

**RMIT**

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**Writing the city otherwise: Skateboarding, Situationism and street press in the practice of storytelling.**

Abstract:

In 1960s Paris, ratbag intellectuals The Situationist International, including Guy Debord and Henri Lefebvre, first posited the idea that the city should be both constructed and subverted to more accurately reflect the desires of its inhabitants. The Situationists and their anti-philosophy made significant contributions to the events of May 1968, where students and workers very nearly overthrew the de Gaulle government. In ‘Writing the city otherwise: Skateboarding, Situationism and street press in the practice of storytelling’, I argue that a similar, though less overtly political (and extraordinarily under-theorised), event occurred in 1980s inner city Melbourne, and represents the ongoing significance of Situationist ideas as they pertain to the written word. I suggest that the birth of punk and the rise of the street press changed the city, with the outcome that, eventually, it became a haven for not just musicians and writers, but artists of all kinds, resulting ultimately in Melbourne’s unofficial and contentious status as Australia’s ‘cultural capital’. Drawing on work by theorist McKenzie Wark, rock critic and academic Greil Marcus, Debord’s *Society of the spectacle*, as well as my interest in skateboarding as a subversive act, I make a case for the ongoing relevance of the Situationists in discourse surrounding the continued development of writing.

Biographical note:

Tony McMahon has written more music journalism articles than he cares to remember, for publications including *The Big Issue*, *Inpress* (Melbourne), *The Drum Media* (Sydney) and *Time Off* (Brisbane). His debut novel, *The Single Gentleman’s Dining Club*, was published by Overdog Press in 2006. In 2012, he began a creative writing PhD at RMIT University, where he is working on his second novel, *Sickness Country*, under the supervision of Dr Craig Batty and Dr Francesca Rendle-Short. His research interests include Indigenous and non-Indigenous relations, situationism, punk and the practice of establishing urban landscapes to better and more interestingly construct the self.

Keywords:

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## 1. The beach beneath your wheels

*Transform the world – all well and good. It is being transformed. But into what? Here, at your feet, is one small but crucial element in that mutation.*

- Henri Lefebvre

I would like to begin this paper by talking about skateboarding. Strange as this may seem, there are what I consider solid academic reasons for doing so. Moreover, a decidedly odd critical writing strategy such as this one may actually be complimentary for an essay concerned with heteronomous storytelling. I have come to the conclusion throughout the writing of this paper that atypical praxis – for my work at least and contradictions in terms notwithstanding – often ends with the best literary results. Skateboarding, of course, links in neatly with the ‘at your feet’ section of the Lefebvre quote above, and I also contend that there are solid connections between the gesture of skateboarding and the question of why writing and living the city otherwise is important for us as storytellers interested in continuing to refine our craft in new, interesting and unusual ways.

I took up skateboarding again in my forties after an almost three decade break and have concluded that there is something entirely writerly about interpreting a city by how it feels under your wheels. Literary theory, from reader response criticism to post structuralism to what might now be called post postmodernism, has long opined that part of what makes good writing is the feeling the reader receives from the text that she ‘belongs’ in any place that writing might happen to be set. James Joyce’s Dublin is one of the more heavily theorised examples. But I also feel an intense sense of spatial connectedness when I read and ‘experience’ the Boston of David Foster Wallace’s *Infinite Jest* (even though I have never been there) or Shane Maloney’s Melbourne (even though this is my hometown). On the other side of the spectrum, ostensibly, we are also presented with the great travel narratives, strictly speaking not set in any one place at all, but concerned with the dynamics of movement: the river in *Huckleberry Finn* or the meta-everyplace of Jack Kerouac’s *On the Road*. Reading Kerouac, I feel that I am right there with the narrator, in a middle America I have never seen, on our first long trip together in an early chapter of the book, hitching a ride on the back of that flatbed truck. The writing is so immediate and engaging that I can almost feel the wind in my hair as I read.

Michel de Certeau talks of walking in the city as an enunciative act. In *The practice of everyday life* he uses the phrase ‘the violence of order’ (1984: XIII) and examines how to usurp it with the ostensibly quotidian undertaking of traversing urban landscapes by foot. He uses gorgeous prose such as “poets of their own acts move about, their trajectories forming unforeseeable sentences’ (XVIII), and places these gestures under the rubric of what he calls ‘everyday tactics’.

