved beyond that:

> "It's about an attitude, it's about a state of mind, it's about who you are on the inside more so than who you are on the outside...or how you look like, you know, or the colour your hair is or the style your hair is or the boots you're wearing or the band t-shirt that you're wearing" - Naefun

> "I don't think it's about the music and I definitely don't think it's about the clothes" - Naja

This idea that punk had become an attitude, a way of thinking, is similar to what is proposed by Bennett (2006) in his sample (all men) of older punk fans. Bennett (2006) talks of internalisation in which participants shift from externally communicating their punkness (e.g. through clothes) to punk becoming a lifestyle of ingrained ideas and beliefs. However, what comprises these ideas and beliefs is only fleetingly considered by Bennett (2006). Returning to my research, one participant, Suzy, when describing this shift in her perception of what punk is, said she thought punk was "less superficial" for her now and "more serious" which again points to an internalisation process, with punk becoming more to do with ingrained beliefs and values.

If punk, then, is commonly conceived as a state of mind, attitude or way of thinking, what exactly is the nature of this? Again, some common themes emerged from the interviews concerning what a punk attitude/way of thinking might involve and a set of core values emerged. These values can be considered as DIY, subversion, political consciousness and community. Given the geographical spread of the women interviewed, these values can be seen as constituting core values of punk, rather than merely the core values of a particular punk community/geographical scene (this logic was also used by Moran 2010).

'Do-It-Yourself' or 'Doing-It Yourself' (DIY)

A number of participants referred specifically to something they named DIY as a core punk value. DIY as a core punk value has been noted in numerous academic texts (for example Beer 2014, Glasper 2014, Moran 2010, O'Hara 1999) with some even referring specifically to punk as 'DIY punk' (e.g. Griffin 2012, Moran 2010). DIY stands for 'do it yourself' or 'doing it yourself' and what follows will be an elaboration on what this might involve within this punk (e.g. rather than home improvement) context. An interesting contrast weaved amongst the women's accounts was that of DIY both possessing independent ('you') and collective elements. Martin-Iverson refers to this as "collective independence" (2014: 187) or the sense that the DIY ethic is grounded both in the values of autonomy and community. Related to this is the suggestion from O'Hara (1999) that DIY is built upon ideas from anarchism concerning individual responsibility and cooperation in enacting change. Both of these can help in understanding what at first glance appeared to be a contradiction in terms of the individual/collective emerging from the women's accounts of DIY.

Overall there was a sense that DIY involved being pro-active and here individual responsibility is evident. As Sam said, "if it's not there and you want it, make it yourself". Further elaborations did, however, bypass just the literal making of things e.g. 'zines or craft, including other creative activities such as writing and playing music, or getting involved in political activity as means of 'making things' happen. This breadth of examples of how DIY could be enacted is interesting when considering existing consideration of DIY punk, as some accounts (e.g. Hannerz 2015, O'Hara 1999, Martin-Iverson 2014) have tended to concentrate on DIY in the context of music (be it playing in a band or putting on gigs). For example, there is the situating of DIY in a binary relationship to 'selling out', a process by which music production/playing becomes commercialised (Hannerz 2015). As illustrated by some of the women in my sample, however, DIY does not necessarily have to be within the context of musical endeavours.

A way that DIY could translate in different ways outside of a music context involved crafting. Lindsey and Sam, specifically, raised their engagement in handcrafts in their interviews and this can be unpacked further in relation to the DIY value associated with punk. One of the photos Lindsey provided prior to her interview showed a collection of cushions and she elaborated on this when we spoke:

> "...so the stuff on the picture - some of that was made by me, some of
> it was made by other people [...]that sort of craft thing of making stuff
> myself, like, I never buy cushions; why would you buy a cushion
> when you can make one? [laughs] [Also] if I do buy something [...]
> crafty then, you know, I'll try to buy it from somebody who's doing it
> for themselves, [...] stuff that doesn't come from a big shop or
> whatever, I try and support people who are being independent".

This can be read as demonstrating a more traditional and/or general conceptualisation of DIY; DIY as being about doing-it-yourself in the sense of just the making of things, the use of hand skills. It demonstrates too the opportunities provided by DIY to resist capitalist mass consumerism (Stalp 2015, Winge and Stalp 2013). This comes through particularly in Lindsey's comment concerning the supporting of, for example, independent (e.g. not mass produced, high profit driven) producers. Taken in the context of the DIY values associated with punk, which the women I spoke with raised, making things also demonstrates that idea again of being pro-active and doing things for yourself (and others). Sam linked this too to speaking out about social issues and engaging in political action:

> "...I've done bits of what I call craftivism as well [...][locally] a drunk
> driver had crashed into [some] railings and gone into this wall and for
> months it'd just been left with like temporary railings on and it's a
> busy corner an' I just thought they're just not bothering to fix it so
> then one night, in the middle of the night, me and a friend and my son
> went down [...] and I crocheted tons and tons of flowers and we just
> (this entire section of fencing) covered it in flowers and ribbons".

Such an example could be seen as a form of 'yarn bombing' whereby crocheted or knitted items are used as a form of graffiti in a sense, as part of a protest activity (Wolfram Cox and Minahan 2005). Using domestic handcrafts (such as crocheting, knitting, sewing...) more generally as a form of resistance or subversion has emerged within third wave feminism (Bratich and Brush 2011, Stalp 2015). Since the industrial revolution, domestic handcrafts have been predominantly associated with women (Scott and Keates 2004) and Stalp (2015) notes that activities such as sewing and knitting are seen as feminine, practiced mainly by ageing women in the private sphere. Therefore

whilst the engagement of older punk women in domestic handcrafts might appear to be supporting the common association between such activities and ageing women, the value they imbue such crafting with offers instead resistance or a means to engage in socio-political discussions. Acts such as those identified by Sam also challenge the notion of these activities being reserved for the private sphere (Stalp 2015).

Several participants saw DIY as bounded up with another punk value, 'community', and it's here the notion of cooperation emerges. DIY could be something done as a group effort ("get people together to organise and do stuff" - Sam) whilst, as Suzy described, supporting others in itself was a part of DIY:

> "the DIY scene really means a lot to me because the ideals of doing it yourself and helping other people has always been something I've felt was important".

The punk value of community which emerged from the interviews more broadly will be discussed further below.

Moran (2010) has considered how DIY within punk often comes as a necessity, resulting from the low economic income of those involved. Yet whilst there was some brief reference to this in the context of one or two participants' youth, as illustrated, DIY was framed more through ideas of being pro-active and supporting your punk community, and related to this too may be DIY as a subversive, or even political, tool (see below). Moran (2010) makes a link between low economic income and the relatively young nature of the participants in the punk subculture, so this serves to illustrate the importance of research samples including older punks as well as older punk women (Moran's 2010 sample was of eight punk men).

Subversion

Subversion was referred to both directly and indirectly by participants but the source of power/authority that the subversion was aimed at could be conceptualised differently. Firstly there was subversion where wider/mainstream society (participant's term) was conceived as the authority to undermine, as demonstrated by Sam when talking about DIY as a subversive tool - "you don't always have to toe the party line, you can do your own thing". This was echoed in other interviews, including Sharon who spoke of "not being afraid to get up and do something, not being stopped by the rules of society". This

subversion will be further unpacked as a value in action across the other data chapters in relation to gender and ageing.

For one participant, subversion was conceptualised as undermining the power/authority of other punks. Punk 'others' were used as a reference point, and seen as representing the existence of a typical way to be or do punk. 'Doing your own thing' for Naja was doing something different to what she perceived punk others as doing. Speaking about a popular punk event and her choice of clothing, Naja said:

> "I'm not gonna wear what the rest of them wear and I'm not going to do
>
> what the rest of them do. Because that's what they all do at [...]'cause
>
> they're all 'punks'. So I'm gonna go do something different".

As mentioned above, some saw DIY as a tool for subversion. This could again be evidence of DIY being concerned with individual responsibility. Political awareness and involvement was a recurring theme across the interviews (discussed further below) and perhaps it could be said that this political awareness or consciousness too was a tool for subversion, as Rebecca illustrated - "anti-racism, anti-homophobia, anti transphobia, anti yeah anti the systems that keep those things in place and doing things to dismantle those systems".

To take Weitz's definition of resistance as "actions that not only reject subordination but do so by *challenging the ideologies that support that subordination*" (2001: 670) it can be argued that examples such as Naja with her clothing might indeed be demonstrating resistance. However, 'resistance' was not an expression necessarily used by the participants I spoke with. Based on the description and examples offered above, then, it can be surmised that this concept of subversion might overlap with that of 'resistance'. Yet my positioning of such subversion as resistance would be imposing my external definition of it, ignoring the perspectives of the women and how they named such acts.

Political consciousness

The relationship between punk and politics has been well documented and, more specifically, the adopting of anarchist principles within the punk movement (O'Hara 1999) or left-wing politics more generally (Phillipov 2006). As previously noted, becoming (more) political aware/conscious and/or getting involved in politics was a common theme that emerged from the interviews and could be considered another core punk value. For some participants this emerged over time. For example Briony said

she'd "gone from thinking about it [punk] as being in a musical sense and then [...] more of an active political sense" whilst Suzy noted she now took "more notice of the politics and ideals that bands sing about in their songs". For Sharon, however, this appeared to be something which had been constant throughout since her first exposure to punk:

> "to me it feels like a real freedom to still have the same attitude, it still means the same to me in many ways, it is still the whole anarchy thing about it, taking responsibility for yourself, not being afraid to get up and do something, not being stopped by the rules of society...and that's to me still the essence of that, in some ways that hasn't changed".

Sharon's quote above also shows the interlinked nature of punk values, as I demonstrated above too with DIY and subversion. Sharon here references DIY ("not being afraid to get up and do something"), subversion ("not being stopped by the rules of society"), individuality ("taking responsibility for yourself") and politics ("the whole anarchy thing about it").

Three main ideas emerged concerning the nature of the relationship between punk and politics and/or political consciousness. Firstly, the idea of punk being part of an era (around the late 1970s) which was bounded up in certain politics. Both punk and the associated politics was therefore contextually bounded and produced. One participant, Naja, spoke of this, expressing that punk emerged to shock and therefore its political stance was part of this, coupled with a belief of being capable of changing how things were. But these were located in a particular period of time:

> "...you believe you can change things, you believe, and you can demonstrate, you've got a voice, and I think unfortunately now probably, sadly enough, I don't think it's quite like that any longer. You can see that in the Brexit thing. There's not really that many demonstrations. I mean, if it was 1979 you'd have a whole different situation. Shock system is no more".

The second idea (which was more common) was that politics was built into punk music through songs/lyrics which expressed particular ideas/views. Here, is the feeling that punk's political component comes from the music, rather than being part of punk more broadly as a state of mind. As Suzy said "obviously politics are so closely tied into punk music". There was reference by Milly to a specific genre of punk music known for being politically laden when she said about getting "more into the politics, the anarcho-punk" – recognising that this type of punk in particular is imbued with a particular

political stance. But the more general way punk music spoke from a particular body of political views/stances was also recognised as Elizabeth said:

> "you look at a lot of the bands and they will sort of...things they sing about in songs an um seem to be linked to political views um although I think one of my main parts is the environment which isn't one of the ones that is as sort of aware in punk music, it's not one of the issues that they 'really' sing about but or mentioned but you know they all interlink".

Thirdly, was the idea – and this was the most prevalent - that politics was just built into and part of a broader punk ethos; it came as 'part of the package'. This was more implicit in the women's narrative with participants talking about politics being important to punk with no reference to these politics being located in music/lyrics, for example. Lindsey illustrated this when I asked her what she would say punk meant:

> "It definitely comes back to DIY [...] that's about self-reliance I suppose and kind of knowing your own mind as well, just sayin' "ok, what do I think about this and what can I do about it?" [...] Whether that's getting involved in politics or, I don't know, being a writer or playing music or making stuff yourself. All of that comes into it".

Again, there is the intersecting of punk values – DIY, individuality and politics. For Lindsey the DIY principle was at the core of what she believed to be punk. Along with this is the assumption that embracing this DIY value would potentially mean becoming more political active, based on the notion of punk entailing some kind of political consciousness.

Whilst participants often referred to particular political outlooks as tied to punk, only a minority labelled such an outlook as anarchist and it was more common for more generalised political affiliations to be made. This might reflect the suggestion made at the start of this chapter concerning the unwillingness of punk (and by that virtue, then, punks) to label or categorise themselves or indeed things more widely. In their paired interview, Christine and Kristianne spoke at lengths about their confusion over and dislike of labels and society's/individual's use of them. It is also worth noting how they saw an embracement of labels as done more so by youth:

> Kristianne: "Does anybody really like labels? I don't know..."
>
> Christine: "I think some people..."
>
> Kristianne: "It's ok if you're into advertising and marketing because it helps you sell something maybe..."

> Christine: "I think a lot of younger people need labels so that they do feel like they fit in..."

Or perhaps, this generalised reference to politics is a reflection of the particular biographies of the women I spoke to. It may not be a coincidence that 'anarchy', 'anarchism' or 'anarchist' were terms voiced by women who had experienced the 'Anarchy in the UK' punk movement of the late 1970s and therefore felt able, or comfortable, using such language.

The more generalised political affiliations which emerged from the women's discussions concerned the linking of punk with leftist or left-wing politics or, more broadly, fighting social injustice e.g. anti-racist, anti-fascist views. Most of the women talked about this directly. Lindsey highlighted this as something which had never changed for her:

> "Social justice and just, you know, anything to do with equality - I think it bothered me then and then it bothers me now and I don't think that, well, I hope it doesn't change to be honest".

Animal rights and environmental concerns were a recurring theme in terms of the political stance of punk – something again anarcho-punk specifically has been linked to. Jess, for example, spoke of running stalls for a conservation society at punk shows whilst Naefun spoke of the local vegan community she belonged to and how veganism and punk were often linked:

> "It's kind of an integral part of the punk community I think, the whole veganism aspect. I'm not saying every punk in [location] is vegan or vegetarian because absolutely not, but I think it is a key part of kind of that sense of identity and community around the whole kind of like animal rights and veganism issue".

Punk as linked to feminism emerged through a few of the women's accounts. Briony, when speaking about her initial entry into punk, said how this resulted because of moving away from the metal scene as "there's quite a lot of misogyny and attitudes towards women are not really good there". This implied punk offered more of a feminist ethos in terms of gender relations and views of women.

Community

As aforementioned, community was predominantly seen as bound up with the DIY value e.g. helping others, DIY as a group effort. There was also a sense that community more broadly and the maintenance of a sense of community was important to punk.

Kristianne, Morag and Naefun saw this sense of being part of a wider community as part of their initial attraction to punk:

"What I liked about punk was [...] I felt like I belonged somewhere" – Kristianne.

"It meant a sense of belonging – of being part of a wonderful family of angry, disenchanted youths" – Morag.

"What initially drew me to the punk scene was about that sense of community and that sense [of] mutual respect for people [...] [it was about] like-minded people who share similar attitudes and similar values" – Naefun.

Naefun above draws upon the idea of the punk 'scene'. This concept of 'scene' was used by fourteen of the research participants (just over half of the sample) though two of these used scene in a non-punk context. This idea of scene is inextricably linked with the idea of community and one cannot be understood without the other.

A punk scene could be conceptualised in terms of geographical location. Seven of the women I spoke to, for example, referred to scenes in such a way. This was as simple as referring to e.g. the 'Southampton punk scene' or the 'London hardcore (punk) scene'. This would then be explained, however, through the punk music scene that was occurring in these places. Punk scenes as generated through the collective musical efforts of people (which were not always conceptualised as tangible/geographically located) was the most common understanding of 'scene' with eleven women using this understanding. When Lindsey spoke of getting involved in the hardcore scene in London and I asked her what this involved she said:

"...so at the beginning [...] actually my housemate was a drummer in a hardcore band and so I used to go along and then not playing any instrument myself I kind of appointed myself their roadie [...] and then I actually ended up learning to play the drums myself and ended up in a [band]".

Lindsey then went on to explain how, with her housemates, she would 'put up' bands at their house with touring bands using this as a place to stay over. What starts to emerge here and what was demonstrated amongst some of the interviews is how this collective musical effort can take many forms. As Jess said, being "actively involved in the scene" could involve "putting on shows [...] going to shows" and just generally "supporting the scene". As noted above in the context of DIY, community could largely be envisioned around this notion of supportiveness – you did not need to necessarily play in a band or

be organising gigs to support the scene and punk community; you could support through your attendance. Such a conceptualisation of scene is reflected in popular music studies with it seen as a geographical space in which musical (and music-associated practices) occur (Hesmondhalgh 2005). Related to this, O'Connor comments how: "When punks use the term 'scene' they mean the active creation of infrastructure to support punk bands and other forms of creative activity" (2002: 226).

For five of the women I spoke to, scene encapsulated the idea of a wider group of people who shared the same values. This can be seen with Elizabeth who spoke of moving city to one which provided her with "a built in scene, it just gave me somewhere to fit in a bit more even though none of us fit in (laughs)". Here, scene is not just something contained within a particular geographical space but it is also being used synonymously for a community of people who have something in common – the idea of fitting in suggests this. This relates to literature concerning scenes' ability to defy the geographical and material. Straw (1991), for example, highlights how scenes are both a local and trans-local phenomenon whilst Bennett and Peterson (2004) have demonstrated that scene participation can be done in the virtual sphere. Bennett and Peterson (2004) and Straw's (1991) consideration of 'scene' does appear limited by the discipline of popular music studies in which they are working. Scene is therefore synonymous with 'music scene' and emphasis is placed on music and music-associated practices (whether local, trans-local or virtual). This last conceptualisation of scene by some of my participants, however, suggests that a punk scene does not have to be focused around music/music-associated practices. Instead, a punk scene is more focused on the common shared values of those within it.

Reflecting more broadly on the idea of community and these values described above, there could be a sense here of an 'imagined community' (Anderson 2016) - that you could feel part of a wider group regardless of never meeting all of those group members. The way the term 'scene' was sometimes used by the research participants could support this. Though a difference here is the way punk women felt there were indeed wider punk values which they shared with other group members whilst Anderson's (2016) community members did not necessarily have anything in common. Instead, this imagined sense of being a community was created by things such as the media promoting nationalism (Anderson 2016). Like the Goths in Hodkinson's (2002) research who experienced a sense of collectivity through stylistic practices, behaviours,

values, it could be said the punk women I spoke with also experienced a sense of being part of a wider punk community through shared values.

Changing Definitions

As already indicated, a change emerged from most of the interviews in the way the women *had* defined punk compared to how they *now* defined it. Of course it is the case that what is being compared here is how they now define punk in comparison to what they believe to have been their definition of punk during their initial 'involvement' - this therefore involves reflection on their part and it could be said what is revealed is their constructions of this rather than the reality. But that is not to say this is any less important. In the case of Andes' (2002) work there was also this notion of reflection, with participants reflecting back to when they were first made aware of or exposed to punk (as mentioned earlier).

That aside, what could be made of why these changes in defining punk took place amongst the women I spoke to? One suggestion may be that the change in definition is merely the result of longevity and how punk is perceived by participants merely changes over time, arguably as they become more 'submerged' into it. Suzy spoke of it becoming less "superficial" for example. This relates again to the aforementioned sense of internalisation over time, with things which formed part of initial definitions of punk (e.g. the aesthetics) slipping away as the values and beliefs become more important and therefore central to how they define punk.

Related to this, geographical place could become a catalyst for this submersion and therefore change in definition. A few of the women linked a change in their definition of punk to a geographical move, with the implication that this move provided them with access to a punk 'scene' – they spoke of it then turning into more of a way of life and the idea of becoming more actively involved:

> "When I moved down to [...] in my early twenties and kind of got involved
> in the music scene much more there um punk rock scene I guess that's
> where kind of much more of the DIY stuff came out? And much more of
> kinda like being involved with groups of people that were putting on shows,
> putting on my own shows, putting on club nights, being involved with kind
> of like friend's businesses um and being very much aware that if I...nothing
> would happen unless you made it happen yourself" – Katie

> "When I moved to [...] um and then kind of actually dealing punk I suppose
> um kind of, it just became more of an everyday thing at that point rather

than simply you know, me in my head going 'right I am punk' um actually

moving to to[...] and getting really involved in the hardcore scene there er

kind of yeah actually just made it an everyday thing" - Lindsey

For women who had once defined punk as involving a particular aesthetic or style, the move away from this aspect in their definition punk seemed framed within ageing generally. When talking about a 'punk' way of dressing, Jess stated you "did all that when younger" as if this was something you just did whilst 'growing up' rather than committing to. Ces also linked an overly punk way of dressing to youth, expressing that whilst when you were young it was felt necessary to use your clothes to say who you were and what you listened to, that was no longer necessary. These ideas concerning punk style and youth might also be representative of broader expectations concerning appearance and ageing with particular things being suitable when you were young. These ideas are illustrated by Milly:

"when I was dressing punk an' I thought that's what you had to do an I

really enjoyed it and I loved the style...but as I got older I just came to

realise that I didn't want to dress like that anymore and to be honest I think,

cause I'm 51 now, and I see women my age dressing in tartan mini-skirts

and things and to be honest I think they look silly...I sound really

judgemental...if women my age want to wear a short skirt with fishnet tights

or stocking then it's up to them. Personally I choose not to because I don't

think it looks right somehow. I think the same way about older punk men

who have huge Mohawk/spikes and wear tartan bondage pants etc".

The changing nature of the women's defining of punk with it becoming viewed as a 'state of mind' again may be seen in light of Andes' (2002) punk career model but also Haenfler's (2006) work on older straight-edgers (a sample consisting of both women/men but predominantly of men). Haenfler (2006) considers how, at the start of their sXe careers, youth go to great lengths to adhere to subcultural rules regarding style and fashion, but that this over time changes and sXe becomes a lifestyle underpinned by a philosophy. Similarly, in Andes' (2002) last stage, 'transcendence', punks are concerned with expressing an ideological commitment to the subculture, rather than adhering to accepted understandings of punk behaviour (e.g. dressing according to a punk style). Whether this was actually the case with the women in my sample will be explored further in Chapter 5 which considers the place of dress in 'being' and 'doing' punk.

This felt change over time in how the women I spoke with conceptualised 'punk' sits also with the proposition that career is a process (Becker 1966). As argued by Fillieule (2010) in research concerning political commitment, for example, the concept of career allows for an understanding of how the attitudes/behaviours of activists at each biographical stage are determined by past attitudes and behaviours. By examining punk women's past biographies as well as the present provides a deeper understanding of the relational nature of the attitudes and behaviours currently held/displayed and how (being) punk was an unfolding, continual process (Emirbayer 1997).

Defining People as Punk

Over the course of carrying out interviews something which really caught my attention was the way that some of the women explicitly said they would not define themselves as a punk. The reason this was particularly interesting to me was because the women had volunteered to be interviewed based on call outs for participants looking for women who were "30 years upwards who **identify as punk**" or which even more explicitly asked "are you **a punk** women (30+)...?" Based on this I assumed those who came forward to be involved in the research would define themselves as punks. When I began to receive expressions of interest in participating (by e-mail largely), some women wished to clarify further the criteria for inclusion. Not all of these became involved in the research but Jen was one of these. Upon e-mailing me to explain how she saw her relationship with punk and whether that would fit what I was looking for, I reaffirmed (as I had with the others) what my call outs perhaps implied rather than stated - that I was looking for women who *self*-identified as punk and so the only person who could decide whether they felt they could be involved would be the potential participant themselves. Jen spoke of her hesitance in the interview itself:

> "everyone's got their own definition of what things are and that's perfectly true with punk so um, I don't know, I wouldn't necessarily, I mean, I've got quite an eclectic music taste so I wouldn't necessarily say 'I am a punk', you know, but the kind of spirit and the ethos that I attribute to punk is something that I do identify strong with. So, I guess, I was just allowing for your definitions [laughs] and how you identify punk and, you know, I didn't want you to expect certain things".

Jen raises here how she believes other people have particular expectations of those who explicitly state that they are punks. Jen was not alone in her hesitation to declare "I am a punk". Over the course of the interviews some women actually said they would avoid defining themselves as a punk with just under half of the sample saying they would define themselves as a punk. In terms of avoiding labelling themselves as 'a punk', this applied to six women when speaking in the present tense – two women, reflecting on the past, referred to avoiding this label. Four ideas surfaced from these interviews concerning why these women did not wish (or perhaps did not feel able) to define themselves as punks: that avoiding labels was actually part of being punk; 'imposter syndrome'; a lack of confidence; and because they felt they *identified with* punk, rather than *were a* punk. At times multiple ideas would emerge in the course of one interview. When reflecting on when they were younger, both Sharon and Naefun considered how they had avoided calling themselves punks:

> "I wouldn't of labelled myself because punks weren't punks, we were people who did what we wanted and you know, it was only called punk by other people" – Sharon

> "I wouldn't necessarily say that I self-identified as a punk, I just sort of, like I always remember er because I always used to say 'I'm just, I'm a girl and I do what I like to do' and that was kind of it but although I wouldn't label it as punk that's actually quite a punk attitude to have really" – Naefun

So, as illustrated above, when reflecting on their younger selves both Sharon and Naefun would not have defined themselves as punk, despite recognising that they may have been defined as such by other people. There is the understanding here of them displaying certain behaviours or attitudes which were part of the commonsensical view of punk and which, suggested in their interviews more broadly, they now would conceive as punk. In the context of their narratives concerning their punk careers, however, it could also be understood that this avoidance of the punk label stems from a dislike of labels, something considered a punk characteristic. As summed up by Elizabeth when reflecting on her present self: "I suppose it is the idea of as a punk you don't want to (...) be pigeonholed, that's part of what it is".

In the context of those who avoided referring to themselves as punks in the present, four out of the six women linked this to a concern of not being seen as authentic (e.g. a fake). Elizabeth termed this 'imposter syndrome':

> "...it's always the fear of someone questioning you, saying, you know,
> 'you're not that, how can you say you're that when you're not that?' so I
> think, yeah, it's the idea of imposter syndrome. I don't want someone
> turning around to me one day and saying 'Hey! You, being an imposter'".

Elizabeth, speaking of her avoidance of defining herself as 'a punk', is demonstrating how the adoption of a label carries with it certain expectations about how the label carrier should be. This might be considered in the context of Goffman's work (1990) regarding the presentation of self and how one tries to manage successful performances which others accept. Not adopting the label of punk might then be a route to a successful performance for some as they recognise they might not be able to fulfil the expectations concerning how they should be (e.g. behaviour, appearance, attitudes). This imposter syndrome notion has been explored in the context of academic workplaces and Schlehofer (2012) notes the gendered nature of this with the feeling of being an imposter being commonly held by women, as a direct or indirect result of such workplaces being structured around a traditionally male workplace model and culture. In the context of punk, imposter syndrome can also be considered a gendered response by women within a masculinist (sub)culture This feeling could then be further magnified by women's awareness of both age norms and wider societal views of punk as a youth based subculture. Thoughts concerning what is considered authentic and therefore who can 'claim' the label of punk (all from the participants' point of view) is something discussed further below as this surfaced in interviews more generally. The third idea of avoiding the label of punk due to a lack of confidence was only suggested by one participant (when reflecting on their younger self) but this may also relate to questions concerning authenticity. Ces said how:

> "...like when I was a teenager and thinking 'emo' music was shit and scene
> kids were just weird and really ferociously identify[ied] with punk but even
> then I would never have said I am a punk? And I don't know whether that
> was not having the confidence to do that or thinking it was too cliché".

Lastly was the view expressed by four of the participants of identifying *with* punk rather than identifying *as a* punk. Some participants framed this through fandom – that they were a fan of punk music but that this was amongst other music they were also a fan of. A clearer way this identification was justified was because of their belief in the values they saw as inherent to punk:

> "the kind of spirit and the ethos that I attribute to punk is something that I
> do identify strongly with" – Jen
>
> "when you're talking about punk as the thing it's much more um about
> values and attitudes and DIY ethos and more of that community element so
> probably more I identify more with it holistically than than individually if
> that makes sense?" – Katie
>
> "I think I'd say I identify more with the ethos behind it, like anti-
> establishment and all that sort of stuff" – Jess

A reluctance to define oneself as a member of a particular subculture (e.g. as a punk, as a metaller...) was found by Jasper (2004) in research involving Dutch Goths (women and men). Here participants stated they identified with Goth, rather than saying they were Goths, despite, according to Jasper (2004), fitting the description of subcultural insiders. Jasper (2004) argued this operated as a way of remaining authentic. Criteria for subcultural identity could therefore not be conceptualised and therefore copied. This suggestion, however, does not seem to sit very well with the narratives the women in my sample provided and this may be in part to do with the way Jasper (2004) still seems to rest on an assumption that there is some homogenous subcultural group present. The notion that the women who refused to identify themselves as punks were doing so in order to protect some kind of insider subcultural knowledge (as Jasper suggests) is also unconvincing given their freedom in talking about what punk meant to them and what they believed it to involve. Another way of reading this reluctance to define oneself as a member of a particular subculture is as a form of identity work, specifically 'associational distancing' (Gonyea and Melekis 2017) which involves distancing one's self as apart from a particular, often stigmatised, group (Snow and Anderson 1987). This associational distancing might, for some older punk women, be a means of distancing themselves from negative views of punk. Firstly, with punk commonly linked to 'youth', participating post-youth may reflect not 'growing up' which might be viewed negatively by others. Secondly, in relation to the more general negative view of those who are not 'mainstream'. Another interpretation is that this associational distancing serves to reinforce their punk values e.g. if punk is about rebellion then defining yourself as a punk might instead denote some conformity.

Given the prevalence amongst my sample to be reluctant in identifying as punks (despite responding to my advertisement which specified I was seeking out such individuals) I would also argue this can be seen as a gendered response. Research from

sociolinguistics (see, for example, Lakoff 1975) raises gender differences in conversational analysis, highlighting women's disproportionate use of tentative speech forms compared to men. Though my own analysis is not focused on linguistic strategies, there is certainly a feel of tentativeness present. Further to this, Lakoff (1973) argues that communicational differences between women and men can be explained by women and men's differential social roles. Such tentativeness to declare themselves as punks in conversation may therefore reflect the male dominance within punk and the value placed upon punk authenticity and men which I discuss further below. The mediation of assertiveness by women for fear of backlash has been noted elsewhere (Amanatullah and Morris 2010) so such tentativeness can be a way of ensuring not to be challenged or questioned (seen with imposter syndrome above). This might in turn relate to their commitment to punk; declaring 'I am a punk' entails a declaration of commitment. This sense of women identifying with punk despite not identifying as punks is not too dissimilar to the "I'm not a feminist but..." phenomena whereby women, despite embracing feminist principles, are reluctant to be labelled as feminists (Zucker 2004). Some have suggested that such reluctance might reflect belief concerning the social acceptability of the term 'feminist' (e.g. self labelling impacted by negative stereotypes) or differential levels of commitment to the collective action feminism entails (Goldberg et al 1975, Wittig 1995 in Zucker 2004).

