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# **Straight Edge Punk - a paradigm shift in the environmental movements market:**

**The tacit environmental activism of Straight Edge**

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**Candace James**

**Student ID 7921024**

**School of Environment and Development**

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# DEDICATION

To animals and the biosphere itself that face abuse and treated like a commodity,  
without thought or consideration.

To those who give a voice to animals and the biosphere, and to those who gave their  
lives protecting it...

...I dedicate this to you.

Love animals: God has given them the rudiments of thought and joy untroubled. Do not trouble their joy, don't harass them, don't deprive them of their happiness, and don't work against God's intent. Man, do not pride yourself on superiority to animals; they are without sin, and you, with your greatness, defile the earth by your appearance on it, and leave the traces of your foulness after you - alas, it is true of almost every one of us!

Fyodor Dostoyevsky (1821-1881)

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Dedication .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Statement on plagiarism .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Declaration .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Intellectual Property Statement.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Abstract.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Acknowledgements.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>List of Figures.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>List of Tables .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>List of Abbreviations .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>1 CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>11</b>
1.1 Background.....	11
1.2 Shape and scope of study .....	13
1.3 Structure .....	15
<b>2 CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH CONTEXT.....</b>	<b>16</b>
2.1 Research review.....	16
2.1.1 Cultural anthropology.....	16
2.1.1.1 Resistance.....	16
2.1.1.2 Abstention.....	17
2.1.1.3 Self-realisation.....	19
2.1.1.4 Social transformation.....	19
2.1.2 Social Movements (SM).....	22
2.1.3 Collective identity and Participation .....	24
2.1.3.1 Continuum of Behaviours.....	25
2.1.2 Politics.....	26
2.1.2.1 Contentious Politics (CP) vs Prefigurative Politics.....	26
2.1.2.1.1 Prefigurative Politics.....	27
2.1.2.2 Punk Politics.....	28
2.2 Key findings of research context .....	29
2.3 A gap in current research.....	31
<b>3 CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>33</b>
3.1 Aim and research questions.....	33
3.2 Objectives .....	33
3.3 Research design and strategy.....	34
3.4 Framework for data analysis.....	39
3.4.1 Grounded Theory .....	39
3.4.2 Discourse Analysis.....	40
3.5 Validation .....	42
<b>4 CHAPTER 4: IS sXe A TYPE OF RADICAL ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT?43</b>	
4.1 Introduction .....	43
4.2 Network embeddedness of sXe within the punk movement. ....	44
4.3 Core values; resistance, abstention, self-realisation and social transformation... 49	
4.3.1 Resistance and self-realisation .....	49
4.3.2 Social transformation and abstention.....	51
4.3.2.1 A description of a radical movement.....	53
4.4 Results .....	55
4.5 Broader implications of the study .....	60
<b>5 CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>63</b>

<b>6</b>	<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>PARTICIPANT INTERVIEWS.....</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Appendices.....</b>	<b>74</b>
8.1	Appendix 1 – Hansard transcripts form 1977 Parliament sitting discussing punk in derogatory terms.....	74
8.2	Appendix 2 – Vivienne Westwood Boutique, King Street, Manchester .....	76
8.3	Appendix 3 – Brain functional networks of vegans, vegetarians and omnivores..	77
8.4	Appendix 4 – Final questionnaire survey via Surveymonkey.com .....	79
8.5	Appendix 5 – List of social networking sites used for the questionnaire survey...	80
8.6	Appendix 6 – Participant information.....	81
8.7	Appendix 7 – Participant Consent form .....	82
8.8	Appendix 8 – Discourse from the online survey questions .....	83
8.9	Appendix 9 – Song lyrics.....	85
8.10	Appendix 10 – Hardline Manifesto .....	86
8.11	Appendix 11 – At the Edge. Stiff Little Fingers.....	87
8.12	Appendix 12 – Academic papers not included .....	88

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis will claim that participants of the punk phenomenon, straight edge, engage in radical environmentalism through tacit behaviours. Moreover, it will demonstrate that depoliticization, based upon the ontological perspective of the participants interviewed, patterns of explicit behaviours, and implicit beliefs, makes straight edge punk a new type of radical environmental movement.