He then asks ‘To what erotics of knowledge does the ecstasy of reading such a cosmos belong?... It transforms the bewitching world by which one was possessed into a text that lies before one’s eyes’ (92). The city as a text that can be read, in other words. A text that can also, of course, be written. If walking the city is an enunciative act, then it’s my contention that skateboarding urban terrains turns the volume up dramatically on this utterance.

Borden has written extensively about how skateboarders reinterpret the architecture of the cities they live in, how they make what is ordinary – our immediate, quotidian surroundings – extraordinary, and I am interested in the implications of this for writing practice. Borden claims that skateboarders find ‘new ways of *editing*, mapping and *recomposing* the city’ (2001: 2, my emphasis). Skaters look at drainage ditches, schoolyards and empty pools, for example, and in doing so are ‘adapting and exploiting a given physical terrain in order to present skaters with new and distinctive uses other than the original function of that terrain’ (2001: 29). Consider a handrail, for instance, designed and manufactured and put in place by unseen forces next to some stairs for the purposes of safety and reassurance. Used by a skateboarder, however, this small part of our city suddenly becomes its complete opposite: an invitation to adventure and the thrill of potential danger. Can these new uses for existing terrain be likened to a realisation that when we read, we are reinterpreting existing intellectual terrain? I think they can, and I will endeavour to explore this reinterpretation of architecture in light of how we read and write below.

Borden goes on to suggest that skateboarders’ actions amount to an ‘implicit critique made by skateboarding of capitalism and architecture as commodity’ (2001: 2). Interestingly, the Situationists had similar views, and it is here that their work is important for my argument. The Situationist project of redefining the city was profoundly interested in anti-capitalism, by subverting the uses capitalism defines for urban space.<sup>1</sup>

Problematizing the notion of anti-capitalism of any kind are social theorists such as Boltanski and Chiapello, especially their *The new spirit of capitalism*. They state that, for capitalism, ‘order reins everywhere’, and that ‘the construction of a political order in which the capitalist economy could expand without encountering too much resistance or bringing too much violence in its train seems finally to have been achieved’ (2005: 167). This, they claim, is because ‘the opposition that capitalism had to face at the end of the 1960s and during the 1970s induced a transformation in its operations and mechanisms’, and ‘it was by recuperating some of the oppositional themes articulated during the May [1968] events that capitalism was to disarm critique, regain the initiative, and discover a new dynamism’ (168). While any current day analysis of capitalism needs to contend with the veracity of these claims, one does wonder what the authors would make of events subsequent to the publication of, or not included in their book, such as the extraordinarily violent 1999 WTO protests in Seattle, the global financial crisis and Occupy Wall Street. Furthermore, literature surrounding these subjects suggests ‘that capitalism may not be as adept at adjusting to adverse situations as Boltanski and Chiapello suggest, that anti-capitalism, perhaps not surprisingly, has in turn attuned itself to capitalism’s flexibility.’<sup>2</sup>

Countering Boltanski and Chiapello in something of an auxiliary manner, but one more directly related to my argument, Borden states that:

Skateboarding suggests that pleasure rather than work, use values rather than exchange values, activity rather than passivity, performing rather than recording, are potential components of the future, as yet unknown city. (173)

I am much too old to be riding rails or slamming stairways, and reinterpreting architecture in the manner that Borden is talking about. Nonetheless, I do often go down to a non 24-hour petrol station near where I live and skate gingerly around after closing time. Boltanski and Chiapello's arguments notwithstanding, I still see this as a profoundly anti-capitalist gesture – these places exist for the sole purpose of selling people petrol and cans of Coke after all – and even the unedifying spectacle of a middle-aged man on a skateboard enacts Borden's idea of use value rather than exchange value to some extent. But I feel strongly that this heteronomous enunciation of my environment is a writerly gesture also. Skating around my city, I find myself constantly looking at my environment in a new way. My hometown is now more than just the everyday place I choose to live and work in: it is an ever exciting playground, alive with possibilities I never knew existed until I took up skateboarding again. During the Paris protests of 1968, a piece of Situationist graffiti began appearing, "beneath the street, the beach". This now famous graffiti attempted to convince people to fall in love, yet also be critical of, and creative about, their environments. For me, skating around the city makes this idea concrete.