Authenticity

An analysis of authenticity claims has been argued as a key feature of recent identity research in which social identities are perceived as multidimensional and mobile (Brekhus 2008). Additionally, the theme of authenticity has been a feature of research on the punk subculture (see, for example, Williams 2011, Widdicombe and Wooffitt 1990) as well as subcultures more broadly (e.g. Clark 2003, Muggleton 2000). Whether reflecting on themselves or others, ideas concerning authenticity and who can be considered an (authentic) punk were weaved into half of the interviews. When constructing criteria for being able to claim the label of a punk two main criterions were identified – era and commitment.

The importance of 'era', or perhaps more specifically when you were born, was present but not as prevalent as the concept of commitment. The understanding was that punk

had its origins in a particular era, and that only if you were part of that era could you claim authenticity as a punk. Deedee referred to this explicitly:

> "I guess I see punk as being an era in some ways and I was born in 77 so I was kind of a baby when kind of punk was established um so I kind of feel like I would be a bit of a fake if I called myself a punk".

This suggestion that original and perhaps then 'true', authentic punk was located in a particular historical period was also supported by Jess when talking about her dad who she described as a punk when he was younger – "cause he's 60 this year so he was around when like the *Sex Pistols* and *The Clash* were all playing and stuff like that". Here is the framing of that punk identity as something bounded in a particular time/era; he *was* a punk because he was involved in what is often described as the punk era of 1977-'79. This linking of punk to a particular historical period or cohort might reflect wider societal views as Katie noted:

> "I think when you talk about punk as like in it's in a public senses people's like reflections on that are much more about kinda like the late '70s, the Pistols, kind of what was determined as kind of punk music".

Again this could be considered in the view of putting on successful performances or presentations of self (Goffman 1990). Acknowledging how wider society views punk might then impact on those who identify with punk rather than identify as punks. Interestingly, those who explicitly raised this question of era were those who felt they could not claim to be a punk. Amongst the women who were happy to define themselves as punks there was no outright claims of being capable to do so because of being born into the rightly timed cohort but when speaking to them it was clear that all bar one had grown up during those pivotal punk years and throughout their narratives they drew upon specific years as references as well as punk bands/singers of that specific era. I found it interesting in relation to era and authenticity that in the early stages of data collection I was sent a message through a social media platform which questioned the criteria I had specified in my call out for participants, saying: "A 30 year old punk will not stay a punk...Well I doubt it, good fucking luck [...] the 45+ were the real ones". The sender of the message did not want to be interviewed but felt strongly that only women over a higher age than what I had specified were the "true punks" (their words). This minimum age would then locate these women within the particular era I refer to above.

The more common claim to how you could be considered a punk comprises of ideas which could be conceptualised as demonstrating (subcultural) commitment such as active consistent participation, longevity and holding particular values. Jess raised a lot of these ideas when she said:

> "I think if you are a punk you believe in the ethos (...) you're heavily
> involved and actually actively that's the one actively involved in the scene
> and stuff like that and you're actually, you know, you're putting on shows,
> you're going to shows, you're supporting the scene and stuff like that and I
> think that's when you are a punk".

Here claims to punkness are being validated when a belief in particular punk values is present, coupled with behaviours which signal commitment (e.g. taking an active role in the punk scene). Christine spoke of an "intense passion" needing to be present when claiming a label such as 'punk' which sits nicely with this idea. Despite identifying as a punk, Briony recognised there could be consequences when this active, consistent participation was not upheld and one might find that they're marginalised within the punk scene - "you're on the outskirts 'cause you're not there every day at every gig smashing the system all the time"

Commitment could also be expressed through musical affiliation and, specifically, being a fan of punk music. Some participants, such as Jen who was mentioned earlier, spoke about their varied (or eclectic) musical tastes and positioned this as if it restricted their ability to identify specifically as a punk. Despite identifying with punk rather than as a punk, Elizabeth noted "my other half might look more authentic but I might be the one that's buying the tickets and introducing him to the bands and things".

Elizabeth's example offers a rejection of the importance of the punk aesthetic and instead musical taste is highlighted as a means to demonstrate authenticity and commitment. The notion of not being able to identify a punk by appearance alone emerged throughout interviews and is explored further in the next chapter. As Naefun said about her friends "if you were to look at them you wouldn't go 'hey there's a punk rocker there!', do you know what I mean?"

Returning to Elizabeth's comments concerning her male partner, she picked up on this point again later in her interview explaining:

> "...like I say he more looks the part and [...] we've been sat outside
> before and someone's been flyering for something and they go to him

[...] but at the same time I did also find this when I had my friends and things [...] I still found people might go to sort of the more male counterparts with me 'cause it's usually blokes that are handing out flyers to be honest...some female friends are seen more as the accessories".

This speaks to the idea of how achieving authenticity in the context of punk is also gendered. The idea of women being seen as 'accessories', rather than 'serious' subcultural participants and/or music fans, is comparable to the idea of the female groupie. Jen illustrated this too when she said:

"...when I go to gigs I think people assume that you've got a boyfriend in a band [...] that you're there basically because your boyfriend's there [...] people are surprised when you like know about music and have an interest in music".

In the context of rock music, Larsen (2017) argues that the groupie identity has been exclusively aimed at female fans/music producers in order to position them as inauthentic consumers; both 'othering' and excluding them. Elizabeth was not alone in having her authenticity questioned...

"I had like this massive issue with my boyfriend about this because I sort of joined the scene later he'd always be like 'you're not punk, you're not a real punk' [...] but um all of my girlfriends are all like 'you're punk as fuck, don't worry about it, you're fine'"" – Briony.

[Speaking about her brother] "he said I was a 'wannabe rock chick'" – Suzy.

Such instances of authenticity being questioned needs to be considered firstly in relation to this challenging being aimed at women and secondly this challenging being carried out by men. It demonstrates, in effect, the policing of women by men and contributes to their 'othering' (Larsen 2017) within punk. Such challenging of women's authenticity in the context of punk therefore contributes to punk as a male-dominated subculture. Gender (e.g. being a woman) operating as a barrier to authenticity was also found by Mullany (2007) amongst those part of the straight-edge scene (an 'offshoot' of punk).

Insider Knowledge

Despite some women stating they would not define themselves as punks, demonstrations of insider knowledge occurred throughout the interviews. Insider knowledge might be considered subcultural knowledge and might involve, for example, use of language or terminology specific to the subculture at hand (Widdicombe and Wooffitt 1995). It is also said to be something subcultural participants use to show commitment, interest and authenticity (Widdicombe and Wooffitt 1995).

One demonstration of insider knowledge was through participants implying their deeper understanding of what punk actually was, that went beyond a superficial understanding that might be held by others. Naefun said she'd consider some of her friends "punk as fuck" despite not visually looking like punks, highlighting a misconception some might have of punk in terms of it being based upon aesthetics. Naefun, however, knows better than that because of her subcultural knowledge. Several participants constructed this distinction between insider/outsider knowledge regarding what punk is/was by drawing on examples involving interactions with others, as demonstrated below:

> "people do come up to me and say you know 'you're so punk' and it's like 'alright, ok' 'cause it's weird cause I've never kind of I never class myself as a punk" - Bally

> "it's always quite interesting when I'm trying to explain that when people are like 'aaay you've got silly coloured hair, like, are you a punk rocker?' no, I, just no no" - Katie

> "people look at me like you're not punk and I've even had it said to me an' I'm like fuck you very much – it's not about how you dress" – Rebecca

The above examples again focus around a misconception that punk is based on aesthetics, whereas those with subcultural knowledge know that to not be the case. Some participants talked explicitly about stereotypical punk, how punk was generally conceived by wider society, and this revolved predominantly around aesthetics. Jess, for example, referred to the punk stereotype which involved a "Mohican and studded things". Outsider inaccuracies were also raised around things for example what the core values of punk was.

With regards to terminology, as discussed earlier in this chapter, many of the research participants used the expression 'scene' and this would also often be said without the preposition of the word punk ('punk scene'). If the expression 'punk scene' requires a degree of insider knowledge, the use of 'scene' alone requires even more. It was not

clear whether or not participants used this expression based on the assumption I would know what they meant but when transcribing the interviews I did notice how in some I had also used the expression which would imply an understanding. Another common use of terminology of course was DIY. References to different types of punk music were littered throughout the women's narratives. There was talk of 'pop punk', 'old-school punk' and 'anarcho-punk' for example. Sharon, reminiscing about a festival she went to, even went into detail of different types of punk people:

> "first there was your ageing punk – so there was the older generation wearing pretty much probably the same bloody things, it wouldn't surprise me, that they were wearing 30 years ago or whenever it was, you know, the same sort of look, the same hair (...) then there's what you call the new age punks which were just all in designer punk gear..."

Her insider knowledge is displayed here both through a use of specific terms and the explanation of the criteria behind these. As stated earlier, use of such punk language and terminology could be understood as showing the commitment, interest and authenticity of the participants (Widdicombe and Wooffitt 1995) and demonstrate socialisation resulting from their punk career trajectories.

Conclusion

A clear definition emerged from the interviews of punk being viewed as something that was 'different' and that punk was conceived as a state of mind involving a set of core values – DIY, subversion, political consciousness and community. There was a sense that this view of punk had developed over time. What I have begun to consider, then, in this chapter is relevant to the concept of 'career' as a concept for understanding older punk women's construction and maintenance of identities. What starts to emerge here is the way that 'punk' is not static and needs to be understood as a process. How, for example, the women's definitions of punk had changed over the course of their punk careers or life more generally, which perhaps also illustrates a process of internalisation of punkness as they age. In additional to punk being processual, it also emerges here as relational. The way participants construct a sense of punk identity is often done in relation to what they perceive punk not to be – the discussions in the chapter concerning defining other punks and authenticity serve to demonstrate this. Both this idea of punk as a career and punk as relational will be developed in forthcoming chapters.

Whilst able to define what punk was and voice commitment to particular punk values, not all of the women interviewed were happy to define themselves as punks. Various justifications concerning who could be defined as a punk emerged and some of the women gave some thought to this concerning authenticity claims. Despite only a small number of the women professing to be punks, displays of insider knowledge were rife across the interviews. These complexities concerning being and doing punk will be considered further in the subsequent data chapters by exploring dress and music but as I demonstrate here, such intricacies around identification can be better understood when situating them in the context of my participants as women and/or ageing participants. Conceptualising punk as involving subversion rather than rebellion allows most of the women to then position themselves as having transitioned into adulthood given the link between rebellion and youth. Punk's rebellious or subversive quality can be understood too as involving a rebellion against or subversion of normative gender. Yet discussions concerning authenticity and imposter syndrome highlight how punk identification is very much bound up in gender identification; punk's upholding of masculine beliefs and culture therefore making it harder for women to claim "I am a punk!"

Chapter 5 – 'Doing' Punk: Dress

Whereas the previous chapter was mainly concerned with how the women I spoke to envisioned 'punk', I will now move onto a series of chapters where I consider punk in the context of the participants' everyday lives, or what might be expressed as the 'doing' of punk. This chapter will consider dress. Dress includes choices regarding hair, body adornment (e.g. accessories, tattoos, piercings, make-up), clothing and footwear. I will firstly explore the notion of being 'alternative' and the significance of this concept for the women I interviewed before moving on to consider the notion of 'punk cues' in dress. Some consideration will then be given to the concept of 'appearance labour' (Peluchette et al 2006) and its relevance to the contextualised dress choices of the women I spoke with.

Initial exposure to punk and impact on dress

Despite the definition of 'punk dress' now being open to some interpretation, Sklar and DeLong (2012) propose that some common features could be band (logo) t-shirts, brightly dyed hair, combat boots, heavy cosmetics, studded belts and tattoos. Such common features can be seen as forming the stereotypical definition of what punk involves yet as seen in Chapter 4 this does not necessarily reflect my participants' definitions. The women I spoke with were asked whether they felt their initial exposure to punk/initial entry into punk had had any impact on their dress. Nearly all of the women (eighteen out of twenty-two) felt, to varying degrees, that yes it had. For five of these women they felt it to be a fairly small impact. Myfanwy said, for example, how it did not impact on her clothing "'that' much", explaining that:

> "It impacted much more on my internal life than anything visible at the
> time. I've always shielded away from joining any crowd [...] and my style
> has always been low key except for rare occasions. I could do the full kohl
> eyeliner thing but that was about it [...] I tended to wear Doc Martens,
> leggings and big t-shirts/jumpers. I was scared by the real punks to be
> honest, except my close friends".

Myfanwy said she had maintained her existing 'low key' style with some nods to punk such as Doctor Marten boots and heavy eye-make up. But she noted how "leggings and long t-shirts were practical" for work – suggesting that items such as these were worn

more for their practical purposes, than to signal a punk affiliation. Had they not been so practical, it is questionable as to whether they would have been incorporated into Myfanwy's dress. For Briony and Lindsey, it could be as small and simple as a change to the t-shirts that they wore. As Lindsey said "it didn't really make a lot of difference, it was just perhaps just a different name, a different band on the t-shirt rather than anything else" and Briony noted her initial entry into punk leading her to swapping t-shirts with metal band names/logos on for punk ones.

For others there seemed to be more of an initial significant impact on the way they dressed. Jess described such a change:

> "...when you used to go to gigs and stuff like that or you'd go to HMV [music shop] and you'd [see] people wearing like big [...] studded belts and ball chain necklaces and things like that...you kind of pick up what you see as cool and then you kind of try and emulate that [...] Seeing people who [...] I wanted to be like [and thinking] "right, I'm gonna dress like that" and dyed my hair loads of weird colours and got my nose pierced when my mum told me not to and stuff like that. So [I] did all the kind of stereotypical kind of young punky sort of stuff".

Exposure to what could be described as subcultural others during her initial entry into punk therefore had a significant impact on Jess and her own way of dressing. This account recognises the importance of structural forces, seeing Jess's exposure to and entry into punk shaping her dress to fit those of the wider group. Unpacking this further in the context of Becker's (1966) career concept, Jess is being socialised into what constitutes doing punk. It is worth noting here how freedom to adopt a 'new style' might signal something of participants' socio-economic background though this was not unpacked further in the interviews themselves.

Jess's idea of the stereotypical punk look seemingly incorporates those common features of punk dress described above by Sklar and DeLong (2012) with Jess explicitly referring to studded belts and brightly coloured hair. Changing one's hair in relation to punk was the most common change to dress noted by the women and featured in ten of the seventeen accounts who considered their dress being impacted by exposure to punk. For most this would involve cutting or colouring but two women, Naja and Sam, noted adopting an iconic punk hairstyle – the Mohican or Mohawk (Sklar 2013). Sam explained how:

"...for years I used to have a Mohican so I'd have the sides shaved, I'd have
all patterns done in it an' grow it and dye it and dye it and dye it 'til it fell
out and then I'd shave it all off and then grow it, an' then as soon as it got
long enough I'd dye it again [...] so I alternated between Mohican and a
skinhead most of my teenage years and my early twenties".

For both Naja and Sam, it would be appropriate to suggest that the adoption of
this hairstyle was linked to what they saw punk as involving; again highlighting
structural forces at play and suggesting a socialisation process. There too is a feel
of them gaining subcultural knowledge here of what punk dress involved. Sam's
first exposure to punk had been seeing a punk band on the TV and from here she
found out more about punk. This would suggest an increasing awareness of what
was commonly linked to punk dress and as Sam said herself, she was attracted to
the 'fashion' as well as the music. Naja explained that:

"When you're younger it's part of a generation, [...] you're fitting in as well
and [...] you're drawn into this crowd of people [...] - you look different and
you're rebelling against things so yeah [...] I had Mohawks and all that sort
of thing".

For Naja then adopting this trademark punk hairstyle was part of becoming
involved in a group of people who identified as punks, it was a means of 'fitting
in' and may even be considered part of a collective resistance.

The above comment by Naja could also relate to the idea of role modelling. In
changing their dress as a result of initial exposure to/initial entry into punk, a few
women offered the idea of there being role models; people whose dress they were
influenced by. Such detailing concerning how individuals enter punk and the
nature of their subsequent learning about punk is not addressed by Andes' (2002)
punk career model. Morag commented how she went "from wearing the same
clothes as my mum to the same clothes as Zillah Minx from Rubella Ballet"
whilst Ces said: "I wanted to be Brody Armstrong - cut my hair off, pierced my
lip (laughs) cut up all my clothes". Zillah Minx and Brody Armstrong are both
female vocalists in punk bands (Rubella Ballet and The Distillers respectively).
Milly too said:

"I was really influenced by Siouxsie [of the band Siouxsie and the
Banshees] so I had my hair like her and did my eye make-up like her [...] At

this time (early 1980s) my style was also influenced by Beki Bondage from Vice Squad [punk band], which I suppose was similar to Siouxsie Sioux".

Discussion concerning the way exposure to/entry into punk shaped my participants' dress offers further insight into the point made in Chapter 4 that punk offered something to the women which differed to mainstream culture's expectations of 'doing' femininity. In unpicking this mainstream notion of doing femininity and what it entails the concepts of normative femininity and emphasised femininity are pertinent. Normative femininity is the form of femininity most valued and involves characteristics such as beauty, humility, kindness, sexual desirability, sexual moderation and softness (Svahn 1999 cited in Elm 2009). Emotions, caring, control and moderation are all wrapped up in this notion of normative femininity (Ambjörnsson 2004 cited in Elm 2009). Such ideas are seen too in emphasised femininity, a form of femininity "defined around compliance with...[the subordination employed by hegemonic masculinity]...and is oriented to accommodating the interests and desires of men" (Connell 1987, 184-5). Returning to punk, the common markers of punk dress (Sklar and DeLong 2012) have been argued as masculine by Leblanc (2002) and therefore punk dress in its forms described by some of the participants above can be seen as a way of resisting normative femininity. A Mohican or Mohawk, for example, challenges normative feminine ideas concerning beauty in terms of hair (Wolf 1991) as are other markers of punk dress adopted by some of the participants after their initial exposure to the subculture/scene. Additionally, adopting non-mainstream dress just generally, punk or otherwise, is not something 'nice girls' do, therefore resisting norms of femininity which include being good and noncontroversial (Fox 1977). A further example reflecting such arguments comes from Elizabeth when speaking about how punk initially impacted on the way she dressed:

> "I'd find places like [names shop] and [names shop] and started buying the baggy jeans - I can't remember what it was called – there was [names shop] I think it was, they did the *baggiest* [Elizabeth's emphasis] jeans round here".

In starting to wear the baggiest jeans she could find, Elizabeth can be seen to be challenging normative ideas concerning feminine beauty and appearance and rejecting clothing which would connote sexual desirability (Svahn 1999 cited in Elm 2009, Wolf 1991) e.g. the association between tight clothing and

sexualisation (Edwards 2018). Such challenges must be considered in their specific context though as well as the participants' own subjectivities. Reflecting on her initial entry into punk Sharon noted:

> "...it was great 'cause it just meant you could tear up clothes all the time and stick pins in things and we just thought that was an easy life you know, none of this fashion stuff we had to worry about [...] it's kind of like all the lacey stuff and sexy stuff and everything like that people wore, well now that's what you see the girls in every Saturday night like it's normal, but it wasn't normal then?"

As illustrated by Sharon's reflection, what comes to be seen as challenging or disrupting 'normative' ways of dressing for girls/women can be contextual and temporal. Whilst Elizabeth's baggy trousers could be a way of resisting normative gender expectations concerning dress so too could Sharon's 'sexy' items of dress be. Sharon – along with others - referred to rejecting fashion, which can be seen as a way to challenge normative gender (given the association between this and girls/women), and fashions, of course, change. A changing reference point can therefore result in a diversity of responses in challenging it.

This notion of freedom in changing dress style which emerges from the accounts above was contrasted by Hester and Deedee. Hester expressed how there were obstacles to changing the way she dressed due to parental control:

> "As a 14 year old the opportunity to dress punk was severely inhibited by my parents' rules so I couldn't change my hair but it was backcombed and bound into a sort of fountain on the side of my head whenever I could get out".

Hester illustrates here how she tried working within particular limitations in negotiating a change in dress. Not being able to drastically modify her hair permanently, Hester negotiated a hairstyle which could be temporarily created. She also described hiding particular items of clothing to collect and wear out of sight of her parents. For Deedee there was also this factor of parental control with her expressing a desire to change the way she dressed but it not being possible. This appears to demonstrate an accommodation by both participants, with potential resistance through dress being limited or constrained. Both Hester's and Deedee's experiences of parental control will discussed in more detail below.

As demonstrated in Chapter 2 in relation to structural approaches to understanding subcultures (such as the CCCS) there has sometimes been a tendency for subcultural theorists to emphasise how those who enter punk in turn adopt the associated subcultural style. As can be seen here, however, awareness of and entry into punk did not necessarily dictate exactly what the women I spoke with wore or necessitate the adoption of a completely new way of looking. Many of the participants took elements of punk and incorporated it into their existing style or reworked existing core elements e.g. continuing to wear t-shirts but just the name of the band on the t-shirt changed.

Initial exposure to punk, dress and parental influence

When describing their initial exposure to punk and any relationship between this and their dress, five of the twenty-two women I spoke with offered some insight into parents' place in this. Lindsey, for example, recounted how:

> "I think as a teenager I just sort of always done wearing black and (both laugh) it didn't really make a lot of difference, it was just perhaps just a different name, a different band on the t-shirt rather than anything else but no, I'd always from quite an early age from about 12 or 13 I've dyed my hair and that sort of thing, I think my mum just thought it wasn't worth fighting about so she let me (laughs) I was quite lucky in that sense".

Lindsey was one woman who did not see punk as particularly impacting her dress. As she expresses above, it may have just meant a different band on the t-shirt. But the wearing of an identifiable band t-shirt in itself could be an important symbolic expression of punk identification. Lindsey felt, however, her dress could have been a potential source of conflict between herself and her mother which perhaps indicates a non-normative way of dressing. But as stated above, her mother allowed her the freedom to dress how she wanted to – something Lindsey seems to see as non-normative route for a parent in the sense she describes herself as "lucky". Whilst Milly did not express the role of her mother in such an explicit way as Lindsey did, there was some implicit sense of this:

> "...my mom had a clothing shop that I worked at before I got into punk and I started selling punk clothes in the shop and so we sold mainly jeans but then it sort of turned into a punk clothing shop and I just started wearing the clothes that we sold; things like mohair jumpers, band t-shirts, bondage trousers, things like that..."

This apparent freedom given to Milly by her mother regarding choices in stock for their shop might be indicative of a wider acceptance regarding Milly choosing to wear such clothing when she became involved in punk. Two of the research participants, Elizabeth and Sam, highlighted their mother's more *active* roles in their dress. Elizabeth, when speaking of how her initial exposure to punk impacted her way of dressing, said how she:

> "...started buying the baggy jeans [...] and my mum asking her students to help out with – she's a teacher at college- and she's asking students where I could find baggy jeans".

For Elizabeth, then, her mother is not just accepting her way of dressing but actively trying to help her in dressing the way she wanted to. Sam expressed similar sentiments, saying that her mother helped her make clothes, dye her hair and how when she was about 15 years old "my mum bought me a leather jacket, a biker's jacket". Sam also tried explaining why perhaps her mother took this stance, as opposed to objecting to Sam's wish to dress a certain way:

> "my mum was really good because [...] her parents had [...] her and they were quite old, they were well into their forties [...] so she got like older parents who were very Victorian and she wasn't allowed to do anything, she couldn't wear make-up she wasn't allowed to do this that and the other she had to sneak out to things...."

For Sam, she believed the parental control her mother was subjected to when growing up had led to her mother wanting to do the opposite for Sam whilst she was growing up. When Sam's initial exposure to punk led to her wanting to change the way she dressed her mother played a positive role in this. It is worth highlighting here that when parents were mentioned in their helping role clothes-wise, it was mothers whom such references referred to (whereas both mothers and fathers though more predominantly the latter were spoken of concerning musical influence – see Chapter 6). This might be indicative of a normative gender expectation concerning women's interest in clothing/dress. Strict parental control, however, was something two participants, Deedee and Hester, had experienced during their youth. As Deedee described:

> "...unfortunately for me my parents were very, very strict [...] I left home under really bad circumstances when I was seventeen and one of the first things I did was start to dress how I wanted to dress. I was kind of always suppressed, I was never allowed to have a personality, you know, even

> listening to music was hard because they didn't agree with it, you know,
> they didn't like kind of Western values so I was kind of going against
> everything really so it was harder to [...] develop in terms of [...] what
> activities I did, you know, what clothes I wore. It wasn't until I'd left home
> that I really kind of embraced that really, it's like 'I can be a free person and
> I can do what I want, wear what I want'. The first thing I did was (laughs) I
> brought, actually a pair of boots not too dissimilar from these actually and
> got myself an army skirt..."

One argument concerning childhood is that it is associated with immaturity, resulting in unequal power relations and adult control over young people's lives (Rawlins 2006). Deedee sees control as manifesting as a result of her parents' culture and their rejection of what is perceived as Western values. With generational inequalities in power relations between them as parents and her as a child they could therefore control her tastes and behaviour. This demonstrates a structural force which can constrain agency (with regards to dress).

Deedee felt she was only able to begin expressing free-will in dress choices when she ceased living with her parents at seventeen. So whilst first becoming aware of punk music Deedee had wanted to begin using dress as a way of expressing a new way of being, this was initially constrained. This is demonstrated when she remembered asking for a pair of Dr. Marten boots with her mum refusing, saying "you're not going to work on a building site are ya?"

Hester's parents also controlled her dress, limiting the extent to which she could change her way of dressing, but she tried to find ways of navigating around this. She recollected how:

> "I'm short and always had to take my trousers up so the extra fabric ended
> up as matching dog collars which had to be kept hidden. My oldest brother
> gave me a cut-off denim jacket with Motorhead blazed across the back, I
> added some punk logos and hid it [somewhere] to be collected as I left [the
> house] but my mother found it and burned it; I refused to speak for a week
> after that".

Hester is describing how she attempted to appease her parents by conforming whilst in sight, but had found ways of being able to dress punk when out of it. Her creativity in doing so is demonstrated in the adapting of things at her disposal to create a 'punk' look. For example, the jacket given to her by her brother featured the logo of a band

who would not have been considered punk at the time so she added punk ones to it. It is also interesting that her brother had been allowed such a jacket. This may have been because of him being older than Hester or it could also serve to demonstrate differential treatment of children by her parents based on gender with greater control over Hester's behaviour and taste as the daughter, compared to their son. This might be evidence of what Hagan et al (1979) refer to as the gendering of mechanisms of social control, whereby females are more likely to be subjected to informal social control (e.g. by their families) than males, which in turn could explain parents' stricter control of daughters compared to sons.

Apart from Deedee and Hester, the experiences described by the participants above demonstrate the role parents can play in assisting their child's initial entry into punk. There is existing research which also demonstrates such parental support for subcultural entrance (O'Connor 2008 in Gordon 2014). This is particularly interesting when considering CCCS subcultural work which argued that subcultures (e.g. punk) needed to be understood in relation to both the parent cultures they were a sub-set of, and the dominant culture of which they were a part (Hall and Jefferson 2006). With this in mind, the working-class subcultures, of which the CCCS spoke, were envisioned as offering collective resistance against not just dominant culture but working-class parental culture (Johansson and Lalander 2012) and, as expected, no parental help/support in enabling youth's subcultural entry was found. I would argue, however, this may reflect the methodology commonly pursued by the CCCS which centred on semiotic analysis with an absence of speaking to subculturalists themselves. The latter may have provided findings such as my own concerning the role parents can play in assisting their child's initial subcultural entry.

Current Dress - being 'alternative', being 'myself'

When talking about the minimal impact initial exposure to punk had on her dress, Lindsey's response was that she'd "always been slightly alternative anyway". This concept of being 'alternative' is important when considering the dress of the women I spoke to and was a recurring idea within interviews both when reflecting on past dress and current dress. 'Being alternative' can be viewed as being something other than mainstream; different to the 'norm'. In a sense, then, being alternative evokes images of counter-culture and resistance, and subcultures can be viewed as 'alternative'

expressions of identity. But it can also be a way of positioning oneself as 'different' without necessarily having to pinpoint affiliation with a particular subculture e.g. punk. This links to the general reluctance of the women I spoke with to pigeon hole themselves which I discussed in Chapter 4. A person can describe their musical taste, lifestyle choices or dress as 'alternative' more broadly, for example, rather than stating their commitment to one subculture. Most of the women I interviewed made reference to possessing, or having possessed, an alternative way of dressing. Even when it was felt their exposure to/entry into punk had impacted their dress, for example, this did not necessitate a shift to what they explicitly labelled punk dress. Only a minority of the sample specifically described themselves as 'dressing punk'.

In relation to the common features of punk dress identified by Sklar and DeLong (2012) a number of items which have been traditionally linked to the punk subculture were present in the women's current dress – references to, for example, Dr Marten boots (a form of combat boots), dyed hair, piercings, and second-hand or homemade clothes would be relevant here. However this did not mean they perceived themselves as dressing punk. What is important to note is how the participants themselves interpreted these items – they might have brightly coloured hair for example but they might not have equated that with displaying a punk style. Milly illustrates this idea when speaking about her nose piercing:

> "I have kept my nose piercings and they're important, now whether that's a punk thing or not or just because I like piercings, it's probably because I like piercings, I don't know".

With examples such as the one above, participants demonstrated how even items typically affiliated with punk could be re-negotiated in their understanding of how they dressed. Whereas traditional CCCS subcultural accounts emphasised the role of structure in imposing particular dress on participants (e.g. Hebdige 1998), what is shown with Milly's example above is a demonstration of agency in the interpretation and utilisation of dress. This argument is developed further in the discussion below concerning 'punk cues'.

A commonality amongst around half of my research sample was the use of hair dye, usually of a bright colour. For these women who referred to possessing dyed hair, this was something they saw as continuing from their youth; offering no sense of this being discontinued in the future. Hester said, for example, in reference to her dyed red hair that it would be with her "to the grave". Hair dye, even when labelled as permanent,

does not entail a one off experience if one wishes to retain this colour – hair grows so roots appear and even permanent colour fades with time. Retaining a dyed hair colour therefore requires a certain degree of time (to dye one's own hair or visit a hair-colourist, for example) as well as money (to buy the dye and/or pay a hair-colourist). Such investment could therefore be suggestive of particular participants' commitment to their appearance and their femininity; something found amongst alternative women by Holland (2004). Whilst possessing brightly coloured hair amongst some of the women I spoke with might be situated in wider discourses expressing agency (in relation to dress) and the idea of 'just being myself', there is still then this notion of them engaging in practices typically associated with normative femininity. It is also worth raising here how this might interplay with the women's subjective experiences of ageing whereby hair dyeing is something one engages in because it's part of their embodied identity and something they have always done and not something they started in order to hide the process of going grey, for example. Sharon even noted how she stopped dyeing her hair in order to stop people questioning if she was going grey, such is the societal assumption of women of a certain age bracket (Sharon herself was her early fifties) who dye their hair.

