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### Never mind the sex pistols, here's CBGB the role of locality and DIY media in forming the New York punk scene

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Vassar College

## Never Mind The Sex Pistols, Here's CBGB

The Role of Locality and DIY Media in Forming the New York Punk Scene

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the  
requirements for the degree Bachelor of Arts in Media Studies.

By

Ariana Bowe

Thesis Advisers:

Professor Justin Patch

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## Project Statement

In my project, I will explore the New York City venue CBGB as one of the catalysts behind the rise of punk subculture in the 1970s. In a broader sense, I argue that punk is defined by a specific local space that facilitated a network of people (the subculture's community), the concepts of DIY and bricolage, and zines. Within New York City, the locality of the punk subculture, ideas and materials were communicated via a DIY micro-medium called zines. When a local subculture is based upon concepts of DIY and bricolage, it is unrestricted by labels and stylistic homogeneity, a characteristic shared with fanzines. This is because DIY and bricolage emphasized individuality, self-sufficient production, and diversion from mass manufacturing. As a subculture grows and gains mass media attention, its "signature" aesthetics are defined by its representations in mass media — entering what is described by Guy Debord as the "spectacle" of media.<sup>1</sup> By circulating specific images, mass media outlets influence the vision of subculture and promote homogeneity to viewers; they advertise a specific visual uniform through images of subculture. Mass media representations provide a framework within which subcultures represent themselves, "shaping as well as limiting what they can say."<sup>2</sup> This is why "punk" has become synonymous with safety pins, mohawks, Doc Martens boots, and so on. The early punk subculture at CBGB did not receive much media coverage and its visual aesthetic was not advertised as a uniform, so it was able to remain visually heterogeneous. Rather, zines would become the visual representation of the CBGB scene, featuring a specific aesthetic that was both recognizable and customizable.

CBGB, the case study here, fostered an environment for artists to engage in what would become known as "punk" worldwide; it served as a space of intellectual and artistic exchange for artists who considered CBGB their common venue. In tracking the development of the CBGB subculture, it becomes clear it set the stage for the emergence of "punk," a global commodity based around a singular and highly-publicized aesthetic portrayal. By exploring the evolution of

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<sup>1</sup> Guy Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle* (New York: Zone Books, 1995), 13.

<sup>2</sup> David Muggleton, *Inside Subculture: The Postmodern Meaning of Style* (Oxford: Berg, 2000), 45.

the CBGB subcultural movement through the micro-media that defined its own aesthetic (zines), I hope to show how it is possible for a subculture to remain heterogeneous while still embodying a distinct stylistic approach.

Dick Hebdige and David Muggleton provide relevant literature on subcultural media theory. Hebdige locates the tension between the mainstream and subculture in the concept of bricolage and “styles made up of mundane objects which have a double meaning.”<sup>3</sup> Bricolage is the process of appropriating and recontextualizing media from past and present sources to create a new product. Objects are given new meaning when they are co-opted by subculture, signing a “Refusal”<sup>4</sup> of the dominant system of meaning and signification. This process may be best viewed through collage, a medium often used in constructing zines. Images and text from mass media publications are taken and given a new juxtaposition within the zine, generating a new meaning via old sources. In discussing the New York punk scene, Hebdige notes how its aesthetic is “pieced together” from various artistic sources — the literary avant-garde, underground cinema, and even poetry.<sup>5</sup> The main takeaway from Hebdige’s book is that bricolage is a key element in constructing postmodern subcultures, which borrow visual and stylistic elements from past cultural movements. This “collage aesthetic” of bricolage may be seen as “an assault on the syntax of everyday life which dictates the ways in which the most mundane objects are used.”<sup>6</sup> This is also reflected in punk’s focal concerns, which included obsessive individualism, the desire to strip things of their meaning to make them new, and a fragmented sense of self.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Dick Hebdige, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* (Methuen and Co. Ltd, 1979), 2.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, 3.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, 27.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 105.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 28.

Muggleton's book, *Inside Subculture: The Postmodern Meaning of Style*, examines the meanings, values, and motives of those involved in "style subcultures."<sup>8</sup> Through interviews with self-proclaimed punks, he explores the multiplicity of stylistic interpretations embodied by the subculture. Although subcultures often imply a homogeneous appearance and belief system, a central tenet of New York punk is individuality, and the idea that one does not have to look like a punk to be a part of the subculture. Muggleton also makes the significant point that the homogeneity so often associated with subculture comes from media representations and "incorporation" of the subculture into the mainstream marketplace as a commodity. "Media representations provide the ideological framework within which subcultures can represent themselves, shaping as well as limiting what they can say."<sup>9</sup> In a stylistic sense, media representations also provide the visual template within which a subculture is defined, creating a style that is synonymous with the subculture.

Jon Savage's study of the punk scene's development in both New York and London provides an in depth discussion of the subculture and its key players. He details the exchange of ideas between CBGB's performers and Malcolm McLaren, who effectively brought punk to London. Savage's account of the punk story explains why punk took off as a phenomenon so quickly in England, especially in relation to the United States, where the New York scene remained under the radar for years before being acknowledged on a mass scale. He attributes punk's success in England to the country's size, and the visual marketability of Malcolm McLaren's Sex Pistols. He also discusses the importance of the visual in punk culture, especially through zines like *Sniffin' Glue* and *Punk*.<sup>10</sup>

Rupert Till's discussion of local cults of popular music provides a strong basis for my study of CBGB as a site of subcultural development in New York City. Till argues that locality helps to identify a movement, lending it a sense of "rootedness, a perception of truth and

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<sup>8</sup> Muggleton, *Inside Subculture*, 2.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, 25.

<sup>10</sup> Jon Savage, *England's Dreaming: Anarchy, Sex Pistols, Punk Rock and Beyond* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), 402.

believability, of honesty and ‘keeping it real.’”<sup>11</sup> A group’s connection to their local culture allows it to represent a specific time and place, and to consist of multiple separate but coherent identities. Till credits the Sex Pistols’ success to their local English influences: performing in local accents; references to the Queen and the United Kingdom; and imagery including the Union Jack. However, as I will discuss later, the Sex Pistols were created to dominate the mainstream rather than construct a locally specific subculture. I argue that the artists who loyally performed at CBGBs were successful in starting an underground movement due to their local associations with one another and with the venue.

Another key source is Richard Hell’s memoir *I Dreamed I Was a Very Clean Tramp*. Hell reflects on his time in the bands Television and The Voidoids, both of which regularly performed at CBGB. He also provides insight into the network of interconnected artists who participated in the CBGB scene, as well as his personal take on the meanings behind CBGB subculture. This is particularly useful since Hell has first-person experience in not only participating in the scene, but also being one of the innovators of the subculture itself. While Hebdige, Muggleton, and other authors provide a theoretical basis for approaching subcultural studies, Hell provides personal anecdotes, insights, and reflections on the way this particular scene really was. Informal sources and personal accounts will be especially important to this project, since I plan to explore the CBGB scene through zines, which largely revolved around interviews and personal interpretations of events.

CBGB opened in 1973 on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. Hilly Kristal, the owner of the venue, originally envisioned it as a space for country, bluegrass, and blues, hence the abbreviated name “CBGB.” Located on the Bowery, CBGB became a hub for New York bands, performers, and young artistic crowds throughout the 1970s. Some bands even took residencies at CBGB, playing weekly shows exclusively at the venue. Bands like Television, The Ramones, The Voidoids, The Stilettos, Blondie, Patti Smith Group, The Dead Boys, and Talking Heads

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<sup>11</sup> Rupert Till, “In My Beautiful Neighborhood: Local Cults of Popular Music,” in *Pop Cult: Religion and Popular Music* (London: Continuum, 2010), 78.

were all regular headliners at CBGB, and the members of these groups often knew each other well.<sup>12</sup> As more bands began playing regularly at CBGB, the venue became a center for intellectual and stylistic exchange between the bands that shared the space, and this is what made CBGB the catalyst for developing a locally specific subcultural movement. The bands' loyalty to the venue allowed them to build a following that was specific to CBGB. From 1974 to 1977, when CBGB began to pick up regular headliners, its lack of national recognition led the venue and its bands to rely on local resources and zines to reach the New York audience. This sense of locality created a subculture specific to CBGB, and to New York City's Lower East Side as a whole.

While CBGB was the common thread between them, the bands who performed there constructed the space as their subcultural "home." Reflecting on the start of the CBGB scene, Richard Hell writes:

we had conjured into existence... this reality in which we were the representatives, the sound and appearance and behavior, of the environment we'd located at CBGB... we, with our rejected and extreme set of beliefs and values and intentions, had managed to materialize an environment in which we were not outside, but at home ourselves. Where we were the positive standards of being, rather than examples of failure, depravity, criminality, and ugliness....It brought real life, as opposed to the conventions of popular songs, back to rock and roll, but starting from the real life of a very specific time and place.<sup>13</sup>

Serving as the meeting point, CBGB provided the space for a subculture and facilitated its existence, but the artists themselves revolutionized CBGB to fit their needs. Although it served as the source of inspiration for the London punk movement that would emerge with the Sex Pistols in 1975, CBGB subculture was isolated, receiving "virtually no national publicity, and even in New York it was a 'downtown' phenomenon."<sup>14</sup> Few people outside of the musicians' circles knew what was happening at CBGB at the time. Those who actively participated in the

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<sup>12</sup> Richard Hell, *I Dreamed I Was a Very Clean Tramp* (New York: Harper Collins, 2013), 147-148.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, 150.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, 149.