From the perspective of writing practice, the up until now undiscovered nature of the cities we live in begs the obvious questions of what else there is that we're missing out on noticing, and how these discoveries might influence what we write. What other ways can urban landscapes be reinterpreted as environments more adequately suited to inhabitants' desires, and how might writers go about translating those desires to the page? I find it difficult to imagine that this question and the myriad of potential answers that might flow from it could have anything but a profound effect on the way any practitioner goes about their writing. 'To make us see' is how Kafka described the purpose of writing, and far be it from me to disagree with as masterful a scribe as him. I would be bold enough only to suggest that we *add* to Kafka by remembering that we should always try to make our readers see *in new ways* when we write, and that activities such as skateboarding can help us to do this.

Reinterpreting our environment through otherwise activities forces us to spend more time to examining things so obviously in our midst, and can be of enormous value to us as writing practitioners. Obviously, skateboarding is a dangerous activity and decidedly not for everyone. But writers can still think about what it is that might allow them to see their cities or towns differently, as skateboarding has done for me, and as the Situationists once did in relation to their own city. It excites me enormously to imagine talented writers thinking about their senses of place differently, and to imagine how they might then go off and write all about it, making us see, but making us see it from a wildly unique and possibly slightly crazy perspective.

Below, I will examine some instances of how this what I call 'otherwise' writing has been performed in the past, and how these historic examples might conceivably be reinterpreted for present and future use in writing practice.

## **2. Exquisite collapse: Ratbag intellectualism and the Situationist city**

*Bourdieu's objection to strictly internal analysis... is quite simply that it looks for the final explanation of texts within the texts themselves... or within some sort of historical 'essence'*

rather than in the complex network of social relations that makes the very existence of the texts possible.

- Randal Johnson

‘Living the city otherwise’, the term from which this paper has taken its inspiration, was first employed by Wark (2011: 38) while talking about the uses that might be made in today’s world of Situationist ideas surrounding the alienation of post-industrial urban life. Given that they were and, to some extent remain, an underground movement, a brief explanation of the Situationist International is germane here. Probably best described as ratbag intellectuals, their theories have been labelled by Wark as ‘delinquent critique’ (17). Key figures include Guy Debord, Henri Lefebvre, Michele Bernstein, Raoul Vaneigem and Ivan Chtcheglov. Important texts that form the literature of this movement include Debord’s *The society of the spectacle*, Lefebvre’s *The production of space*, Bernstein’s novel *All the king’s horses*, Vaneigem’s *The revolution of everyday life* and Chtcheglov’s ‘Formulary for a new urbanism’.

The Situationists are most famous for their involvement in, and partial incitement of, the May 1968 riots in Paris, a conglomeration of student protests, strikes and countercultural momentum that very nearly succeeded in bringing down the de Gaulle government. Both Wark (2011) and Knabb (2006) devote considerable page length to detailing the Situationists’ involvement in key events leading up to and during 1968, but examinations of their exploits can also be found in texts less concerned with the Situationists per se and more with direct historical documentation (see for example Fraser 1988) and Avant-garde musical movements (see for example Marcus 1989).

However, as espoused in the most famous Situationist text, Guy Debord’s *The society of the spectacle*, Situationism was primarily concerned with simultaneously loathing the city, and yearning to change it to more adequately reflect its inhabitants’ desires. It can be argued that Debord orients his writing considerably more towards loathing: ‘urbanism is capitalism’s seizure of the natural and human environment,’ and ‘the society which eliminates geographical distance reproduces distance internally’ (1983: 169). But perhaps the best example of Situationist attitudes towards the phenomenon of the unliveable capitalist city is the following: ‘Capital makes the modern city... There is work space, leisure space, and resting space. The worker works in one space, spends free time in another, and schleps home to sleep in a third’ (Wark 2011: 23). Wark then goes on to tell us that ‘the city is subjective and can be reconstructed to expand with our desires’ (2011: 26), a possibility that Straram calls ‘the ultimate everyday renaissance’ (2006: 92). This would result in a city where, according to Chtcheglov: ‘There are houses more conducive to visions than any drug, and rooms it’s impossible not to fall in love in’ (1953: 6).

According to Marcus, the birth of punk combined with Situationist ideas had the effect that: ‘[t]he shock of this changed the street. Once out of the nightclub and onto the pavement, every grey building came alive with secret messages of aggression, domination, malignancy’ (1989: 73). This would, I argue, have a profound effect on the written words that would emerge from this sense of urban malevolence.