Punk has enjoyed scholarly attention for many reasons, whereas the meta-rebellion of straight edge punk has been neglected as a countercultural contributor to environmentalism. This study attempted to contribute to the gap in research that straight edge punks depoliticize and have their own brand of environmentalism.

As well as autoethnography, mixed methods were used to facilitate a triangulation of data. Quantitative methods were used to predict and model straight edge punk's behaviours and decision-making as an awkward social movement, while qualitative methods utilised empirical, secondary data to extrapolate a theory. Fourteen semi-structured interviews, one hundred and eight online questionnaires, and song lyrics, supplemented the interviews, since interviews alone are insufficient in explaining the phenomena of tacit ecocentrism in straight edge punks.

Using grounded theory, the participants were given the opportunity to talk about their involvement in environmentalism and activism, and how it was related to their behaviours and food politics of veganism. It also emerged that punk music, song lyrics and network embeddedness had an impact on participant's beliefs. From research analysis, axial coding revealed patterns in discourse that highlighted animal rights and environmentalism were talked about most frequently. Netnographic data showed a contradiction in questionnaire answers, and that further research was needed to accurately gauge the tacit ethics of straight edge punks in a wide geographic area. Additionally, ethnographic observations revealed that punk as a movement has an ecocentric system of values.

**Key words:** Autoethnographic; Awkward social movement; Depoliticization; Ecocentrism; Grounded theory; Meta-rebellion; Network embeddedness; Radical environmental movement; Straight edge punk; Tacit environmentalism; Veganism.

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To The Creator, I give all the glory.

## LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 2 - PAPER-CLIPPING SHOWING THE SEX PISTOLS FROM THE LONDON EVENING STANDARD AND WHAT THE BRITISH MEDIA THOUGHT OF PUNKS. DECEMBER 1ST 1976. AUTHORS OWN SCAN. ....	13
FIGURE 3 - SxE HIERARCHICAL ORGANOGRAM AND THE TWO MAIN QUESTIONS OF THIS STUDY SHOWN WITH A DOTTED OUTLINE. AUTHORS OWN.....	14
FIGURE 4 - PIE CHART OF PARTICIPANTS .....	38
FIGURE 5 - KING MOB POSTER FROM THE 1970s. PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN AT A PUNK ART EXHIBITION AT THE HAYWARD GALLERY, LONDON, CALLED 'SOMEDAY ALL THE ADULTS WILL DIE'. AUTHORS OWN PHOTOGRAPH. ....	44
FIGURE 6 - VIVIENNE WESTWOOD JOINS CAMPAIGNERS PROTESTING IN PARLIAMENT SQUARE TO URGE BRITAIN'S GOVERNMENT TO BAN THE USE OF PESTICIDES CONTAINING NEONICOTINOIDS, IN CENTRAL LONDON, APRIL 26, 2013.....	45
FIGURE 8 - ONLINE SURVEY QUESTION 1 .....	57
FIGURE 9 - ONLINE SURVEY QUESTION 2 .....	57
FIGURE 10 – DIMENSIONALIZED CATEGORIES OF WORDS AND THEMES FOUND IN THE SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS.....	59
FIGURE 11 – fMRI WITHIN-GROUP ANALYSIS OF ACTIVATIONS. ....	78

## LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 1 - LYRICS TO PUNK SONGS STRAIGHT EDGE AND BREAKOUT .....	12
TABLE 2 - CONTINUUM OF BEHAVIOURS. AUTHORS OWN BASED ON HAENFLER 2004. ....	25
TABLE 3 - GROUNDED THEORY. AUTHORS OWN BASED ON STRAUSS AND CORBIN 1998. ..	40
TABLE 4 - ONLINE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE .....	56
TABLE 5 - AXIAL CODING RESULTS .....	58
TABLE 6 - PARTICIPANT INTERVIEWS .....	73
TABLE 7 - FEEDING HABITS AND EMPATHY RESPONSE TO HUMAN AND ANIMAL SUFFERING IMAGES. AUTHORS OWN.....	77