The idea of punk not dictating dress was further exemplified in the way that a sense of 'I'm just being myself and I wear what I like' emerged across some of the interviews with regards to their dress. Some specifically referred to this:

"I just wear what I wanna wear" – Deedee

"I just dress how I want to dress and how I feel comfortable dressing" – Jess

"I just wear whatever I like to wear" – Milly

This expression of just wearing what they want gives the impression of their autonomy with regards to their dress. Participants are voicing agency when it comes to how they dress, challenging the idea of a punk dress being enforced on them passively but also challenging too the notion of normative gender constraining or shaping their choices. In relation to punk identification, this supports the point made earlier too concerning the flexibility allowed by referring to ones' self as 'alternative' – it allows the women to position themselves as 'different' without necessarily having to pinpoint affiliation with a particular subculture e.g. punk. So, they can be alternative but also be 'themselves'. This too allows them to uphold 'individuality' (which, as seen in Chapter 4, is a value associated with punk). Yet this does not have to interfere with punk retaining importance to their sense of self. As demonstrated in Chapter 4, the women I spoke to

had generally come to view punk as something which was a state of mind rather than a particular way of dressing – this process of the internalisation of punk and its relationship to dress is discussed further below. Additionally one of the core values of punk I identified in Chapter 4 was subversion. This helps then to further understand the notion of being alternative or being yourself in terms of dress as both can be seen as doing your own thing which is central to that subversive mentality – in other words, to not do punk is actually to be punk. It is important to locate this expressed agency by the women I spoke with too in terms of broader social processes such as detraditionalisation and female individualisation; second wave feminism from the 1960s onwards (Thornham 2001) can be seen as both a signifier and outcome of such societal change. Key ideologies pertaining to feminism include that of self-reliance and autonomy, and a rejection of subservience (Stacey 1991); such autonomy can be seen in claims from women I spoke with towards agency in terms of how they dressed. This can demonstrate an appropriation of feminism (Aronson 2008) but one which is generally unconscious (Stacey 1991).

This idea of 'I'm just being myself and I wear what I like' with regards to current dress choices relates to a narrative of growing confidence which emerged by comparing participants' reflections on how they used to dress compared to how they now dressed. Eleven of the women I spoke with (half of the total sample) offered such narratives – there was a clear sense that whereas in their youth they needed to 'prove' who they were through their dress (e.g. in terms of being punk, or the kind of music they were a fan of), this was no longer the case – they dressed how they liked and did not feel such a need. Six women situated this growing confidence in the context of getting older. Morag said, for example: "...the older I get, the less of a crap I give about what anyone thinks about what I do or how I look". Such narratives go some way in challenging the dominant cultural narrative concerning ageing, that of decline, which sees it as problematic and represented negatively (Ohs and Jamasaki 2017). Further still, this could question Sontag's (1972) proposition of a double standard of ageing in which women are more 'wounded' by the ageing process than men because of physical bodily changes undermining women's sexual attractiveness (their traditional source of power) – e.g. not being deemed 'youthful' anymore.

Whilst there could be ways in which the punk women I spoke with were consciously challenging a structuralist view of the relationship between dress and doing punk/gender, it is important to recognise that this sense of 'I just wear what I wanna

wear' did not operate in a vacuum. Instead, enacting agency in dress choices was still negotiated against what could be deemed structural forces. This will be explored in depth in Chapter 8 with regards to age/gender and the workplace but for now an example which serves to illustrate this idea comes from Rebecca when speaking about limitations placed on her choice in clothing:

> "...the shows I go to now, the t-shirts are like small or medium, large, extra large and I wouldn't fit an extra large in a lot of them and I feel like in a lot of arenas that is true - that I can't particularly wear t-shirts of my favourite bands because they wouldn't fit me because they physically wouldn't fit me so I'd have to do something to *make* it fit so that's why I don't dress particularly as if I'm in that subculture".

As noted by Rebecca, her clothing choices here are being constrained because of particular clothing manufacturers catering predominantly for what is taken as normative body sizes. Downing Peters (2014) notes how the clothing industry plays a role in determining people's dress choices and agency, with the fashion industry marginalising plus-size women. Normative ideas concerning femininity and beauty appear again then and, as Wolf (1991) notes, being thin, or attaining thinness, are part of the beauty myth aimed towards women. Rebecca presents this as potentially constraining the visual expression of her punk identity though overall Rebecca expressed in her interview that punk identity was not to do with how one looked which could, then, be seen as her resisting such constraint.

The use of punk cues in dress

As briefly mentioned above, participants may engage in a reflexive understanding of their dress, drawing perhaps upon items which might historically have been affiliated with punk but reinterpreting these in an individualised way. Items which have been historically affiliated with punk could be described as 'punk cues' – "elements of punk dress [which] have become iconic and stable in popular culture" (Sklar and DeLong 2012: 286). Punk cues might also be more subtle, signifying a punk affiliation to those 'in the know', rather than mainstream culture more generally (Sklar and DeLong 2012). As seen in Bennett's (2006) research punk cues were conceptualised as discrete affiliations which could be incorporated into a participants' dress more broadly, but which the older punks were able to read as a sign of punk affiliation (Bennett 2006). Examples included band t-shirts, nose rings or metal studs (Bennett 2006). Bennett's (2006) older punk men appeared to be drawing upon their insider knowledge in

identifying the discrete affiliations adorned by others. Choices concerning which cues to incorporate into their dress could therefore be viewed as drawing upon this same knowledge in order to be recognised by others. The possession of insider knowledge is indicative of individuals' socialisation into what 'doing punk' involves in terms of dress. As noted in literature concerning the concept of career (Jderu 2015, Matza 2010), this socialisation is key to individuals becoming part of new social worlds.

There were two forms of punk cues at play amongst my research participants. Firstly, items which could be recognised by both outsiders and punk insiders as punk cues. Secondly, non-punk (or everyday) items which had been re-interpreted as punk by the participants and therefore not necessarily recognisable to any but themselves. What is important to note is that what could be perceived as punk cues by my interviewees was at times a lot more individualised and personal in comparison to the older punk men in Bennett's (2006) sample – it was less about displaying a discrete affiliation which could be identified by others as punk and more about how these items had been reflexively imbued with personal meaning and linking to punk by them. I would argue that this links to the punk value of subversion (see Chapter 4) and the point I made earlier in this chapter that 'to not do punk is actually to do punk'. Personal meaning was therefore more important than being outwardly perceived as punk. This might not have been the case with Bennett's (2006) participants depending on the punk values they held but without detail from Bennett (2006) on this it is difficult to say for certain. As argued earlier in the chapter, in the case of items which could be typically recognised as punk by outsiders or punk insiders (e.g. bright hair, nose rings) these were not necessarily used by the women I spoke with to signal an affiliation to punk: they were often just 'being themselves'.

There were examples from the women I spoke with of everyday items which they had reinterpreted through punk values. For example, when speaking about the impact of punk on her current dress, Jess spoke about wearing pin badges which featured popular culture references e.g Harry Potter. This would not be read as a punk cue necessarily by others. However Jess had imbued this item with a punk affiliation because she viewed it as demonstrating her lack of caring what others thought, akin to the punk values in the previous chapter. A particularly interesting example, because of the irony involved, concerned Naja and a particular designer handbag she liked to take to the Rebellion punk festival:

> "I go with my Gucci handbag, because I think *that's* punk. Because I'm, I'm
> not gonna wear what the rest of them wear and I'm not going to do what the
> rest of them do. Because that's what they all do at Rebellion festival 'cause
> they're all 'punks'. So I'm gonna go do something different. So I have,
> another girlfriend of mine [...] we have a Gucci handbag and we'll wear
> something completely ridiculous, you know, and really normal and only do
> it just to piss people off".

The Gucci handbag being affiliated with punk is ironic because of the resistance to the mainstream stance associated with punk. But Naja uses this handbag in a way that for her still signifies resistance because for her in the context of this punk festival, punks have become uniform in their dress: her Gucci handbag can be her way of being different to the rest.

Some participants customised or personalised otherwise everyday items to take on a punk significance, linking too with the DIY ethic highlighted in the last chapter as a punk value. Interviewees were invited to bring items along to their interviews which they felt helped in detailing the significance of punk to their lives (as highlighted in Chapter 3, only a minority did so). The hat and hoodie (see Figure 1 and 2) Elizabeth choose to bring were items which were part of her general dress already and illustrate this personalisation:

> "I've been doing this for some time but it's festival wristbands on a cap,
> I've always get compliments on the hat, it's cause you know people keep
> them on their wrists and they wear 'em for years and they look vile (laughs)
> well they *can* do so I try to take them at full length and um the hat came
> from a festival as well [...] it desperately needs updating, I've got more to
> put on but er not quite sure the hat's gonna last, it was black
> originally...**(Laura: so would you wear that on a regular basis then?)** oh
> yeah that's um, throughout the summer, less in winter but throughout the
> summer yeah I'd wear that it's well worn...next one is this, which I don't
> wear as much as I might because I look back on it and I wish I'd put it on a
> bit of a better quality hoodie".

Figure 1 Elizabeth's hat   Figure 2 Elizabeth's hoodie

Another example of the personalisation of everyday items came from Sam with what she had named her "trolley of punk" (just about visible bottom left in Figure 3 below). Whilst the photograph below (provided by Sam) shows her trolley being incorporated into a Halloween outfit, this was how the trolley looked when being used on a day-by-day basis. After a shoulder injury prevented Sam from carrying heavy bags, she solved the problem by acquiring this shopping trolley which she then customised with her partner:

> "...he made some stencils (laughs) so it's got, it's a black shopping trolley
> and it's got Sex Pistols, Sham 69, X Ray Spex and PIL on it (laughs) and
> it's got studs all round the flap and then some er patches, Sex Pistols and
> 'Punk as Fuck' and a little anarchy badge (laughs)".

First there is something to say here about Sam's customised trolley in the context of social ageing. Shopping trolleys are stereotypically associated with old people, in particular old women. The customisation of her trolley can therefore be seen as subversion against ageing stereotypes. Sam used elements which have been traditionally or stereotypically associated with punk (dress) – the studs, for example, and a badge with the anarchy sign on. But again, like Elizabeth, there was a prevalence of references to particular bands, whether in the form of band patches or stencils depicting their logos. Reflecting on this within the context of Elizabeth and Sam's interviews more

broadly, punk music was a significant part of both of their lives (as seen in the next two chapters). They both regularly attended gigs and participated in the consumption of music goods. The customisation of everyday items with band patches/logos for Elizabeth and Sam allowed them to visually express the significance of music to them in their punk affiliation. Other women I spoke with also commented on the wearing of items with band logos (commonly t-shirts) which again could be said to serve as a public display of their personal music tastes as well as a way of engaging in fan-artist relationship maintenance (Brown and Knox 2017). As Deedee expressed: "I wear a lot of band t-shirts" and she would make band t-shirts for going to gigs of the band in question:

"...what I've got here is a t-shirt that I made and it's a Sylvia Plath quote and [...] I made this for a Manic's [the band Manic Street Preachers] gig that I went to and they use [...] this quote on one of their singles from the first album".

However, there was the sense that the wearing of band t-shirts could be more multi-vocal. As Ces said:

"I don't really wear things out of a desire anymore just to show off to people it's more that they're just comfy t-shirts to wear when I'm hungover or I'm just really doing anything, you know what I mean? Like I'd never wear a band t-shirt to work or anything other than just a lazy day or going to a gig or something".

For Ces the wearing of a band t-shirt might serve the purpose of demonstrating her personal musical tastes in the context of a gig. Yet these band t-shirts are also just seen as comfy t-shirts, a description which makes it seem as though they are treated just like any other t-shirt. The fact they have a band logo on becomes meaningless. But Ces then recognises how the reading of these t-shirts can vary according to context e.g. not suitable for work (something discussed further in Chapter 8).
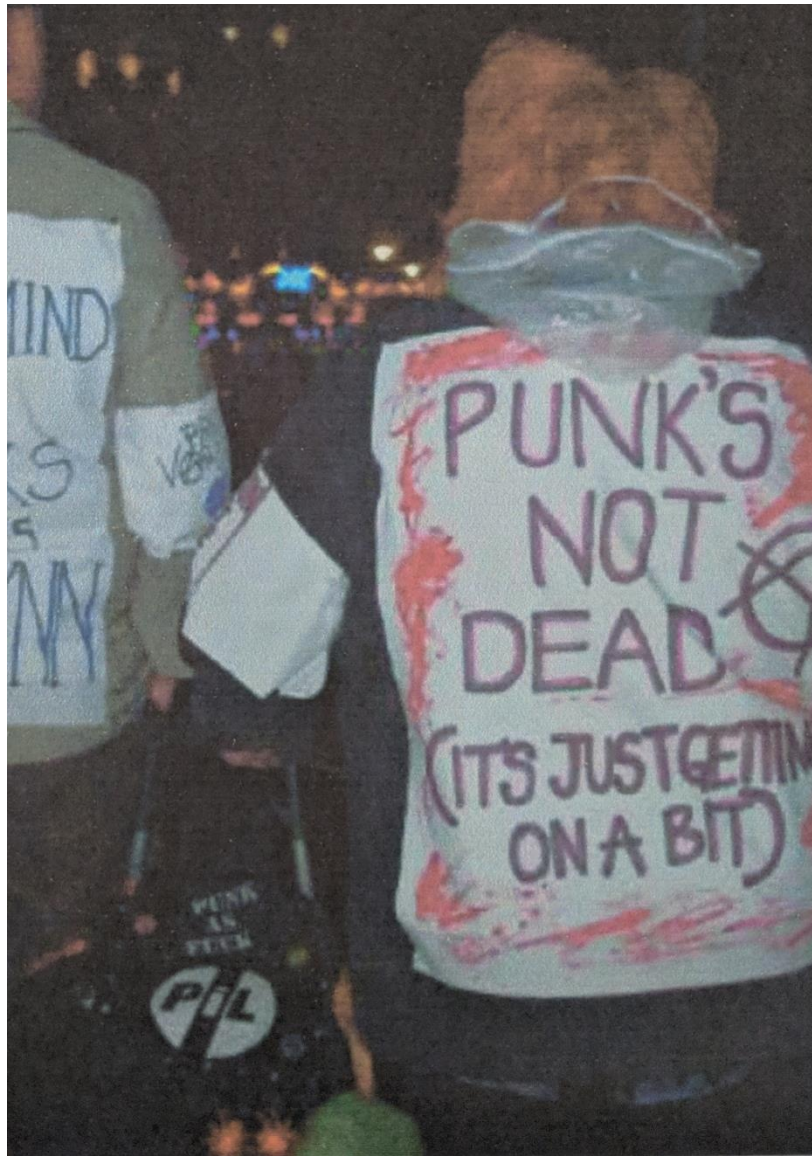
Fig. 3 Sam's 'trolley of punk'

Exploring the use of punk cues amongst the interviewees highlights the agency and reflexivity enacted by them in their dressing. A structuralist approach to subcultural dress as utilised by authors such as Hebdige (1998) is therefore limited in its application here. The exercising of agency in regards to clothing/dress has been discussed, however, in research concerning subculturalist women. Holland's (2006) study of alternative women, for example, demonstrates this. But Twigg (2007), speaking on age, gender and dress, notes that whilst dress can be an expression of agency, choice and the meanings attached to clothes are largely determined by structural contexts. Whilst my participants can be seen as expressing agency through the personal meaning they give to particular items, it is important to look at the wider structural context for why they do so and why they do so in these particular ways. This will be something I consider in Chapter 8 when

I unpack the significance of ageing in more detail. I now turn to the idea of dressing punk to go watch punk.

Dressing Punk to Go Watch Punk

There was some fairly brief discussion amongst three of the interviewees of changing the way they dressed in relation to what I would term 'punk environments'. This could reflect participants engaging in appearance labour (Peluchette et al 2006). Peluchette et al (2006) refers to the physical and mental effort an individual may put into dressing appropriately for work. This particularly the case when there is a dissonance between what the individual would want to wear and what they feel they are expected to. However, I argue that this concept could be utilised in a non-work context to more broadly refer to the physical and mental effort an individual puts into dressing and can help further understand, then, the participants' narratives concerning dress in the context of particular areas. When appearance labour emerged in the interviews it was in relation to three contexts: appearance labour in relation to punk environments, appearance labour in response to gendered societal expectation, and appearance labour in relation to the workplace. All three of these can be considered structural contexts which can impinge upon individual's agency. Punk environments will be focused on in this chapter. The other two themes – in the context of gendered societal expectations and in the workplace - will be explored in Chapter 8 in the context of ageing and adulthood. All of these can be considered structural factors which may or may not then constrain the women's dress choices.

Dress could be altered when coming into contact with particular sites of subcultural activity e.g. gigs. There was some discussion amongst a few of the interviewees of changing the way they dressed when attending gigs, for example. Deedee referred to donning her pink "DMs" (Dr. Marten boots) and doing her heavy eye make-up for gigs whilst for Suzy her studded belt would make an appearance. As mentioned above, Ces commented on gigs being one context when she would wear band t-shirts. These four aesthetic choices would again be considered 'punk cues' as things commonly associated with the punk subculture. This demonstrates a reflexive capacity, with certain 'punkier' elements being included in their dress choices when entering particular punk environments. Periodic/strategic visual displays like these were found amongst older straight-edgers by Haenfler (2012). Despite an internalisation of straight-edge,

participants might engage in such displays to set an example to younger participants, signify their continuing resistance to the mainstream, or for the purpose of nostalgia (e.g. wearing particular band t-shirts) (Haenfler 2012). It could be the case for Deedee and Suzy that this periodic display of particular punk cues might also signify something regarding their identification with punk – they felt stable enough with their punk identification that they did not need to visually display identification at all times: they had 'internalised' punk and did not feel the need to prove their punkness outwardly on an ongoing basis.

Whilst Deedee and Suzy, however, did not explicitly unpack their choices further, thinking about this in relation to Milly's feelings experienced when previously dressing punk may provide some further understanding:

> "...when I was dressing punk an' I thought that's what you had to do and I really enjoyed it and I loved the style, I loved dressing up, then I was really into it"- Milly

The interesting element here is the treatment of dressing punk as 'dressing up' and, to push that performance analogy further, given the heavy eye-make up and exaggerated hair style Milly describes as 'donning' it can be argued that such stereotypical punk dress can be quite theatrical. The enjoyment that might be derived in 'dressing up' is seen in research by Johnstone and Conroy (2005) which considers why women 'dress up' to go shopping. But 'dressing up' was also found to serve the purpose of social affiliation (Johnstone and Conroy 2005) which is also plausible in the case of Deedee and Suzy - their strategic visual display may serve the purpose of demonstrating their punk affiliation to other punks within a punk environment. Choosing to incorporate particular punk cues in dressing for gigs could therefore act as a way of being recognisable in their punk affiliation by other punks. Regardless of how this dressing up might be perceived, the notion itself of playing 'dress up' supports again the argument that dressing punk was not an essential element of being punk (see Chapter 4) – it was something that could be done sporadically e.g. for gigs and not necessarily needing to be maintained otherwise.

Conclusion

The discussion here continues the argument I initiated in Chapter 4 concerning the way punk can be understood as both processual and relational. Punk as a process can be seen

here through the exploration of the degree and the ways initial exposure to punk impacted on participants' dress. Whilst punk's relational quality emerges through discussion concerning punk cues. In the work of the CCCS, a subcultural style (e.g. dress) was made up of objects the working-class subculturalists had given new meaning to in an attempt to challenge dominant ideology (Williams 2011). Amongst my participants there were examples as seen in this chapter of the women giving new ('punk') meaning to objects incorporated into their dress. These, however, did not operate within a class framework as suggested by the CCCS (Williams 2011), instead reflecting the way punk had taken on an individualised meaning over the course of the punk career. There is a degree, then, to which the analysis provided in this chapter supports Bennett's argument that we must consider "the range of other possible meanings which the punk style assumed for those appropriated it, as the active decision of individuals" (1999: 602).

This chapter demonstrates that for the women I spoke with the relationship between 'being' punk and dress was not homogenous, nor was it static. My analysis highlights the interplays between agency and structural factors such as dress codes for punk gigs, generational power relations between children/parents, and size-ism by the clothing industry. This emerged through their narratives on the past as well as the 'now'. What this demonstrates is how my research participants were being reflexive in their choices concerning dress, at times navigating their agency and altering their choices in response to constraints (attempted to be) placed by structural factors. As Entwistle (2000) argues, dress may have a social nature, but individuals are active in their engagement with the social. This then questions the argument that the concept of 'scene' is now more relevant than 'subculture' (Bennett 1999) when considering something like punk. Scene foregrounds agency; seeing "individuals as active consumers whose choice reflects a self-constructed notion of identity" (Bennett 1999: 607). Such a foregrounding of agency downplays structural constraints such as those experienced by the older punk women I spoke to. The women's reflections on the impact of initial punk exposure/entry on their dress highlights ways normative femininity could be challenged and resisted. Discussions concerning how they dressed now highlighted how narratives concerning choice could challenge some dominant narratives of ageing. As demonstrated in Chapter 8, dress needs to be understood in the context of gendered ageing. Before moving onto this, however, further aspects of 'doing' punk will first be explored with the next chapter focusing on music.

Chapter 6 - 'Doing' Punk: The Role of Music and its Continued Significance

Music as a topic emerged across all of the interviews to some degree or another. This could be said to be expected given that punk has traditionally been conceived as a subculture orientated around music (as demonstrated in Chapter 2). As shown in Chapter 4, however, the women I spoke to emphasised punk as a belief system which might suggest that punk music fandom is not the sole signifier of their punk identity. In what ways, then, did music play a part in their construction and maintenance of a punk identity? This chapter is structured around what could be conceived as some kind of musical trajectory which in turn offers an insight into different punk careers. Firstly I will consider how music had largely facilitated the women's initial exposure to and entry into punk before considering the two common musical trajectories which were presented by my participants. The remainder of the chapter will deal with the significance that music held for the women I interviewed in their present lives and how this significance was conveyed.

Music and Initial Exposure to Punk: Facilitators and Gateway Bands

When I asked participants how and when they were first exposed to punk, the majority of the women in my sample spoke of this centring on punk music. In relation to this, eighteen of the twenty-two women referred explicitly to what I will consider as 'facilitators' (people/things which facilitated this exposure) and, as Jen referred to them, there could be within this "gateway bands" (bands which facilitated exposure to further similar and/or different bands). These, then, can be seen as contributing to the role of music as a point of entry into a/the punk career. This finding from my research offers insight which was not found in Andes' (2002) stage model of the punk career. Andes (2002) considered a predisposition stage and then a first stage with each entailing different definitions, reference groups, behaviours and core values. However there is no consideration in Andes' (2002) model of factors which might facilitate this predisposition or first stage.

Twelve of the facilitators that were referred to across the interviews were close or significant people – family members or peers for example. Speaking about her

introduction to punk music for the first time, Lindsey explained, for example, the role of a peer:

> "...when I was 16 I did something a bit mad and I went um to America for a
> year to go to high school [...] anyway, one of my American friends made me
> a tape, that's how long ago it was, um (laughs) made me a tape and I think
> on one side it was somebody like the *Dead Kennedys* and then the other side
> it was *Circle Jerks* and I listened to it and I thought I'm not sure if I like this
> but I really need to (laughs)".

With regards to family members, Elizabeth, Christine and Jen all spoke of their first exposure to punk music resulting from their brothers. Elizabeth said of her brother:

> "...he was a Britpop kid, very much into that, but he did own two *Green Day*
> albums in fact the two *Green Day* albums of his that he owned are in my
> collection [...] and so, I classify [...] everyone I know who listened to punk
> likes one of the big three, it was either *Offspring*, *Blink* or *Green Day*".

Her brother is not someone Elizabeth would describe as a punk or as a punk fan more broadly, but the presence in his music collection of two albums by the punk band *Green Day* became what Elizabeth recalls as her first exposure to punk music. Christine's brother, on the other hand, was, in her words "the type of punk that would just [...] spike his hair with like glue...". Whilst she was exposed to punk dress through her brother's appearance, it was listening to the music he listened to that Christine noted as her first exposure to punk. A very similar scenario was also presented by Rebecca but with regards to her "young" uncle:

> "...he'd got into it as quite a young teenager [...] and we'd always had that
> kind of around, you know, we always had that kind of old school punk
> around of the *Buzzcocks,* the *Sex Pistols,* the *Clash...*"

With Jen, it was not the case that her brother introduced her directly to punk music but she highlighted her brother's musical influence as important to her initial exposure to punk:

> "...sort of probably around the age of 9 or 10 and then just I kind of got into
> a lot of metal through my brother, got into *Metallica* and stuff, kind of got
> into all that and then I guess about 12/13 there was when I was about 12 or
> 13 there was the whole pop punk thing".

Jen, therefore, sees her brother as introducing her to another genre of music – metal. Yet she understands this as leading on to her discovery of punk music. There is the sense

that by listening to one alternative musical genre this may naturally, almost organically, progress into listening to another (or other) alternative musical genre(s). This sense of tastes being viewed by participants as naturally developing emerged across a handful of the interviews and will be discussed further below.

For three of the women I spoke to, parents emerged as facilitating interviewees' initial exposure to punk music. This was interesting when considering earlier work by the CCCS which proposed that punk was a youth culture which rebelled against or is in opposition to the culture of, for example, parents (e.g. Hall and Jefferson 2006, Hebidge 1998) and this argument was discussed too in Chapter 5 concerning parental roles with regards to dress. As illustrated below, for Ces, Jess and Kristianne punk music was part of their parents' culture:

> "...would of been my parents having vinyl LPs and stuff at home, stuff like the *Sex Pistols* or *The Clash* or *The Specials*" - Ces
>
> "My dad was a punk when he was younger 'cause he's 60 this year so he was around when like the *Sex Pistols* and *The Clash* were all playing and stuff like that so always had a kind of influence with the heavier side of music and things with my dad [...] just growing up with like him playing records and stuff like that always kind of been in the background" - Jess
>
> "...my dad er he's a musician [...] and he was always really into music and from a very, very young age like I was really into bands like *The Clash* and the *Sex Pistols when* they came out (laughs) [...] and my dad would go to shows and he would just take us along to punk gigs in village halls" - Kristianne

The reference to *The Clash* and the *Sex Pistols* in all three examples is not without significance (as could be said with Rebecca's earlier quote concerning her uncle). Both of these punk bands have taken on a somewhat iconic status and, in particular, are part of the public's imagination as representing the British punk scene of the 70s and 80s. This reflects the passing down of cultural knowledge (e.g. of punk music) by parents to their children. This was also found by Smith (2012) concerning parenthood and the Northern Soul scene whereby 'soul parents' pass on their cultural capital to their children who then in turn may participate in the scene themselves. The notion of first generation subculturalists becoming older and retaining the musical tastes of their youth was not considered by early subcultural work by the CCCS (e.g. Hall and Jefferson 2006, Hebidge 1998) therefore ignoring the impact that might have on any children they

may have (or younger family members). This supports the post-subcultural arguments detailed in Chapter 2 which claim that it has become increasingly difficult to conceptualise punk as just a (youth) (sub)culture (Muggleton and Weinzierl 2003). The media could also be a facilitator although this was only raised as such by Cheryl and Sam:

> "I was 6 or 7 years old watching *Top of the Pops*. *The Jam* were on and I loved the tune" - Cheryl

> [On recalling visiting a relative in hospital and going into the visiting room where the television was on] "...so I went in there an' *Top of the Pops* was on and *Siouxsie and the Banshees* was on and I just remember standing there and thinking "Oh my god! This is amazing! Who's this woman?" And just thinking she was amazing and fantastic" - Sam

In both of these examples the same media outlet acts as the facilitator. *Top of the Pops* was a BBC music chart television programme, broadcast between 1964 and 2006 on a weekly basis. The nature of this programme (e.g. shown on a main broadcasting channel at a reasonable hour) would make it easily accessible and it seems to offer a way of being exposed to new music without actively seeking it out through subcultural media. The two examples above also demonstrate another theme that emerged from the interviews – gateway bands. Sam's example also shows how femininity was in part important to her response to first seeing a punk band on the television, seeing Siouxsie Sioux, the band's front-woman, and being in awe of her.

As already suggested, gateway bands can be considered bands which introduce the listener to a new genre of music e.g. punk and/or lead to the listener developing their new found musical taste further. The significance of such bands for the women I spoke to might be indicated by the mere fact they were often able to remember specific details about hearing them after twenty or thirty plus years (as illustrated above by Sam). However, their significance is also demonstrated in the emotional responses they evoked in the women. The role of emotions in initial exposure to punk (music) will be discussed further below.

As already stated, twelve of the facilitators that were referred to would be considered close or significant people to the women and ten of these twelve were men; brothers, fathers, boyfriend or husband, or male peers. This could be indicative of men's greater access to public spaces and therefore street subcultures, relating to Walby's (1989) concept of private patriarchy (discussed in Chapter 2). From this it makes sense then

that a lot of my participants' exposure to punk came from men, particularly young men. As raised in Chapter 5, young women can also experience greater informal social control compared to young men, particularly in the context of the family, also contributing to their restricted access to street subcultures such as punk. Additionally, the medium through which the exposure took place supports this argument as exposure to punk music, as seen above, largely took place in the family home or through the media more so than through direct contact with other punks (non-family/close friends) or live exposure to punk music at a gig. Patriarchal culture (Walby 1989) also relates to punk being conceptualised as a masculine subculture (Leblanc 1999) which may make punk less appealing or even accessible to girls/women. The role of fathers in musically educating these young women was raised in Chapter 5 when the point was made concerning gender differences in parental facilitation e.g. it was common for mothers to facilitate dress choices/changes whereas fathers facilitated music exposure.

Initial Entry and Emotion

For fourteen of the twenty-two women I spoke to, punk music had some kind of emotive link for them and most commonly this was expressed when speaking about their initial exposure/attraction to punk music. Outside of this there were only three references to the emotive side of punk music which will be discussed separately. This may have reflected the nature of the semi-structured interviewing that took place. Emotions and their place in punk music fandom was not a focus I had considered and as a result there were no questions explicitly around this which might have led to an absence of discussion of this nature. Yet the way the women's narratives concerning their initial attraction/exposure predominantly brought in emotions should be considered significant in further understanding how their punk careers began and extends work which speaks of careers being preceded by a predisposition amongst individuals (Andes 2002, Matza 2010).