CBGB scene were locals from New York, who knew about CBGB either due to proximity or the circulation of zines and DIY publications.

Many of the sources I've encountered treat Malcolm McLaren's project, the Sex Pistols, as the starting point for punk rock. Even more sources ignore the full circuit of punk and CBGB bands in favor of the Sex Pistols because of their recognizable image and controversial presence in England. The way that "punk" has previously been examined, with a focus on the Sex Pistols and London, "is problematic because it leaves a part of punk's history out of the picture."<sup>15</sup> This missing piece is CBGB. I argue that the Sex Pistols exist because of Malcolm McLaren's co-option of the CBGB scene, despite their existence in different localities. McLaren, the mastermind behind the Sex Pistols, frequented New York City while managing the New York Dolls; there he met Richard Hell, the stylistic power behind the band Television and the person who established choppy haircuts and torn, ill fitting clothing as traits of punk subculture. After Television's debut to small audiences in 1974, McLaren translated what he saw in Richard Hell to his own project in London, ultimately constructing a punk band on a major world stage. News of McLaren's contrived punk project eventually made its way back to New York through music magazines, and punk as we know it was born. The Sex Pistols' mass media presence facilitated a homogeneous movement, unlike the organic and varied local scene at CBGB. The homogeneity of London's punk scene lent itself well to being incorporated into the marketplace, where followers could easily buy into the punk look. Where the Sex Pistols were made to be commodified and dominate the music world, CBGB's scene was made by and for people seeking creative freedom and personal fulfillment.

As I have just shown above, CBGB subculture can essentially be considered "punk before punk was punk." The scene valued personal expression over world domination and fame,<sup>16</sup> and was created as a space for performers to attempt new projects and styles. Connection between

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<sup>15</sup> Michelle Liptrot, "'Punk belongs to the punx, not business men!': British DIY punk as a form of cultural resistance," in *Fight Back: Punk, Politics and Resistance*, ed. The Subcultures Network (Manchester University Press, 2014), 232-233.

<sup>16</sup> Muggleton, *Inside Subculture*, 59.



bands and audiences was often inevitable due to the local nature of the small venue, but it was also an encouraged aspect of the participatory scene. Using the term “fan” was even discouraged because it implied “bands being separate or better than fans.”<sup>17</sup> Participation in the punk scene often occurred through the production of fan-made zines, which were used to disseminate information to local readers with common interests. Stylistically, CBGB and its bands did not start with a set aesthetic, but rather several iterations of style and music. Again, the connective thread between the members of the CBGB movement was the venue itself, the adhesion to DIY and processes of bricolage, and zine culture. CBGB’s lack of mass media coverage actually preserved its subcultural credibility, allowing it to remain separate from the mainstream spectacle.

This concept of the spectacle raises another important point, drawn from Guy Debord’s *The Society of the Spectacle*. The media spectacle is what created the homogenized image of punk subculture. Once a subculture is encompassed in an image (a visually mediated representation — for example, pictures of the Sex Pistols), it becomes spectacle. The spectacle alienates its viewers, and fragments the world in which its subjects exist. Through the spectacle, the world becomes a series of representations and images, a reality that exists in multiple separate representations. The media spectacle constructs an idealized and homogenized version of the world, or the subculture, against which its inhabitants or members must compare themselves. This recalls Muggleton’s point, that mass media representations limit the creative freedom of subcultures. Meanwhile, CBGB’s subculture remained beneath the scope of the mass media due to its isolation in local micro-media, and was never homogenized.

I have mentioned the word “micro-media” to describe the DIY publications that circulated through CBGB’s subculture. The specific form of micro-media that I explore in relation to CBGB is the zine. In the context of CBGB in the 1970s, zines were not just used to spread information. Zines also helped to create a recognizable visual identity that represented

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<sup>17</sup> Liptrot, “Punk belongs to the punx, not business men!” 245.

the CBGB scene and its participants.<sup>18</sup> In the most basic sense, a zine is a handmade “fanzine”<sup>19</sup> made without concern for design rules and censorship common in mass media publications. Fanzines have been “integral to the creation of a thriving communication network of underground culture, disseminating information and personal views to like-minded individuals.”<sup>20</sup> In the era of CBGB, zines often contained gig schedules, interviews with bands, and reviews of new albums, along with features of current events, politics, and personal rants.<sup>21</sup> Zines allowed for producers to circulate information about subculture for a low cost, and were equally accessible for readers. The DIY process of zines during the CBGB era functioned as a critique of mass production, but also engaged in bricolage, a key element of subculture. Bricolage occurred through the “appropriating the images and words of mainstream media and popular culture,”<sup>22</sup> and was present in both zine-making and underground music production. As a whole, the DIY ethos reflected the culture of CBGB, which encouraged its participants to “make your own culture and stop consuming that which is made for you.”<sup>23</sup> Although the participants in CBGB subculture did not share a common style, zines provided a recognizable visual aesthetic that came to represent the scene.

The style of CBGB-era zines is distinct. Zines attempted to recreate the same “buzz” of CBGB’s live performances through specific visual styles.<sup>24</sup> Some notable zines include Mark P.’s *Sniffin’ Glue, Ripped and Torn*, and Charlie Chainsaw’s *Chainsaw*, which all displayed recognizable stylistic traits. Ransom note lettering, using letters cut from various sources to form new words, was a popular style, along with collage in general. By creating new meaning out

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<sup>18</sup> Teal Triggs, “Scissors and Glue: Punk Fanzines and the Creation of a DIY Aesthetic,” *Journal of Design History* 19, no. 1 (2006): 70.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, 69.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, 70.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid, 69.

<sup>23</sup> Stephen Duncombe, *Notes from the Underground: Zines and the Politics of Alternative Culture* (Verso, 1997), 1-2.

<sup>24</sup> Triggs, “Scissors and Glue,” 69.

of pieced-together bits of other publications, zines engaged with bricolage, further embodying the DIY ethos and the concept of postmodernity. Typewritten and handwritten text were also popular stylistic choices. Handwriting conveyed individuality and connection to the producer, and the inclusion of typos, strikeouts, and grammatical mistakes stressed the immediacy of the zine's production, as well as the transparency of the journalistic and design processes.<sup>25</sup> The written content of zines adopted an informal tone, sometimes speaking directly to the reader, and often consisted of open letters, rants, how-to columns, and opinion pieces. Other content included images, cartoons, comics, and announcements relating to local venues, gigs, and bands. Perhaps the most important stylistic element of zines was that they were produced using photocopiers. This often degraded the original imagery, giving it a raw and grainy quality. Photocopiers were used both out of financial necessity, and because it eliminated the need to go through publishing companies, which meant that zines were unrestricted by design standards and literary censorship. Ultimately this method of zine production provided producers with total agency in their creative processes, and reflected the DIY ethos of the CBGB scene.

Essays by Teal Triggs and Michelle Liptrot provide plenty of insight into the importance of zines in subculture. Zines avoided the mainstream media spectacle and circulated information among local audiences on a micro level, meaning that the subculture could remain free of the homogenization and labeling associated with the mainstream. As I mentioned in the previous paragraph, zines were unrestricted by design standards, similar to the way in which CBGB's performers were able to experiment in their musical styles. Zines allowed for total creative freedom and personal agency on the part of their producers, while readers were privileged with a means of unfiltered (uncensored) communication with like-minded individuals. Zines essentially created and circulated the DIY aesthetic that served as a common thread within the CBGB subculture. Punk zines were eventually co-opted by similar movements

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<sup>25</sup> Triggs, "Scissors and Glue," 72.

in the 1990s, like Riot Grrrl, and were used as a tool of personal expression and cultural resistance, this time against the 'boys club' of punk rock.<sup>26</sup>

I have chosen to focus on the CBGB subculture because most sources, including Greil Marcus's comprehensive and informative *Lipstick Traces*, choose to focus on the Sex Pistols and the punk scene in London.<sup>27</sup> The New York City CBGB scene is important because it served as a precursor to punk, yet it is often overlooked in scholarly studies. As perhaps the first postmodern subcultural movement, punk borrowed from previous decades of style and aesthetic in order to create something new, which is what conveys the concept of bricolage as described by Hebdige. The New York punk scene was based around a locality, a venue, which consisted of several different artists, each with their own style. This project will focus on the following artists in exploring the subculture at CBGB: Television, Richard Hell and The Voidoids, Patti Smith Group, the Dead Boys, the Ramones, and Blondie.

