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Edited by Gregory Blair, Jason Swift

# What Punk Taught Me

SERIES IN MUSIC

## About the editors

**Gregory Blair.** Originally from Red Deer, Canada, Greg Blair is an artist, writer, educator, and activist who resides in Evansville, Indiana, with his wife and two children. Blair is an Assistant Professor of Art and Design at the University of Southern Indiana, where he teaches digital design, contemporary art history, and gender studies courses. Blair's scholarly research and artwork intertwine various forms of writing, publishing, zines, sculpture, photography, sound, and installation. Blair's last book project, 'The Politics of Spatial Transgressions in the Arts', was published by Palgrave Macmillan. His writings have been featured in 'Arts Magazine', 'The Journal of Art for Life', 'Echo: A Music-Centered Journal', 'Art Style Magazine', and 'Kapsula Magazine'.

**Jason Swift** earned his BFA from the UNCG in 1994, his MFA from the Rinehart School of Sculpture at MICA in 1997 and his Ed.M. in 2003 and Ed.D. in 2009 from Columbia University. He is an Associate Professor of Art at the University of West Georgia, where he teaches foundations studio and art education courses and coordinates the Art Education Program. In his studio and research practice, he investigates the influence of experiences upon the artist's visual vocabulary, skateboarding, punk rock, and his experiences with his grandfather. He has exhibited his artwork nationally and internationally.

## Summary

From personal anecdotes to philosophical inquiries, 'What Punk Taught Me' gathers essays from fifteen different contributors whose lives have all been touched upon by punk culture in some meaningful way. Many years after hearing their first blast of distorted punk guitar as a youth or teenagers, these individuals (like so many others) have come to realize later in life that their experience of punk has provided them with an incredibly valuable tutelage in becoming an artist, writer, educator, or overall human being. For these contributors, the experience of punk has been the source of community and ethics, philosophy and aesthetics, or even an attitude and identity. This anthology explores how various individuals have connected with punk in a variety of distinctive ways—through music, venues, fashion, art, writing, activism, collecting culture, rebellion, subversion, or DIY projects. These essays document the lessons of punk, bringing together people from a wide array of backgrounds. Each of them shares their own unique story of what punk has taught them – how those experiences have been formative in their lives and how punk has supported their personal and professional development. These narratives serve as a reflection on the myriad influences of punk – as a methodology, a philosophy, an ontology, an aesthetic, a strategy, a cultural phenomenon, or a worldview. The culmination of this collection provides a deeper understanding of the individualized and personal influences of punk but also the wider arch and overall legacy of punk culture. Through this analysis, an explicit correlation is drawn between the world of punk, the educations it provides, and the ripples of its wider socio-cultural impact.

June 2025 | Hardback 236x160mm | 324 Pages | ISBN: 979-8-8819-0268-1

**SUBJECTS** Sociology, Music Studies, Cultural Studies

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