A few of the women expressed how they were initially attracted to punk music because it was 'different' and it conjured particular emotions in them. As demonstrated below, a common emotion experienced was excitement:

> "I didn't like a lot of the whiney indie, it just wasn't my side of things umm it was "Ooo this sounds a bit different, this sounds a bit more interesting"" – Elizabeth

> "...the music to me was really exciting" – Milly

Hester, Sharon and Suzy also expressed similar sentiments and this feeling of punk being different and exciting formed part of their initial (and for some ongoing) attraction. Such feelings might be in part due to the social context in which these women were 'growing up in' – Sharon had indicated in her interview, for example, that she was living in a fairly rural area at the time. As well as 'exciting', references to punk being energetic were evident and expressed by four of the women, including Milly:

> "I liked that [the music] was loud and heavy. The use of the guitars and the speed of the drums. I also liked the vocalist would scream or just be shouting the lyrics. There was something ruff [Milly's spelling] and energetic about it".

Again, for these women this energy they found in punk music was used to describe their initial exposure and subsequent attraction to punk. Such feelings link again to punk being a way to engage in the rebellion typical of adolescence (Henderson et al 2007, Hudson 1984), something raised in Chapter 4. Punk music is typically loud, heavy and energetic (commonly described as aggressive) – these characteristics are at odds with the stereotypical ones associated with femininity, such as gentleness and quietness (Hudson 1984). Hudson (1984) argues that emphasised discourses of femininity and adolescence (which is constructed as masculine due to its characteristics such as rebellion) place conflicting expectations on teenage girls. Punk again is constructed as masculine, a potential alternative to normative femininity.

Aside from the emotions described above, the other way emotion was framed in narratives concerning punk music and initial exposure/attraction to punk was through the idea of this music resonating with them. Naefun and Deedee spoke of this with regards to the lyrics they found within punk music. Naefun recalled how:

> "...there was always something in me that I felt like a little bit separate I guess [...] I could sort of, um, identify with, um, these artists that were saying".

For Deedee, it was specifically the political content of the lyrics with one of the bands which formed her initial entry into punk music, *The Clash.* But for others it was less clear as to the source of this felt resonation, as seen in Gill, Lindsey and Milly:

> "The music hit home [...] I was never particularly into the anarcho political stuff but I knew it made sense" – Gill

> "...I listened to it and I thought 'I'm not sure if I like this but I really need to' (laughs) it was weird, it was just this feeling of 'ah ok, this is, this is important' I suppose" - Lindsey
>
> "Music that meant something" – Milly

For Gill there could be a resonation again because of what the lyrics speak to. It appears she might not have particularly been a fan of the anarcho punk music, but she could identify with the lyrics. Or it could be a more ambiguous feel of resonation as suggested by Lindsey or Milly - this sense of recognising that this music is important and should be treated as such though initially not being completely sure as to why. This ties into the argument made in Chapter 4 concerning how some participants described an initial 'superficial' understanding of punk which over time changed as they began to see what punk 'really' was about (e.g. a set of particular beliefs and values). Here, Lindsey might be experiencing an initial sense of knowing this music was important but was unable to know why because she was yet to understand the underpinning beliefs and values of punk which band lyrics often exude. This resonation expressed by some of the women speaks too of the identity searching and experimentation often associated with adolescence (Henderson et al 2007). Punk music is conceptualised as being part of their journey in 'finding' their selves and developing their sense of who they are.

As detailed above, these emotive responses on hearing punk music for the first time were largely bounded in this idea of it being 'different' somehow to what the women had experienced prior to it. There is a strong sense that this 'different' music and the emotion it generated was the hook which drew them into punk. In Andes' (2002) predisposition stage, there is a perception of being 'different' from 'normal' others (this too was found in Gordon's (2014) work concerning individuals' feelings prior to entering the punk subculture). It might be assumed that amongst my research participants who felt they had discovered something 'different' on hearing punk music that this reflected their more general feeling of their self as 'different' (see Chapter 4).

Musical trajectories: a self-directed exploration? Or an organic progression?

With regards to what happened after their initial exposure to punk music, two main musical trajectories were presented by my participants. First, the idea that increasing awareness of punk music/bands was a self-directed exploration whereby it is a path the

participant consciously pursues. Second is the idea of this increasing awareness being more of a natural, organic progression; it is a path which unfolds itself for the participant and there is a sense that there is a certain way this 'just happens'. These themes appeared across fifteen interviews, sometimes both appearing in the scope of one interview.

As noted, gateway bands played an important part in this exploration. As Deedee said:

> "...my favourite band is *Manic Street Preachers*, when I started to find out more about the band more about their influences and started to explore some of the music references that they'd made and er find out you know more about them and discovered so much new music through that".

From knowing what bands influenced her favourite band, Deedee is able to explore and find further bands she likes, therefore extending her musical tastes. Similarly, Jen speaks of a gateway band leading her to find out more about the history of the musical genre, developing her awareness and repertoire of punk bands:

> "...there was the whole pop punk thing with *The Offspring* and bands like that so that was a kind of a bit of a follow on from that and being into that those kind of bands and you know that kind of American pop punk explosion that happened [...] and then that kind of, I think they're kind of like a gateway [...] and then you get into the you know you listen to those for a year or so and then maybe delve deeper into what the history of punk is".

As well as being influenced by other bands, bands may release recorded songs whereby they cover other band's songs. This too can help in further exploration of a genre such as punk as shown by Elizabeth:

> "*Green Day.* [My brother] definitely were the one that got me into them [...] an' obviously they do covers of various songs you know from *Operation Ivy* and then you find out more from there".

As illustrated above, there are various ways to explore and extend musical tastes beyond, for example, gateway bands. But what these examples share is that sense of exploration being directed by the participant. As noted above, the second way a musical trajectory was conceptualised evoked a sense of this being out of their control. This theme was less prevalent than the former. An example of that is shown here by Naefun when talking about how and when she was first exposed to punk. Naefun described

what can be understood as a natural progression – starting with her involvement with alternative music more broadly and this then leading into punk music more specifically:

> "I started to get into sort of like alternative music [...] I mean music has always just been a really, really important er important part of my life um, I think as I just got a bit older and went through my teenage years umm it was then that I could sort of like um identify I guess with um more alternative subcultures and alongside that kind of came um you know the sort of like [...] my introduction to punk [...] gradually they kinda went from indie gigs if you like to um into punk gigs".

There is no explicit sense of Naefun actively exploring or seeking out punk music, instead, as said, it is more an organic progression (something illustrated particularly in the last line with the use of the verb 'gradually') and there is a sense that it 'just happened'. Another example came from Naja, who said:

> "...it was that side of youth culture, you end up going to all the punk shows, you end up going to all the squat gigs, you end up going [to] the rallies, the demonstrations..."

Speaking about her involvement with punk in her youth, Naja envisions punk as a youth (sub)culture which comes with particular expectations regarding behaviour, therefore reflecting age norms concerning teenage rebellion and engagement in youth cultures. Going to punk gigs and listening to punk music is not something she explored of her own accord then but was something which was 'part of the parcel' so to speak. Again there is the sense of something which is organically unfolding but also that there are particular ways things happen – it is almost inevitable, it is not a result of your own efforts.

The presentation of two different conceptualisations of their musical trajectories might demonstrate how the women I spoke with experienced different pathways in the punk career. Such a conclusion is complicated, however, because some participants drew upon both conceptualisations in their accounts. But this does add weight to the argument that punk careers are not necessarily linear or follow a single pathway even in the context of one individual. Regardless of the pathway(s) taken, their growing awareness of punk music serves to show how participants were submerging themselves into punk, subsequently identifying with it more.

Music 'Now'

The focus of this chapter so far has been more retrospective in considering the importance of music in initial exposure to/entry into punk for the women I spoke with and how they perceived their musical trajectories after this. What will be explored next is the significance of music for the women 'now'. It is worth noting that what is discussed here relates to music in a non-gig attendance context - gig attendance and music will be considered separately in Chapter 7.

Listening to Punk Music

There was indication, either explicitly or inexplicitly, by eighteen of the twenty-two research participants that they listened to punk music outside of a gig context. Seven of these participants avoided, however, giving an impression of listening to punk music exclusively and instead highlighted their varied tastes – four of the seven used the descriptor 'eclectic'. Rebecca used her husband as a contrasting example to illustrate her musical tastes:

> "...he exclusively listens to punk and I don't. I like a lot of indie, I like a lot
> of anti-folk..."

Placing emphasis on having varied musical taste could be understood as another example of the women in my study associational distancing (Snow and Anderson 1987) themselves from being identified exclusively as punks (described in Chapter 4), especially as musical tastes are often used as an indicator of subcultural membership. Rebecca gave the impression from her interview that her husband would identify more *as* a punk rather than identifying *with* punk and perhaps she indeed linked that with his exclusively punk musical tastes. However, an exception to this application of associational distancing could be Sam who described how:

> "I still buy records all the time and I still play them because music's so
> important to me [...] I've got an eclectic collection, I've got all sorts of stuff
> but there's a massive lot of punk".

Despite using the descriptor 'eclectic' in relation to musical preferences, Sam was one of the few women in the research sample who explicitly identified as a punk suggesting that the associational distancing described above would not appear to apply. However, despite this suggestion of listening to non-punk music, Sam emphasised the importance of punk music above other types of music. One way of doing so was doing in tandem

with her conceptualisation of punk music as music located in a particular era and her disdain of 'modern' music:

> "I *liked* the music. And I still *like* the music (laughs). Modern stuff
> doesn't...there's very little modern music that I like or listen to at all".

Sam referred to 'modern' music in this way a few times in her interview and this helped to construct this understanding of punk as belonging to a particular historical time as well as demonstrate that punk music took a pedestal-like position for her in terms of musical tastes. Morag, like Sam, had also been one of the few women who identified as a punk and she too emphasised the importance of punk music but suggested an exclusive listening to what she deemed punk:

> "It's what I am. If you ask me what I am [...] I'm a punk [...] Punk is the
> music I listen to, the colours I dye my hair, my make-up, my social life..."

Returning to this notion of possessing a varied taste in music, three participants (Deedee, Katie and Milly) spoke of this emerging over time. Deedee said, for example how: "I suppose I listen to less punk these days and I suppose my music interests have kind of expanded". This suggests something again about the nature of their musical trajectories. This moving away from punk might also relate to how, for them, music had been their entry points into punk in their youth and therefore may have been a significant part of their punk identity previously. Over time, however, as Chapter 4 argued, punk could become less about the music and therefore musical tastes became broader.

Listening to punk music in the present day did not, however, necessarily equate to regular listening. Christine even explicitly commented on the fact she did not listen to punk music outside of a gig context:

> "...it's definitely more about a group of people getting together kind of thing
> for me rather than music [...] I definitely think I'm the kind of person that if
> I'm home I actually don't listen to music. I only listen to music either when
> [her husband] is playing music or when I'm out and I'm with people and it's
> more of an event I guess".

Christine's comments above also reflect discussion in Chapter 7 concerning gigs not being just about the music. Other women were more selective in their listening. Milly, along with Jess and Sharon, presented this idea of selective listening. As Milly explained:

> "I do still listen to punk but not [...] that often really [...] I like some heavy
> metal, I like some black metal, I like reggae, ska, even things like (laughs)
> Enya if I just wanna 'chill' [...] I find this music calming, so I sometimes put
> it on as background music when I'm reading or something".

What begins to be suggested is the use of different musical genres for different listening purposes. As Jess said, she had to "be in the mood for it now". Similarly Sharon noted:

> "I still know lots of people that hammer punk out all the time. I don't think I
> [do] so much now [...] I don't mind a bit now and then but I don't listen to it
> in the car going home anymore. It's not that I don't like it but if we go out to
> a gig or something we might make a mix or something to play beforehand
> with all the 'old favourites' on".

Sharon's use of the expression 'old favourites' generates a nostalgic feeling with a sense of affection for those old bands she will return to at particular times. A similar nostalgia concerning music emerged with five other participants. For Sam, her collection (and continued collecting) of punk records appeared bound up with nostalgia:

> "I've still got nearly the majority of all my records from my teens [...] this
> was the first one I ever bought when I was probably about 14, 15 [...] Sex
> Pistols' picture disc and it cost me five quid from [names shop], sound's
> rubbish on it, sound's dreadful, but I've got it".

This nostalgia can be understood more when considered in the context of Sam seeing punk music as predominantly the music of a particular era. For Sam it could also be the case that she was engaging in a 'consumed nostalgia' (Cross 2015). As she explained regarding her Sex Pistols' collection she had "bootlegs" and "counterfeit" records but: "I just like to have 'em in my collection". Taken too with the above quote, there's the idea here that the quality of the sound is not important, just possessing them is and nostalgia informs her continued consumption of records. In terms of material items women brought with them to their interviews to help discuss the significance of punk to them, three others in addition to Sam had chosen a record/records. For two of these, Deedee and Milly, the records were ones of significance to them with regards to their early punk involvement; perhaps again suggesting some nostalgia. Sam was not the only woman in the research sample who saw punk music as located in a particular era. This links to the argument made in Chapter 4 concerning how 'authentic' punk more broadly was understood by some of the women as being located historically in a particular time

period. Along with Sam, four additional women (of the eighteen who spoke about music) saw punk music as temporally located.

Also pointed out above by Christine was the way she described not actively 'seeking out' music. The suggestion that there was an absence of 'seeking out' (new) music was also noted by Jess. There would be some logic in equating this with the view that punk music was temporally located, with the seeking out of (new) music not then being of great concern. However, neither Christine nor Jess espoused the view of punk music being located in a particular era. Their reasons for attending gigs, however, can shed light on this aspect of their relationship to music (Chapter 7 will concentrate on music in a gig attendance context). Christine's main reason for attending gigs was for the social dynamic whereas for Jess, she attended particular gigs to maintain her relationship as a fan of (a) particular artist(s). This speaks of the role of music in their lives and in turn suggests a relationship with music that does not sit with seeking out new music. Others, however, explicitly drew attention to the way they were still seeking out new music. This concerned five of women of the eighteen who discussed music. As Cheryl said: "...there are so many new sounds and genres of punk out there that I'm still finding bands".

Music – not just about listening

Music was also discussed by participants in non-listening, non-gig contexts. Such examples serve to demonstrate how music can be embedded in everyday cultural practice and not just through 'blatant' measures such as listening to music or attending gigs (Bennett and Taylor 2012). As already discussed in Chapter 5, band logos/iconography, for example, could be incorporated into participants' dress; shown by Elizabeth's hat and hoodie or Sam's punk trolley. In response to my suggestion that research participants brought items to their interviews, amongst Deedee's was a t-shirt. She explained how:

> "I thought no, I'd bring something more personal so what I've got here is a t-shirt that I made and it's a Sylvia Plath quote and [...] I made this for a Manics' [*Manic Street Preachers'*] gig that I went to and they use it on one of their singles".

Again, here is something being crafted or created (just as with Elizabeth or Sam) to incorporate some musical reference(s). This would require a degree of effort from those doing the creating suggesting an investment in such an activity. The use of band

logos/iconography by Elizabeth and Sam on items of clothing and accessories might serve as a way of demonstrating their fandom and they can also be recognised by others. Deedee, however, has not used such an easily identifiable band logo or name on the t-shirt in question; instead choosing a particular quote used by a band she is a fan of. Indeed she describes it as 'personal' and this then maybe explains her choice of a slightly more obscure way of referencing a particular band.

Music could also be embedded into the participants' lives in other ways and six of the research sample took what could be described as 'contributing roles' in some kind of musical endeavour. Naefun, for example, described how:

"...there's quite a lively punk scene in [city she lived] and [...] one of the ways that I kind of contribute to that scene is being a punk DJ at gigs and at local pubs and stuff like that".

Both Sharon and Suzy played in bands which were currently active in a gigging sense. Sharon described in detail the story of her band to me:

"...we call it a revenge band...our blokes are all in bands [...] and they've been doing it for years and [...]it's always been easy, they just get on with it, they go off every weekend they go duh duh duh we follow them around and I think we were just all drunk at [named festival] and everyone was a bit pissed and we wrote a song, none of us could even play at this stage [...] and we were just going on for ages about how cool it would be to have a band [...] and then it took us about two years after that I think, I learnt to play the bass cause one of the other girls could drum a bit and someone played a bit of guitar and we are a bit shit to be honest but we're getting much better (laughs)".

What is interesting is the way Sharon and her friends set out to form a band and this preceded any substantive possession of musical ability. This exudes the DIY value of punk discussed in Chapter 4 and such an approach to forming a band was quite common amongst the first punk bands.

Sharon's account also raises issues here concerning gender differences, adding to my argument earlier in this thesis concerning patriarchal culture (Walby 1989). There is here the presumed acceptability of 'the blokes' being in a band and this then having to be accepted as a legitimate commitment in terms of how they spend their leisure time. This notion of there being more structural constraints placed on women's leisure time

(therefore potentially limiting their ability to take on such musical roles) was further expanded upon by Sharon:

> "...it hasn't been that easy at all, it's been rubbish. To practice we have to practice at half past nine in the morning after the school run cause it's too complicated cause in the evening by the time they've cooked dinner, I mean my kids are grown up so you know, but the time they've cooked dinner and done this and done that".

As demonstrated above then childcare responsibilities of the other women in Sharon's band had limited their available leisure time so band practices had to be organised in accordance with this. This demonstrates a structural constraint women face. Sharon also highlighted an issue concerning payment of gigs:

> "...it's made really difficult for women [...] it's not valued in the same way, it's not taken as seriously, it's not promoted in the same way [...] Because we're all girls we don't go out now unless we're paid [...] it's like we can't take that time out of our lives, we can't afford to be spending money we should be spending on food for our kids to go and do a gig for nothing. But that's not a priority for blokes".

Again, this reflects the common idea of mothers prioritising their children which is indicative of patriarchal culture and structures (Walby 1989). Milly also spoke of how having children had limited not just her own but also her husband's potential for playing in band. Subcultutural participation being adapted in light of having children has also been found amongst ageing Goths (Hodkinson 2013a).

Outside of playing in a band, the other 'contributing' roles women played in relation to music were predominantly organisational. Kristianne, for example, organised DIY events which spanned spoken word and music whilst also performing spoken word herself. Hester stated that she helped to promote a band and Rebecca ran a promotional venture with her husband which put on DIY gigs. It is worth noting that whilst some of the women took these 'contributing' roles, this was just under a quarter of the research participants. Andes (2002) argues that in a punk career punks will end up dissociating from the punk subculture over time unless they retain a creative or organisational role (e.g. as a tour manager or record label owner). Andes (2002) is therefore suggesting that in order to 'grow up punk' successfully, such a contributing role needs to be undertaken. However, this was not an outcome for majority of my research sample as

they had aged and despite this they were not dissociating themselves from punk. This goes some way in supporting the existence of multiple punk career pathways.

Conclusion

Whilst an understanding of punk as a system of beliefs and values prevailed amongst the research sample (seen in Chapter 4), it can be seen in this chapter the various ways music could be constructed to retain significance for the women I spoke with, from selective listening to the portrayal of musical fandom through dress/accessories. Taking on a creative or organisational role within punk in the context of music was something done only by a handful of my research sample, questioning Andes' (2002) argument that this was required in order to remain a successful punk as one aged.

As illustrated in this chapter, music played a key role for most of the research sample's exposure to, and arguably subsequent entry, into punk. Therefore this can be seen as an important facilitator in initialising a punk career, a complexity missing in Andes' (2002) model. For over half of my research sample, emotion played an important part in relation to hearing punk music for the first time. Again this is something not considered in Andes' (2002) model of a punk career and as my research demonstrates, emotion can be an important factor in facilitating a predisposition to beginning a punk career.

Indeed, the role of emotion is also not something explicitly considered in the commonly cited literature on the concept of career (e.g. Becker 1966, Matza 2010) which might reflect a historical tendency in sociology to not engage with the study of emotion (Stets and Turner 2006). This speaks towards the originality of my finding.

For a small number of the women I spoke with, parents facilitated their musical exposure, again questioning the idea of punk as a subculture constructed in contrast to a dominant, or parental, culture (e.g. Brake 1985, Clarke et al 1975, Hebdige 1998). More prevalent in my study was the gendered nature of this facilitation with ten of the twelve facilitators referred to being men. I have highlighted in this chapter how this supports suggestions of the masculinised nature of punk (Leblanc 2002) and also speaks of the greater social control placed on (young) women (Walby 1989). The notion of experiences being gendered was also picked up in terms of 'contributing roles' with a nod to normative assumptions and expectations concerning gender constraining leisure time. This is of vital importance when trying to further understand punk careers or punk subcultural affiliation over time more broadly. Existing discussion of punk careers

(Andes 2002) or punk affiliation over the life course (Bennett 2006, Bennett 2013) fails to consider the impact(s) gender has, with my findings therefore offering an original contribution to this.

The narratives concerning musical trajectories after initial exposure to punk music serve to illustrate the way the women developed their understanding of punk (music) further. Regardless of whether these were a self-directed exploration, an organic progression or indeed a mixture of both, they are indicative of a process by which the women I spoke with submerged themselves into punk, developing their punk knowledge. This is in keeping with the learning process careers involve (Becker 1966, Jderu 2015, Matza 2010) and support an understanding of punk as processual, developing over time.

The findings of this chapter contribute to discussions in Chapters 4 and 5 concerning agency and structure, supporting the argument that both played a role in my research sample's construction and maintenance of a punk identity. In the context of music (as described in this chapter), structural factors could go some way in shaping the role of music in the lives of the punk women I spoke with yet this did not mean they did not attempt to negotiate these. This can be seen, for example, with the structural constraints experienced by Sharon and her creation of a band as a response. Patriarchal culture and gender, noted above, were ways some of the women's initial exposure to punk music was mediated yet a sense of agency then emerges from the women's accounts of their self-directed exploration of punk music. My discussion concerning agency and structure will continue in the next chapter which considers music in the context of gig attendance.

Chapter 7 - Doing Punk: Music in the Context of Gig Attendance

This chapter remains on the topic of music but I will explore music now in the context of gig attendance. In Bennett's (2006) research on older punk fans, he notes a distinct absence of women at the punk gigs he attended, another indicator that punk is a masculine culture (Leblanc 2002 and as discussed in the previous chapter). When speaking to the women in my own sample, however, gig attendance was a common occurrence. I begin this chapter by exploring motivation for their gig attendance before exploring the practical factors experienced by the women I spoke with which posed potential barriers to gig attendance. Attention then turns to their positioning and presence at gigs, questioning whether as Fonarow (1997) argues older gig attendees are 'aged out' of venues. I finish with some discussion of the women's presence at gigs in terms of gig etiquette and alcohol consumption.

Why Go to Gigs?

As noted in my introduction above, gig attendance was a common occurrence amongst the women I spoke with. A handful of the women felt their gig attendance had declined in regularity over time, but only a few said they now rarely went to a gig. Eighteen of the twenty-two women said they went to gigs – three of these described their attendance as 'pretty regular', five as regular and the rest did not quantify their gig attendance. This regularity of gig attendance might indicate another way that music played a significant role in the women's 'doing' of punk but as the discussion below illustrates it would be wrong to assume such a simplistic relationship.

Recent research by Brown and Knox (2017) considered the motivations behind attending pop concerts and found that four key themes emerged. Whilst their research is considering a different genre of music and looking at reasons for attending (rather than reasons for not), their findings provide a useful point of comparison in considering my own sample's motivations, or reasons, for attending gigs. The four themes identified by Brown and Knox (2017), in order of prevalence, were 'experience', 'engagement', 'novelty' and 'practical', these themes comprised of sub-themes. The themes 'engagement' and 'practical' were evident in my research.

Engagement

The most common motivator for attending gigs for the women I spoke with was 'engagement', with twenty-six references to this theme. As seen in Brown and Knox (2017) engagement could include motivation concerning the sub-themes of fan-artist relationship maintenance, emotional aspects and social dynamics. Additionally, from my sample, some further sub-themes were identified – 'local scene support' and 'new music discovery'.

Under the theme of engagement the biggest pull for the women when speaking about going to gigs was centred on the social aspect (or social dynamics) of gig attendance – socialising or meeting new people. This theme emerged from twelve of the twenty-two interviews. Naja spoke, for example, of gig attendance not being about interest in the music but being used as an opportunity to meet up with her fellow punk friends who were also women:

> "I don't go to the gigs to go to the gigs, I don't give a shit about the gigs. I go because I meet up and go 'Ay, you going to that gig?' 'Yeah, your husband's playing' 'Oh, that's great, well my husband's playing' 'Oh we'll meet up and have a bit of a laugh', you know?"

Here is another sign of the gendering of punk, with Naja's husband and her friends' husbands being the musicians, whereas they are the spectators. This speaks towards Leblanc's (2002) suggestion that punk remains a masculine subculture and a site where women remain marginalized.

A similar sentiment of going to gigs to socialise was expressed by Christine:

> "...it's definitely more about a group of people getting together kind of thing for me rather than music [...] I definitely think I'm the kind of person that if I'm home I actually don't listen to music, I only listen to music either when [her partner] is playing music or when I'm out and I'm with people and it's more of an event I guess".

Whilst predominantly framed as a pull factor, this idea of socialising or being amongst friends could also be framed as a push factor by some for not going to gigs; as Jen expressed:

> "...a lot of my friends don't go to gigs anymore, a lot of them have settled down, maybe got more sensible jobs, stopped going out as much, had children [...] and their time is not really dedicated as much to gigs and so for me going to gigs is more than just about the music, it's about socialising as

> well and I don't always feel I wanna go out on my own [...] I will do but,
> I'd rather go out with friends and then the people that used to go out don't
> anymore so there's not as much opportunity to go out and socialise".

Jen interprets her friends' reduction in gig attendance as resulting from things that might be associated with ageing or adulthood – 'settling down', prioritizing a career, having children. Such aspects will be considered from my sample's own experiences later in Chapter 8. Jen, though employed herself but not in her view 'settled down' (for example, by not having had a child/children), is therefore positioning herself as not having quite succumbed to the usual expectations adulthood brings. As a result, she sees this as allowing her to maintain her gig attendance.

It is interesting that this social aspect of attending gigs came out so strongly from my research sample and this again links to the previous argument made in Chapter 4 concerning punk becoming a set of beliefs and values for the women involved – that being the case it is logical that the actual music might not have such a significant place in the women's lives or be the main pull for gig attending. This again demonstrates the different pathways within a punk career. Despite music being central in the majority of the women's entry into punk, the importance of music as expressed through gig attendance was only demonstrated by a few - punk music fandom, however, could be expressed in different ways such as through dress (for the detailed discussion of this, see Chapter 6).

Related to this social aspect of gig attendance (and perhaps alluded to by Christine above) is the suggestion that attending gigs also served to reinforce an idea of a collective amongst punk participants. Morag said that:

> "Going to gigs is more about being around being among like-minded
> people, seeing friends and meeting new people. It's reassurance that my
> own world view is shared by many others in the scene."

Being present at a punk gig where you feel you are amongst others who hold the same punk values can help in creating a sense of being part of a collective and can also be, as Morag expressed, a source of reassurance that there are others who think like you. This feeling of being part of a wider group who share the same beliefs and values conjures Durkheim's (in Tsitsos 2012) idea of social solidarity and highlights the collective/community feel of punk (a punk value discussed in Chapter 4).

This collective/community feel of punk links to the motivator 'local scene support' which three interviewees referred to, demonstrating how being affiliated with punk can take on the feeling of being part of a collective, or community. This was one of two sub-themes identified from my research sample which was not present in Brown and Knox's (2017) study. Amongst Elizabeth, Kristianne and Katie there was the belief that they were supporting local venues or the local scene by attending gigs. Elizabeth worded this as "giving back to the venue" whilst Kristianne explained that:

> "...we could be looking at losing even more venues and we've already had some, a number, closed down in the last year so and the problem then is, you know, the venues that are closing down are the ones that were letting people put punk shows on for nothing [...] I try and go to as many shows as I can and...I guess support the community as much as possible".

This links too to the DIY value in punk expressed by participants in Chapter 4 whereby supporting smaller, independent venues and gig promoters becomes important. Katie also spoke of this but instead reported that for her currently there was no felt need to contribute to keeping venues going hence not needing to attend gigs:

> "I know if I don't turn up to shows they don't get cancelled whereas back in other places like if five people didn't turn up to a show like the promoter would lose a lot of money and (laughs) you wouldn't get any more shows [...] the feeling like I'm part of a community isn't, doesn't exist here at the minute".

DIY as being part of a community which helps each other achieve things (e.g. putting on gigs) really comes through here. Living in London, Katie no longer feels that sense of being part of a DIY collective and also recognises the reduced struggle for gig promoters/venues. As noted, local scene support was not a sub-theme of engagement identified by Brown and Knox's (2017) research and I would argue that this reflects their focus on live pop music. Firstly pop music is a commercially driven industry which does not have the independent venues and/or gig promoters characteristic of the punk genre, nor a notion of localised scenes. Secondly, as I've already argued, this idea of supporting the local music scene is interwoven with the DIY value associated with those who take a punk mindset. Whilst this DIY value might not necessarily be unique to punk, it is unlikely that such a value is as important to pop artists or fans.

'Emotional aspects' emerged as a motivation for gig attendance from three of the interviews. Deedee's accounts of gig attendance evoked a feeling of passion and

emotional investment in the music or the performer. Below, for example, she described how she felt about those who bought gigs to tickets with the aim to sell them to make a profit:

> "...like *Manics* say recently did the 'Holy Bible' tour 20th anniversary and you just knew the tickets were just gonna disappear and I wasn't very well and tickets went on sale and um when I logged on the computer in the evening I was gutted cause they'd all gone so that is a massive disappointment to me cause they get sold they get you know bought by touts and people who don't really know anything about the music? You know, they're not passionate about it".

There is the clear idea here that for Deedee going to particular gigs is because of her passion for the music or performer. This was further supported through other references made about this particular performer – some of which are demonstrated below under 'fan-artist relationship maintenance'. Here an overlap in themes can be highlighted with emotional aspects and fan-artist relationship maintenance sometimes being difficult to untangle. Emotional aspects could concern more broadly the emotional responses felt by the women on hearing/watching live music. For Sharon, for example, a pull of attending gigs seemed to be the fun she associated with them. She talked about not attending certain festivals, for example, because they were out of her "fun zone" and a sense of gigs being about having fun and 'having a laugh' came through in accounts such as below when talking about her role (e.g. behaviour) at gigs:

> "I still dance, I love dancing but I don't know, I don't really know what my role was, I haven't really thought about it like that – get drunk and dance? I don't think that's changed (laughs) I probably don't dance as much as I used to [...] I guess it just depends".