As a witness myself to something very similar to the phenomena Chtcheglov and Marcus are describing, I concur with their findings. The historic specificity of my

experiences of the changing city were localised around the Melbourne punk music scene in the late nineteen seventies and early nineteen eighties, and the cultural vibrancy that this was a harbinger of. Despite this localisation, I nonetheless feel qualified to enhance these American and European utterances by stating that my particular urban landscape during this time also came alive with hope, connectedness, possibility, and the feeling that, somehow, this new relationship to the city was the way of the future.

And the connections between punk and Situationism are multiform. Malcolm McLaren, 'founder' and early manager of The Sex Pistols, was an avid reader of Situationist texts, and belonged to a UK Situationist movement, King Mob, who achieved notoriety when twenty-five people, including McLaren, entered a department store dressed as Santa Claus and began giving toys away to startled but delighted children (Savage 1991: 34). Many of early punk's slogans, such as 'be reasonable, demand the impossible', were direct quotes from a graffiti campaign the Situationists had initiated in Paris in May 1968, transposed by McLaren and his partner Vivienne Westwood onto clothes and sold to music fans in their Chelsea clothing store during punk's nascent years (156). This 'sartorial symbolism', as Bourdieu puts it (1993: 62), is an important element in transforming cultural fields, and punk was no exception in this regard.

Before moving on to examine punk's relevance to writing practice, it is worth noting what Marcus says about its ability to engender social upheaval:

The juxtaposition of seemingly unrelated phenomena was the basic tactic of twentieth century modernist art. The idea was that, to the degree aesthetic categories could be proven false, social barriers could be revealed as constructed illusions, and the world could be changed. (1986: 191)

The Dadaists did this, Marcus then goes on to explain, and the Situationists took part of their inspiration here (209). Punks, in turn, took their inspiration from the Situationists (22), thus continuing what Marcus explains as a long line of connectivity:

In 'Anarchy in the UK,' a twenty-year-old called Johnny Rotten had rephrased a social critique generated by people who, as far as he knew, had never been born. Who knew what else was part of the tale? If one can stop looking at the past and start listening to it, one might hear echoes of a new conversation; then the task of the critic [writer?] would be to lead speakers and listeners unaware of each other's existence to talk to one another. The job of the critic would be to maintain the ability to be surprised at how the conversation goes, and to communicate that sense of surprise to other people, because a life [writing?] infused with surprise is better than a life that is not. (23)

Looking back now with the hindsight of twenty plus years of writing experience, I can see that punk was an important element of a narrative that gave me a new sense of feeling at home in my environment. My city, and by extension my world, was suddenly full of the surprise Marcus is talking about, and it is difficult to disagree

with his assertion that life was the better for it. This might be called an ‘everyday renaissance’ to use the Situationist term, or an example of ‘nourishing terrain’, to use an Indigenous Australian one (Bird-Rose 1996). Certainly a fissure appeared to open up in what the Situationists saw as the impenetrable-seeming capitalist city. In my case, it was Melbourne, Australia, but, really, there was a sense that it could have been anywhere. Suddenly, myself and a small group of like-minded individuals began thinking there was perhaps something worthwhile about our environment a place that until this point we had felt offered nothing but the abovementioned alienation, identified by the Situationists, resulting from the neat divisions of work space and ‘leisure’ space,. Due to the anti-establishment thematics<sup>3</sup> and sheer otherworldly status of the music that began being produced during this time, we found ourselves at home in several music venues, at least one record shop, and sundry other locations. Punk, Marcus tells us, was ‘the sound of the city collapsing’ (1989: 8), which contained ‘words to make disruption precious’ and ‘a new kind of free speech... that will, for some, overturn what they have taken for granted, thought they wanted, decided to settle for’ (18). In line with this, punk made me realize I was not constrained by my lower working class upbringing to only work in a factory. Bourdieu’s notion of the habitus, often translated as ‘a feel for the game’, and his observation of ‘the similarities in the habitus of agents from the same social class’ (1993: 5) was suddenly, in retrospect, inverted. The results of Marcus’ precious/disruptive words, the notion of an indubitably changing game, I argue below, written down in the pages of the emerging street press, would be more treasurable to me as a writer than I ever could have imagined at the time.