The medium of this project will take the form of zines. Specifically, I will create a series of zines detailing the origins and development of the New York punk scene in relation to CBGB. The zines will track specific New York artists and how they formed the scene through interactions with each other and personal innovations within the venue. The evolution of CBGB subculture will be told throughout each issue by exploring DIY, bricolage, zines and key performers. I will also explain how the New York punk scene served as a basis for the worldwide punk phenomenon that emerged with the Sex Pistols. Each issue will focus on a particular artist from CBGB, and will include an artist profile. The artists and their visual style will be reflected in the imagery, content, and styles I choose to employ in each zine. I will utilize the broad design aesthetic of collage and mixed media by appropriating images from popular magazines, newspapers, comic books, and other physical materials. However, I will adapt the style of each

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<sup>26</sup> Lisa Darms, *The Riot Grrrl Collection* (New York: Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 2013).

<sup>27</sup> Marcus, Greil. *Lipstick Traces: A Secret History of the Twentieth Century*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990.

zine to reflect the aesthetic of the particular artist at hand. Each zine will tell the sometimes-overlooked story of CBGB's punk scene, detail artists and their existence within the CBGB space and culture, and function as an act of DIY bricolage.

While the physical zines will be made by hand, I will be sharing them digitally via a Flipsnack, an online media publishing platform. By presenting the zines through this platform I will be able to insert audio and video, media that are excluded from physical zines. Digitizing the zines will allow me to overcome the limitations of the physical zine, and further show how zines embody every aspect of punk subculture. I will also be able to share my zines adequately during the coronavirus pandemic, which has barred students from returning to Vassar campus due to social distancing. While the digital zines will gain the media of audio and video, they will inevitably lose their tactile qualities. I am aware of this compromise, but I believe that this mode of presentation will effectively capture the zines' full range of artistic qualities.

I have chosen to title this zine series *Quaranzine*, to reflect the time in which the zines are being made. This, along with my aesthetic choices in the zines themselves, will hopefully convey the fact that these zines are being made in today's day and age. Inevitably, I will be utilizing different and more varied technologies than what was typical for zine production in the 1970s. I am creating a modern take on zines, and this will be very clear in my use of digitization. The following is an outline for my project's zine series:

*Quaranzine #1* will focus on the band Television and the start of CBGB subculture. This issue will include an artist profile of Television: the story of their formation, artistic intentions (how they desired to bring "life" back to rock and roll), musical style, visual aesthetic, and Richard Hell's account of Television's first show at CBGB. I will also include information on CBGB's establishment by Hilly Kristal in 1973 and Television's "residency" there from 1974 to 1975. Relevant audio and video will include early Television songs, and selections from their album *Marquee Moon*.

*Quaranzine #2* will discuss Richard Hell, his band The Voidoids, and how the London punk scene built upon CBGB's subculture. This issue will include a discussion of how Malcolm McLaren and the Sex Pistols crafted their visual aesthetic based on Richard Hell, as well as Richard Hell's departure from Television to front his own band, The Voidoids. In the artist profile, I will explore Richard Hell's early career as a writer and poet, as well as what The Voidoids set out to do differently from Television. I will also discuss The Voidoids' song "Blank Generation" along with its meanings and misconceptions. Richard Hell's autobiography will be an importance source here, since he details his bands' connections with other CBGB artists like Chris Stein of Blondie, Patti Smith, Dee Dee Ramone, and members of the Dead Boys. These connections will show how CBGB facilitated a network of local musicians in New York City, specifically on the Lower East Side. In exploring the motivating factors behind punk subculture, I will also discuss the scene's sexual politics.

*Quaranzine #3* will focus on Patti Smith Group and CBGB as a space for subcultural experimentation. Patti Smith's artist profile will discuss her experimentation with "rock poetry," and the influence of William Burroughs and Arthur Rimbaud on her creative process. I will also discuss zines, which were a key element in creating a cohesive yet unrestricted subculture. In continuing my discussion of sexual politics from *Quaranzine #2*, this issue will delve into the intersections between queer and punk in the 1970s, using Tavia Nyong'o's interpretation of reproductive futurity and death drive.

*Quaranzine #4* centers on the Dead Boys and the Sex Pistols' influence on the band. This issue will explain how London punk was relayed to New York through mass media and style. The Dead Boys adopted a similar style and sound to the Sex Pistols, and considering their later arrival at the venue, it is reasonable to say that they were influenced by the London punk scene. I will also discuss the Dead Boys' musical style, onstage antics, and aesthetic in their artist profile. This issue will also include an analysis of their song "All This and More" to show how the band engaged with bricolage in re-conceptualizing the teenage love song.

*Quaranzine* #5 will focus on the Ramones and the importance of personal style in CBGB's punk scene. The Ramones are notable for their catchy and pop-influenced songs as well as their recognizable style. Each member wore jeans, tee shirts, black leather jackets, and long hair, differentiating themselves from bands like Television who had no dress code except for choppily cut short hair. I will use this issue to explore the wide range of varied styles — musical and aesthetic — among CBGB's performers. This seeming lack of cohesion among the artists conveys the key points behind the scene: personal fulfillment and expression, creative freedom, and a rejection of labels. Interestingly enough, the Ramones are a peculiar case in that they very much adhered to a cohesive group "look," even going as far as adopting stage names all with the last name Ramone. In discussing the Ramones, I will emphasize their use of bricolage in drawing from early 60s girl- and boybands, comic books, cartoons, and even sex workers in creating their overall aesthetic.

The sixth and final issue of *Quaranzine* will discuss Blondie and the participation of women in CBGB subculture, with a feature on the 1990s Riot Grrrl movement. In the artist profile, I will explain how Blondie was often not taken seriously in the CBGB scene because of their musical style, which was more pop-influenced and sometimes seen as less "punk" than that of other male-fronted bands. Blondie's frontwoman, Debbie Harry, also brought her own signature style of thrifted clothing to CBGB, and at the time was known on the scene for her remarkably feminine appearance. I plan on discussing the role of women in the punk subculture's development, from performers like Patti Smith and Debbie Harry to other prominent members of the scene like Anya Phillips and Sable Starr. This issue will also feature a look into the Riot Grrrl movement of the 1990s, spearheaded by Bikini Kill frontwoman Kathleen Hanna. Riot Grrrl pushed back against the "boys club" of underground music scenes, and zines played an enormous role in disseminating information to women interested in the movement. Riot Grrrl zines also provided a platform for taboo topics (such as menstruation, masturbation, sexual abuse, domestic violence, and radical feminism) that were typically

omitted from mass media publications. Lisa Darms' compilation of Riot Grrrl zines provides images that present the style and content of zines from this movement.

The materials and media used in this project include newspapers, magazines, catalogs, flyers, book jackets, photos, printed images, tape, impact labels, glue, paint, and writing utensils. Each zine will consist of standard printer paper that has been folded and sewn into a pamphlet. Each page of the each zine will feature a collage that visually relates to, or makes reference of the written content placed over that page. In addition to physical materials, the zines will be scanned and uploaded to Pages documents, which will allow me to lay out the zines' the digital appearance before posting them on Flipsnack. Once uploaded to Flipsnack, interactive audio and video elements will be embedded in the zine.

The digital zines are best viewed on a laptop, tablet, or computer (audio and video elements do not function in smart phone viewing). To enter full screen, the following clickable icon will appear on screen over the zine:



In viewing the zines, please look out for audio icons. When clicked, music will begin playing. To stop the music, simply click the icon again, or flip to the next page of the zine. The following image shows what the interactive audio icons look like (they will appear in several different colors throughout the zine, so I recommend taking the time to look for audio icons on each page of imagery):



Videos are embedded from YouTube throughout the zines as well. Simply click the play button and the video will start automatically.



## ***Quaranzine***

To view my project, please open the following links on a desktop computer, laptop, or tablet.

Each link contains one zine. For the best viewing experience, view the zines in full screen. These zines feature interactive audio icons and embedded videos. Please look for these icons throughout each zine, and simply click the icons to start the audio or video.