An absence of emotion was highlighted by Milly as a contributing factor for her reduced gig attendance. Milly had described her initial attraction to punk music being due to its 'exciting' nature and it seemed appropriate to assume this was a motivator for gig attendance given what she later said in her interview:

> "I do still like the music and I do listen to it but I think I did go off um the music when I was going to a lot of hardcore punk gigs and I do like certain hardcore like crust type but when it became just it just became too monotonous it was one band after another at a gig, they were just sounding

the same, and it just put me off I got bored with it and I wanted more really

than going to the gigs standing there bored".

What appears above, then, is an absence of excitement (suggested by the descriptor 'monotonous') becoming a push factor with regards to gig attendance. In the context of what she had said about her initial attraction to punk, it is only fair to assume that for Milly excitement had once been a pull factor for gig attendance. As shown above, Milly still liked the music and would listen to it outside of a gig context, but this was not enough in itself for her to continue to attend gigs.

Whilst the presence of only three occurrences of the motivator 'emotional aspects' may seem a relatively low occurrence, this was still more prevalent when compared to Brown and Knox (2017) where references were very brief e.g. 'to relax'. In addition to this, it might be that emotional pulls for attending gigs were present but just not voiced explicitly by the women I spoke to. For example, the idea of attending gigs because it was an 'old' band playing might have had some emotional basis as outlined below. Fan-artist relationship as a motivator for gig attendance appeared across three interviews. Most commonly this would be expressed by naming a particular artist, or artists, and speaking about attending their performances. Speaking about *Adam and the Ants*, for example, Sam said that:

"[the] first album I ever bought was *Adam and the Ants'* 'Dirt Wears White

Socks' [...] and I'm still a massive fan, I've seen him twice in the last couple

of years, absolutely love him".

Sam is expressing a fandom aimed at this particular artist and it would appear by attending their live performances she is maintaining that fan-artist relationship. Similarly this was seen when Jess spoke about her "love" of *Patti Smith* before leading on to speak of attending her last tour, and Deedee's ongoing relationship with the *Manic Street Preachers* which was helped by attending their gigs. As noted above this is where an overlap in the categorisation used by Brown and Knox (2017) occurs as Sam, Jess and Deedee were attending particular gigs to maintain their relationship as fans of a particular artist but there is emotion being expressed too. The fan-artist relationship maintenance as a motivator for gig attendance may then have an emotional aspect to it, making it harder if trying to separate these motivators out such as Brown and Knox (2017) have attempted.

Moving away from naming references to specific artists/performers, Naefun spoke of how she was more likely to attend a gig if an 'old' band were playing, a band she "knew

and loved", rather than an unheard of, young band. Similarly Kristianne said that being familiar with the band playing would be a motivator for attending. Perhaps again the importance of emotion is coming through with such examples, particularly with this idea of going to gigs by 'old bands' whereby 'old' is being used to categorise bands which had been around in your youth or when you were younger. There can be an emotional investment at play here (being a fan of a band for years and years because of some investment in them) but there can also be a nostalgia attached to such bands; reminding you of a previous time, for example. As Breeden and Carroll (2002) note, nostalgia is often bound up in reflections concerning our youth.

Whilst there was this notion of fan-artist relationship maintenance for some, there could also be the idea of 'new music discovery'. This was the second of the two sub-themes identified from my research sample which had not occurred in Brown and Knox's (2017) study. Only one participant, Kristianne, spoke of this:

> "...people will say 'oh I don't wanna go to that show cause I don't know any
> of the bands' and it's like, how are you ever gonna know who the next cool
> band are to watch if you don't go to shows?"

There might of been more discussion around this had my research focused specifically on identifying motivators for gig attendance as Brown and Knox (2017) had done but the absence of specific questions on this meant that there might of been lots left unsaid. However, this again could serve to support my previous argument in Chapter 4 of the importance of punk as a belief system. Therefore, that 'new music' discovery as a motivator for gig attendance was only referred to by one participant. If punk is more a belief system than a music fandom it makes sense that going to gigs to discover new music would not be as important.

Above I have laid out the theme of engagement and the various sub-themes of this which emerged from my research sample, comparing where appropriate to Brown and Knox (2017). Engagement was the most prevalent theme across my interviews and this was largely because of the many references to its sub-theme 'social dynamics' as a motivator for attending gigs. In Brown and Knox's (2017), however, engagement, was the second most prevalent theme to the theme they categorised as 'experience' which spoke of the gig as a unique, distinctive experience and included references to proximity to the musician and visual stimulation. This theme of 'experience' did not emerge from my research sample at all and that coupled with my point above concerning the prevalence of 'social dynamics' supports again this argument that punk for the women

I spoke to was not so much about music fandom, instead having gone beyond this to encapsulate a set of beliefs and values. There is also something to be said regarding the impact the genre of music can have on gig attendance motivators and differences between pop and punk are evident above.

Barriers to Gig Attendance

Discussion of practical reasons for (not) attending gigs suggested some barriers to gig attendance. In my research practical reasons could be further divided into the sub-themes of work-life balance; location and accessibility; cost; childcare responsibilities and health. Here lies another difference in comparison to Brown and Knox's (2017) findings as their practical sub-themes included: pre- and post-event purchasing; cost and convenience. Most of the practical reasons my participants spoke of can be understood further in the context of ageing. Work commitments and childcare responsibilities may be a reflection of social ageing, for example, whilst discussions concerning health may be in the context of physical ageing. Work-life balance was the second most prevalent theme across all the interviews, whether referring to practical factors or not. This will be explored, however, in Chapter 8 in the context of employment as a marker of adulthood. Accessibility of gigs, or their location, was framed as a push factor by Ces, Lindsey and Naefun. Lindsey explained how she lived "a bit out of town so buses are quite irregular an' you know once the last bus has gone well that's it, you just end up kind of leaving at 9 o'clock which is...sad". But greater accessibility and ease of location did not always entail gig attendance as there could be the weighing up of push and pull factors. Katie described living in a city where an abundance of gigs happened in close proximity but that did not necessarily mean that she went to more. When I asked her to clarify whether she felt she did not get to go to many gigs because of where she lived now Katie said:

> "Um I don't think it's getting to go cause there's definitely lots of gigs that go on (laughs) [...] I'm less likely to go to a small gig, no matter if I really want to see the band cause it's rare that I can find people that I wanna go with and I really can't...either standing in a pub on my own watching a band or going home after a long day at work like I'd much rather just get the bus and go home which is quite sad (laughs)".

Katie highlights again that importance felt by some of the research sample of the social aspect of gig attendance. Despite there being a number of gigs which are

accessible to her, Katie does not see this accessibility as outweighing the desire
for gig attendance to be something to do with other people and not alone.
Money could also be another practical factor. The lack of it could be a push factor as
highlighted by Christine, Kristianne and Milly. Christine said how:

> "Yeah it depends on when the shows are as well and if we know in advance
> cause [her partner] and I [are] sometimes really bad towards the end of
> month where we're just kind of like "well...we could get food or we could
> go to a punk show" (laughter). Sometimes we go to punk shows instead of
> buying food, we have done that before, um, it was probably not like the best
> way to go about it (laughs). So sometimes if it's like a really good gig [...]
> it's like [...] can we afford to do that? Because we're also the two of us, he's
> worse than I am about going to shows and then not drinking or not getting
> some drinks when you're out, like he really needs those drinks to kinda like
> loosen up and get chatty or whatever [...] that can be [an] expensive night
> out then so you have to think about that kind of thing as well but that's why
> punk shows are really good because you're not having to worry about
> buying drinks at a bar you can go to Tesco and buy two litres of cider for
> one pound ninety-nine and be 'golden' for the night".

As illustrated above, then, a lack of money did not necessarily mean Christine (and her
partner) would not go to a gig – there had been occasions when going to a gig might be
valued more highly by Christine (and her partner) than necessities such as food. There is
also the point being raised here concerning the nature of some punk gigs, namely 'house
shows' where there is an absence of a charging bar and you are welcome to take your
own alcohol. House shows are not an anomaly within punk or more broadly DIY music
scenes and Glass (2012) notes that this transformation of places (e.g. residential
buildings) into non-traditional venues can be a means of counteracting a lack of
resources to create their own place. Such a practice has its roots in the DIY value and
can be seen with Christine as providing an opportunity here for those who may
otherwise have been priced out of attending a gig to still engage in that punk music fan-
ship. What emerges here too is this link between gig attendance and alcohol
consumption which is considered further below.
Milly also spoke of money in relation to the money required for childcare and how this
had in the past been a push factor which constrained gig attendance. Although Milly

reflected on how their financial situation coupled with parenthood had impacted both on her *and* her husband's ability to go to gigs, she added:

> "[...] when our children were young my husband played in a band. Often I would stay at home whist he was gigging".

Presented here is another indicator of the gendering of punk, as seen before with Naja's husband and her friends' husbands playing in bands, again supporting Leblanc's (2002) proposition of punk as a masculine subculture. Walby's (1989) concept of private patriarchy is also relevant here in which women are relatively excluded "arenas of social life apart from the household" (Walby 1989: 228). For women, parenthood could then be a way that access to public freedom (e.g. playing in a band) becomes restricted. The impact of children and/or childcare on scene participation has also been noted by Hodkinson (2013a) with regards to ageing Goths. Some relationship between managing childcare and attending gigs was also raised by Briony. When I asked whether going to gigs was an important part of her life still she replied:

> "Yeah, it's really important - like me and my boyfriend take it in turns to go to gigs like we don't have a strong like support network around us for childcare and stuff but we definitely take it in turns so I've only been to one festival this year but it's really nice to get away and be stupid for a weekend".

Despite childcare being limited for Briony, her and her partner negotiated this by taking it in turns to go to gigs therefore limiting the impact having a child might have on their continued gig attendance. Becoming a parent did not necessarily mean the curtailing of going to gigs but, as seen with Briony, could lead to a reduction in the level of gigs attended. Comparing Milly and Briony's accounts here, a generational difference also emerges. Milly highlights a gendered division with her husband off gigging and her at home after they had children, reflective of societal expectations concerning gender and domesticity in the context of the 1980s when she is referring to. Briony, speaking of her current situation, demonstrates more of an attempt at shared responsibilities, reflective of changes since the 1980s concerning greater challenging of traditional gendered practices. Briony too is engaging in an appropriation of feminism in her male partner's participation in domestic work (Aronson 2008).

Some of the women I spoke with perceived certain barriers to their gig attendance, however, where negotiation did not appear as possible. Jess cited her mental health, for example, as having an impact on her gig attendance:

> "I used to go to [a gig] every couple of weeks and now I think I can
> probably count on one hand how many I think I've gone to in the last year
> or so. There's plenty of reasons, I think, I've got social anxiety as well so
> it's like going out in public it's a bit of a [night]mare sometimes".

Issues related to health were also raised by Milly as impacting her level of gig attendance:

> "*I've* changed *hugely* as a person. When I was in a band we used to do a lot
> of gigs, we used to go to a lot of gigs, we'd have friends staying, we'd be
> partying every weekend, I'd be drinking an awful lot socially and then I
> started getting health problems [...] about ten years ago maybe and I think
> that instigated change. First of all I was doing the PhD and I gave the band
> up because I didn't have an awful lot of time before the band for practice
> and so on and I needed to concentrate on my studies, so I gave the band up
> and I stopped going to gigs as much um then I got some health problems so
> I stopped drinking as much and when I stopped drinking as much I realised I
> didn't want to be in that environment anymore. I also developed tinnitus
> while I was in the band and loud music started really affecting me after I'd
> been to a smallish gig it would really affect my ears so all those things really
> together. I think the main thing probably was the health issues and I started
> thinking more about looking after myself and not going to gigs staying out
> all night drinking".

As Milly points out her, there is no clear identifiable factor which reduced her gig attendance levels but rather a mixture of factors. Despite this she felt personally the health issues probably did hold greater significance than others – the desire to reduce alcohol consumption for health reasons and the desire to not aggravate the tinnitus she had developed. Here the concept of social ageing is relevant as Milly could be understood as beginning to fulfil societal expectations of becoming a 'responsible' adult who takes responsibility for their health and wellbeing. The account above also highlights the way for Milly, like Christine, gigs and alcohol consumption seemed inextricably linked.

In Brown and Knox's (2017) research, practical reasons for attending or not attending live music were the least prevalent - this may again be a reflection of the method used by Brown and Knox (2017) as by asking gig attendees about motivators for attending it might be unlikely for practical factors to be raised as this tends to be a push rather than

pull factor. But what is reflected above is the degree to which practical factors could impact on decisions to attend (or not attend) a gig and serves to demonstrate the complexity of my sample's relationships with music. What has been demonstrated is that my research participants were reflexive in their gig attendance, considering a range of push/pull factors. This was done so in the context of their wider lives e.g. work or child-care responsibilities. There was no sense that they would be expected to be attending particular gigs or even attending gigs consistently. It was about gig attendance being made to fit into their lives and as Lindsey commented sometimes "it just doesn't really 'fit' anymore". This is particularly significant when conceptualising 'being/doing' punk as a process, recognising the different pathways a punk career might take and how being/doing punk can be negotiated alongside ageing. Additionally it is clear based on the motivators above and the predominance of the 'sociality' sub-theme that gig attendance is not inextricably about the music being played – gig attendance is bound up with the punk beliefs and values we saw present in Chapter 4.

Positioning and Presence at Gigs

Some of the research participants referred to the 'nature' of their presence at gigs whereas in some of the interviews this would be something I would raise when/where appropriate. I was interested in how the participants described the nature of their presence, e.g. positioning, at gigs given the claim from Fonarow (1997) that individuals are 'aged out of venues'. The argument presented by Fonarow (1997), by looking at indie gigs, is that the audience area at a venue can be divided into three zones, each with a particular common demographic and affiliation to the artist(s). The trend over time, according to Fonarow (1997), is that older members are 'aged out of venues' via a retreating backwards. Nine of my research participants referred to their positioning at gigs and for them retreating backwards was not the common picture.

According to Fonarow (1997) zone one consists of the area directly in front of the artist(s) and a 'pit' area behind this – it is the zone where the most frenetic activity takes place, where the youngest audience members and the strongest statement of fandom resides. Based on this then Fonarow (1997) suggests it would be fairly rare to find older audience members at the front of the audience at gigs, but both Sam and Kristianne said they could be commonly found 'up front'. Speaking of her and her partner going to gigs Sam said how they "always get up the front and dance and chuck ourselves about"

whilst Kristianne referred to herself at gigs "just at the front, doing this" (at which point she made some wild dancing gestures and laughed).

Deedee and Sharon, on the other hand, demonstrated more selectivity about being up front. Deedee (as shown below in the context of zone two positioning) described her increasing intolerance towards getting "bashed around" at gigs as this could disrupt her viewing yet when speaking of a *Manic Street Preachers* gig she'd recently attended this changed:

> "...we kind of just worked our way through to the front and started jumping around - you know when you hear 'that song' that you just you know that you've been waiting for all night and it's like, yeah!"

Deedee had prior to this made it clear in the interview that *Manic Street Preachers* were a band that evoked a lot of emotion for her, a band which she was passionate about. This is further emphasised by the reference in the quote above to them playing 'that song' – a song which she'd been waiting for all night. The place of emotion in determining selective positioning and what might lead to a crossing of zones was again shown with Sharon:

> "I probably don't dance as much as I used to but then that's cause I don't find the music as interesting as I did [...] I guess it just depends. Something has to be very good to catch my attention you know? [...] I still stand to the left about so far back just where I used to stand, get a habit don't you? But yeah sometimes something will grab me and I'll go in amongst it but not as much now".

What is being shown here is how the emotive connection to music can impact on positioning and movement at gigs with both Deedee and Sharon feeling the need to get 'up front' when something or someone particularly resonates with them or evokes that emotional connection. Thinking of my own personal experiences of attending gigs this is something I could identify with and that feel of wanting to get up front when a particular band play or when a particular song is played was familiar to me. After interviewing older hardcore/punk scene members who 'returned to the pit' Tsitsos (2012) concluded their selection of when to return was often based on idealized visions of the past, for example, dancing to bands popular when they were younger or dancing when other bands did covers of such songs. Whilst Deedee was perhaps dancing to a band she'd liked since she was younger, this did not seem to be the case for Sharon – especially as she had presented *Evil Blizzard* as an example of choosing to get up front

and dance, a quite recently formed band who certainly would not have been around when she was younger. For Deedee and Sharon, though they highlight this selective positioning up front through emotional draw, they both note above their reduced desire to engage in energetic movement at gigs. This could be read as a response to physical changes as they have aged, leading to tire more easily/quickly.

Aside from their selective positioning of themselves up front, neither Deedee and Sharon described their positioning at the back – they instead sought out 'good positions' in terms of their watching/listening which involved not being, as Deedee phrased it, "stuck at the back". Lindsey too described her positioning like Sharon more in terms of being at the side, rather than being at the back. Deedee. Lindsey and Sharon then could be seen as occupying zone two – the area behind zone one which has an older demographic and where audience members can engage in privileged spectatorship to give the artist(s) their undivided attention (Fonarow 1997). Certainly Deedee demonstrates valuing a position of privileged spectatorship when she describes becoming tired of getting knocked into by dancing audience members at a gig:

> "I actually walked out of a gig fairly recently [...] we got a good position and um then like all these kids come and they come up and kind of bash into you, stand in front of you an' just have no, I was gonna say respect, but I sound really old [both laugh] um and I was so mad and they were like constantly bashing into you it's like 'I wanna enjoy this as well!' you know? 'It's not just about you' and I ended up um standing right...well...on the bar basically and I got so fed up I left".

Deedee feels here a difference between herself as an older audience member wanting to engage in privileged spectatorship and younger members who are perhaps more concerned with engaging in physical allegiance with the band through, for example, dancing. These differences are exactly what Fonarow (1997) described. Yet as already seen, this privileged spectatorship is not constantly observed by Deedee suggesting that her age does not dictate her positioning at gigs necessarily.

Zones one and two therefore involve different forms of allegiance to the artist(s) performing with zone one being about physical closeness whereas zone two is about demonstrating allegiance through providing your undivided attention vis-a-vis achieving the best sound quality and view (Fonarow 1997). Fonarow (1997) argues this is age related and what is deemed important in expressing allegiance changes as an audience member ages rather than differing levels/strength of fandom being a

determinate of zone one or two presence. Positioning oneself in zone three, however, evokes a different feel with Fonarow (1997) claiming this to be the space inhabited by music professionals, people engaging in activities other than watching the band or those who even dislike the band. Allegiance could be demonstrated here through a back stage pass for example (Fonarow 1997) but this seems quite a generalised assumption for the variety of people such a zone could include. The three women in my research sample who described positioning their selves in zone three (or even in one case out of the venue) revealed varied accounts as illustrated below.

Christine described herself as the kind of person who liked to sit back and watch:

"I'm definitely one of those like sit back in the corner and watch kind of people um and just taking it all in [...] I'm a big people watcher so I really like, I enjoy being able to get out and get into like that kind of more comfortable zone where I can just kind of like stand back and kind of watch and take in everyone and yeah I *really* like doing that".

For Christine, then, it was not necessarily about sitting back and even watching the band but sitting back and watching other people. This made sense in relation to Christine's other comments about gigs and music generally as for her, the music was not particularly of importance: "I only listen to music either when [her partner] is playing music or when I'm out and I'm with people and it's more of an event I guess". For Christine a draw of gigs was not about the musical aspect and so her positioning reflected this. There was no indicator however that this was something that had emerged as Christine had got older. With regards to further comments made in her interview there was indication that socialising was a pull factor for Christine attending gigs. The gig as a social event was more strongly invoked by Briony who commented that:

"...it's not necessarily so much about the music, it's definitely more the social thing. We were all joking at this festival in Copenhagen that we'd all paid tons of money just to sit around in a car park and (laughs) smoke and drink, like 'how many bands have you seen?' 'er one?' (laughs)"

When punk becomes less about just a particular music fandom or style and reconceptualised in a way which is bound up with particular beliefs and values (as demonstrated in Chapter 4), paying a large sum of money to attend a gig and spend the time socialising rather than watching the bands makes sense. Positioning one's self in zone three along with others enables this socialising to take place on a more practical level e.g being able to hear one another (whilst potentially also limiting disruption for

those who *do* wish to watch or listen to the performance). Such a complexity is absent from Fonarow's (1997) spatial organisation theory. Yet Briony's account does lend itself to a way age could still be understood as a (central) organising factor when it comes to zone positioning (Fonarow 1997). She commented how:

> "I think it definitely used to be more about the music yeah and then just as your social network grows and you know more people you're always catching up with somebody who's been away or somebody you've not seen in years so it gets more (laughs) I think it's probably when you get older you spend more and more time just sat at the side. (laughs)"

The idea of the importance of the punk community (Chapter 4) emerges here and there are connections, albeit perhaps loose ones, which could be made between what is being said and the changing nature of subcultures in which they are more 'deterritorialized' or 'translocal' (Bennett and Peterson 2004). But there is perhaps more clearly the idea that getting older can bring with it various factors which might restrict the maintenance of a physical community of regular gig attendees (see practical factors above, for example) – as a result gigs, as participants get older, become an ad hoc place where catching up can occur. Thinking about Briony's own situation, her ability to engage in a physical community of regular gig attendees was somewhat constrained by the childcare she shared with her partner.

For Rebecca, when she referred to a zone three positioning at gigs this was in the context of 'sitting on the door'. Rebecca and her partner were part of a gig promotions set-up which involved organising punk gigs at local venues and when speaking of some of these gigs she explained how:

> "I sat on the door for both of them, *all* of the day um but I never mind because quite often I'm not bothered about seeing the bands or I'm not bothered about seeing *all* of them and it means he can go and sort out bands and he knows that I'm not going to rob money from him because you never know what people might take".

Sitting on the door at a gig as described above involves policing a border, taking responsibility for ensuring those entering are paying/have paid. Rebecca's position in zone three then does reflect Fonarow's (1997) claim that those in zone three might be engaged in other activities (other than the activity of watching the band, for example) or might not have an interest in the band or performer. But Rebecca's lack of concern at taking this position can be understood not just in terms of a lack of interest in the bands

she's potentially missing as a result, but can also be understood in terms of the beliefs and values which underpin punk – by taking this role she is upholding a DIY effort (putting on gigs) being made by her and her partner and is in terms supporting, even enabling, the scene to continue. Additionally I raised earlier in this thesis how Rebecca's role can also be understood through a gender lens.

Overall there was no real sense from the women who referred to their positioning at gigs of them being 'aged out', or indeed how this ageing out process has been conceptualised by Fonarow (1997). There is some evidence above that suggests age might bring with it some adapting of behaviour at gigs but this was not consistent or generalisable. Gibson (2012) looking at older rock fans' behaviour at gigs found clearer evidence of adaptation with the fans tending not, for example, to participate in energetic or frenzied dancing but as demonstrated here this was not a commonality amongst my own research participants. Gibson (2012) attributed this tendency to the fans working "within certain established age-appropriate discourses" and changing "conduct to correspond with the limitations of bodily ageing" (85) and whilst some participants noted a reduction in being physically active at gigs with comments about getting more tired, this was not apparent for all. For Sam, there was even the recognition that her knees "will pay for it the next day" but this was not enough for her to alter the energetic dancing characteristic of her gig behaviour.

Gig Etiquette

Three of the research participants described taking an overseer-like presence at gigs. This was seen in discussions concerning (un)acceptable behaviour at gigs. Gibson (2012) and Bennett (2006) both found that older fans could be critical overseers at gigs. Deedee's recalling of her recent negative gig experience described earlier demonstrates how she perceived some behaviour of others then as unacceptable:

> "I actually walked out of a gig fairly recently um because I don't know
> whether this like fact of my age but um I just thought it was just full of
> obnoxious children [...] we got a good position and then like all these kids
> come and they come up and kind of bash into you, stand in front of you..."

Deedee's issue here, then, is with these particular gig goers not having any respect for the experience of those around them. This could relate back to the spatial organisation of gigs with particular zones designated for physical activity, supported further by the way Deedee had described her positioning:

"...you know when you get a position [...] because they really fill [names
venue] to the brim and it's really difficult to kind of move and I don't know
whether you know the venue but you kind of go up the right-hand side and
you can kind of go through the downstairs venue bit and up through the
stairwell to the right hand side. We always go that way to kind of avoid
getting stuck at the back and you can get quite a good position if you do
that".

The venue Deedee referred to was one I had been to numerous occasions so was very
familiar with. The place Deedee referred to positioning herself in was one was not one
where physical activity would typically take place with that being reserved more for the
downstairs space in front of the stage. There is a sense here that Deedee perceived these
'kids' as not being aware, or caring, of such routines and their lack of socialisation was
something to be critical of.

Gig etiquette was discussed at lengths by Kristianne and Christine. Kristianne started by
saying how:

"I have no problem with people crowd surfing, I have no problem with
people moshing, I can avoid those if I need to, what I really don't like are
stage divers. I really do not like stage divers. I missed [a band] because
somebody stage dived onto my head when I was photographing their show
at the beginning of the set and I ended up spending four and a half hours in
A&E and I don't like stage divers because crowd surfers need the crowd,
it's a joint effort, you have the complicity of the people around you even if
you see somebody crowd surfing you've usually got time to get out the way,
same as mosh-pits [...] but stage divers [...] they get on the stage, they jump
indiscriminately".

Whilst zone one is argued by Fonarow (1997) as being the zone for physical activity
e.g. dancing, Kristianne clearly sees there being particular forms of physical activity
which are more acceptable than others. Again these issues are wrapped in a discourse of
respect for others, illustrated in the way Kristianne sees crowd-surfers and mosh-pits as
acceptable as they give people the option of moving out of the way. Other issues raised
by Kristianne and Christine included people who made a 'woo' sound indiscriminately
at gigs, people who held loud conversations during acoustic sets and people
photographing constantly or filming consistently on their mobile phones. Kristianne
even recalled an example in which she had actively challenged the latter:

> "I have done that thing where I will start having a bit of a dance and
> nudging them out of the way [...] I can't remember who it was I went to see
> but I watched almost an entire show and I was stood behind this woman and
> every time the band stopped playing I'd be like "you can put your phone
> down now so I can watch the show", like, you're making a video of a gig,
> it's gonna sound terrible anyway!""

These examples serve to support the claim by Bennett (2006) and Gibson (2012) that older fans may become critical overseers at gigs. This could serve to illustrate the outcome of socialisation into gig etiquette over time or it could suggest changing roles amongst the women as they have got older. A limited discussion around this theme could be said to arise from my methodology and the nature of the interviews. It would have been interesting to see how an ethnography involving gig attendance and participation might have shed further light on this area.

Gigs and Alcohol Consumption

In addition to the examples of behaviour adaptation at gigs already discussed, Gibson (2012) also noted a tendency amongst older rock fans not to engage in excessive alcohol consumption. Alcohol consumption in the context of gigs did not feature in all of the interviews but overall it appeared to be taken for granted by the women I spoke to that alcohol consumption and gig attendance usually went hand in hand, or at least, there was some kind of expectation to drink whilst at a gig. As Naja explained:

> "...it's part of it, you go to a gig and not many people that I know [...] go to
> a gig and not drink, it's part of the whole package".

The way drinking was seen to 'go hand in hand' with attending a gig was even part of Naefun's reasoning for being selective about 'school night' gigs:

> "I would be able to you know even 10 years ago I'd be able to kind of like
> you know go out to a gig, have a few pints and then kind of get up for work
> the next day and there'd be no trouble at all but it's definitely a bit different
> now [...] as I've sort of like progressed in my career and stuff like that it's
> about kind of thinking 'I don't want to go into work with a bit of a
> hangover' and stuff like that".

So for Naefun she was aware that going to watch a band would entail drinking and this was such the association that she refers here to not usually attending gigs on a work night because of the hangover involved, rather than going to such gigs and not drinking

to avoid this. Amongst some of the women I spoke to there appeared to be a reduction in excessive alcohol consumption (or even putting a stop to drinking altogether) at gigs. As detailed earlier in the chapter Milly had reduced her alcohol consumption due to health concerns. Like seen with Gibson's (2012) older rock fans, then, Milly is noting a reduction in excessive drinking but what she felt instigated this change does not fit with Gibson's suggestion that older fans are working within age appropriate discourses as Milly is referring specifically to health problems. It is not known exactly what these health problems are and whether they would correlate with ageing and therefore align with Gibson's (2012) finding that older fans also alter behaviour to reflect bodily ageing but as considered earlier, perhaps the concern for one's health could be understood as part of a wider discourse concerning adulthood.

 Kristianne had stopped drinking entirely for personal reasons but noted a general trend with regards to alcohol consumption at the gigs she attended:

> "...at one point in time everyone drank, everyone was smoking and a lot of people were taking drugs and now you go out and like hardly anybody smokes anymore or they're outside vaping or whatever, but it's not as many people as it used to be and a lot more people don't drink".

This might signal a collective trend toward reduced alcohol (and nicotine) consumption again as a social ageing process due to the increased pressure to become a responsible adult (who therefore takes responsibility for looking after their health) therefore linking with Gibson's (2012) consideration of age appropriate discourses. Naja also gave an account which seemed to sit with Gibson's (2012) conclusions:

> "You can either carry on doing what you did, what you always did, you die. It's quite simple. Or else you stop doing it and you try and have some sort of a normal, conform, or just a healthy lifestyle. To be able to live. I go to the gym. I have to go to the gym. One, because I want to look semi-good and two, because it makes you feel good and I can't drink every day doing the job that I do".

Naja recognises that continuing to excessively drink can take a serious toll over time but she is also picking up on something which could be seen as age-appropriate - getting older and beginning to assume a healthier lifestyle than that which one had in their youth. Again, like with Naefun, a link is made between alcohol consumption and work, with thought being given to Naja's professional role. Health and work aside, Naja offered another way of conceptualising her decreased alcohol intake when she said:

> "I don't mean to sound you know like polishing my own halo but [...] I have
> been to demonstrations, I've done all the squats, [...] I've done the drugs,
> I've done the drinking, I've been to all the shows, you know, I don't feel
> that I've got to prove that I'm in any way a punk or not a punk, you know,
> it's how I chose to live my life".

This brings us back once again to the argument developed in Chapter 4 concerning what punk meant to the women I spoke to and it is clear here that this relates to that. Naja no longer feels the need to put on public and physical displays e.g. going to protests, attending gigs all the time or getting intoxicated at said gigs. Punk is now a way of life for her, it is a set of beliefs and values; it is something she has internalised.