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

<b><u>Abbreviation</u></b>	<b><u>Term</u></b>
<b>ALM</b>	<b>Alternative lifestyle movement</b>
<b>ASM</b>	<b>Awkward social movement</b>
<b>CFC</b>	<b>Chlorofluorocarbon</b>
<b>CP</b>	<b>Contentious politics</b>
<b>EA</b>	<b>Environmental activism</b>
<b>EC</b>	<b>Environmental citizenship</b>
<b>EQ</b>	<b>Empathy Quotient</b>
<b>LM</b>	<b>Lifestyles movement</b>
<b>NSM</b>	<b>New social movement</b>
<b>REM</b>	<b>Radical environmental movement</b>
<b>SI</b>	<b>Social identity</b>
<b>SM</b>	<b>Social movement</b>
<b>SMO</b>	<b>Social Movement Organisation</b>
<b>sXe</b>	<b>Straight Edge</b>
<b>TE</b>	<b>Tacit environmentalism</b>
<b>TPB</b>	<b>Theory of Planned Behaviour</b>
<b>VsXe</b>	<b>Vegan straight edge punk</b>

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

This is an autobiographical project and personal narrative that explores the writer's participation of being a vegan straight edge punk (sXe). It is not a mind-experiment in anarchy, but an autoethnographic study of the environmental activism that happens regularly in the sXe scene. The rationale for an autoethnographic approach was due to this concept, which I had recognised over the past three decades, but was invisible within academic literature and the punk movement itself. Therefore, the focus of this study is the tacit environmentalism (TE) within the sXe movement.

In 1977 I was fourteen years of age and I joined the counterculture of the Punk Movement.<sup>1</sup> It gave a meaning to my life in terms of resistance. The punk scene, however, was fuelled by substance use and not something I felt drawn towards. I rejected the nihilism associated with punk. In 1979, when I was fifteen, I heard a song by the punk band Stiff Little Fingers (not a straight edge band) called Breakout (Table 1), which helped me see I could be different, even within the counterculture of punk. Then, in 1981, I heard a forty-six second song called 'Straight Edge' (Table 1) by the punk band Minor Threat (Figure 1), and realised this is what I was: a straight edge punk (sXe). This song gave birth to the label 'straight edge', and a culture emerged out of it.

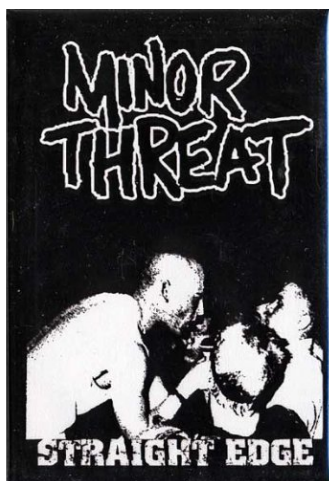


Figure 1 - Punk band Minor Threat's single cover, Straight Edge

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<sup>1</sup> Punk is broadly accepted academically and within the punk counterculture as meaning: **a)** Be individual **b)** Create music for yourself which is why most punks have learnt an instrument **c)** Do-it-yourself and not just be consumers **d)** Probably most importantly, question everything.