*Quaranzine #1: Television and the Start of CBGB*

<https://www.flipsnack.com/aribowe/quaranzine-1-television.html>

*Quaranzine #2: Richard Hell and The Voidoids*

<https://www.flipsnack.com/aribowe/quaranzine-2.html>

*Quaranzine #3: Patti Smith and CBGB as an Experimental Space*

<https://www.flipsnack.com/aribowe/quaranzine-3.html>

*Quaranzine #4: The Dead Boys and Mass Media*

<https://www.flipsnack.com/aribowe/quaranzine-4.html>

*Quaranzine #5: The Ramones and Personal Style at CBGB*

<https://www.flipsnack.com/aribowe/quaranzine-5.html>

*Quaranzine #6: Blondie and the Girls of the Underworld*

<https://www.flipsnack.com/aribowe/quaranzine-6.html>

Interactive audio will appear with the following icon:



## Reflection

This project focuses on how the punk subculture originating at CBGB was not characterized by a singular musical or visual style. This absence of uniformity is an unusual trait in youth subcultures, which typically display a level of stylistic homogeneity.<sup>28</sup> However, there are three factors that serve to tie punk's otherwise heterogeneous elements together. Firstly, do-it-yourself (DIY) and bricolage played off one another in fueling the subculture's spirit of individualism. The DIY ethos encouraged creative agency and personal expression, and the process of bricolage allowed for artists to draw inspiration and appropriate from various sources.<sup>29</sup> DIY also granted artists the ability to create without being subjected to rules of censorship or copyright, and this further allowed for engagement with bricolage.<sup>30</sup> Secondly, the punk subculture was based around a physical venue, rather than an ideology or singular music genre. CBGB served as a shared subcultural space and a site for artistic exchange among its performers and audience members.<sup>31</sup> The venue is a common locality shared by the subset of punk artists I discuss in my project, and it facilitated a network of musicians, artists, and fans in lower Manhattan. The third element that runs throughout punk subculture is the medium of zines. In particular, the 1970s punk scene and the 1990s Riot Grrrl scene utilized zines as a method of communication and creative expression. As a medium, zines (as opposed to magazines) imply a DIY process of production; they are fanzines, created by and for people with common interests that typically divert from the mainstream. Most importantly, zines provided a visual representation of punk subculture through a recognizable design aesthetic, which was especially important in the absence of stylistic uniformity at CBGB.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Muggleton, *Inside Subculture*, 45-59.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid*, 13, 45.

<sup>30</sup> Michelle Liptrot, "Punk belongs to the punx, not business men!," 245-246.

<sup>31</sup> Savage, *England's Dreaming*, 88.

<sup>32</sup> Triggs, "Scissors and Glue," 69-70.

Not only did zines represent punk visually, but they also tied together nearly every cultural topic within the community. Zines combined community with discussions and representations of music, visual art, fashion, film, gender, sex, politics, feminism, and literature. Zines had the potential to include almost every art form aside from sound and video. Such zines were also executed through the lenses of bricolage and DIY, using techniques of collage, juxtaposition, and low-cost production.<sup>33</sup> The process of zine-making and the nature of zines themselves result in a medium that embodies the CBGB punk subculture.<sup>34</sup>

Zine culture is still alive and well today, although it seems they are based more upon self-expression and less upon community-building. I attribute this change to social media and technology, and that communities once considered “underground” can now meet online in forums, interest groups, and community websites. Zines have also become somewhat of a specialty item, as they can be hard to find. While some bookstores like Powell’s in Portland, Oregon and Bluestockings in New York City still have zine sections, they are typically small but varied. Artists are still making zines, but it is hard to know whether they are being read. The fact that zines are stocked in bookstores also speaks to the changing landscape of DIY; the medium of the zine still conveys a DIY effort, but for profit.

For my project, I chose the zine as the medium because it instantly conveys a sense of DIY. At its core, this medium was conceived without design rules, without censorship, and with the intention of self-dependent publication and circulation.<sup>35</sup> Especially in approaching an artistically-driven project, zines would allow me to create a project with little creative restriction, and with fewer formal guidelines than a traditional paper or magazine. Along with the practical and creative pros of the medium, zines and DIY also directly intersect with the content of my thesis topic.

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<sup>33</sup> Liptrot, “Punk belongs to the punx, not business men!,” 244.

<sup>34</sup> Triggs, “Scissors and Glue,” 70.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, 69-70.

I will now briefly reflect on the ways in which zines embody nearly every aspect of subculture aside from sound and video. These elements include visual art, drawing, and collage; discussions of music and the live music scene; community, correspondence, and communication; fashion and aesthetic; discussions of film and television; feminism, gender, sex, and sexuality; politics; and literature of various forms.

#### ART

Zines not only feature discussions and images of art, but can be considered works of art themselves. Often times, art is created purely for the zine-making process, as a focal point or a decoration. Many zines of the CBGB era feature original comics, hand-drawn cartoons, and other illustrations used to support specific subject matter.<sup>36</sup> The process of zine-making itself is an artistic one; whether it is creating collages, laying out text and images, or drawing by hand, the elements of zine-making are inherently artistic in their creative nature. Especially with the processes of DIY and bricolage in mind, juxtaposing new and old materials to create an original product takes time and some level of creative thought.<sup>37</sup>

#### MUSIC

As is the case with the ones from the 1970s CBGB era, zines that revolve around specific subcultures will typically discuss music in some way. Since the punk subculture in New York City was closely tied to a specific venue, zines often discussed the bands that played there. Zines might also include performance schedules for a specific band or venue, announcements about new music, rankings of albums or bands within a certain genre, or personal opinions about what music to listen to.<sup>38</sup> According to Teal Triggs, zines were essential in representing punk music: “Punk Rock is a live experience; it has to be seen and heard live. Playing a record at home just doesn’t communicate the sheer energy, excitement and enthusiasm which are the hallmarks of

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<sup>36</sup> Triggs, “Scissors and Glue,” 74.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid, 76.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid, 70, 80.

the music. Punk fanzines attempted to recreate the same buzz visually.”<sup>39</sup> Punk fanzines not only visually represented subcultural scenes, but also the music of subculture. In physical zines, the only thing missing in discussions of music is the music itself. However, in the digitized versions of my zines, I was able to include audio of songs by each artist I profiled. In my opinion, the addition of audible music enhances the viewer’s experience of the zines by creating a fuller sensory product.

### COMMUNITY

In the case of the CBGB scene, zines provided a visual representation of punk’s subcultural community. But in other ways, zines are a communal medium. Zines’ content can be collectively generated, with multiple contributors. Some zines, like the ones from the 1990s Riot Grrrl movement, often featured content sent in by readers — open letters, rants, local announcements, etc. Zines overall were an indispensable medium for subcultural communities. Since they were so financially accessible (due to their DIY production)<sup>40</sup> and typically produced by and for people with common interests, zines were an excellent medium for disseminating information among subcultural communities.

### STYLE

Zines from particular subcultures often utilized specific elements of design, resulting in recognizable styles. Punk zines, for example, featured stylistic techniques such as ransom note lettering, typewritten text, collage, cartoons and comics, and bricolage (in which images and or text were appropriated from other media, and repurposed in the zine’s new context).<sup>41</sup> In written content, typos, strikeouts, and grammatical errors were left untouched to communicate the immediacy of the zines’ production and the transparency of the design process.<sup>42</sup> Xeroxing or

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<sup>39</sup> Triggs, “Scissors and Glue,” 70.

<sup>40</sup> Paul Atkinson, “Introduction: Do It Yourself: Democracy and Design,” *Journal of Design History* 19, no. 1 (2006): 2.

<sup>41</sup> Triggs, “Scissors and Glue,” 76.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid*, 72.

photocopying was another technique used in both crafting zines and publishing them.<sup>43</sup> The use of such design elements resulted in products that were visually recognizable as representing the punk subculture. Another example is Riot Grrrl era zines, which often featured xeroxed photographs, typewritten text, repeated stylized headings, drawings and cartoons of women, collage, and bricolage.<sup>44</sup>

#### FILM

As we will see in *Quarantine #4*, film is another topic that can be covered by zines, especially cult films and films relating directly to the subculture at hand. In my zine about the Dead Boys, I explore the significance of George Romero's *Night of the Living Dead* in relation to the band. Especially if musicians and other subcultural figures made explicit reference to certain movies, film was a relevant topic (really any topic could be fair game when creating a zine).

#### FEMINISM

Riot Grrrl zines paved the way for the discussion of feminism and womanhood in subculture. Their zines often covered feminist topics that were taboo in mainstream media, like the female orgasm, masturbation, menstruation, domestic violence, and sexual abuse. But more than anything, Riot Grrrl zines were a tool in spreading a movement that aimed to push back against the "boys club" of underground communities, like punk rock. Riot Grrrl zines served as an outlet for female expression and empowerment, and in spreading feminist sentiment to underground communities, the zines fueled the movement's political goals.

#### GENDER, SEX, AND SEXUALITY

Zines provided a platform for taboo topics, especially in discussing sex, gender, and sexuality. As I mentioned previously, Riot Grrrl zines allowed women to read and write about experiences that wouldn't normally be featured in mass media publications. As we will see in a few of my zines, I discuss the sexual politics of the punk scene, and how sexuality and sex work intersect with the subculture.

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<sup>43</sup> Savage, *England's Dreaming*, 402.

<sup>44</sup> Darms, *The Riot Grrrl Collection*.