Conclusion

This chapter opened with the finding that nearly all the twenty-two women I spoke with attended gigs though the levels of attendance and regularity varied. Their continuing presence alone counteracts Fonarow's (1997) suggestion that fans are 'aged out of venues' and contradicts Bennett's (2002) research which found no female presence at the punk gigs he attended. Social dynamics was the main motivator for gig attendance, suggesting that gig attendance was about much more than just the music, but the complexity of the discussion above concerning motivators suggests a process of weighing up push and pull factors amongst my research sample. The data also shows that core punk values identified by the women in Chapter 4, such as DIY and community, were drawn upon in terms of understanding or explaining their gig attendance. The findings of this chapter offer a unique contribution to knowledge and understanding of subcultural activities in its unpacking of the women's motivation for attending gigs, demonstrating that reasons for gig attendance might be complex and not purely about the music. This reflects the punk values held by the women as well as the impact of age and gender and demonstrates how an understanding of subcultural activities such as gigs needs to consider the impact of subcultural values and structural factors.

Bennett (2006) suggested that punk women's absence from the gigs he attended might have reflected the women's privatisation of their punk fandom. This is a suggestion which feminist analyses might argue fails to consider and fully unpack the restraints on public participation in the punk scene that may be placed on (punk) women as well as

continuing to make invisible the experiences of women who do still attend gigs. There was some evidence to suggest that patriarchal culture impacted gig attendance but the women I spoke with more so highlighted ways gig attendance could be constrained by issues of social and physical aging. Expectations around what being an adult entailed (e.g. being a 'responsible adult') also arose with regards to gig behaviour, particularly in relation to alcohol consumption. Pressures to fulfil these age-appropriate societal expectations may be felt more so by women if it is believed that their behaviour generally is open to more scrutiny and social control than that of men (Fox 1977). What were evident from my research sample were, again, attempts to negotiate structural constraints, they made gigs 'fit'. This interplay between structure and agency was seen too in my previous chapter and will be continued in my next chapter which unpacks ageing and adulthood further.

Chapter 8 Ageing, Adulthood and Punk

How does ageing interact with 'doing punk'? Whilst ageing may have emerged as a theme through the thesis up until this point, in this chapter I will pull these threads together and specifically focus on this issue. I unpack some of the ways the women I spoke to negotiated getting older with certain aspects of doing punk which the preceding chapters introduced. Participants demonstrated an awareness of societal expectations concerning age and gender which will be discussed first, before looking at the relationship between these and specifically the participants' dress. Throughout that discussion attention is given to the importance of social and physical ageing. From here, consideration moves to adulthood as a socially defined status and participants' interactions with this. Focus then goes to employment as a key marker of adulthood and the relationship between this and 'doing punk' is explored. I then bring these discussions together, along with findings from some of my earlier chapters, in an establishment of three key identity categories (or punk career pathways): the 'consistent punks', the 'toner downs', and the 'never massively outrageous'. This chapter finishes with an exploration of the overarching themes of the internalisation of punk and the malleability of punk values that have emerged across this thesis and are of key significance to the punk career over the life course.

Age, Gender and Societal Expectations

An awareness of particular societal expectations or assumptions concerning age and gender was apparent across the interviews I carried out (regardless of whether the participants themselves believed them to be appropriate or indeed abided by them). This can be seen as part of 'social ageing', societal norms, values and institutions helping to shape individuals' experiences and meanings of ageing (Morgan and Kunkel 2007). I recognise that assumptions/expectations concerning age are often inextricably bounded up in assumptions/expectations concerning gender and this is reflected in the interwoven structuring of the discussion below. If, taking Weitz's (2001) definition, resistant acts are that which challenge ideologies that support subordination then exploring participants' awareness of social expectations is also relevant in beginning to explore their resistance or accommodation.

Given the focus of this research it seems fitting to first consider the way in which the participants themselves were aware of the common societal assumption that punk is synonymous with youth. Suzy had experienced this attitude concerning punk first-hand with family members:

> "My brother (who is 28) has made comments about my age at rock/punk nights [...] and thinks he's too old sometimes for things like that [...] My mum has made comments about people acting their age [...] I have another friend who I was in a band with at uni, and he's very adamant that he shouldn't play in a band ever again because if you're over 30 it just looks sad. I don't agree though".

Whilst Suzy believed though that punk was not just for the young, she did comment that her looking younger than she was meant she could still get away with going to gigs/playing in a band which will be discussed further below. In this sense, Suzy was able to bypass the expectation placed on her and express her identity through playing in bands and attending gigs. Yet, rather than an act of resistance, this could serve as a form of accommodation with Suzy appealing to common-held ideas about punk.

Similar to the feelings of Suzy's family, Morag said how "My mum still laughs no, 38 years later, about thinking it was 'just a phase'..." According to Morag, her mother felt that punk was just going to be something her daughter temporarily engaged in – this view of punk as a (teenage) phase is reflected in much public discourse on punk (discussed in Chapter 1) . When I later asked Morag whether she felt any difference now compared to when she first become involved in punk, she commented: "I honestly don't think so. Bit sad that, I suppose – never grew up". Morag indicates here that punk involves a particular way of being which is not conducive to what is expected of an adult, reflecting a way her subjective experience of ageing might be negotiated with retaining a punk identity. It could also reflect how punk offers Morag a way of resisting social ageing. Thornton (1995) argues how youth cultural scenes can be appealing to older adults as they can become a buffer against social ageing, for example.

Grace also voiced similar ideas to Morag when speaking about the significance of punk to her ("It keeps me young at heart"), how punk might make her different to other women her age ("I see myself as having a younger attitude") and whether she saw herself as different now compared to when she first entered punk ("I don't feel older inside than when I was 17"). Like Morag, then, punk for Grace is inextricably bounded with this notion of youth and being young. But also there is a sense here of some

separation between the self and the physical body (Fairhurst 1998) whereby the punk (and therefore youthful or young) self has been retained despite the physical body ageing. Grace and Morag conjure this sense of an 'ageless self' too through the way they do not feel that their selves and their identities correspond with their chronological ages (Kaufman 1986). In terms of this concept of an ageless self, Kaufman (1986) is conceptualising this as a more generic element of subjective ageing relevant to those in later life. But in terms of older participants in subcultures it could be that associating their selves with something commonly perceived as a youth subculture may amplify this feeling of an ageless self as described above.

Naja believed particular behaviours associated with punk were not appropriate as one got older, recognising particular age-appropriate expectations:

> "It's a part of life for me. I'm not young [...] I'm not the one who's on the barricades. I'm not the one who's writing [...] rebellious music any longer because we're not young, we haven't got that battle in us any longer, we've been there, we've done it. We've just changed our lifestyle".

As Naja said **"I've had to grow up, I'm not that rebellious because I'm not a teenager any longer"**, accommodating expectations concerning age. Rebellion (or indeed rebellion in a particular format) was something to be left behind as you grew older. Morag, on the other hand, did not feel the need to leave behind certain particular behaviours associated with punk, despite these conflicting with what she felt was expected of her as a 50 year-old woman:

> "Most women knocking on 50 don't sleep in the back of vans on tour with their musician boyfriend in their down-time, nor do they go to punk gigs with people of all ages or go on marches or protests...it's not peculiar to punk women, of course, but mostly women my age tend to not do those things".

As noted earlier, however, Morag felt she hadn't 'grown up' and this feeling accompanies her continuing involvement in such activities that she felt did not chime with societal expectations of a 50 year old woman. In turn by engaging in activities like these Morag might be offering some kind of resistance to societal expectations. Though less explicit about this than Morag, Sam too described having a "younger outlook" as akin to being punk and actively challenged societal expectations. An example of such challenging is demonstrated through her customisation of a shopping trolley:

"...a few years ago I had a shoulder injury and I couldn't carry any heavy bags [...] so I thought I'll have a shopping trolley and [...]my partner's a tattooist, and artist, so he's really good at doing stuff and he said 'right we're gonna pimp it', so he made some stencils (laughs) [...]and it's got Sex Pistols, Sham 69, X-Ray Spex and PIL on it (laughs) and it's got studs all round the flap and then some [...] patches, Sex Pistols and 'Punk as Fuck' and a little anarchy badge (laughs) [...] I figured, if I'm gonna grow old I'm gonna do it as disgracefully as I can".

As seen in Chapter 5, when Sam comments on growing old in the context of the acquisition of a shopping trolley she is recognising how this is seen as a stereotypical 'accessory' of the older generations (a pull along, fabric shopping bag). Sam in turn challenges this, adapting the trolley to reflect her punk identity through the use of logos of punk bands, slogans and the anarchy sign which is associated with punk culture – Sam is resisting the expectation of growing old gracefully (Fairhurst 1998). Possessing an alternative, or even punky, dress was also at times perceived as something which societal norms attributed to young people e.g. you grew out of it and did not maintain this way of dressing post-youth. Sam, comparing her current dyed hairstyle to her natural hair highlighted how:

"...everybody used to say 'oh it's so beautiful [...] I suppose, for societal norms I'd fit in and I was looking like a 40 year old woman should look like, you know, get a job and have normal hair and don't do the silly things that you did when you was in your teens".

Even though she reflected upon this, Sam had not allowed what she felt was expected of her to currently influence how she looked. Milly and Naja felt particularly strongly about those who tried to maintain the punk style associated with youth as they aged; demonstrating the policing of others (Holland 2006) as well as policing their selves:

"I see women my age [51] dressing in tartan mini-skirts and things and to be honest I think they look silly [...] if women my age want to wear a short skirt with fishnet tights or stocking then it's up to them. Personally I choose not to because I don't think it looks right somehow. I think the same way about older punk men who have huge Mohawk/spikes and wear tartan bondage pants etc" - Milly

"*Personally*, I think, when you get to a certain age, there's nothing more unattractive [...] than a middle-aged woman who's trying to relive her past,

> or trying to hold onto a youth culture [...] what I find is sad is a 44 year old
> woman or a 48 year old woman who's still got a Mohawk and trying to grab
> hold of what was a youth culture in 1982, or whatever. And not moving on
> from that. And I [...] personally I don't think there's nothing more
> unattractive than an overweight woman with bright red 'air, you know, fully
> dolled up to the nines and looks dead punk and you think "oo look mate,
> you're not 22 any longer", that's my personal opinion [...] I think it's
> unattractive. I think it's bloody ugly. You know, a 50 year old woman
> dolled up to the nines looking a bit, I think it looks a bit pathetic" – Naja

Naja's last sentence there might be a comment on women more generally rather than women who dress in a stereotypically punk way. This saying of being 'dolled up to the nines' and the way Naja uses this expression feels similar to the idea of 'mutton dressed as lamb'; an expression used to police older women through the fear of dressing in an inappropriately youthful way (Twigg 2007). Both Milly and Naja's accounts above are about the stereotypical punk style being seen as something to be pursued by youth. But such comments could be considered further in the context of a culture which treats ageing negatively (Gullette 1997) and, in particular, views signs of ageing in women negatively (Sontag 1972). Dressing youthful (e.g. as a stereotypical punk youth would) is not necessarily equated with hiding the signs of ageing, in fact, it appears here to accentuate the fact you are no longer young – you just end up looking like an old woman dressing as a (youthful) punk. Sharon summed this up when speaking about the band she plays in:

> "...but the first gig we ever did (laughs), was, we tried to be really punky
> again so we were all 'oh yeah we can be punky again' and we just looked
> like a bunch of old ageing women being punks, you know, that's what we
> looked like".

Haenfler (2012) found a similar theme amongst older straight-edgers with some avoiding being seen to be trying to look younger than they are as they did not want to look as though they were 'trying too hard'. This was an attempt by the older straight-edgers to maintain authenticity which contrasted to the route to authenticity in their youth when 'looking the part' seemed important (Haenfler 2012). This comes through in the example from Sharon above; that authenticity as a young punk was achieved through a particular way of dressing, but that this does not have the same meaning as an older punk. Another way to read this, however, is that this shift away from expressing

punkness through dress (in essence an internalisation of punk – discussed further below) forms part of a strategy for maintaining a punk identity when physical signs of ageing limit engagement in certain punk styles for fear of being seen as an old punk trying to recapture their youth. This is what is perhaps lost then in Haenfler's (2012) work and the reasoning behind the avoidance by older straight-edgers of trying to look younger. This questions particular takes on identity which emphasise agency and fluidity (Giddens 1984) as this might imply that the physical, ageing, body can be overcome in order to express identity in a fluid way. But as seen above, this agency and fluidity continues to be constrained by the physical, ageing body as well as issues concerning social ageing. For some of the women I spoke to then, the physical body and its indicators of age served an important role in their configuration of how they created a punk identity. As captured by Suzy when speaking about gig attendance and playing in a band, she looked young so could "get away with it".

Relevant to the above deliberation by Sharon over how their band should dress is the concept of 'appearance labour' (Peluchette et al 2006). This has been used to describe the physical and mental effort an individual may put into dressing appropriately for work (especially when there is dissonance between what the individual would want to wear and what they feel they are expected to) (Peluchette et al 2006). Whilst in its original usage this concept is used in the context of work, the concept of appearance labour could be utilised in a non-work context to more broadly refer to the physical and mental effort an individual puts into dressing (as I highlighted and discussed in Chapter 5). Various examples of this appeared in the interviews. This can be seen with Naefun, for example, speaking about the decision to cut off her very long dreadlocks. She describes thinking "my god [her name] you cannot be an 80 year old woman with dreadlocks down to your toes". Again there is an awareness here of societal expectations, in this case specifically towards elderly women and an accommodation on Naefun's part. As seen in Holland's (2006) research, women might take part in the policing of themselves in light of perceived expectations. Naefun's awareness of how she felt she *should* look and the subsequent cutting of her dreadlocks acts as an example of such policing. But whilst Naefun might be seen as 'playing up' to those expectations by her pre-emptive move to cut her dreadlocks she is careful to note that she will never fully conform to these expectations:

"When I cut my dreads off I you know bleached my hair and dyed it red and stuff and I've had it red ever since [...] I don't think I'm ever going to be kind of um a twinset and pearls kind of [...] woman" – Naefun.

In cutting off her dreadlocks, Naefun has still maintained a hair style which could be considered alternative whilst allowing some blurring of both resisting and playing up to expectations of how as an ageing woman she should be. This supports the argument that accommodation and resistance are not necessarily polar opposites, instead, coexisting (Weitz 2001). Naefun's quote above illustrates too another stereotype associated with older women – the twinset and pearls. Jess also drew upon this particularly stereotype:

"...when you were younger you think that when you're 30 you should be in like, you know, polo necks and stuff like that and [...] cravats or you know neckerchiefs and all covered up but now I'm 31 I'm like 'I don't wanna dress like a, in a pearl and a twinset I wanna dress how I feel comfortable ' and just until, I don't know, until I hit that age where it's like 'right I need to start kind of wearing twin sets and things like that' but even, no it's just yeah you kind of feel like you should calm down and feel like you should kind of dress a bit more sensible but if you feel younger it's just like dress younger, life's a bit too short really isn't it?"

Jess is aware that there are certain perceptions of how the young and old should dress with some styles perceived as more youthful than others. Her rejection of, and arguably resistance to, these expectations though are justified by feeling she wears what she feels comfortable in and the notion of 'dressing as young as you feel' (the idea seen earlier of a separation between self and body). Naefun and Jess both draw upon the same example of the woman in a twin-set and pearls. The woman in a twin-set and pearls is a common stereotype drawn upon when thinking about elderly women (Burns and Lafrance 2002), the traditional housewife (Robinson 2011) or, as Lilley and Usherwood found, librarians who are commonly thought of as "the twin-set and pearled, bespectacled middle aged spinster" (2000:18). What can be concluded, then, is this image being associated with respectability; a respectability which one might expect from an ageing woman. This stereotype of (middle aged) respectability emerged from Sam and Hester's interviews in the context of marriage; something often linked to normative middle age. Reflecting on her marriage to her ex-husband Sam said that:

"I sort of went, I had a phase of being a bit normal then cause he was dead straight and I think he quite liked 'ah yeah the punk woman, and now look

at her, I've made her go all straight' [...] and he managed to turn me into a normal woman (laughs) but then as soon as we, as soon as that marriage ended and I sort of got my mojo back".

The use of 'normal woman' by Sam demonstrates how punk had been an alternative identity (an alternative to that considered normative). Hester had a similar experience:

"I was married for 15 years to a man who really didn't get the whole thing at all [...] so I lost contact for the first 8 years. Then there was a catastrophic event in my life and I suddenly, deeply understood the adage 'This Is Not A Rehearsal'. The hair was chopped and dyed purple (didn't like it) then red (will be with me to the grave) I started getting serious about tattoos and piercings and I built up a music collection again, to be played in the car or while my husband was out to avoid irritating him [....] and I stopped wearing boring tat from BHS".

The reference to BHS (British Home Stores) could also be akin to the stereotype of the aforementioned twin-set and pearls, implying a conservative and respectable way of dressing. Both Hester and Sam, as illustrated above, speak of emerging from a period of 'losing touch' with their true selves. Despite changing their way of dressing for their ex-partners and arguably broader expectations concerning married respectability, they no longer feel they must compromise their alternative dress because of the crisis points described above waking them up to their inner, dormant punk.

And whilst these crisis points are not directly related to ageing, marriage can be seen as a normative marker of adulthood (Blatterer 2007) – something considered further below – and structural constraint. To consider this in comparison to Naefun and Jess, whilst Hester's and Sam's crises awakened their inner punks, Naefun's and Jess' perspectives appear to have experienced a more gradual shift to accommodate ageing. The impact Hester and Sam's ex-partners seemingly had on their expression of a punk identity mirrors the impact of family as an institution on a musician's career (Becker 1966). The family institution, according to Becker (1966) demands a musician to behave conventionally, causing misunderstandings and disagreements which often alters the direction of a musician's career or ends it.

Remaining on the theme of changes in dress for now, however, some women referred to clothes which they rarely or no longer wore but still kept. Whilst Ces regularly wore band t-shirts outside of work it seemed there were many band t-shirts she owned that were not regularly worn and which had been stored away:

> "...both me and my boyfriend have got like suitcases full of t-shirts from
> right back when we were teenagers that we can't bring ourselves to throw
> away, but I think like someday I'd like to make them into a throw or
> something, you know, do something creative with them so you can still have
> them out even if you don't have to wear them all the time".

T-shirts originating from Ces's teenage years might suggest that some of these t-shirts are no longer worn regularly due to changing tastes in bands or even changing size leading to them no longer fitting. Her feeling of being unable to throw them away signifies a continuing significance of these t-shirts for her and her desire to make them into something which could be seen regularly (e.g. a throw) may be explained through Banim and Guy's (2003) idea of continuing identities. Banim and Guy (2003) argue that some clothes which are no longer worn or rarely worn might represent a continuing connection to the owner's self-image. This could be said of Ces's band t-shirts which hold some punk significance for her and by keeping them this demonstrates her wish for this element to continue with regards to her current identity (Banim and Guy 2003). Rebecca also detailed an example of something she now rarely wore:

> "I wore my doctor martens [to the interview] [...] cause these are my
> original doctor martens from 1997 and I don't wear them very often um I
> put the ribbon laces in about 5 years ago (laughs) I don't wear them very
> often cause they're not overly comfortable but I did, I was like 'I'm not
> putting them in a bag I'm just gonna put them on' (laughs)".

Rebecca is referring to my invitation to participants to bring things to their interview which they felt helped signify the importance of punk to their lives. Like Ces, Rebecca has something she rarely wears but which continues to hold significance to her and is important to her continuing identity. The description of them as her "original" DMs, which she has kept despite rarely wearing, supports them being associated with a particular identity linked to a perceived past – this association helps Rebecca in her construction of a continuing identity (Banim and Guy 2003). It is worth noting that both Ces and Rebecca are referring to items they have kept from their youth, when they were first exposed to punk and punk music; a time during which their dress was more aligned with what one might perceive as a 'punk style'. Despite changes in their dress, and arguably an internalisation of punk, retaining items which are rarely worn helps them in the constructing of their current identity and incorporating the continuing significance of punk.

'Adulthood'

As noted above societal norms, values and institutions help to shape individual experiences and meanings of ageing (Morgan and Kunkel 2007). One way it might do so is through the organisation of age into particular categories e.g. childhood, adulthood, old age, with these categories comprising of particular expectations and understandings of age, which then can shape individuals' experiences/meanings. Pilcher (1995) noted how adulthood had been neglected as a social category within sociology research and Pilcher et al (2003) argued there was no convincing 'sociology of adulthood' at the same level as areas such as the sociology of childhood, youth or old age. In the above discussion concerning ageing and the relationship between this and punk identity or identification this concept of adulthood emerges largely through reflections on societal expectations. See, for example, the way some of the participants acknowledged various age related expectations which could be considered as those expected of an adult. Now this concept of adulthood will be unpacked further in relation to the participants I spoke with.

Adulthood in contemporary Britain can be seen as involving particular private, public and official 'markers' (Jones and Wallace 1992 in Pilcher 1995) and the particular social 'markers' of attaining adult status consist of, for example, being in stable full-time work, stable relationships, independent living and parenthood (Blatterer 2007). These are markers of what might be called traditional or modern adulthood. When advertising for participants for my research I identified a requirement to be aged 30 years of over. This was to move away from previous punk research focusing more so on the experiences of those in their youth (see the further detail regarding this in Chapter 3). Given this minimum age, my participants in the context of official markers (e.g. 'in the eyes of the law') would be considered adults. However, as seen already in the case of participants such as Morag this did not necessarily necessitate a subjective sense of feeling adult.

Adulthood evokes particular connotations such as 'working nine to five' (Blatterer 2007). Two participants referred to the idea of 'doing the nine to five' and this was framed in the context of what was normative post-youth. Naja reflected on how she had felt as a teenage punk:

> I remember looking and it was from, you know, my late teenage years
> thinking "I'm never gonna be like the rest of them" them being, you know,
> 9 til 5, getting up, leading a mundane lifestyle, going to university, going to

school. Doing what you're told to have to do. Then getting a job, then getting married, then having 2.5 children, having the house and the mortgage and all that. I remember thinking "how boring! I don't wanna do that, I'll never do that!"

A stereotypical view of adulthood is presented here by Naja as consisting of working nine to five, getting married, having children and getting a mortgage; all of the four social markers identified by Blatterer (2007). Naja remembers as a teenage punk resisting this normative ideal in constructing an alternative identity, however this appears to change as she notes how years later she thought to herself "I'd like to be like the rest of society, to some degree [...] I'm going to have a *normal* [my emphasis] job and I'm going to [...] have a 9-5". This again reinforces these aspects as part of a normative ideal and it also demonstrates Naja becoming more accommodating of these normative expectations. Jess too spoke about the idea of the 9-5 job as a marker of what was considered common, or normative, but presented this as something you could do alongside maintaining a punk identity, as long as you were supporting the 'scene' – again, demonstrating a process of accommodation.

Some participants also drew up common markers of adulthood when they hypothesised about the future. I asked some of the participants during interviews how they envisioned their future and three of them drew upon common markers of adulthood in their reflections – namely, having children and/or being in a committed relationship. All three mused that these would place some constraint on their ability to go to gigs - as Suzy said, children would make it "tricky" and Deedee mirrored this sentiment:

"I don't have um commitments in terms of like family and or partner even so I can do what I want when I want and don't really have to think about anyone else but I suppose [...] if I was married or had kids I guess I wouldn't be able to spend as much time you know going to gigs or kind of doing stuff like that".

Rather than hypothesising about this Jen drew upon the experiences of her friends, linking their reduced gig attendance to what she understood as 'settling down':

"I've definitely noticed in the last 5 years that people have I guess settled down by that I mean [...] they've stopped going out as much and they've started working a bit harder and got partners, kids and you know priorities in life have changed".

Briony, on the other hand, reflected on how she had previously had such expectations concerning having a child but based on her own experience had found this to not actually be the case:

> "...I kinda always felt that [having a child] would be the end of my social
>
> life and the end of everything but it's not at all".

The reality being different for Briony links to the idea of punk becoming adaptable for the participants over the course of their lives, something discussed later in this chapter. Participants in my sample were engaged in one or more of the social markers identified by Blatterer (2007). They might have been engaged in more than what emerged trough the interviews but my interview schedule, for example, did not consist of any questions gauging which social markers applied to the women I spoke with. These social markers therefore emerged organically or coincidentally from the wider discussions covered in interviews. Employment was the marker most commonly referred to in interviews but as to whether the nature of the work was stable and full-time it was not always clear. Twenty of the twenty-two women were in some kind of employment, one was a postgraduate student and one made no reference to whether or not they were employed. Around half of the sample made reference to being in relationships, but this would not necessarily mean the others were not. Six participants were parents - some made it clear they were not parents through either explicitly or implicitly saying they did not have children. Based on what the participants made public to me in the course of the interviews, however, there was more prevalence of markers of adult status present than absent.

As employment was discussed in depth by some of the participants this will be considered next as a social marker of adulthood and how participants interacted with this in the course of constructing/maintaining punk identification.

Employment – a marker of adulthood

Employment could interact with punk identification in three ways. Firstly, this could be in terms of how participants negotiated being in the workplace with their physical presentation of punk (dress). Secondly, the notion of work/life balance was raised and the relationship between working and attending gigs. Lastly, the way some participants brought punk values into their employment or workplace.

Dress, the workplace and appearance labour

Just under half of the sample adapted their style for their job, something which can involve appearance labour and is suggestive of accommodation. This included not wearing band t-shirts, taking out piercings, having more neutral hair, or just generally wearing what was perceived as smart or tidy clothes. When speaking about not wearing band t-shirts to work, Ces also raised an experience she'd had on the way to our interview:

> "today I saw somebody that I work with walking into town and I was just embarrassed like 'I bet she thinks I look like a teenager and I'm supposed to be a manager' (laughs) so I do kind of have like that struggle now I think you know 'you're a bit old for it' like that, but..."

What Ces is experiencing here could be unpacked further in relation to views of self (on the basis of Guy and Banim's (2000) ideas of self-presentation). Taking Ces's comments above alongside her avoidance of wearing band t-shirts to work can be seen as illustrative of 'the woman I want to be' (Guy and Banim 2000) with the non-wearing of certain things at work being important here in creating her desired professional image. This 'woman I want to be' here is one which is specific to Ces' working/professional role. Similarly amongst ageing Goths, Hodkinson (2011) found some adopted a more work friendly Goth look in order to feel professional at work. Mental and physical effort would be involved in this reflection and subsequent action involved in dressing for work. Holland (2006) found that the women in her study linked their alternative appearance to their true self and felt that they experienced situations of compromise which threatened this. The most prevalent compromise identified by Holland's (2006) participants related to the workplace, relating therefore to social ageing. Ces' account reflects this.

Another example of participants attempting to present a professional image might be the covering up of tattoos for work. Rebecca says, for example:

> "...certainly professionally I always cover them. I wear long sleeves which I don't like doing but a lot of people are still quite prejudiced aren't they, you can't possibly do your job cause you've got these tattoos" – Rebecca

Rebecca chooses to conceal her tattoos as she recognises that there might be particular societal connotations around tattoos and the tattoo owner. The proposition clearly amused her given the tone this sentiment was expressed in during the interview. This is similar to the idea of a 'secret self' identified by Cahill and Riley (2003) in which tattoos are deliberately concealed to present a socially acceptable image, with this

concealment of the true self being treated like a 'game'. This almost jesting attitude towards concealment was not mirrored in Jess' reasons for covering her tattoos at work however:

> "people have always got something to say about it or they just always want to have a conversation and I can't be arsed really because it's like you have so many conversations about it so I try and cover myself up at work and it's not because anyone's told me to it's just I don't want the conversations and stuff, but if I'm outside of work I'll show 'em off, I don't care" - Jess

Jess is aware of the attention tattoos can attract, with people often asking you questions or engaging you in conversation about them, and is making a conscious change to limit this. But her feeling of not wanting to engage with the attention that comes with tattoos does not extend into the out of work environment. Though Guy and Banim (2000) focused on clothing, their idea of 'the woman I want to be' can again be relevant here with tattoos. This might be seen then as yet another example of 'the woman I want to be' with a feeling emerging that Jess does not want her tattooed self fore-grounded at work and potentially impacting on the work identity she is trying to present. There is a sense of appearance labour emerging through Rebecca and Jess's accounts because of the physical effort of covering tattoos for work. This is something which would also require mental effort in thinking through options of clothing which would perform this covering.

However, some of the women I spoke to did not change their style drastically within their workplace/working environment. Three women spoke specifically about the nature of their work allowing them to retain their everyday 'alternative' style. Katie and Naefun acknowledged broader societal expectations concerning work-wear (for example "the whole kind of suited and booted stuff" - Naefun) but they described the areas they worked in as allowing them to broadly dress how they wanted or, "to be a little bit more individual" as Naefun described it. Sam also recognised the impact having an alternative style might have on how you were perceived professionally, saying:

> "Not everybody wants you to turn up to work with multicoloured hair and piercings and stuff. I think I've been quite lucky 'cause the schools I worked in didn't mind and now I work for [...] and they actively encourage you to just be yourself".

But Sam, again, had not been constrained in maintaining her everyday alternative style within the workplace, whether coincidently when working within different schools or more deliberately within a major alternative toiletries retailer.

The only account of conscious challenging of stylistic limitations being imposed by a working environment came from Naja, who had came to nursing at a later age...

> "[At university] I was told, from day one, I had to dye my hair a natural colour I couldn't get [...] any more tattoos and I had to tone down, I wasn't to wear piercings and I had to conform [...] otherwise they'd have to review my contact as a nursing student. I was livid, absolutely livid. And I, I took it further to the dean of university and I was quite eloquent about it and I said my nursing skills and my personal skills have absolutely nothing to do with the way I looked and the colour of my hair and I found that discriminating and if they saw [that] my outside appearance should have any influence on my academic abilities or my nursing abilities I would find that rather interesting and I would probably involve the press in it. And I would consider I would start seeking legal advice. Because I didn't think that academically that had anything to do with my personal appearance [...] I was called into the dean and he was *very* polite to me, and he said he agreed fully. That my academic abilities had nothing to do with my personal appearance and yes it would be discriminatory".

Despite what might be seen as a success in challenging the expectations being placed on her, Naja went on to describe what she felt became a "battle" in which she felt judged every time she went on placement – her response was to "work an awful lot harder"; something she still saw herself doing:

> "I have to do extra work. I feel, personally, that I have to be extra good at my job. I have to be extra careful about things. I have to be extra on the ball because I will get the finger pointed out because *I'm* the one that sticks out. *I'm* the one that people notices. *Everybody* knows who I am, because of the way that I look. And I know, I know that and I take that as that's unfortunately or fortunately the way it is. People go 'well, well you've made yourself look the way you do, so you've got to expect comments' and I go 'yes, to a certain degree, yes' and I'm happy to answer all the comments, and I'm happy to stand by my beliefs and my convictions and the way I look but I do an extra good job".