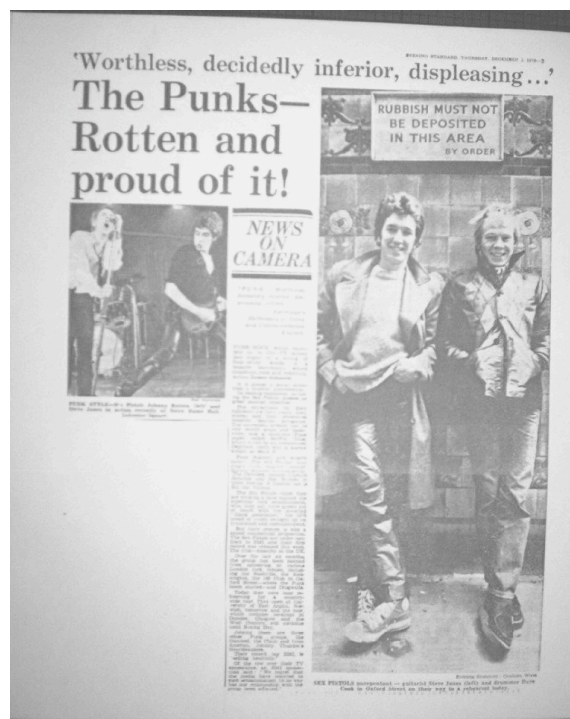
Straight Edge – Minor Threat	Breakout – Stiff Little Fingers
<p>I'm a person just like you But I've got better things to do Than sit around and fuck my head Hang out with the living dead</p> <p>Snort white shit up my nose Pass out at the shows I don't even think about speed That's something I just don't need</p> <p>I'VE GOT STRAIGHT EDGE</p> <p>I'm a person just like you But I've got better things to do Than sit around and smoke dope 'Cause I know I can cope</p> <p>Laugh at the thought of eating ludes Laugh at the thought of sniffing glue Always gonna keep in touch Never want to use a crutch</p> <p>I'VE GOT STRAIGHT EDGE</p> <p>© Minor Threat</p>	<p>Ain't got no money but I don't give a damn 'Cos when I get it I spend it fast as I can Ain't got no worries at least none I can see Gonna make a fast connection then I'll be free I gotta</p> <p>(CHORUS) Breakout and leave this life behind Breakout and see what I can find Might lose I'm gonna try my luck Might win don't really give a fuck</p> <p>And I gotta try 'cos I gotta know If I'm a winner or the star of the show Can't stand routine for another day Rules and regulations getting in my way I gotta</p> <p>(CHORUS) And I won't let anyone put me down I ain't gonna be nobody's clown I won't be taken in by their promises, no I'm gonna try on my terms this time</p> <p>So if I can do it you can do it too Why don't you try it you've got nothing to lose A boring job living from day to day Do something different try to break away</p> <p>(CHORUS) Breakout Breakout</p> <p>© Stiff Little Fingers</p>

**Table 1 - Lyrics to punk songs Straight Edge and Breakout**

## 1.2 Shape and scope of study

The purpose of this study is to get beyond the ghettoization of the green issue, and aims to demonstrate, through interviews, surveys and secondary data, that sXe is a radical environmental movement (REM), via its activism and ethos. It also makes the case, in Chapter 4, that being sXe implies, by its core values, not only environmental concern, but aims to contribute to the gap in research regarding REMs.

Punk was a watershed and raised questions in the British parliament (Appendix 1), media (Figure 2), and in theoretical research in a unique way. Punk was and still is hard to understand and categorise.



*“Worthless, decidedly inferior, displeasing...”*

London Evening Standard.

*“What’s that but a declaration of war?”*

John Lydon, Jonathan Ross interview (BBC1, 2001).

**Figure 2 - Paper-clipping showing the Sex Pistols from the London Evening Standard and what the British media thought of Punks. December 1st 1976. Authors own scan.**

Punk changed society, in that it questioned everything, and as a musical form of art it destabilised the lucrative industries associated with it via its ‘do-it-yourself’ message. Interestingly, radical commentators in the UK ‘agreed’ that punk (music and the culture it bred) was a good thing (Frith, 1980/1997). This study is not about the culture of punk, as this has been extensively covered in literature, and neither is it about the lifestyle of the sXe movement, but it will only be referred to where appropriate. It will explore the core values of sXe, and how those values translate into activities that could be deemed as radical environmental behaviours, because of sXe being situated within the counterculture of punk.

This study will also explore how, through the complex structure of sXe, the network connections that binds depoliticization and a REM together (see Figure 3). The study is based on one main research question and a sub question:

1. Is sXe a type of radical environmental movement?
  - a. Does depoliticization apply to sXe?

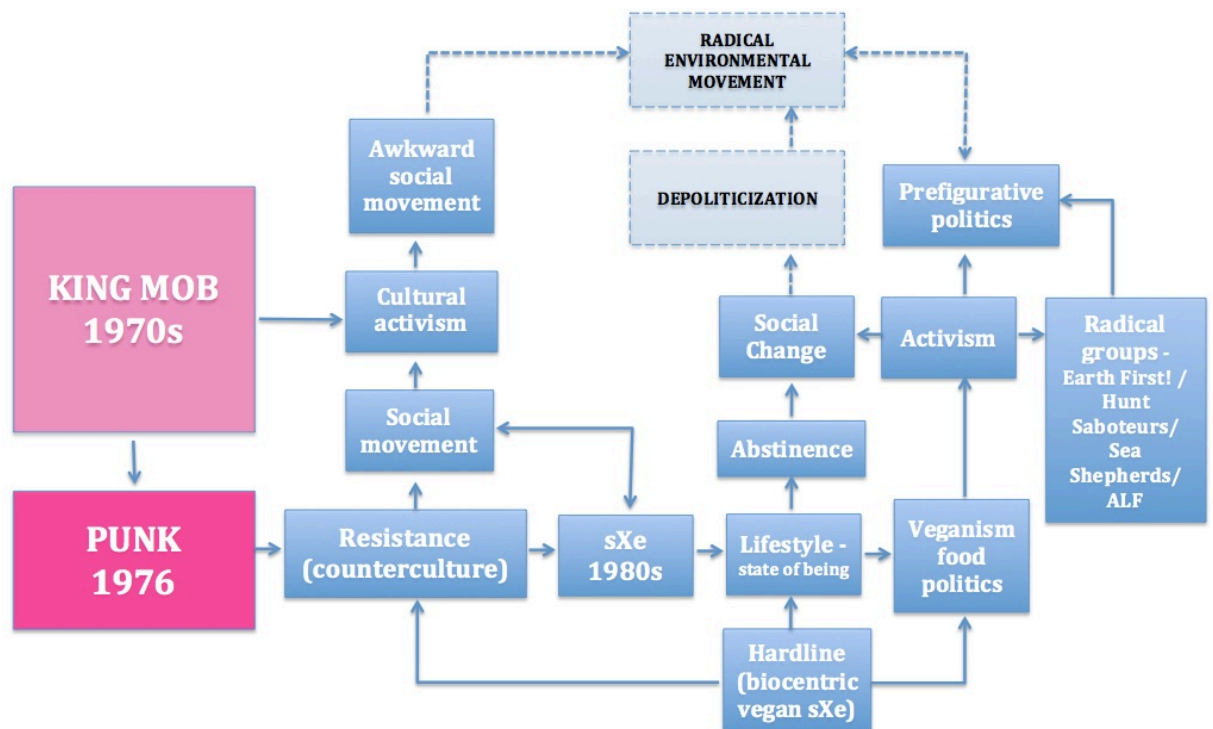


Figure 3 - sXe hierarchical organogram and the two main questions of this study shown with a dotted outline. Authors own.

There are three types of data collection which will provide the research needed to answer the questions posed and fill the gap in current research. The methods used are secondary data, semi-structured interviews and a survey questionnaire. The survey questionnaire was based on asking questions to discover any dimensions that influenced sXers behaviours. To do this a theory by William Marston, called DISC,<sup>2</sup> will be utilised, where he argued that these behavioral types stem from people's sense of self and their connection with their environment. Taking this concept of asking the same question in a different way, the following questions were posed for the online survey questionnaire:

<sup>2</sup> DISC is a theory based on behaviour types Dominance (D), Inducement (I), Submission (S), and Compliance (C) Marston, William M. (1928). *Emotions of Normal People*.

1. Do you see yourself as a radical environmental activist?
2. Do you think sXe is a radical environmental movement?

The results of the survey questionnaire are discussed in Chapters 4.

### **1.3 Structure**

Chapter 2 – ‘Research context’ contains the following:

- An overview of the current literature and key points arising from cultural anthropology and politics. First, it considers the core values of sXers and focuses on these (resistance, abstention, self-realisation and social transformation), using Haenfler’s perspective: that it is time “to rethink and expand notions of resistance” (Haenfler 2004: 409). Second is the role that politics play in sXe. This considers prefigurative politics and how it is linked to lifestyle action, as it describes activists’ who want to create the kind of world they want to live in (Breines, 1989)
- A summary of the main points found in the research and theoretical context
- Consideration of how this study could possibly fill the current gap in literature

Chapter 3 – the methodology contains the following:

- The aim and research questions
- The objective of the study detailing the approaches used
- The design of the research and strategies employed
- The frameworks for analysing the results and the methods used
- A justification of the choice of methodology uses to answer the questions set out in the aims and objectives

Chapter 4 – Main research question 1: “Is sXe a type of radical environmental movement?” This chapter brings together the conclusions of the analysis, including a brief discussion of depolicization.