## POLITICS

In their connection to underground subcultures, zines usually embodied some kind of political message, whether directly or indirectly. Riot Grrrl zines promoted feminism and denounced patriarchal society; and punk zines expressed the subcultural community's dissatisfaction with American life in general. Punk surfaced during the Vietnam War,<sup>45</sup> when much of the youth was becoming disillusioned with the 1960s ethos of peace and free love.<sup>46</sup> Locally, New York City was entering a decline in quality of life,<sup>47</sup> which only added to punks' political outspokenness. People were growing tired of many of the dominant systems in the United States, including the music industry; one of the goals of punk subculture was to dismantle the existing cycle of fame and rock stardom, and replace it with a movement that would better represent the disillusionment of American youth.<sup>48</sup>

## LITERATURE

This may go without saying, but zines were literary publications at heart. Since zines were intended to disseminate information to underground communities, it is only natural that the media would spread their message through writing. Zines featured a multitude of writing formats, including (but not limited to) traditional prose, informal essays, open letters, journal entries, poems, song lyrics, stream of consciousness, reviews, rankings, announcements, and more. Whether it was handwritten, typed, or cut and pasted, writing was often presented in various ways, sometimes within the same zine.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Peter Robert Brown, "Strange Notes from the LA Punk Underground: The Durability of Darby Crash and the Germs," *Canadian Review of American Studies* 41, no. 2 (2011): 212.

<sup>46</sup> Hell, *I Dreamed I Was a Very Clean Tramp*, 222.

<sup>47</sup> Kim Phillips-Fein. "Lessons From the Great Default Crisis of 1975," *The Nation*, October 16, 2013, <https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/lessons-great-default-crisis-1975/>

<sup>48</sup> Savage, *England's Dreaming*, 88.

<sup>49</sup> Triggs, "Scissors and Glue," 70.

In choosing to create physical zines, I considered the importance of the physical object. For one, I enjoy working with my hands, and manipulating physical materials heightens the tactile process. As I have explored in my thesis, collaging and physically creating were also deeply embedded in the visual culture of punk. Although I drafted much of the written content digitally, I felt it would've been inadequate to create a zine solely by entering pictures and text into a digital document. A similar discussion can be found in the preference for vinyl records as opposed to digitally-streamed albums. The act of viewing a physical object is different than viewing a digital one; it is tactile, and the process of creation can be seen more clearly in the physical object. That aside, the physicality of a handmade zine gives it more impact in presenting a subculture's varied visual representation. As a physical zine, its DIY qualities are clearly displayed not only visually, but tangibly. The different textures of paper, tape, dried paint, and other materials are better seen and felt in a physical zine, allowing for the creative handiwork to be present in the final product.

When it was made clear that students would not be returning to Vassar due to the coronavirus pandemic, I realized that my senior project would not be presented in person. All of my zines' written content was completed and I hadn't started making the physical components yet, but I knew I would have to share my project digitally. Still, I decided to continue with my original concept and make my zine series by hand.

For almost an entire month of quarantine, I created six zines out of paper, each one profiling a different performer of CBGB. In gathering materials, I cut through stacks of magazines, catalogs, newspapers, and miscellaneous paper materials before sorting them into subject-based piles. Publications used include *Rolling Stone*, *MOJO*, *Kerrang*, *Rock Sound*, *Alternative Press*, *The New York Times*, *The Daily News*, *The Economist*, *The New Yorker*, *New York Magazine*, *Bon Appetit*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Vogue*, *PAPER*, *Basic*, *Bust*, *Wired*, *Rotunda*, *Columbia Magazine*, *Barnard Magazine*, *Vassar Quarterly*, *Marvel Comics*, *Upshot Comics*, and others. Other physical materials were gathered from posters and flyers taken from Vassar



College, and miscellaneous book jackets discarded by Vassar's library. Before starting each zine, I organized its written content into the order in which it would appear on each page; I planned for each page of written content to correspond to an artistic page in the zine. Each page of written content served as inspiration for the collage with which it would appear, and I integrated certain short fragments of text into the collages themselves. I intended for each zine to display a different visual aesthetic, whether it was color scheme, style, or the types of images and layouts used. Before I detail the creative process behind each individual zine, some of the techniques I used include: paper that was torn rather than cut; intricately cut windows and layering of materials; pop-up, fold-out or movable hinged elements; drawings and paint; ransom note lettering; xeroxed images; and mixing images and text from various magazines, newspapers, postcards, and paper of different quality and texture.

In the week before turning in my final project, I began to figure out a way to present the physical zines digitally. I also had to determine how to integrate the written content into the artistic component. I started by scanning each zine page before entering the scanned images into layout documents, each document consisting of one zine. Each pair of adjacent images appears twice consecutively: the first pair features a colored text overlay on top of the collaged images, followed by the second, which features solely the collages. Once I had each zine's appearance laid out, I converted them to PDF files and uploaded them to the online application Flipsnack. There, I was able to add interactive audio and video features to enhance the overall viewing experience, and add yet another media element to the zines. In converting the physical to the digital, I effectively overcame the limitations on sound and video that accompany a traditional physical zine.

I chose the name "Quaranzine" as the title of my zine series. I wanted the title to reflect the time of the zines' production, which was very much affected by quarantine under the coronavirus pandemic. By referring to today's circumstances and converting the zines to a digital form, I wanted it to be clear that my series is a modern take on zines. They are not meant to be identical to zines made in the 1970s, but rather incorporate elements from CBGB era zines

in creating a modern final product. I also intended for the play on words (“Quaranzine” rather than quarantine) to be somewhat self-referential; including “zine” in the title makes the medium abundantly clear.

### **Project Notes**

#### **QUARANZINE #1: TELEVISION AND THE START OF CBGB**

Throughout this zine, I discuss CBGB, the New York music scene, the band Television, and the processes of bricolage and DIY. In an attempt to convey bricolage visually, the collages vary but still appear cohesive, and reflect my use of various mismatched sources. The cover features a television set in direct reference to the band’s name, ransom note lettering, and the newspaper headline “They Came To Create A Ruckus.” By placing these elements on an image of a tree struck by lightning, I intended to convey a sense of chaos similar to the CBGB environment that I would be discussing.

The first two pages of writing discuss the establishment of CBGB as a venue and Television’s background. In referring to the text here, the collages include a torn, printed-out image of CBGB’s storefront and an excerpt from a *Rolling Stone* article discussing Television’s place in the developing CBGB scene. The audio for these pages are the Neon Boys’ “Love Comes In Spurts”<sup>50</sup> and Television’s song “Torn Curtain.”<sup>51</sup> The former is a direct reference to a line in the text discussing the song; and I chose the latter because it opens with a drumroll, which I felt was appropriate for the zine’s opening pages.

In pages three and four, I discuss Television’s intention to supersede glam rock, and the stylistic differences between punk and glam. To represent glam rock, I use an image of a platform boot and glittery black duct tape, and I included audio of The New York Dolls’ “Stranded in the Jungle.”<sup>52</sup> I chose this song because The New York Dolls were the biggest glam

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<sup>50</sup> Neon Boys, “Love Comes in Spurt,” track 1 on *Spurts: The Richard Hell Story*, 2005.

<sup>51</sup> Television, “Torn Curtain,” track 8 on *Marquee Moon*, Elektra/Asylum Records, 1977.

<sup>52</sup> New York Dolls, “Stranded in the Jungle,” track 2 on *In Too Much Too Soon*, The Island Def Jam Music Group, 1974.

band in New York at the time, and the song's title relates to an image in the collage that bears the words, "Welcome to the jungle." I also included the Television's song "Friction"<sup>53</sup> to provide a punk counterpart to The New York Dolls' glam song. While the Dolls' song features theatrical vocals, piano, sound effects, and scatting backup vocals; "Friction" is far more stripped down, centering more on the guitar and semi-melodic vocals. I also included imagery referring to New York, an overarching motif in the zine: the image behind the platform boot is of New York City, and the yellow frame containing an image of CBGB's storefront is an old-fashioned pedestrian light from a *New Yorker* cartoon.

Pages five and six discuss DIY and Television's style. The collage features more NYC-related imagery — a city skyline and squares cut from an image of Manhattan. It also features a picture of Television's band members, with Richard Hell and Tom Verlaine holding a small television set, to show the band's physical appearance. The photo of the band is placed on top of a shattered CD, to represent the breaking of musical conventions. Additionally, two Hellenistic busts appear on the left page. In reference to this image, I use the audio for Television's "Venus"<sup>54</sup> here, a song that references the ancient greek statue Venus de Milo.

The seventh and eighth pages discuss the visual culture of CBGB and zines, and Television's status at CBGB as a local phenomenon. The collages here reference Television's album *Marquee Moon*. The page on the right features a large image of planet Venus that I folded to fit on the page; but when unfolded, the interior of the planet features the lyrics to Television's song "Marquee Moon"<sup>55</sup> (and naturally, I chose to pair this song's audio with these collages). The page on the left provides an example of layering and combining images both seamlessly and conspicuously. The cut-out hand appears to be holding the black and white image of Television, but the images have different qualities — the hand is colored, glossy, and cut cleanly around the edges, while the band's photo is torn, printed on matte paper, and in black and white.

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<sup>53</sup> Television, "Friction," track 3 on *Marquee Moon*, Elektra/Asylum Records, 1977.

<sup>54</sup> Television, "Venus," track 2 on *Marquee Moon*, Elektra/Asylum Records, 1977.