Fully aware of her alternative style being seen as 'out of place' yet wanting to maintain a positive work identity, Naja had decided to put up a fight rather than compromising or accommodating. Naja's defiance of a work dress code can be considered an act of resistance. This contrasts the earlier idea of participants adjusting their style for the workplace in keeping with 'the woman I want to be' view. Naja had found a way to maintain a professional work identity via an alternative means, arguably of over-compensating, in her professional role. Naja's resistance through her dress in the workplace is therefore balanced out through her over-compensating. Whilst Hester similarly expressed being "exceptionally good" at her work when speaking about negotiating her alternative dress with new employees unlike Naja this went hand in hand with her dressing "conventionally" for work. The example from Naja demonstrates again appearance labour with both mental and physical effort being exerted by Naja in dealing with her decision to not comply with the expectations of how she should dress. Whilst Naja, along with other participants, commented on not adjusting dress for the workplace, I have illustrated that this was not a generalised response with some women negotiating dress for work. As will be seen in the identity categories later in this chapter, a refusal to change how one dressed for the workplace is not indicative of not having toned down dress overall as one aged.

Work/life balance

A felt conflict between employment and the desire to attend a gig was raised by five of the women I spoke to. In terms of what could be considered push/pull factors in relation to attending gigs this was the second most prevalent theme to 'social dynamics' (which was discussed in Chapter 6). Most commonly this work-life balance was framed around tiredness. Katie said, for example:

> "[I could be] either standing in a pub on my own watching a band or going
> home after a long day at work [...] part of it's just I'm knackered and I'm
> old now so I go home with a cup of tea and read a book (laughs)".

For Katie there is the additional social dynamic element here. It is the tiredness after a day at work coupled with the lack of people to go to gigs with. Katie sees this change in activity (e.g. no longer attending gigs regularly) and tiredness as part of getting "old" despite being in her early thirties. It could be understood then that Katie is conceptualising her behaviour through an awareness of normative understandings of ageing.

Ces spoke of the physical toll going to a gig on a work (or as some termed it 'school') night would have on the next day:

> "I would go to more now if I didn't have work basically...but like when I lived in [...] I was working full time but I'd go to a gig a week if not more um but obviously in [resident city] it's less available like so we drive to [...] all the time or to [...] so I think it's due to work but also location cause the bands are all out there still it's just harder to see them...it's like the more adult you get...like when I went to see *The Bronx* I was looking at my watch and thinking 'oh god I'm not going to get home to like midnight or 11 oclock now' and I was so tired whereas if that'd been 10 years ago I would of been jumping around not giving a shit (laughs)".

As demonstrated by Ces above, it is not just the physical toll alone of going to a gig on a work night but, as felt by Katie, the added tiredness which she feels comes with being older. Naefun also developed the work/gig relationship further:

> "...even 10 years ago I'd be able to kind of like you know go out to a gig, have a few pints and then kind of get up for work the next day and there'd be no trouble at all but it's definitely a bit different now but I think it's also a little bit about umm maybe a bit more discerning about what you wanna go to but also um actually maybe work stuff um as I've sort of like progressed in my career and stuff like that it's about kind of thinking 'I don't want to go into work with a bit of a hangover' and stuff like that do you know what I mean? So…I will go out on a school night but it has to be a pretty special band to get me out I think".

Two things can be drawn out from what Naefun says here. Firstly the suggestion that the reduced desire to go out on a work night comes from an increased sense of professionalism with regards to her employment which she may have not been so concerned about when she was younger. This could demonstrate Naefun responding to societal expectations around what 'being an adult' entails e.g. recognising the responsibility of having a job/career. In addition to this alcohol consumption is referred to here. Across quite a few of the interviews alcohol consumption seemed inextricably linked to gig attendance (discussed in Chapter 7) and the desire to not have a hangover the next day at work was explicitly commented on by Naefun. Again this can tie into the increased sense of being professional within her working role...rather than "not giving a shit" as Ces puts it above.

It appeared, therefore, that for Ces and Naefun, this was not just a case of not wanting to be tired for work the next day. It was more that they saw themselves now feeling a need to take more responsibility to be professional in their work, something which perhaps might not have been the case when they were younger and were less concerned about the impact on their work. They might, then, be engaging in what Bennett (2012) terms 'sustainable fun'. In research with dance party participants aged 40-55 years Bennett (2012) found they used a strategy of 'sustainable fun' which allowed them to successfully manage their clubbing activities and professional workplace responsibilities. Being selective about gigs (when and who) can therefore act as a strategy for the women I spoke to in order for them to successfully manage their gig attendance and their working roles/responsibilities.

It was noted, however, by two participants how employment had had a positive impact on their gig attendance and opened up the possibility of attending more gigs due to the increased financial opportunity to pay for attendance. Deedee said she was now able to go to more gigs due to having more money and Kristianne noted "I can choose now which ones I want to go to because I can afford to!" The consideration of work-life balance in relation to gig attendance was not uniquely experienced by a particular identity category but as I will note below, such considerations were more present amongst participants who were not on a 'consistent punk' pathway.

Bringing Punk Values into Work

Five women raised how the values they associated with punk exuded through the nature of work they did or how punk had shaped their educational/employment choices. Ces felt that the punk scene she had been introduced to in her youth had definitely impacted her choice of degree and subsequent work:

> "I think I was definitely shaped by the idea that you shouldn't just be in it
> for yourself and that you should you know thinking more collectively about
> you yourself and all the other people you share society with really and
> maybe not challenging the status quo but questioning it at least [...] I think
> it's definitely made me more inclined to want to work in a way that was
> going to help other people rather than make loads of money".

Several things emerge here in Ces' account concerning values – critical awareness; collectivity/community and a rejection of a vocation as being merely for monetary gain. The first and last tie together, with the pursuit of helping others understood as being of

more value than merely making a lot of money. Ces explained she had always worked in the third sector for these reasons. Working needing to be more than just a way of making money was also expressed by Lindsey:

> "I've been doing the same job, I teach English as a foreign language [...] I don't think anybody would ever claim to do that for the money um you do it cause it's interesting because the people, you meet loads of really interesting people um so it's always much more about the people I think than the money".

Whilst not said explicitly here, it could be suggested too that teaching could be a job in which the idea of collectivity or community arises again through helping others. Katie believed her job was about building communities and saw a clear relationship between this and the punk scene she had been involved in. She briefly referred to her job allowing her to embed other punk values into her work too:

> "I get given a lot of autonomy, I get to manage in a way that [...] isn't really hierarchical [...] so a lot of the values stuff gets um gets kind of drawn out in different aspects of my job? So whether I'm delivering training or writing campaigns and stuff, they're kind of, the values stuff is all embedded in it".

Whilst it is not clear how exactly particular punk values are embedded into Katie's day-to-day work practices, it is clear from this that she felt that to be the case. Similarly Lindsey referred to how she was in the process of completing a degree with the Open University which she described as a "punk institution if I ever saw one" – again the interview did not unpack the details of this further but it could be assumed that this educational path embodies some of the punk values, e.g. DIY (highlighted in chapter four). This idea of a DIY ethic permeating through the work an individual was engaged in was reflected too by Jen who worked as a production co-ordinator in TV and film:

> "...my job as well is quite um, it's quite DIY [...] my job is to set up from the beginning [...] no help, just getting on and doing it [...] making things happen".

Here Jen draws upon a conceptualisation of DIY discussed in chapter four whereby DIY is about being pro-active and taking individual responsibility; supporting the point made in that chapter that DIY did not have to be in the context of musical endeavours as suggested by some authors (e.g. Hannerz 2015, O'Hara 1999, Martin-Iverson 2014). The importance of work which offered some degree of flexibility or changeability was highlighted by Lindsey and Naja. Naja did not see her job as a typical '9-5', for

example, and allowed her to travel whilst with regards to teaching English as a foreign language Lindsey said:

> "it's very easy to, um if you're in a place you don't like you can get out
>
> **(yeah)** um kind of you're not tied down, it's very escapable".

This could be understood further through a subversion lens. A common punk value identified by the women I spoke to was subversion where wider/mainstream society was conceived as the authority to undermine (see chapter four for further discussion). Reflecting back to a marker of adult status being 'stable full-time work' (Blatterer 2007), the engagement in work which was flexible or changeable could be understood as subverting the normative expectations concerning adulthood.

Lastly, Naja described her job as allowing her to 'rebel' in a more acceptable way compared to what she saw as the type of rebellion typical of her youth:

> "You rebel in different ways. I find it quite rebellious when [...] I'm the only woman and I think it's punk [when] I'm the only woman that goes [to specific worksites] on my own, with a bunch of men [...] they have to do as they're told. Because I'm in charge of them and I have to look after them. Now I think *that's* pretty punk [...] It's pretty scary [...] it's an adrenaline rush".

Naja acknowledged how she was unable to rebel in the same way she had done whilst a young punk (consideration of why has been seen within this chapter), yet Naja still needed to experience the same adrenaline rush felt in her youth. The type of work she now did allowed her to rebel in a way which was in keeping with the expectations of adulthood/the expectation to engage in paid work. The very nature of the work afforded her that adrenaline rush whilst allowing her to rebel against societal expectations concerning what was expected of her as a woman.

Across all the participants some common themes emerged concerning the nature of employment they were in with fourteen (out of the seventeen who specified the work they did) working within what could be considered at face value as the public sector. Within this, eight of the women worked within education/academia, four within social or youth work, and two worked in charity roles. It could be suggested that the nature of this sector broadly could be linked to punk values regarding collectivity and community.

What has been demonstrated above in relation to employment and punk values is the way punk is adaptable – the core values are capable of being expressed in different

ways meaning punk could continue to hold a part in these women's changing lives alongside things ageing brought with it and the expectations adulthood brought. As shown, some of the women I spoke to now saw punk values as something that could be fulfilled through the work that they did. This demonstrates a malleability of punk values, discussed at the end of this chapter, and this was found across my sample, in the context of employment or otherwise. It was not something unique to a particular punk pathway.

Ageing and Punk – three identity categories, three paths

Due to the abundance of data, and its relationship to the discussion of social expectations earlier in this chapter, it was more appropriate for me discuss ageing and dress here than in Chapter 5 which considered dress more broadly. With regards to ageing and dress, patterns emerged across the data which indicated three different ways of understanding the relationship between ageing, dress and punk. Bringing these together with findings concerning ageing from my previous data chapters, I discuss here three identity categories which can be seen as differing paths in a punk career. The greater space given to ageing and dress here reflects this not being previously discussed in my thesis but also highlights how differences in participants' relationships to dress is the key defining characteristic of the pathways. The three key identity categories which emerged overall from the data were the 'toner downs', the 'consistent punks' and those who were 'never massively outrageous'.

The 'Toner Downs'

With regards to the 'toner downs', participants had changed their dress over the life course and as the name suggests they had felt there to be a toning down of dress. Eight of the twenty-two women I spoke to could fall under this categorisation – Ces, Elizabeth, Jess, Milly, Naefun, Naja, Sharon and Suzy. An awareness of societal expectations concerning age/gender was present amongst these participants but more importantly there was often (as a result) some engagement in the policing of others, as well as their selves, in relation to these. Participants here saw initial exposure to/entry into punk as impacting on how they dressed (though this could be to varying degrees). Participants highlighted some changes in their dress over time with three women referring specifically to a process of toning down or adopting a "more subtle" look as Milly expressed it. Yet despite toning their style down, there was still the assertion that

they had not fully conformed, maintaining some form of an alternative style. This process of toning down was also seen in Bennett's (2006) research concerning older punk men but as already indicated it was not as prevalent amongst my own sample of women. For Bennett's (2006) sample there was the clear sense that the majority had shifted in their dress over time, moving away from a 'spectacular' punk style once adopted to a more subtle incorporation of a few, if any, punk cues in their overall dress (e.g. a band t-shirt). As demonstrated elsewhere in this chapter, however, despite only some of the sample referring specifically to toning down over time, there were other examples of how they might compromise/had compromised their style demonstrating that whilst an overall toning down might not take place, situational/contextual toning down could still occur e.g. in the context of employment.

As this path involved a toning down of dress over time – in this sense it could be said there was a degree of internalisation occurring. For the women on this path, their punkness was no longer expressed either wholly/partially externally in the way they dressed and now was commonly something *within* them. As highlighted in Chapter 4, both Andes (2002) and Bennett (2006) argue that older punks, over time, internalise their punkness. They are instead able to show their commitment through their lifestyle rather than communicating it externally through dress (Bennett 2006). This internalisation was also found amongst older straight-edge punks (Haenfler 2012). Some of the toner downs spoke how in the past clothing was about making a statement or clothing being used to 'say who you were' whereas the feeling was that now this was not needed, demonstrating a process of internalisation and supporting the argument made in Chapter 4 of how punk was defined more as a state of mind:

> "I do find it much, much more liberating that I don't need to look, I don't feel I need to look punk because punk is part of me, it's within me, it's inside; I don't need to tell the world that I'm punk" – Milly

> "I think I stopped really caring about showing other people what I listened to, I think when you're younger like you put patches on the back of your clothes and badges, I remember like drawing tattoos on – I've got a Leftover Crack tattoo on my back from when I was 16 – I was desperate to show everybody and to prove all this stuff but now, I think the older I've got I just thought like literally 'I don't care' (laughs) if other people know or don't know what I listen to, less of a desire to like um outwardly scream at other people this is who I am and this is what defines me, I think as I've

grown older there's been more things that define who I am and I'm less

eager to force them on other people" - Ces

Participants on this path often had varied/eclectic musical tastes with some selective listening of punk music occurring whilst others might have more of a punk preference. Most still attended punk gigs though attendance was likely to now be negotiated through a consideration of particular push/pull factors. Unlike with the three 'consistent punks' who identified as punks, here there was no explicit identification as a punk and instead identification *with* punk was common. All of those on the toned down path held punk beliefs and values to be important. This pathway holds most similarity with the experiences of the older punk men in Bennett's (2006) research sample in the way they have maintained their punk identity through adulthood by engaging in accommodation of punk style and internalising 'punkness'. Yet the findings detailed in my thesis consider the wider context of societal expectations in relation to this, something Bennett (2006) failed to acknowledge due to his focus on style. I will return to this point again in Chapter 9 in terms of the implications and impact of my research.

The 'Consistent Punks'

'Consistent punks' could apply to six of the twenty-two research participants: Briony, Grace, Hester, Katie, Morag and Sam. For those on the consistent punk path there was a good deal of continuity from their initial entry into punk. They comprised of participants who saw clothing as expressing their punk identity and the two being inextricably linked (though they might vary in how explicit they expressed this). Some explicitly referred to 'dressing punk'. They saw this link between punk and dress as being the case when they first entered punk (typically in their youth) and something they saw as being maintained over time (with perhaps some lapses over the life course – seen with, for example, Sam or Hester). It is worth noting that these participants' dress might not necessarily fit into the 'spectacular' stereotypical image associated with punk – what was important was their subjective experience of how they dressed feeling punk. There was the feeling amongst these participants too of resisting societal expectations e.g. concerning age/gender, commonly not altering their dress for the workplace, for example.

Hester, like some of the other 'consistent punks', actively highlighted the way she'd seen little change over time in the way she dressed:

"I wore boots, paint splashed jeans and customised second hand men's shirts often topped off with a cravat and corduroy flat hat [...] It's still very much my identity, I still look punk [...] My hair is pillar box red, I'm multiply pierced and tattooed".

For Hester, hearing punk for the first time when she was 14 years old had impacted on, amongst other things, her way of dressing. She indicates above how she believes she dresses punk and this has been maintained over time rather than becoming toned down with the exception of the period in her life when she lost touch with her true self which I referred to in an earlier chapter. Grace, also felt there was little change over time in the way she dressed, concluding "I don't know how to conform" and Morag explained how:

"I went from wearing the same clothes as my mum to the same clothes as Zillah Minx from *Rubella Ballet* [...] I always felt a bit odd anyway and now my look reflected that. I wasn't trying to be 'normal' any more [...] Punk is the music I listen to, the colours I dye my hair, my make-up [...] compared with non-punk women, my appearance is radically different".

Morag was one of the research participants who took part in answering interview questions by e-mail rather than face-to-face and voluntarily (without prompting) e-mailed a recent photograph of herself which showed her outside a pub, dressed in black with a band t-shirt, big boots and heavy, dark eye make-up. Describing her initial involvement with punk above, Morag sees punk and dress as very much linked – she sees this presentation of a punk appearance as still maintained and continuing now in her late forties.

Moving onto music, amongst the consistent punks there was some display of more predominantly punk musical tastes compared to the toner downs e.g. some listened to punk and did not speak of any varied tastes as those on other pathways may have. Gig attendance was still important and overall amongst the consistent punks there was less consideration of push/pull factors – this, however, may reflect the less in-depth email interviews carried out with three of these participants.

As with the toner downs, punk beliefs and values could be identified and were deemed to be of importance to them. Amongst those on this path there were three participants who identified explicitly as 'a punk'. These were the only three participants from the twenty-two I spoke with to identify as such and this is being understood as a reflection of their path and relating to discussions raised in Chapter 4 concerning authenticity, imposter syndrome, and punk. In Chapter 4 it was highlighted how some participants

did not feel comfortable identifying themselves as 'a punk' because of concern they would be seen as imposters due to their lack of trademark punk dress, for example. It could make sense then that the three women who declared they were punks appeared on this particular path where a feature of this pathway could be a marker such as punk dress which reduces this imposter syndrome.

A reason for remaining consistently punk rather than toning down may lie in the individuals' subjective experience of ageing. Bringing in my findings in Chapter 8 concerning social expectations of age/gender, two consistent punks, Morag and Sam, indicated how they still 'felt' young. This subjective sense of age, then, may allow them to bypass societal expectations concerning adulthood meaning there is no felt need to tone down e.g. their dress.

'Never Massively Outrageous'

The third identity category which emerged from the interviews – those who were 'never massively outrageous' - entailed a feeling that dress had never been spectacular enough to require toning down. Therefore dress was not necessarily ever something deemed extra-ordinary and requiring toning, or even could be toned, down. The 'never massively outrageous' included women therefore who displayed no strong sense that punk and dress had ever correlated, during their youth or otherwise; as suggested above there was a sense of always having been relatively 'low-key' in their dress. This categorisation could apply to six of the research sample: Christine, Jen, Kristianne, Lindsey, Myfanwy and Rebecca.

Illustrating this identity category, Jen said:

> "I mean, I dyed my hair and I had piercings and I've got a few tattoos and stuff but nothing um, I was never massively outrageous yeah so no I think I've always looked relatively normal. I do, I started on the piercings quite young but um I've never had, I've never had that stereotypical punk [look]".

Jen never saw herself as having the stereotypical (read spectacular) punk look or way of dressing. The absence of toning down, then, results from an absence of perceived need to as she was always "relatively normal" anyway. As Myfanwy described it, her style had always been "low key" anyway.

Dress aside, the remaining characteristics of this identity category, or pathway, were the same as those of the 'toner downs': musical tastes were often described as varied or 'eclectic' with some selective listening of punk or more frequent listening to punk; gig

attendance varied and was negotiated alongside certain push-pull factors; there was no explicit identification as a punk but identification *with* punk was common; and punk beliefs and values were important.

When categorisation does not apply to all...

Twenty of the twenty-two women I spoke with have been referred to above in where they appeared to sit with regards to these three identity categories. Two women, Cheryl and Deedee, have not been considered. This is for two quite different reasons. In the case of Cheryl this was one of five interviews carried out by e-mail and the data lacked depth. This made it very difficult to draw conclusions concerning Cheryl with regards, specifically, to the identity categories outlined and any conclusions would be very assumptive. The absence of Deedee in the attribution of identities categories above might reflect a complexity which needs further consideration. My initial thought was that Deedee demonstrated the identity of 'consistent punk', in that she saw a relationship between punk and dress, and did not perceive there being any significant toning down. Deedee had discussed in her interview how her desire to adopt punk dress on initial exposure to/entry into punk, however, could not be put into practice because of parental control (see Chapter 5 for fuller discussion of this). This was unlike other women who were being understood as 'consistent punks' who had maintained a relationship between punk and dress from their initial exposure to/entry into punk. As it stands in the model above, twenty of the twenty-two participants are represented. There were two women for whom it was more complicated, therefore acknowledging a limitation of the categories I present being able to capture all punk women's experiences. First there was Deedee, whose initial entry into punk was severely constrained by parental control. As reflected upon in Chapter 5, Deedee may have wanted to use, for example, dress or music as part of her punk identification/affiliation after her initial exposure to punk but this was not possible because of parental control. On that basis, despite sharing characteristics with other consistent punks, it would not be appropriate to consider Deedee as such. I consider Deedee's case further in Chapter 9 when I present a model of punk careers. Secondly, I did not feel it was appropriate to define Cheryl's path due to it not being entirely clear. This reflects the very short exchange we had by email and is in part a reflection of some of the issues I experienced with email interviews (see Chapter 3 and Chapter 9 for further discussion). Without enough data in order to gain a fuller understanding of Cheryl's path it would have been

both wrong and no doubt inaccurate of me to surmise about the pathway she took in terms of her punk career.

Strategies for Ageing

Two strategies appeared to emerge as a means of continuing to 'do' punk as participants aged. Firstly 'punk' becoming malleable (which featured more prominently) and, secondly, internalisation of punkness. As highlighted in Chapter 4, both Andes (2002) and Bennett (2006) argue that older punks, over time, internalise their punkness. They are instead able to show their commitment through their lifestyle rather than communicating it externally through dress (Bennett 2006). This internalisation was also found amongst older straight-edge punks (Haenfler 2012). Some of the women in my sample spoke of how in the past clothing was about making a statement or clothing being used to 'say who you were' whereas the feeling was that now this was not needed, demonstrating a process of internalisation and supporting the argument made in Chapter 4 of how punk was defined more as a state of mind:

> "I do find it much, much more liberating that I don't need to look, I don't feel I need to look punk because punk is part of me, it's within me, it's inside; I don't need to tell the world that I'm punk" – Milly

> "And I probably don't feel the need to dress to tell people I love punk so much. I think when you're younger you're carving out your identity but once you feel like you've found it, it doesn't feel like you need to show it/prove it in the same way?" – Suzy

> "I think I stopped really caring about showing other people what I listened to, I think when you're younger like you put patches on the back of your clothes and badges, I remember like drawing tattoos on – I've got a Leftover Crack tattoo on my back from when I was 16 – I was desperate to show everybody and to prove all this stuff but now, I think the older I've got I just thought like literally 'I don't care' (laughs) if other people know or don't know what I listen to, less of a desire to like um outwardly scream at other people this is who I am and this is what defines me, I think as I've grown older there's been more things that define who I am and I'm less eager to force them on other people" - Ces

As well as a process of internalisation, Ces signals how ageing may bring with it further elements individuals incorporate into their identity. This may mean someone who is able to demonstrate clear commitment to a particular subculture in their youth may have to begin negotiating this identity along with new identities, potentially leading, as Ces suggests, to a reconfiguration of how that identity is expressed. As highlighted in the previous chapter, participants' definition of punk can change over time therefore facilitating the process of internalisation. Naja, for example, says:

> "I had Mohawks and all that sort of thing um and your outlook changes along the route and your outlook changes towards you know you don't have to be a cert-you don't have to be a certain look, you don't have to wear the clothes, you don't necessarily have to listen to the music" – Naja

For Naja, over time punk may have shifted from being equated with a particular way of dressing to becoming more a state of mind. As shown in the previous chapter, whilst punk might have originally been something equated with possessing a particular style and listening to a particular genre of music, it had largely now for the women became a mind-set, a set of ideas. This aids them in the process of internalisation and also enables them to negotiate their dress and the relationship, if any, between this and punk. This strategy of internalisation was predominantly seen within the identity category of 'toner downs'. With the 'consistent punks' there was also the expression of punk being a mind-set, however this was coupled with the maintenance of a relationship between punk and dress which would suggest limited internalisation (e.g. not complete internalisation of punk).

Related to this internalisation of punk is the way punk becomes malleable – what punk constitutes and what it involves is adapted in order to still be a part of the women's lives as they age. If the meaning of punk can be reinterpreted this allows ageing women to then continue to 'do' punk whilst being faced with particular constraints social and physical ageing might present, even when 'locked in'. It was clear from the sample I spoke to that how you 'do' punk could be adaptive; that whilst core values might be retained, how these values played out could be re-imagined over the course of one's life. The following quotes from Naefun, Naja and Sharon illustrate this nicely in the sense that part of moving out of youth into adulthood might entail this process of becoming 'locked in' – whether because of a need to work or because of having children. There is the idea here of there being "more at stake":

>"there's more at stake now because um because of you know I'm not saying that I'm a high flying professional career woman an stuff but actually you know because of the job that I do for example, then if I got arrested on a protest march um...it would it would be more difficult to [...] deal with the ramifications of something like that – Naefun
>
>"[when you're a young punk] you go on demonstrations, you get arrested and you get chucked in jail, you know? It's [...] that's part of...the fun of life. You know? I guess I just do it in a different way now (laughs) I don't wanna get chucked in jail anymore! I'd get sacked! (laughs)" – Naja
>
>"I don't look like an office person but I can if I have to, so I suppose it did change. I think having kids was probably when it changed *more* than anything [be]cause you have to support a family don't you?" – Sharon

As demonstrated in the section above on employment, for some of the women I spoke to the malleability of punk values allowed them to engage in work whilst still upholding values important to their punk identity. This malleability of punk occurred across all of the three identity categories. This malleability of punk has also been demonstrated elsewhere in this thesis, notably Chapter 5 concerning what constitutes as punk dress and how values might inform dress.

Conclusion

From the discussion above, the relevance of a social constructionist approach to age/ageing becomes clear, allowing an understanding of how individuals' meanings are constructed in relation to the 'life course' (Holstein and Gubrium, 2007). The use of 'life course' here is deliberate, to highlight how this too is something emerging from construction. At the start of this section the concept of social ageing (Morgan and Kunkel 2007) was introduced. Whilst what followed demonstrated various assumptions and expectations concerning age/ageing (and gender) that the research participants were aware of, the discussion above highlights the need to avoid, as Fairhurst emphasises, an over-socialised conception of women (1998: 260) in which normative assumptions/expectations are taken as synonymous with subjective experience. The various ways the older punk women interacted with or negotiated these societal assumptions/expectations shows that such an over-socialised view would indeed be inaccurate. This has important implications for the notion of subversion and as

demonstrated here there were various subversive acts as well as examples of accommodating. If subversion and resistance are being seen as 'cut from the same cloth' this supports Weitz (2001) in a need to understand resistance and accommodation as coexisting variables, rather than polar opposites. Additionally, the examples of subversion offered in this chapter are not grand political gestures but that should not detract from their significance. Instead this demonstrates the importance of seeing subversion, as with resistance, amongst the personal and everyday (Haenfler 2004, Munro 1999, Weitz 2001, Widdicombe and Wooffitt 1995).

Exploring participants' awareness and interactions with societal expectations contributes also to my argument raised in Chapter 4 concerning the need to understand punk as relational. It is through their awareness of societal expectations, and their acknowledgement of how this sits with their own sense of self, that my participants construct their punk identities. Knowing what is punk comes from engaging with such expectations of being non-punk.

Building upon the theme of agency-structure developed in my previous chapters, it can be seen again here that there are various structural constraints placed upon older punk women. These structural factors are indicative of those experienced by ageing women more generally, predominantly focused around societal expectations, social ageing and physical ageing. How the women I spoke to responded to such structural constraints was not homogenous, reflecting instead differing levels of agency. In the case of dress, for example, some of the participants altered the way they dressed in response to societal expectations concerning age/gender or because of workplace expectations whereas others refused to do so. The questionable degree to which older women can express agency in dress choices has been noted by Twigg (2007) and it is shown here that even when upholding punk values which include subversion, this can still be the case. The discussion above demonstrates the degree that there could be constraints placed on women in how they could 'do' punk as they aged and it has been demonstrated in this chapter that there is no one way punk women age. I have established in this chapter three key identity categories which illustrate this – the consistent punks, the 'toner downs' and those who were 'never massively outrageous'. In addition, I discussed two strategies for successful ageing when punk: punk becoming malleable and internalisation of punkness. To consider this in the context of Andes' (2002) work concerning growing up punk and the punk career, it can be suggested that there can be different career possibilities rather than the single path, sequential career

suggested by Andes (2002). This may be in part due to the way the scope of options become more limited for women as they age, but also reflects the strategies some punk women might adopt concerning the internalisation of punk and malleability of punk values. This builds on arguments from previous chapters with regards to the punk career and in the next chapter I consolidate these discussions by presenting a working model of the punk careers experienced by the women I spoke with.

Chapter 9 Conclusion: Punk Women Growing Old Disgracefully?

As highlighted in my opening chapters, this is the only study to-date which explores solely older punk women and specifically their construction and maintenance of punk identities. There were four key themes that this research set out to explore in relation to 'post-youth', or older, punk women (subcultural identification, ageing, embodiment and resistance) and from these themes, three bundles of questions emerged:

- What does punk mean for post-youth punk women? How do these women enact a punk identity? How does their punk identity interact with other identities they hold? How do they articulate punk as still significant in their lives? Do they encounter any barriers or limitations on this articulation?

- How is 'being' and 'doing' punk negotiated alongside the experience of age/ageing? How is it managed with regards to societal expectations concerning (ageing) women? What relationship has their punk identity played with life events significant to these women? How is the body used in the construction of a punk identity and how do these women respond to the ageing body?

- In the context of post-youth punk women, is the subcultural concept of 'resistance' still relevant and if so, what form does this take? Does resistance play a role of these women's lives? How is such resistance articulated? Does resistance take different forms? How does resistance interact with issues regarding ageing and femininity?

In this concluding chapter, I summarise my findings in the context of the four key themes identified above. I then present a punk careers model which ties together much of the empirical data discussed in this thesis. The chapter will then turn to discussion of the implications and impact of my study, followed by a reflexive account of the limitations.

Subcultural Identification

As Chapter 4 identified, a common sense of punk being a state of mind emerged from the older punk women I spoke with. This entails punk being seen as a set of core values: subversion, DIY, community and political consciousness. Possessing these values were key to their identification as, or with, punk. As evidenced, the shift from punk being

seen as rebellion to punk being seen as subversion by most of the women I spoke with allowed them to distance themselves from the association between punk and youth, meaning they could work punk into being coherent with their experiences of social ageing. This linked to the argument too of punk identification being temporal and processual, rather than a static, unchangeable concept.