Chapter 5 – Conclusion and highlights the main findings of this study, and puts forward any implications for further research.

## **2 CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH CONTEXT**

This chapter considers a selection of articles and books, which are relevant to the focus on this study. The following sources have been carefully selected within the academic research into social movements, and will identify the politics within which sXe operates. They focus on cultural anthropology (sociology) and politics. There are a large number of studies on new social movements, environmentalism, direct action, lifestyle movements, and the politics within which they fall. However, since the focus of this study is on sXe, within the scope of social movements these will not be reviewed in depth, and will only be referred to as appropriate.

### **2.1 Research review**

#### **2.1.1 Cultural anthropology**

Haenfler wrote a paper titled “Rethinking Cultural Resistance: Core Values of the Straight Edge Movement”. It has been cited seventy-eight times in various disciplines. He wrote the paper from a longitudinal participant observation (Agar 1996), affirming his interest in social justice and environmentalism, but manages throughout to stay neutral, and at no point glorifies straight edge. This paper sets out the core values of sXe, and I will focus on these: resistance (oppositional subcultures), abstention (clean-living), self-realisation (clear-minded), and social transformation (activism and progressive politics), which all overlap to form subcultural resistance.

Haenfler states that the article fills a gap at that time in literature for an empirical account of sXe movement, which had not been extensively researched and gave an opportunity “to rethink and expand notions of resistance” (Haenfler 2004: 409). Haenfler details an overview of other previous subcultures to place sXe in a historical context (punks, skinheads, hippies), his methods, the core values and sXers involvement, and a new framework for analysing sXers experiences. Only the core values of sXers will be discussed in depth in this review.

##### **2.1.1.1.1 Resistance**

Haenfler draws from the critique of Muggleton (2000), Grossberg (1992), Young and Craig (1997) and Gottschalk (1993), to question whether they should have “a broader understanding of resistance that accounts for members’ (sXe) individualistic orientations” (Haenfler 2004: 408). Haenfler is well qualified to judge this, as he

himself is straight edge and has been since he was fifteen, in 1989.

Being sXe infers political behaviour: it is an act of resistance, as individual sXers resist domination of the alcohol, tobacco and drug industries, as well as hegemony. Taylor and Whittier termed it “the politicization of the self and daily life”, meaning the actors practice a lifestyle they envision for the future (Taylor and Whittier, 1992: 117; Scott, 1995; Melucci, 1989, 1996). Haenfler believes resistance is multi-layered; it has to be put in context and is not a static and uniform act, as depicted by many scholars. For example, the early subcultural theorists at the Birmingham University’s Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) failed to acknowledge subculture participants subjectivities, focusing on Marxist/class-based explanations, staid and static theories. Post-modern theorists have also criticised the CCCS ideas, as subcultures are not easily categorised. Straight edge is a subculture-counterculture (Helton, Staudenmeier 2002) of punk rock. Robert T Wood (2004) argues that his “findings encourage future researchers to examine sub-cultures not only in terms of their cultural commonalities, but also in terms of their internal complexities and contradictions” (Haenfler, 2004: 408; Wood, 2003).

Haenfler maintains that the personal is political. It is this outlook within sXe: some are actively involved in animal rights and environmentalism, whilst others make their everyday lifestyle a form of political protest. Rather than directly challenge companies, many would show resistance by boycotting products, adopt a vegan/vegetarian lifestyle, amongst other actions. Subcultures, by their very nature, are politically meaningful, and can serve as a stepping-stone to more involved political involvement. Moreover, sXe is more than just a label; it is a collective challenge to the rest of society, resisting dominating authorities, becoming a visible lifestyle and setting up an alternative for others to follow (Haenfler, 2004: 428).

#### 2.1.1.1.2 Abstention

To become a member of sXe one must abide by its core values, which are as follows: one must wholly abstain from casual sex, using drugs, tobacco and alcohol. This is a commitment for a life-long way to live. One criticism of sXe is, if one has a lapse, they “lose any claim to the sXe identity” (Haenfler, 2004: 409).

Abstention to sXers is a political statement of resistance, but it also is a conscious way to question societal values that, in many cases, leads to involvement in social change. Using abstinence for someone in sXe gives them the power to make conscientious decisions, which affect their lives as well as society as a whole. Like the Ghandi movement, which also featured abstinence, being sXe offers inclusion into a community, and this, in 2013, is worldwide.