<sup>55</sup> Television, "Marquee Moon," track 4 on *Marquee Moon*, Elektra/Asylum Records, 1977.

The next four pages feature a xeroxed excerpt from Richard Hell's autobiographical memoir, *I Dreamed I Was A Very Clean Tramp*. I used patterned tape to decorate the book's pages before scanning them. On the second page of the excerpt, I include Television's song "Hard On Love,"<sup>56</sup> which is referenced in the text. The third page of the excerpt features audio from Television's "Little Johnny Jewel."<sup>57</sup> The song's heavy bass intro relates to the text, which discusses Television's bassist Richard Hell. When scanning the fourth page of the excerpt, I placed a lock and a bag of safety pins over the book's page to add dimension, and to reference the punk symbol of the safety pin.

The last pair of pages features Gerard de Nerval's poem "El Desdichado"<sup>58</sup> in both French and English. Tom Verlaine and Richard Hell both started out in New York City as poets and writers, and Jon Savage explains that de Nerval was one of Television's literary influences, so I felt it was appropriate to include a selection of de Nerval's poetry. The poem also adds another form of media to the zine.

#### QUARANZINE #2: THE VOIDOIDS AND THE U.K.'S APPROPRIATION OF NYC PUNK

This zine profiles Richard Hell, former bassist of Television and frontman of The Voidoids. I also explain how London's punk scene, starting with Malcolm McLaren and the Sex Pistols, formed in response to the scene at CBGB. McLaren took inspiration from Richard Hell and Television, and used their stripped down aesthetic as a basis for the Sex Pistols' image. I also explore the importance of zines to the punk subculture, and the sexual politics of punk. For this zine's cover page, I once again use ransom note lettering, a technique that has become nearly synonymous with punk due to its use in zines and on the album cover for *Never Mind the Bollocks*, the Sex Pistols' only studio album. I layered the ransom note lettering over notebook paper and an image from a magazine, and paired it with a printed-out photo of The Voidoids.

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<sup>56</sup> Television, "Hard On Love," 1975.

<sup>57</sup> Television, "Little Johnny Jewel," track 9 on *Marquee Moon/Adventure/Live at the Waldorf*, Elektra, 2005.

<sup>58</sup> Gerard de Nerval, "El Desidichado," 1865.

The aesthetic of this zine is meant to be more bare bones than the first zine, but also more brash, to match the musical sound of The Voidoids.

Opening the zine, the first page of text includes two quotes, the first from Nietzsche and the second from Richard Hell. I chose to pair these two quotes together because they both discuss transformation into monstrous figures. Nietzsche quote, as I discuss later in the zine, asserts that fighting against something comes with the risk of becoming what you are fighting against.<sup>59</sup> This parallels The Voidoids' intention, which was to take down mainstream stadium rock — an endeavor that could only be achieved by becoming the mainstream they were fighting against. The second quote, from Richard Hell, details how becoming a rock star is akin to becoming a sacred monster, idolized for cockiness and irresistibility. I used this quote as a basis for this page's collage counterpart, which features an empty-eyed Richard Hell surrounded by reflective silver tape (unfortunately, the mirror-like surface of the tape did not translate well when scanned, so it appears black). The adjacent second page features images of a young Richard Hell, to reflect the text's discussion of Hell's upbringing. I also included an image of a cowboy to convey Hell's childhood fascination with them, which I also discuss in the text. The audio used for this page is The Voidoids' song "Liars Beware,"<sup>60</sup> which starts with ominous guitar riffs that crescendo into a twangy wall of noise. As the songs goes on, Richard Hell begins yelling over the track; this aural atmosphere hopefully conveys some off-kilter monstrousness.

The third and fourth pages refer back to Nietzsche quote in discussing The Voidoids' intentions of creating something for the "misfit kids." To reflect the text, the collage features a cutout of the phrase "Misfit Royalty," taken from a copy of *Rolling Stone*, and a background image of two firefighters against a forest engulfed in flames (meant to represent the fight against monsters). The text here also explores The Voidoids' musical style and Richard Hell's place in CBGB's musical network. I specifically mention Richard Hell's friendship with Dee Dee Ramone, and the corresponding collage features images of the two musicians underneath a cutout of

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<sup>59</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, 1886, 146.

<sup>60</sup> Richard Hell and the Voidoids, "Liars Beware," track 2 on *Blank Generation*, Sire Records, 1977.

CBGB's awning. To represent the line of text, "The scene all revolved around CBGB," I placed an image of a spiraling storm's eye just underneath the image of the awning. The audio used here is from The Voidoids' rendition of "Love Comes In Spurts."<sup>61</sup>

The fifth and sixth pages discuss the way that London's punk scene appropriated the aesthetic of CBGB's subculture via Malcolm McLaren and the Sex Pistols. The corresponding collages include an image of the Sex Pistols' frontman Johnny Rotten coming out of a cutout neon mouth, representing London punk's regurgitation of the New York scene. I also include a framed image of Malcolm McLaren, a fragment of Richard Hell's face, and a neon-lit eye hovering above a city skyline, to reference McLaren's urban source of inspiration and the appropriation of Richard Hell's style. I chose to include audio from the Sex Pistols' song "New York," which — in its ranting about bands from New York — conveys the rivalry between the London and New York punk scenes.

The seventh and eighth pages present Richard Hell's song "Blank Generation," its lyrics, and the meanings and misconceptions behind it. I paired this text with images of a featureless, color-inverted face (representing blankness), and a mannequin in a junkyard surrounded by vibrant figs. The juxtaposition of the dreary junkyard and the colorful fruit hopefully reflect the positive and negative meanings behind "Blank Generation." Of course, the audio for this page is The Voidoids' "Blank Generation."<sup>62</sup>

The ninth and tenth pages feature a photo of Richard Hell from the cover of The Voidoids' album *Blank Generation* (which is referenced in the previous two pages), and a woman's face with the eyes scrubbed out. These collages are paired with a continuation of the discussion about the meanings behind "Blank Generation," so I inserted a video of The Voidoids performing the song live at CBGB in 1977.<sup>63</sup> This video gives the viewer a sense of The Voidoids'

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<sup>61</sup> Richard Hell and the Voidoids, "Love Comes in Spurts," track 1 on *Blank Generation*, Sire Records, 1977.

<sup>62</sup> Richard Hell and the Voidoids, "Blank Generation," track 7 on *Blank Generation*, Sire Records, 1977.

<sup>63</sup> "Richard Hell/Dead Boys/Ramones : CBGBs 1977," *YouTube*, June 11, 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5mc4DFT1bWA>

onstage style and sound, things that would typically be absent from a physical zine's discussion of live music.

The eleventh and twelfth pages of text discuss the sexual politics of punk, the remnants of 1960s free love, and the similarities between punks and sex workers. I include images from a vintage Pepsi ad paired with U.S. military planes, dripping blood, and the phrase "World's Finest" — this is meant to represent the idealism of the 1960s in the face of the Vietnam War, and how punk subculture rejected such "peace and love." Additionally, I include a torn-out portrait of two gay kink enthusiasts by Robert Mapplethorpe, paired with three images of a faceless semi-nude woman; this is meant to reflect the textual discussion of underground sex culture in relation to punk. The audio used for this page is The Voidoids' "New Pleasure,"<sup>64</sup> referencing punk's adoption of sexual liberalism.

The last two pages of the zine feature an image of Malcolm McLaren and Vivienne Westwood's boutique, "SEX," on King's Road in London; disembodied hands and legs clad in fishnets; and the phrase "UNDER-GROUND" all against a backdrop created by stenciling paint over fishnet fabric. This collage refers back to the discussion about sexual politics in underground subcultures. The audio here is "The Plan"<sup>65</sup> by The Voidoids. The back cover of this zine features a torn-out photo of Richard Hell with the word "VOID" written on a bandaid on his forehead, referencing The Voidoids.

### QUARANZINE # 3: PATTI SMITH, ZINES, AND CBGB AS AN EXPERIMENTAL SPACE

The third zine in this series profiles Patti Smith and her band Patti Smith Group, zines, and CBGB as a space for creative experimentation. Patti Smith was known as the underground It-Girl of the Lower East Side music scene, and I conceptualize her as the "Queen Bee" of CBGB. This is why there is a motif of bees throughout this issue, starting on the cover. The cover features a beehive with Patti Smith in the lower right corner, and the title of the zine series is

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<sup>64</sup> Richard Hell and the Voidoids, "New Pleasure," track 3 on *Blank Generation*, Sire Records, 1977.

<sup>65</sup> Richard Hell and the Voidoids, "The Plan," track 9 on *Blank Generation*, Sire Records, 1977.

made of individual letters cut from a newspaper. This zine's aesthetic is meant to be more intricate, with smaller details and a warm neutral color palette to reflect the color scheme used in several of Patti Smith's album covers. This zine required more time than all the others, largely because I incorporated a hinged fold-out element, and I frequently used an X-Acto knife to carefully cut holes out of images before layering different images underneath.