The main reason for this is that, importantly, what followed the destructive sound of Marcus’ ‘collapse’ was the renaissance hum of the city building itself anew. Wark says that ‘[o]ur species-being is builders of worlds. Should we consent to inhabit this given one as our resting place, we’re dead already’ (2011: 159). Both myself and the people I knew in punk era Melbourne were certainly not content to inhabit the world as it was presented to us at the time, and, consciously or not, went about changing it. The results, as I will argue, were not just good for ourselves personally and our city more generally, but good also for the ongoing practice of writing.

### **3. Street press and the unreturned gift of writing**

*This definition – Who can legitimately be called a writer? What is legitimate literary practice? – is one of the key stakes of symbolic struggle in the literary field, and failure to understand it often results in the blind acceptance of the dominant definition of literary legitimacy.*

*- Randal Johnson*

In the nineteen eighties, as the cultural collapsing/ rebuilding of Melbourne was in full swing, there began appearing, literally on the pavement, odd examples of a new kind of literature. Strategically placed right next to the new punk nightclubs were incongruously neat stacks, bound with plastic twine, containing slightly larger than tabloid-sized music magazines, *Beat* first and then *Inpress*.

Rife with spelling mistakes, laxly edited, but full of enthusiasm, this street press, as it

became known, was open for anyone to contribute to. Marcus' new voices, it seemed, were beginning to be heard. Initially, we read these publications out of curiosity, then quickly out of great devotion. All our favourite bands were being written about, often glowingly and with stylistic innovation. A subculture quickly began cohering around this mutual admiration of certain music and its legitimisation in the new format of the street press. Finding others who liked a certain band – a band generally despised or ignored by a mainstream that was now being subverted – instilled a sense of Us Against Them togetherness, an alternative bond strengthened by shouted conversations in loud nightclubs and validated every Wednesday with each new issue of *Inpress*.

Johnson claims that 'works have significance for certain groups and individuals based on their own objective position, cultural needs and capacities for analysis or symbolic appropriation' (1993: 21). Looking back now, I am less sure about Melbourne paleopunks' ability for analysis than I am of their cultural needs and ability to absorb this new symbolism, but can state with certainty that it felt very much as if Wark's beach beneath the street was suddenly beginning to overflow its retaining walls, and that this new kind of writing, found exclusively on that street, was a big part of the reason why. Furthermore, Marcus' 'words to make disruption precious,' and his 'new kind of free speech' found an exciting new home in the pages of the street press.

Street press publications were, and staunchly remain, free. While revenue is obviously provided by advertisers, the ability to, quite literally, pick one up off the street creates the impression of these magazines as something like gifts. In keeping with this idea of distribution, another strategy the Situationists had for improving and undermining urban life in the wake of the capitalist spectacle was *potlatch*, a Native American word meaning the giving of a gift with no expectation of anything in return. This is a rarer occurrence than most people might think, and scholarship surrounding the selfishness of gift giving is well advanced (see Shershow 2005 and Smith 2005). According to Wark:

Exchange affirms the identities of givers and receivers, and the value of the thing exchanged. Exchange arises as a way to contain the disturbing capacities of the gift... This might be the last nobility left to life: to give and not receive, receive and not gift, to invent *unreturnable acts* (another name for which might be situations)... The Situationist International exercises a continued fascination because its members made a gift of their time that was not returned. (2011: 72-3)

The Letterist International, the anarchic collective that was the forerunner of the Situationists, called their journal *Potlatch*, and, as Wark points out, the Situationist International itself was something of a *potlatch*, disappearing without physical trace the moment it became popular.

It is not difficult to make the connection between street press writing and the notion of an unreturned gift: I can attest from personal experience that contributors never know who is reading their work or what their reaction might possibly be. This lack of communication inherent in being a street press writer necessitates a *potlatch* where the effects of what one is saying may not be felt for years or potentially even decades, even then perhaps only indirectly. This is not dissimilar to Marcus above, describing

Johnny Rotten singing Situationist phrases without knowing anything about their context.

Countering the arguments made by Shershow and Smith, Bourdieu describes what he calls the field of cultural production, from which all art derives, as an ‘anti-economic economy’ (1993: 54), where an inversion of the usual rules of economics exists. Cultural products with mass appeal reward in terms of money, while Avant-garde works deliver in terms of cultural capital.