The Abstinence Movement is a single-issue movement and based in morality politics. Its policies attempt to change behaviours by being authoritative or using financial incentives (Williams, 2011: 6). Unlike sXe, which is anti-authority, and entered into freely, the Abstinence Movement relies on institutional and governmental sponsorship for support. The main difference between sXe and the Abstinence Movement is sXe takes the whole issue, question and concept of abstinence to include no drugs, drinking or smoking. Straight edge does not oppose sex before marriage, but it does encourage saving sexual intercourse for loving and long-lasting relationships. Straight edge does this out of respect for self and the other person, and not for religious reasons, which the Abstinence Movement is based on.

As a social movement the Abstinence Movement's aims are to influence other moralistic organisations (anti-homosexual, anti-abortion, anti-pornography), and gain their support as sympathisers to their cause. In contrast, sXe is insular and does not have links by social interaction with other groups outside the scene. Straight edge participants, however, may join other social, cultural or radical groups, for example vegan and environmental groups.

Whilst early sXers came from an evangelical Christian background, the current scene and the main identity of sXe are rooted in 'punk-fundamentalism' and resistance. The Abstinence Movement uses elaborate shows in schools aimed at adolescents to spread its message, which is similar to sXe gigs, to disseminate the core values of sXe. The similarities between sXe and the Abstinence Movement are the message to teens of abstinence, but for different agendas. The Abstinence Movement relies on the classic social movements framework and politics to lobby for cultural change. Straight edge, on the other hand, is more exaggerated and relies on the lyrics from



sXe bands to affect cultural change. Straight edge has no allegiance to other institutional politics, and therefore does not fit the standard social movement model.

#### 2.1.1.1.3 Self-realisation

“We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking  
we used when we created them”.

Albert Einstein

Being clear-headed within the sXe movement is a doorway to a positive outlook on life. Many sXers are vegan or vegetarian, and as studies show they have more empathy than omnivores, which can be translated to a clearer vision of social cognition (Filippi M, Riccitelli G, Falini A, Di Salle F, Vuilleumier P, et al. 2010). This could be interpreted as what Einstein was expressing in the above epigram: that new ways of thinking would solve problems. Straight edgers believe that norms make the world worse off, and to question them aids in self-realisation in a positive way. A new thinking to the old problem of youth cultures, fuelled by drugs, drink and health-destroying habits is, what sXers realise and try to convey to their peers. It gives sXers control over their own lives, to carry out activism and to question authority. They claimed that, in resisting societal standards of mediocrity and conformity, and what was expected of them (go out take drugs, get drunk and sleep around), gives sXers a way to self-realisation with a clean-living set of rules to follow. Many sXers feel that their potential is “slowly crushed and destroyed by a standardized society and mechanical teaching” (Berger, 1967: 19). The self-realisation that occurs within sXe could be viewed as an awkward social movement through its cultural activism,<sup>3</sup> and seen as radical environmental behaviour (Armstrong and Bernstein, 2008: 78).

As a participant in sXe, and after self-analysis, one critique of this self-realisation is that some members can think of themselves as elite, and distance themselves from others outside of the sXe community in a disapproving way.

#### 2.1.1.1.4 Social transformation

Many sXers are involved in progressive causes, which forms part of the core values of sXe. Activism, as defined by the *Oxford Dictionary*, can be understood as: *action of using vigorous campaigning to bring about political or social change*. The on-going

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<sup>3</sup> Cultural activism: Actively attempting to change culture, trying to be the change one wants to see in the world and showing others it is possible. Cultural activism is about creating, sharing, and living a cultural target. It is not passive or quiet, and it tries to build rather than pressure others into different beliefs and behaviour. <http://www.mail-archive.com/ecopath@csf.colorado.edu/msg00065.html> [Accessed 09/04/2013]

campaign of abstention leads the way to clear thinking, and many in sXe saw the logical step into being directly involved in social change (Haenfler, 2004: 425).