In the first two pages, I recount seeing Patti Smith in the West Village and discuss Patti Smith's early life and career. I mention the Patti Smith Group's first single, "Hey Joe"<sup>66</sup> and pair audio from the song with the text. The imagery behind the text features a color scheme that is largely brown, yellow, beige, red, and gold. The album cover of *Wave* is paired with audio of Patti Smith Group's "Dancing Barefoot,"<sup>67</sup> a well known song from the album. The collage on the right includes an image of a St. Marks brownstone originally shown on the cover of Led Zeppelin's *Physical Graffiti*; here, through the process of bricolage, I recontextualize Led Zeppelin's iconic image to reference Patti Smith's early poetry readings in St. Marks Place.

I cut the image of the brownstone so that it is made of two flaps. When opened, the flaps uncover an image of Patti Smith and Robert Mapplethorpe against a metallic gold background. While it was not possible for me to recreate this mobile effect digitally, the third and fourth pages of the zine present what the brownstone looks like once the flaps are opened. The cover of Patti Smith Group's first album, *Horses*, is pasted to the interior of the flaps. This page features the audio from the group's track "Land: Horses/Land of a Thousand Dances /La Mer(de),"<sup>68</sup> which is featured on *Horses*.

The next pair of pages discusses Patti Smith Group's experimental sound, bricolage, and Patti Smith's status as a creative today. The page on the right mentions Patti Smith's Instagram page, @thisispattismith, and the corresponding collage features a caption from the account, reading: "This is keeping some semblance of normality. I have my own cafe table, my own mug,

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<sup>66</sup> Patti Smith, "Hey Joe," track 1 on *Hey Joe / Piss Factory*, Sire Records, 1974.

<sup>67</sup> Patti Smith, "Dancing Barefoot," track 2 on *Wave*, Arista, 1979.

<sup>68</sup> Patti Smith, "Land: Horses / Land of a Thousand Dances / La Mer(de)," track 7 on *Horses*, Arista, 1975.



borrowed from a real cafe, some Nescafé and a great book to read. I miss the world, I miss mobility, but revisit in my ever traveling mind.” I chose to include this caption because it was written during the coronavirus pandemic, and so it reflects the period during which the zine was created. The page on the left features a collage I made by cutting out portions of an illustrated design. I cut out several windows and sections from the image, and then layered other materials and images underneath, so that they would be visible through the “windows.” The audio used for these pages is Patti Smith Group’s “Kimberly.”<sup>69</sup>

The next two pages discuss CBGB as an experimental space and the importance of zines to CBGB’s subculture. In the corresponding imagery, I included an excerpt from a *Rolling Stone* article detailing the rise of both Patti Smith Group and the CBGB scene (Unfortunately, I was unable to find the author of the article. I cut out the excerpt years ago for another collage project and happened to find it while gathering materials for my zine series. All I can remember is that it was originally in *Rolling Stone*). I embedded a video<sup>70</sup> of Patti Smith performing live, and placed it over a television set in the collage — I intended for the video to be viewed as though it is appearing on the television’s screen.

The following pair of pages continues my discussion of zines. The collage on the page on the left features a pair of scissors, in reference to the zine-making technique of collage; the background of this page consists of excerpts from zines featured in Lisa Darms’s compilation of 1990s-era Riot Grrrl zines.<sup>71</sup> With this collage I paired audio of Patti Smith Group’s song “Because The Night.”<sup>72</sup> The page on the right presents William Burroughs’s poem “Fear and the Monkey”<sup>73</sup> placed over a photo of Patti Smith and William Burroughs. I spelled Burroughs’s name using ransom note lettering, and I cut out each line of the poem before reassembling it

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<sup>69</sup> Patti Smith, “Kimberly,” track 5 on *Horses*, Arista, 1975.

<sup>70</sup> “Patti Smith Live 1976,” *YouTube*, September 19, 2009, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2-8o8ATQWK8>

<sup>71</sup> Darms, *The Riot Grrrl Collection*.

<sup>72</sup> Patti Smith, “Because the Night,” track 3 on *Easter*, Arista, 1978.

<sup>73</sup> William Burroughs, “Fear and the Monkey,” 1978.

into its original order; these elements are meant to reference Burroughs's signature cut-up technique, in which he would cut words from newspapers and reassemble them arbitrarily.

The next pair of pages feature Arthur Rimbaud's poem "Phrases,"<sup>74</sup> in both English and French. I chose to include poetry excerpts by both Rimbaud and Burroughs because Patti Smith has named the two poets as sources of inspiration.

The pages following "Phrases" explain William Burroughs's relation to bricolage, and delve into the intersections of queer and punk culture. For imagery, I used a printed-out photograph of William Burroughs sitting beneath the words "Life is a killer," and for audio I used Patti Smith Group's song "Gloria."<sup>75</sup>

The final two pages of this zine continue my discussion of punk and queer culture. I reference the Ramones' song "53rd and 3rd" in discussing the intersection of sex work and punk, so I incorporated audio of the song into the text. I also explain Tavia Nyong'o's discussion of reproductive futurity and death drive in relation to queer and punk culture.<sup>76</sup> The corresponding imagery for this text features impact labels reading "No future," paired with a clip of audio from the Sex Pistols' song "God Save The Queen."<sup>77</sup> I chose to include this song's outro because its only lyrics are "No future, no future for you."

#### QUARANZINE #4: THE DEAD BOYS AND MEDIA'S ROLE IN CREATING SUBCULTURE

This zine has a drastically different aesthetic from the Patti Smith issue and the ones before it. I included brighter colors, repulsive images, and references to the horror film genre.

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<sup>74</sup> Arthur Rimbaud, "Phrases," in *Complete Works, Selected Letters*, translated by Wallace Fowlie, The University of Chicago Press, 2005.

<sup>75</sup> Patti Smith, "Gloria: In Exelsis Deo," track 1 on *Horses*, Arista, 1975.

<sup>76</sup> Tavia Nyong'o, "Do You Want Queer Theory (or Do You Want the Truth)?: Intersections of Punk and Queer in the 1970s," *Radical History Review* 100 (Winter 2008): 102-119.

<sup>77</sup> Sex Pistols, "God Save The Queen," track 6 on *Never Mind The Bollocks, Here's The Sex Pistols*, Warner Records, 1977.

This stylistic choice was made to convey the Dead Boys' overall aesthetic, which was very much influenced by the Sex Pistols and the horror genre. In response to their album titled *Night of the Living Dead Boys*<sup>78</sup> (which directly refers to George Romero's film, *Night of the Living Dead*), I included several images of disembodied body parts to reference the zombie film genre. The zine's cover is bright green, with the title "QUARANZINE" painted in red; along with an eyeball and a torn-out image of the Dead Boys, I splattered red paint over the entire collage.

The zine opens with a description of my record collection, which includes the album *Night of the Living Dead Boys*; I pair this text with a photo of the album cover, and a pair of floating hands holding eyeballs. I also discuss the Sex Pistols' influence on the Dead Boys, so I included a video of the Dead Boys performing the Sex Pistols' song "Anarchy in the UK" live at CBGB in 1977.<sup>79</sup>

The third and fourth pages discuss Iggy Pop's influence on the Dead Boys' outrageous onstage antics, which included self-harm and generally offensive behavior. Corresponding to this excerpt is several images of Iggy Pop in concert, along with audio of his song, "Search and Destroy."<sup>80</sup> I also include a pair of disembodied eyeballs floating above an image of Stiv Bators choking himself with a microphone cord, an image that references Iggy Pop's influence on the Dead Boys' performance methods.

On the fifth and sixth pages I write about the Dead Boys' style, and I focus on the significance of George Romero's *Night of the Living Dead*.<sup>81</sup> The corresponding imagery includes the film's poster, and a video of the film's trailer.<sup>82</sup> To reflect my discussion of Otherization in zombie movies, I include the word "THEM" spelled with what looks like

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<sup>78</sup> Dead Boys, *Night of the Living Dead Boys*, Bomp! Records, 1981.

<sup>79</sup> "Richard Hell/Dead Boys/Ramones : CBGBs 1977," *YouTube*, June 11, 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5mc4DFT1bwA>

<sup>80</sup> Iggy Pop and The Stooges, "Search and Destroy," track 1 on *Raw Power*, Sony, 1973.

<sup>81</sup> *Night of the Living Dead*, directed by George Romero, Image Ten, 1968.

<sup>82</sup> "Night of the Living Dead (1968) Trailer," *YouTube*, December 23, 2008, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ob8vZhSjES8>.

intestines; a quote about zombies and humans from George Romero; and a bloody, disembodied finger.

The seventh and eighth pages discuss the Dead Boys' song "All This and More"<sup>83</sup> (paired with the song's audio), the decontextualization of love songs, and the role of media in creating subculture. In the imagery there is yet another disembodied eyeball that seems to be fixated on a pair of disembodied legs, representing the Dead Boys' sexualization of teenage love in "All This and More." I also include a video<sup>84</sup> of the Dead Boys' performing the song live at CBGB in 1977, so viewers can see an example of the band's onstage antics. The word "punk" placed over a lollipop represents mass media's "labeling" of subcultural characteristics.