Bourdieu argues that ‘In each and every field... an investment is made, even if it is not recognised as an investment’, and then goes on to posit ‘A general science of the economy of practices, within which one can analyse all practices including those purporting to be disinterested or gratuitous, and hence non-economic, as economic practices directed towards the maximalising of material or symbolic profit’ (8).

This would seem to negate the idea that any cultural practice – including and perhaps especially one such as the street press – can be a ‘true’ potlatch. But Bourdieu himself talks about the idea of belief being an intrinsic component of the field that contributes to making art what it is: we believe something is a work of art because we have been conditioned – by family dispositions and cultural values, for example – to do so. A text therefore becomes ineluctably what we believe it to be, through the means of our very belief. It is my contention that the same can be said regarding the ‘gift’ of the street press. Original punks saw it as a non-invested harbinger of a new way of looking at the world. Therefore, for a moment at least – even if only in our imaginations – it became exactly that.

Returning to the notion of context, Marcus clearly places Situationism into one he (and I) see(s) as of the utmost importance:

If what they did led to no official revolutions, it made life all over the world more interesting, and life continues to be more interesting than it would have been had they never appeared... making life more interesting is the only standard of judgement. (1989: 148)

I conclude this section by suggesting that surely making *writing* more interesting, not just life, is one of the paramount concerns for practitioners of this art. As Marcus suggests above, the Situationists are a more interesting and fun place to start examining how we might go about this than most. Reediting and remapping our environments – whether physically on a skateboard, intellectually in the pages of a Situationist text, or by exploiting, as either readers or writers, the unfettered accessibility of the street press – can prepare writers for a career making the quotidian extraordinary, the everyday revolutionary, and the merely returnable a true gift, with the result of a more interesting life reflected in the consequently more stimulating and thought-provoking pages of our literature.

### **Conclusion: Skating the Academy**

Bourdieu might not have been thinking specifically of capitalism’s ability to reinvent itself, as outlined in Boltanski and Chiapello, when he said:

The fact remains that cultural producers are able to use the power conferred on

them... to mobilize the potential strength of the dominated classes and subvert the order prevailing in the [cultural] field of power. (44)

But I will conclude this paper nonetheless by stating that, as writers and cultural producers, this ability to use the power conferred on us is actually more of an obligation, and that writing about things differently is something we *must* think about doing in order to grow as writers, the un-trendiness of this vaguely Marxist-sounding statement notwithstanding. Or, as Wark puts it:

Every spent tactic is a lesson in how to make new ones... Just as the Situationists adjusted romantic tactics to suit new situations, so too Situationist tactics can be adapted at will.... Just as Debord, with the founding of the Situationist International, accepted the tactic of positioning the movement within rather than against the art world, perhaps today one might take up a defensive position within higher education rather than against it. (2011: 157)

Finally, analysing Bourdieu, Johnson says that:

The full explanation of artistic works is to be found neither in the text itself, nor in some sort of determinant social structure. Rather, it is to be found in the history and structure of the field itself, with its multiple components, and in the relationship between that field and the field of power... *what we have to do is all these things at the same time.* (1993: 9; emphasis in original)

One of the components of the field of creative writing, for me, is skateboarding; another is what I consider the current under theorising of Situationism; yet another is the profound accessibility of the street press, something I see as nothing less than potlatch, a true gift. Just as Johnson claims, we must do all these things at the same time. Johnson also declares that Bourdieu's work opens new horizons for the study of cultural works and practice. It is my fervent desire that writing the city otherwise – both the work you are reading now and the practice – can play its modest role in doing the same.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Most notably supported in Sadler. While I agree with Knabb (2006, 498) that Sadler's almost complete failure to mention the revolutionary nature of the Situationists' actions detracts from the comprehensiveness of the text, it is, nonetheless, the definitive work on the subject of Situationism's uneasy relationship to urbanism.

<sup>2</sup> The most aptly titled example of which – at least for my argument here – is Sarah Ruth van Gelder's *This changes everything: Occupy Wall Street and the 99% movement*. While van Gelder is clearly enamoured of the movement and its aims, and her writing is sometimes murky as a result, there is no doubting that she does a good job of documenting the protests and their organisers' and participants' abilities to learn from the mistakes of the past.

<sup>3</sup> For example, the anti-royalism of *God save the Queen*, the anti-capitalism of *Holidays in the sun* and

anti-politics of *Anarchy in the U.K.* just to name three songs from a single album of the time, The Sex Pistols' *Never mind the bollocks*.

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