There were some central areas which interviews revealed as ways the women 'did' punk. These were dress and music (in its various forms) and were discussed in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 respectively. My findings demonstrate how the relationship between dress, music and punk identification could be complex and not necessarily homogenous across the research sample though some common patterns were identified. Whilst dress may have been significant in articulating punk identity at the start of the women's punk careers, it was more common for it to now not be significant, with consistent punks being the minority within the sample. Overall, however, there was a shared view that music (in whatever form this took) for my participants was still significant in their articulation of punk identity across the sample. Chapters 5 through to 8 also highlighted various potential barriers or limitations the women noted in articulating 'being' and 'doing' punk, which were sometimes, though not always, negotiated by them. In constructing an authentic punk identity, there were issues concerning gender, for example, with punk women posited against a masculine punk culture.

Pretty in Punk? Alternatively Feminine?

In Chapter 2 I identified two key pieces of research in relation to this thesis – Leblanc's (2002) study of punk girls and Holland's (2006) research exploring alternative women. My research demonstrates some findings in keeping with Leblanc's (2002). For example, my research participants' conceptualisation of punk initially as rebellious supports Leblanc (2002) in the way punk girls challenge mainstream culture by identifying as punk. Leblanc's (2002) key argument is that punk girls go beyond this to also challenge the masculine norms of the punk subculture by combining discourses of femininity with those of punk – they adopted established, masculine style but juxtaposed this with feminine aspects both in style and behaviour. The main limitation I identified with Leblanc's (2002) work was the invisibility of age/ageing. My own findings demonstrate how normative gender, or more specifically normative femininity, could constrain my participants' construction and maintenance of punk identities and

this often is further complicated when reflecting upon social and physical ageing. A key difference is that whilst some of my research sample may have adopted established masculine style (e.g. in terms of punk dress) upon their initial involvement with/exposure to punk, this was less common as time elapsed. Social ageing contributed to some of the participants' 'toning down', for example, but overall a felt internalisation was common meaning punk commitment became conceived as more about the values they held rather than adhering to a particular established form of dress.

Following on from this notion of social ageing, the women I spoke with (as seen in Chapter 8) demonstrated an awareness of cultural and societal expectations concerning ageing women – much like the alternative women interviewed by Holland (2006) did. Amongst Holland's (2006) sample narratives of toning down were common but the women's overall sense of being alternative was not impacted – they argued they were still the same alternative person. This can be said, too, of the women I spoke with – those that expressed a toning down over time in relation to their dress still maintained that punk was important, if not central, to their sense of who they were (arguably this could be seen alone in their desire to participate in the research). However, I have demonstrated how this identification as a punk women could be more complex than, for example, identifying as an alternative women – in part because of punk not just being about dress (as Holland's 'alternativity' was) but it also being about a set of values and also because of punk's associations with masculinity. Alternative dress as a practice lacked this further aspect which could further complicate women's agency and choices.

As Chapter 8 illustrated, my participants demonstrated an awareness of social ageing and expectations concerning age/gender. 'Being' and 'doing' punk was negotiated alongside the experience of age/ageing in two main ways: through the internalisation of punk, and through the malleability of punk values. These processes allowed punk identities to be negotiated alongside ageing. In terms of life events, a lot of the women's discussions centred round employment and there were various ways they negotiated this alongside their maintenance of punk identity. This again could relate to the malleability of punk values with their employment seen as embodying certain punk values.
With regards to how the body was used in the construction of a punk identity, Chapter 5 considered the role of dress in this. As noted above, whilst this may have been one way that participants previously articulated their punk identity this was not necessarily the case for them now. Structural constraints on dress were raised in both Chapter 5 and

Chapter 8, demonstrating how use of the body in articulating punk identity may potentially be limited. There were, however, examples amongst the women I spoke with of using their bodies subversively through dress to respond to such constraints.

I noted in Chapter 2 how subcultural literature's discussion of age and bodies often focuses on dress and gig attendance. With regards to the latter, this is predominantly in the context of physical ageing (e.g. Gibson 2012). What is demonstrated in Chapter 7, however, is that the use of the body in terms of positioning at gigs is also significant and this can be an additional way the body in used in the construction of a punk identity.

Just 'Typical Girls'?

Across the data chapters gender as both something which might constrain construction and maintenance of punk identities, as well as something which might be negotiated in said construction/maintenance, has been highlighted. Initial attraction to punk as something which was 'different' and/or rebellious relates to how punk was perceived as offering something different to the mainstream and normative femininity, yet punk's coding as masculine emerges early on, with the prevalence of facilitators (discussed in Chapter 5) being men; indicative of the higher numbers of them within the scene/subculture but this also speaks towards the greater informal control placed on young girls more broadly. Whilst punk may be seen as different to the mainstream, offering an alternative to gender normative expectations, the findings discussed across Chapters 4 through to 8 demonstrate the way punk can also limit women's agency in constructing alternative gender identities. This has been illustrated, for example, in the way punk upholds its male musicians over female; its tendency towards replicating heteronormative relations concerning parenthood and childcare which limit women; or the links between authenticity and masculinity. Ageing punk women are very much aware of how they as women are expected to be as they grow older yet the degree to which they have internalised this (with 'toning down' being common) suggests involvement in punk does not necessarily give them strategies for negotiating, or challenging, these.

Resistance (...or subversion)

I began the research process with a cluster of questions (seen above) concerning resistance and older punk women. In Chapter 2 I highlighted the prevalence of work concerning 'resistance' in subcultural literature as well as the relevance of this concept to ageing and gender. In line with my critique of the way resistance as a concept might

act as an epistemological straitjacket (Chapter 2) and my inductive approach (Chapter 3) I wished to consider resistance from the participants' subjectivity and not impose an external definition. In Chapter 4 a punk value was conceptualised by my participants in ways 'resistance' has been conceptualised, but as I argued, this particular term was not used by them. Instead the term 'subversion' did emerge from some of the interviews and so this was the name given to that particular punk value. Given that 'resistance' was not a term utilised by the women I spoke with, this would suggest that the subcultural concept of resistance is not relevant when understanding older women's construction and maintenance of punk identity.
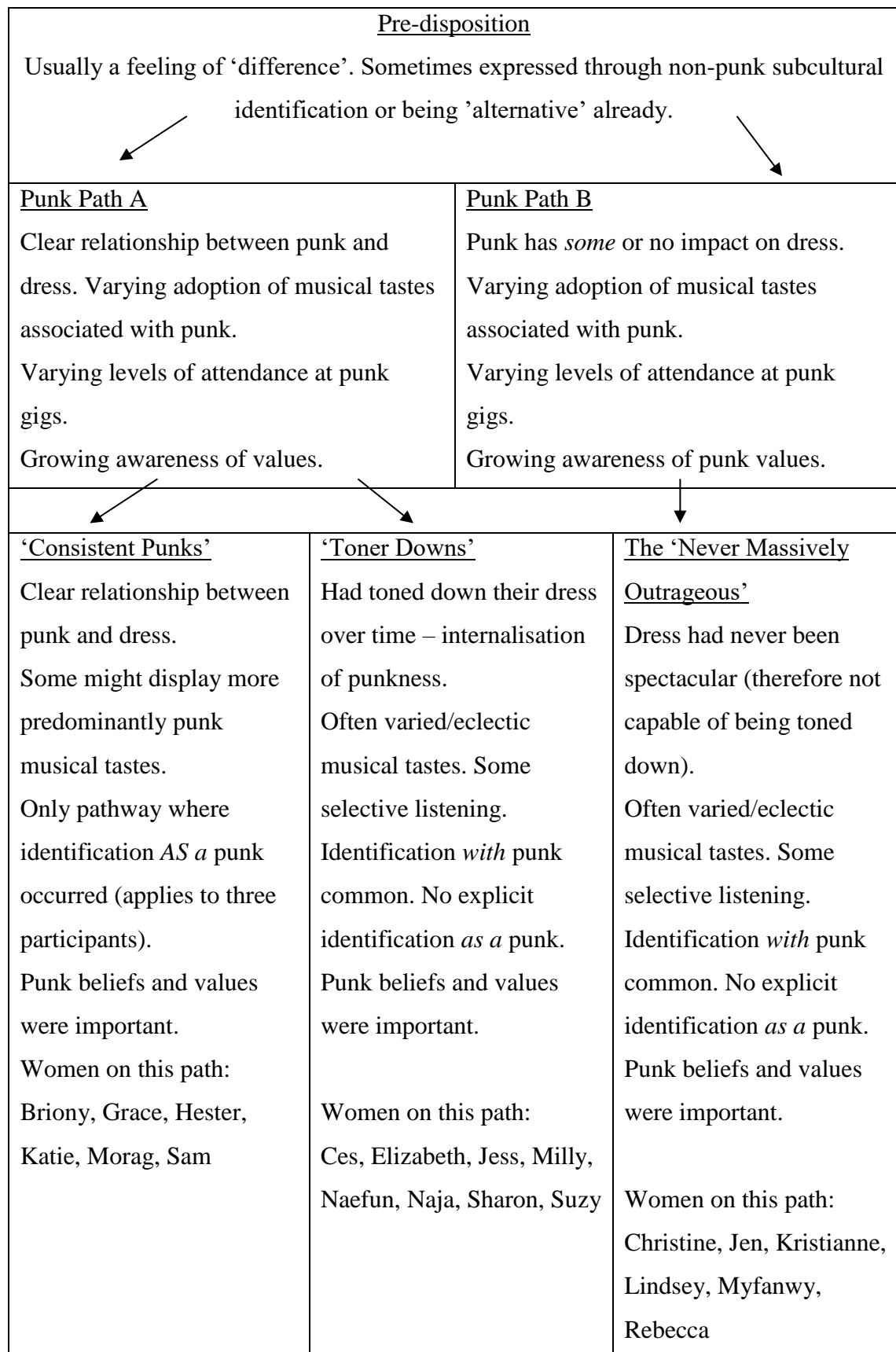
There were various ways which the women I spoke with presented accounts of subversion as demonstrated in the data chapters. Even the holding of punk values themselves can be seen as subversive due to the way they are perceived as presenting a 'different' belief/value system to the norm/mainstream (as detailed in Chapter 3). With the participants overall deeming punk values to be important to them, then, this was the common way of being subversive. Relating this back to the concept of malleability above, holding punk values can be a way of engaging in subversion within the context of social and physical ageing. As shown in Chapter 7, though there was acknowledgement of societal expectations around age and/or gender, some women were subversive in their defiance of these expectations. This discussion highlights the way subversion interacted with issues regarding ageing and femininity.

As illustrated across the data chapters, then, subversion does play a role in my participants' lives and whilst this is commonly expressed through holding subversion as a core punk value, it could also take other forms.

Punk Careers

Whilst moving through my data chapters, I have considered how being punk can be considered a process. This leads me then to propose here a model which demonstrates the different punk careers which emerged from my research sample. I make here a clear distinction between the research which is presented in this thesis and that by Andes' (2002) research of 'growing up punk'. In Andes' (2002) stage model, it is acknowledged that individuals might not necessarily move through all of the stages. However the model in itself presents punk career as singular and sequential, therefore unable to accommodate variations. However, my model recognises that there can be

more than one punk career and whilst we may begin on the same path, there can be forks in that path resulting in a 'splitting' into different pathways. This relates to the fact that sometimes there can be 'obstacles' on paths, recognising the structural constraints experienced by the women I spoke with. These obstacles might therefore potentially limit you continuing on that path and may have to be negotiated. Such structural constraints have been discussed more fully across Chapters 5, 6 and 7 concerning dress, music and gig attendance and in the context of ageing more broadly in Chapter 8. Whilst Becker's (1966) work, for example, on 'career' made more allowance for factors which might alter the path of a career, there was no unpacking of the role of ageing or gender in relation to this.

Twenty of the twenty-two participants are represented in Figure 1 and in Chapter 8 I explained the complexities involved in applying this to all of my research sample.

Figure 1 – Punk Careers Model

Pre-disposition		
Usually a feeling of 'difference'. Sometimes expressed through non-punk subcultural identification or being 'alternative' already.		

Punk Path A	Punk Path B	
Clear relationship between punk and dress. Varying adoption of musical tastes associated with punk. Varying levels of attendance at punk gigs. Growing awareness of values.	Punk has *some* or no impact on dress. Varying adoption of musical tastes associated with punk. Varying levels of attendance at punk gigs. Growing awareness of punk values.	

'Consistent Punks'	'Toner Downs'	The 'Never Massively Outrageous'
Clear relationship between punk and dress. Some might display more predominantly punk musical tastes. Only pathway where identification *AS a* punk occurred (applies to three participants). Punk beliefs and values were important. Women on this path: Briony, Grace, Hester, Katie, Morag, Sam	Had toned down their dress over time – internalisation of punkness. Often varied/eclectic musical tastes. Some selective listening. Identification *with* punk common. No explicit identification *as a* punk. Punk beliefs and values were important. Women on this path: Ces, Elizabeth, Jess, Milly, Naefun, Naja, Sharon, Suzy	Dress had never been spectacular (therefore not capable of being toned down). Often varied/eclectic musical tastes. Some selective listening. Identification *with* punk common. No explicit identification *as a* punk. Punk beliefs and values were important. Women on this path: Christine, Jen, Kristianne, Lindsey, Myfanwy, Rebecca

Pre-Disposition

Both Andes (2002) and Gordon (2014) note a sense of difference felt by individuals before their initial entry into punk with Andes (2002) conceptualising this as part of a pre-disposition 'stage' to the punk career. Whilst not voiced by all of the women I spoke with, this feeling of difference was common. Some expressed this in the way they saw themselves as always having been alternative in some sense (usually through clothes) as summarised by Lindsey when she expressed in Chapter 5 how she had "always been slightly alternative anyway". Or it could be the case that this feeling of/already being different prior to punk exposure/entry entailed seeing themselves as affiliated with a non-punk subculture. With both Jen and Briony, for example, they referred to being 'into' metal prior to becoming increasingly aware of or involved with punk.

Regardless of whether this pre-disposition was present, the key facilitator for exposure to/entry into punk was music (as detailed in Chapter 6). Andes' (2002) punk career model fails to consider what facilitates initial exposure to/entry into punk, but there has been some consideration of the role of the media in initial exposure to punk in Leblanc's (2002) of punk girls. Despite this, there is no consideration of the gendered nature of this initial exposure which my findings demonstrated (Chapter 6). I also highlight the role of emotions in punk women's initial exposure to punk and how this might be an important aspect of pre-disposition (Chapter 6), noting that emotion has not really been explored in other career literature (Becker 1966, Matza 2010).

From this pre-disposition and initial exposure to punk, two career paths emerged in the women's narratives. These are titled Punk Path A and Punk Path B in the pathway model (see Figure 1). As can be seen in Figure 1, the characteristics of these paths are very similar with the key difference being about how participants saw the relationship between punk and dress. It is important to highlight now, that my point in Figure 1 concerning how all participants then experience a growing awareness of punk values is something which would require more empirical consideration. There is some assumption of this having taken place on the basis that there was a collective sense of values present amongst my research sample now. Arguably they would not be able to identify these common values had there not been a process previously of developing awareness of these.

Punk Path A

As noted in my model (Figure 1), with regards to punk path A the following common themes emerged from the participants' narrative: a clear relationship between punk and dress, varying adoption of musical tastes associated with punk, varying levels of attendance at punk gigs and the growing awareness of punk beliefs/values. Participants reflected on this as being experienced in their youth, after their initial exposure to punk. This descriptor invokes the subcultural conceptualisation by the CCCS in which these subcultures involved shared behaviours, musical tastes and stylistic choices (Clark 2003). But beyond that, the relevance of the CCCS' subcultural theorising is limited as it concentrates on working-class youth specifically and resistance, through subcultural participation, aimed at the dominant and parent culture. As noted in Chapter 5 something worth highlighting is the assistance provided by parents to some of the women I spoke with in realising their child's punk dress. This seems at odds with the role of the 'parent culture' suggested in some CCCS work (Brake 1985, Clarke et al 1975, Hebdige 1998) but a consideration the CCCS' semiotic analysis would not have been able to unearth.

Punk Path B

Path B sees punk having *some* or no impact on dress, varying adoption of musical tastes associated with punk, varying levels of attendance at punk gigs and the growing awareness of punk beliefs/values. As with Punk Path A, participants reflected on this as being experienced in their youth, after their initial exposure to punk. This is where perhaps post-subcultural theorising becomes more relevant. Sweetman's (2004) consideration of neo-tribes (which I considered in more detail in Chapter2), for example, demonstrates an alternative to subculture which emphasises individualistic identity and reflexivity (irrespective of age). A neo-tribe might entail certain behaviours or things acting as group markers but that is not a defining characteristic. This reflects the ambiguity around such things amongst those who followed Path B e.g. musical tastes, dress. In a neo-tribe, commitment to particular (ideological) beliefs is replaced by shared feelings and experiences (Sweetman 2004). From the data gathered in my research it was not clear to what extent that latter point regarding shared feelings/experiences rang true. The importance my participants placed on particular punk values, however, would signal that commitment to particular beliefs was important, therefore questioning this proposal by Sweetman (2004).

Sweetman (2004) proposes two post-subcultural types of contemporary subculturalists – tourists and travellers – which also have limited application here. Whilst the tourist "playfully celebrates, happily rummaging in the dressing-up box of past subcultural styles, the traveller chooses a costume and sticks to it – at least for a short while" (Sweetman 2004: 91). Path B questions these types. Path B entails punk having some or no impact on dress, and in the case of women who felt it had no impact this would be in conflict with the notion of a traveller who would at least adopt some of the subculture's 'trademarks', even if not long-term. But yet the 'tourist' is no more applicable to this categorisation. Path B entails a growing awareness to particular punk values and as the women I spoke with now demonstrate they adopted these, this suggests a growing adoption of punk values over their punk career. This is in conflict with the idea of neo-tribalism which the tourist stems from (Sweetman 2004) for reasons I detailed above. These weaknesses in Sweetman's (2004) conceptualisation of contemporary subculturalists result from his failure to consider post-youth subculturalists and the impact of ageing.

'Consistent Punks' and 'Toner Downs'

For those who took Path A, a fork appeared in the path which led to the emergence of two further pathways – this is where the 'consistent punks' and the 'toner downs' feature (Figure 1). The accounts offered by my research sample suggest this could result based on two factors. Firstly, toning down could result from structural constraints related to gendered ageing (see Chapter 8) and secondly, the fork could reflect a difference in the participants' subjective sense of age. This is an area that would benefit further exploration but some discussion is given below. For those on the consistent punk path there was a general continuity from Path A whereas the toner downs involved a toning down of dress over time. The 'toner downs' hold the most similarity with the experiences of the older punk men in Bennett's (2006) research sample in the way they maintained their punk identity through adulthood by engaging in accommodation of punk style and internalising 'punkness'. Yet my findings consider the wider context of societal expectations in relation to this. This is something Bennett (2006) failed to acknowledge due to his focus on fandom and style. The participants who offered a narrative of toning down could be said to have internalised gendered expectations concerning adulthood and ageing, therefore resulting in some accommodation in terms of dress choices. Seen, for example, in Chapter 8 when Naefun foresees how she could

not be an 80 year old woman with dreadlocks – the nature of this prospective view indicates an internalisation of societal expectations concerning how she is meant to look (or not look) as she grows older. Chapter 8 also highlighted the role employment (a marker of adulthood) might have in constraining dress choices, particularly around impression management of upholding a professional image. This might be reflective of these participants' work contexts having stricter expectations concerning what was work appropriate dress, or again might be indicative of greater internalisation of professional role expectations by the women I spoke with. By considering wider societal expectations, however, my findings contribute to a more nuanced understanding of how gendered ageing can contribute to the construction and maintenance of punk identities. I will return to this point again below in terms of the implications and impact of my research.

As implied in the discussion above, a key questions is how did it come to be that some of the women on Punk Path A were able to maintain a perceived relationship between their dress and 'punkness' whilst others offered narratives of 'toning down'. Amongst the consistent punks there was a clear sense of social ageing being resisted, largely on a perceptual level. Awareness of age appropriate norms and expectations was present, but the women on this pathway commonly conceptualised themselves as not typical adult in terms of their outlook, lifestyle and/or sense of self. Yet this was negotiated against their participation, still, in common markers of adulthood (Blatterer 2007). Morag, for example, who positioned herself within a discourse of having not 'grown up yet', still engaged in the common marker of adulthood, employment. Across the consistent punks, parenthood, another marker of adulthood (Blatterer 2007), was also common. Yet engagement in such common markers did not negate their feeling of being not-quite-adult. This could be one explanation, then, for the absence of 'toning down' and their ability to continue as consistent punks in terms of dress.

'Consistent Punks' was the only pathway of the three in which identification AS A punk occurred (e.g. as opposed to identification with). From the interviews I would argue this relates to issues concerning authenticity as well as the way consistent punks conceived a clear relationship between punk and the way that they dressed being maintained as they aged. When discussing what punk was my research participants emphasised how punk was a mindset, a way of thinking...yet 'looking punk' featured in discussions concerning authenticity alongside the idea of 'imposter syndrome' (all of which was unpacked in Chapter 4). Whilst all six of the consistent punks perceived a maintained

relationship between punk and their way of dressing, I noted in Chapter 5 how this dress did not necessarily involve which has been noted as typical stylistic markers of punk (Sklar and DeLong 2012, Sklar 2013). However, in the context of authenticity and imposter syndrome, it was not surprising then that the three consistent punks who happily declared 'I am a punk', Grace, Morag and Sam, were the three whose dress featured those punk stylistic markers. Based on this, it could be concluded that the way they did not hold back from asserting they were punks is linked to the reduced likelihood that their authenticity would be questioned out of a lack of punk dress.

'Never Massively Outrageous'

Whereas the two pathways discussed above emerged from Punk Path A, there was a third pathway which emerged from Punk Path B – the 'never massively outrageous' path (Figure 1). As detailed in Chapter 8, participants on this path expressed a feeling of their dress never being 'massively outrageous' or spectacular and due to this, participants' dress was not deemed something capable of being toned down over time. This was the key way the characteristics of this path differed from the toner downs.

As can be seen in Figure 1 and demonstrated in Chapter 4, there was a common set of punk values which were deemed important by the participants. As suggested in Chapter 8 which discussed ageing and adulthood, placing such importance on punk as a belief or value system was a way for participants to help punk 'fit' into their lives in the context of social and physical ageing and the 'obstacles' which these might present. For some participants (as detailed in Chapter 8) this could then allow an internalisation of punkness as they moved through the life-course but it could also allow participants to then enact those punk beliefs and values in ways that 'worked for them'. This latter idea is that of the malleability of punk beliefs/values which Chapter 8 discussed and was evidenced variously across the research sample.

Viewing punk through the concept of career allows for punk to be understood as processual, but my findings also highlight the way punk is relational. Punk is defined through an awareness of what it is not. This was demonstrated particularly in Chapter 4 (concerning definitions and authenticity) and in Chapter 8's discussion of societal expectations concerning age and gender. Whilst there has been some consideration elsewhere of punk as relational (Widdicombe and Woofitt 1995), these do not consider the interplay of this with age and gender, structural aspects my research provides because of its focus on older punk women.

Implications and Impact

In my opening chapters I identified a clear gap in academic literature with a complete absence of empirical work on solely older punk women. It is clear, then, that this thesis fills this gap in offering an in-depth consideration of older punk women's construction and maintenance of punk identification. Not only is this important in its contribution of a previously unconsidered sample to the academic body of work on subcultures/post-subcultures, but it is also important from a feminist standpoint in giving attention and power to voices which have been previously unheard and, arguably, marginalised. The findings discussed offers insight into the career concept, in terms of subcultural work which has considered punk careers (Andes 2002) and to sociological work more broadly that uses this concept. Unlike Andes' (2002) punk career model which assumed a sequential and singular 'route', I have argued that a punk career can be more varied by exploring the impact of ageing and gender. This has led to my development of a descriptive and explanatory model which demonstrates the different paths punk career took amongst my research sample. This model also offers some explanation for these different paths though, as I highlight later in this chapter, further research would need to be done to consider this more fully. In presenting punk careers plural rather than a punk career singular I am able to acknowledge the processes of social and physical ageing and how these impact on paths or the way pathway features are ways of responding to these processes. Whilst there has been consideration of this outside of punk studies, as I will note below, Bennett's (2006) work on older punk men failed in acknowledging the social expectations associated with (gendered) ageing and how these interplayed with 'being punk' as did Andes' (2002) work on 'growing up punk'. My research therefore contributes to the body of work which explores the different ways that post-youth subculturalists "negotiate and adapt their participation" (Hodkinson 2013b: 14) in the context of adulthood (e.g. Bennett 2006, Bennett 2013, Davis 2012, Hodkinson 2011, Hodkinson 2013a, Holland 2006). This has been demonstrated in my thesis through a consideration of my participants' relationship with (punk) dress, music and gigs (discussed chiefly in Chapter 8). As I discussed, some adapted their participation more so than others. Furthermore, by looking at ageing subculturalists through a gender lens, my research supports and extends existing research which suggests this negotiation/adaptation of participation is gendered (Gregory 2009, Holland 2006,

Holland 2012) by contributing new knowledge from a different context (older punk women).

As seen too in Bennett (2006) and Davis' (2006) studies of older punks, there was a sense that for some of my participants punk had become more personal and, as I termed it, malleable as they had aged. This was not consistent, however. Some of the women I spoke with had maintained the spectacular style of their youth and whilst my careers model begins to unpack why that might have been possible for some and not others, this would be a fruitful area for further research (as I suggest below). Hodkinson (2013a) notes that understanding of how ageing individuals integrate their subcultural participation with things such as work, family etc requires further exploration. Whilst my thesis contributes knowledge to this developing area in terms of how older punk women integrate being and doing punk with work, the area of family would be another area for further research.

This thesis also highlights the value in taking an approach to understanding ageing and subcultures which is informed by a life course approach. As suggested in Chapter 2 a life course approach might be valuable in moving away from conceptualising older fandom as merely an extension of participants' youth fandom. My thesis demonstrates that it would indeed be wrong to understand older punk identity as merely an extension of the punk identity held in one's youth. A life course approach has allowed for this recognition of the different ways older women construct and maintain punk identities and allowed the subjective experiences of the women to be revealed. This study therefore demonstrates a strength of utilising a life course approach in exploring post-youth subculturalists as it has allowed different perceptions of the women to emerge concerning how punk interplays with their experiences of ageing.

In Bennett's (2006) research on older punks he noted difficulty in locating older punk women to speak to, resulting in a sample which comprised of entirely older men. A methodological implication of my thesis then could be the particular sampling method used (detailed in Chapter 3) and its success in gathering older punk women who wanted to be involved in my research. I would not like here to assume that my gender contributed to women coming forward to participate, however, that could be something to explore further.

Limitations of this Research

Reflecting on the methods utilised in this thesis, there are limitations to the sole use of qualitative interviewing. My contention as argued in Chapter 3 was that the words of the women I spoke with would be taken as of value. I would not be questioning their validity as I was interested in the participants' meanings and understandings and this was in line with my epistemological position. It would have additionally been interesting to have pursued an ethnographic approach, particularly with regards to attending gigs to add an additional layer of analysis. This would have been in line with a grounded theory approach too as my ongoing analysis during data collection had suggested to do this. My failure to do so was, however, due to practical limitations with my position as a part-time researcher with additional commitments in terms of full-time employment and, at the time of data collection, childcare responsibilities. In Chapter 3, I discussed the limitations of the email interviewing which occurred and also I addressed the difficulties experienced with trying to utilise digital ethnography and participant-generated 'zine pages.

In terms of the analysis and subsequent conclusions drawn, there is a limitation with regards to the explanatory detail of the punk career model. The model is able to outline how participants started initially on punk pathways through the notion of 'difference' and the exposure to music. It also offers some explanation concerning why some of those on Punk Path A continued as consistent punks whilst others became toner downs (as discussed above) though it would benefit from further exploration. There is no explanation at all for why some participants took Punk Path A as opposed to Punk Path B, or vice versa.

Whilst I have noted the virtues of the sampling method utilised in my research above, a significant issue was that my sample comprised of predominantly white punk women. By amending my sampling strategy I could have increased the ethnic diversity of my research sample, rather than contributing to the continued marginalisation of black punk women (McGraw 2012).

Areas for Future Research

In addition to areas I have noted under 'Implications and Impact' above, two further potential areas for future research come from the discussion concerning limitations. Firstly, research which considers the punk career in more depth in terms of *why*

different paths emerge and secondly, further exploration of older punk women and subversion. In addition to these, despite my rationale for not including younger punk women in this research, I do believe a comparison of younger punk women and older punk women would be beneficial. This may indeed help further explore the point above concerning the *why* of different pathways.

For the last four decades, punk women have received a disproportionate amount of academic attention in comparison to punk men. Ageing punk women have been rendered even more so invisible. This alone means there is considerable scope for further research concerning older punk women. Older punk women have been overlooked in academic research for so long, yet my findings show the importance of raising their voices.

Appendix 1. Research Participant Information Sheet

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Title of Project: Just Typical Girls? An exploration of post-youth punk women.

Please read carefully through all the information before making a decision on your participation

My name is Laura Way and I am a postgraduate student at the University of Leicester. I am conducting a piece of research on post-youth punk women concentrating largely on the significance of punk to their lives and their 'punk biographies' so to speak.

If you agree to take part in this research, I will ask you to complete an interview with me. It should take approximately 45 minutes. In addition I will ask you to bring to the interview a selection of objects (these could be anything from material items to photographs) which you feel are significant to telling the story of punk in your life. After the interview you will be invited to create and submit a 'zine page if you wish on what being punk means to you.

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. If at any point you wish to no longer take part in the research you have the right to withdraw at anytime and there will be no pressure to stay.

All the information you give **will be anonymous** and only used for the purposes of this research. The discussions will be recorded using an audio device, and all recordings will be destroyed once they have been transcribed and anonymised. The recordings will be listened to by me. The chance to use your real name, however, is offered if you so wish. I will then keep any information that might lead to the identification of others without their consent confidential.

The data will be collected and stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and will be disposed of in a secure manner. The information will be used in a way that will not allow you to be identified individually.

You will have the opportunity to discuss your participation and be debriefed on the research once it has been conducted and analysed.

If you are not sure about anything mentioned above please do not hesitate to ask me.

If you agree to take part you will be asked to sign a consent form. The consent form will not be used to identify you. It will be filed separately from all other information.

Thank you very much for your time and help!

Appendix 2. Research Participant Consent Form

University of
Leicester

Research Project Consent form

I agree to take part in the **'Just Typical Girls? An exploration of post-youth punk women'** project which is research towards the submission of a PhD dissertation in Sociology at the Universityof Leicester.

I have had the project fully explained to me and I have read the information statement about the project which I may keep for my own personal records. I understand that my own contribution will be used for the purposes of PhD research only and that I can withdraw from the research at any time.

I also understand that this project will be carried out in accordance with the University of Leicester's Code of Research Ethics. Material gathered as part of this study will be treated as confidential and securely stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Name [PRINT] ………………………………………….

Signature ………………………………………….

Date ………………………………………….

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