The final pair of pages continue my discussion of subculture as a media creation. To reflect this discussion, the imagery includes a quote reading, "I could win the Nobel Peace Prize...and my tombstone would still say punk on the bus" (Unfortunately, this is also an old clipping, so I am unsure of whom is being quoted). This is meant to convey the restrictive nature of labeling subcultures, which I discuss in the text. Finally, this collage also features a video of the Dead Boys performing "Sonic Reducer," live at CBGB in 1977.<sup>85</sup>

#### QUARANZINE #5: THE RAMONES AND PERSONAL STYLE AT CBGB

The fifth issue in my zine series was intended to have a very specific aesthetic in comparison to the previous issues. In this zine I discuss the Ramones and personal style at CBGB, so I attempted to use the Ramones' stylistic inspirations (cartoons and comic books) as explicitly as possible in creating this issue. I included at least one cartoon or comic book element on each page, sometimes combining images from various comic or cartoon sources. The cover features a cartoon Joey Ramone, who holds a cartoon missile in one hand and a cigarette in the other, standing on a comic-book pileup of cars. The image of Joey is from *Punk* magazine, one

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<sup>83</sup> Dead Boys, "All This and More," track 2 on *Young, Loud and Snotty*, Sire Records, 1977.

<sup>84</sup> "Dead Boys - Live at CBGB's 1977," *YouTube*, January 2, 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QOHOM1hVM-M&t=17s>

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

of the original punk zines in the 1970s. Here, “Quaranzine” is spelled out in an adapted ransom note style; I closely cut lettering from various comic book headings and pasted them together to create a cohesive textual image.

The first two pages introduce the Ramones and muse on their iconic personal style. I include an image of the Ramones’ seal (referenced in the text), and audio of “I Wanna Be Sedated,”<sup>86</sup> one of the Ramones’ most recognizable songs. I also include a New York City subway car (to recall the band’s Queens roots), and images of a comic book monster.

The third and fourth pages go deeper into the Ramones’ style and aesthetic, with special mention of their black leather jackets. The corresponding imagery includes a photo of the band wearing the aforementioned jackets, a quote from Legs McNeil (founder of *Punk* magazine) about the Ramones, and stacks of comic books. The audio used here is the Ramones’ song “Beat on the Brat.”<sup>87</sup>

The fifth and sixth pages discuss the Ramones’ musical style through covers and originals. More cartoon and comic-book imagery can be seen paired with audio of three covers by the Ramones: “Baby I Love You,”<sup>88</sup> “California Sun,”<sup>89</sup> and “Needles and Pins.”<sup>90</sup> I also include a photo of the band performing live, which is decorated with comic book onomatopoeias and exclamations; this page also features a video of the Ramones performing “Blitzkrieg Bop” live at CBGB in 1977.<sup>91</sup>

The seventh and eighth pages delve into the importance of personal style at CBGB. Since I discuss the scene as a whole, I included imagery of nearly all the artists profiled in my project,

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<sup>86</sup> Ramones, “I Wanna Be Sedated,” track 7 on *Road to Ruin*, Sire Records, 1978.

<sup>87</sup> Ramones, “Beat on the Brat,” track 2 on *Ramones*, Rhino, 1976.

<sup>88</sup> Ramones, “Baby I Love You,” track 7 on *End of the Century*, Warner Records, 1980.

<sup>89</sup> Ramones, “California Sun,” track 11 on *Leave Home*, Rhino, 1977.

<sup>90</sup> Ramones, “Needle and Pins,” track 22 on *Mania*, Sire Records, 1988.

<sup>91</sup> “Richard Hell/Dead Boys/Ramones : CBGBs 1977,” *YouTube*, June 11, 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5mc4DFT1bWA>

with a cartoon image of the Ramones (from the album cover of *Road to Ruin*) positioned at the center. This page features audio from another Ramones hit, "Sheena Is a Punk Rocker."<sup>92</sup>

The final two pages have no text, but the imagery references New York City, the Ramones' place of formation. There is a cartoon of King Kong on the Empire State Building; a subway sign for the Forest Hills station (where the band formed); and a video of the Ramones performing "53rd and 3rd."<sup>93</sup>

#### QUARANZINE #6: BLONDIE AND THE GIRLS OF THE UNDERWORLD

Similar to Issues 4 and 5, I wanted the aesthetic of this issue to come through clearly. This issue discusses Blondie, a band that is often considered to be New Wave rather than punk, and women in subculture. I attempted to include more "feminine" elements in this issue, including images of women and a color scheme featuring purples, pinks, blues, and yellows. The imagery also features patterns, negative space, and dynamic shapes, hopefully to convey the more "New Wave" aesthetic. The cover features pink and black stripes, a play on the imagery from Blondie's album *Parallel Lines*, and a pop-art image of Debbie Harry by Andy Warhol. The button that says "Blondie is a group!" is a reference to the band's marketing campaign in the 1970s and 80s.

In the first two pages, I introduce Blondie and the gender dynamics of subculture and punk. I included audio from one of Blondie's biggest hits, "Call Me."<sup>94</sup> For the imagery I included a picture of the statue "Fearless Girl"<sup>95</sup> by Kristen Visbal layered over a photo of bulls kicking up dust in an enclosure. The "Fearless Girl" statue once made headlines when it was installed opposite the statue "Charging Bull"<sup>96</sup> in Manhattan's Financial District. It was thought

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<sup>92</sup> Ramones, "Sheena Is a Punk Rocker," track 6 on *Rocket to Russia*, Sire Records, 1977.

<sup>93</sup> "Ramones- 53rd and 3rd (1975)," *YouTube*, February 24, 2007, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_a4xN1tiJhY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_a4xN1tiJhY)

<sup>94</sup> Blondie, "Call Me," Track 1 on *Call Me*, Capitol Catalog, 2005.

<sup>95</sup> Kristen Visbal, *Fearless Girl*, 2017, New York City.

<sup>96</sup> Arturo Di Modica, *Charging Bull*, 1989, New York City.

that “Fearless Girl” was placed there to promote female empowerment in male-dominated industries (many of which take place in the Financial District). My goal was to replicate this juxtaposition in my collage in order to reflect women’s fight to succeed in oppressively male atmospheres, like the punk scene.

The third and fourth pages discuss Blondie’s music and style, with a special focus on Debbie Harry’s conspicuous femininity in the context of CBGB. Relating to the section on music, I use an image of Blondie’s album *Parallel Lines*<sup>97</sup> with a background that features similar black and white stripes. A picture of Blondie’s vinyl single “X Offender” is placed next to the audio icon containing that song.<sup>98</sup> There is also an image of Marilyn Monroe, in reference to Debbie Harry’s source of inspiration when bleaching her hair blonde. The video on this page is of Blondie performing “Rip Her to Shreds” live at CBGB in 1977.<sup>99</sup> I chose this video because the song’s title is symbolic of the criticism Blondie received for having a female vocalist.

In the fifth and sixth pages, I write about other female figures at CBGB, like Anya Phillips (featured in the collage wearing a top she designed herself), and I go on to describe the Riot Grrrl scene of the 1990s. The audio paired with the text here is an excerpt from Talking Heads’ “Life During Wartime,”<sup>100</sup> which references CBGB and the Mudd Club (locations mentioned in the text). The collage features audio of Blondie’s “The Tide Is High,”<sup>101</sup> as well as an image of Bikini Kill’s Kathleen Hanna, and a cutout from a Riot Grrrl era zine.

The seventh and eighth pages explain the enormous role zines played in the Riot Grrrl subculture. In addition to three Venus symbols, I use more cutouts from Riot Grrrl era zines in the accompanying imagery. The audio here is Blondie’s “One Way or Another.”<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Blondie, *Parallel Lines*, Chrysalis Records, 1978.

<sup>98</sup> Blondie, “X Offender,” track 1 on *Blondie*, Capitol Records, 1976.

<sup>99</sup> “Blondie - Rip Her to Shreds | Live at CBGB (1977),” *YouTube*, May 3, 2017, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=7&v=qNSLPLkGQFo&feature=emb\\_title](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=7&v=qNSLPLkGQFo&feature=emb_title).

<sup>100</sup> Talking Heads, “Life During Wartime,” track 5 on *Fear of Music*, Sire Records, 1979.

<sup>101</sup> Blondie, “The Tide Is High,” track 4 on *Autoamerican*, Capitol Records, 1980.

<sup>102</sup> Blondie, “One Way Or Another,” track 2 on *Parallel Lines*, Chrysalis Records, 1978.

The last two pages of this zine feature no text, but I include a video of Bikini Kill performing “Rebel Girl”<sup>103</sup> placed on top of the song’s lyrics, written by hand. Opposite the video is an image of Kathleen Hanna in concert.

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<sup>103</sup> “Bikini Kill - Rebel Girl,” *YouTube*, November 10, 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bOCWma5vOiQ>



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