Animal rights and environmentalism were at the top of the agenda for causes which sXers were involved in, and at least three out of four sXers were vegetarian or vegan, according to Haenfler. This micro level of personal choice, connected to personal identity within the sXe movement, becomes the “politics of self-actualization”, and a “politics of life decisions”, through individual action (Giddens, 1991: 214-15; Haenfler, 2004: 427/431). Social transformation, therefore, is through the hope of influencing others (especially other youths), and important in the resistance business (Leblanc 1999).

The Vegan Movement is a diffuse cultural movement, and in the main has been studied according to the substantialist approach (Emirbayer, 1997). Elizabeth Cherry’s paper, titled “Veganism as a Cultural Movement: A Relational Approach”, and cited 30 times, argues the substantialist interpretation is not enough to explain motivations and behaviours within veganism. Cherry uses two groups of vegans, punks and non-punks, to show how support, discourse and network embeddedness creates solid vegan activism.

The relational approach is well situated to explain diffuse movements, such as veganism and sXe, as it explains the core values of both movements, and captures the dynamism of contentious politics and social movements (Cherry, 2006: 156). Relational thought, in the context of Cherry’s research, describes a variety of aspects and phases of behaviours, without looking to external forces to explain the eating behaviour of vegan punks and vegan non-punks. Cherry comments that framing (Snow & Benford, 1988) provides a link between relational approaches and social movements. Comparing veganism and sXe, framing therefore offers both movements “a collective of discursive repertoires”, which are then collectively used to “diagnose a social problem and advise a specific route for social change” (Cherry, 2006: 158).

In her study group, Cherry conducts semi-structured ethnographic in-depth interviews with twenty-two vegans unaffiliated to vegan organisations, and half of them (twelve) were affiliated with the punk counterculture (Cherry, 2006: 159). Cherry’s analysis

revealed that the strict vegans who wholly adhered to the definitions of veganism, as laid down by the Vegan Society, were all the punks; whereas the non-punks were more lenient with their definitions of being vegan, and were prone to backsliding. It is the core values of the punks and relational thinking which are similar to sXe and its strong social networks. Cherry questions substantialist interpretations to adequately explain the differing behaviours of the two groups of vegans. Substantialist thinking maintains the “vegans as rational actors and would attribute their actions to individual strength or willpower” (Cherry, 2006: 161). Cherry disagrees with this in terms of relational theory, and claims it is much more to do with a strong social network embeddedness (McAdam, 1986, 1988), to support the participant’s food politics and continual involvement in punk.

Whereas the non-punks had little or no ‘pull’ factors (McAdam, 1986) to situate them in a meaningful social network, the punks, as do sXers, have plenty. With the punk counterculture comes a long-standing tradition of songs featuring lyrics which enlighten the listener to a new way of thinking for themselves, gigs, a brother/sisterhood, zines,<sup>4</sup> fashion and food politics. These pull factors enable social embeddedness that has been continuous since 1976. These core values, according to Cherry, seem to be the main reason that the vegan punks were more committed and had a better understanding of what being vegan really meant. Coupled with this, knowledge was a discourse between the punks that fostered a close affinity, led to activism, and replaced conventional norms with subcultural norms. Both the vegan movement and sXe are diffuse movements, very similar in their core values and practices, and slot into Armstrong and Bernstein’s Awkward Social Movement (ASM) model, which is discussed below. Conversely, the non-punks were usually isolated in their veganism, embedded in social networks which did not support their veganism, and backslide more frequently (Cherry, 2006: 167). What Cherry did not take into account was the brain functional networks and the levels of empathy in her vegans as a determinant of their commitment (Appendix 3).

In summary, Haenfler shows how the core values of sXe illustrate that subcultures are a reaction to other countercultures (punk) and to society as a whole. It is a form of resistance, and many sXers engage in environmental or animal activism. The

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<sup>4</sup> A ‘zine’ is a do-it-yourself short magazine, usually A5 in size.

interview data shows that sXe is more than just abstention; it is about actively spreading the word and setting an example. Veganism shares similar traits to sXe of core values, especially amongst the vegan punks. Due to social networks, which provide a non-hierarchical structure of the punk counterculture, Cherry's research showed a strong discourse between the vegan punks in her study and the bands they followed, creating a vegan activism that will be discussed in Chapter 4. As well as sharing the same core values as sXe, veganism is a social movement that leads to cultural activism, and will be discussed in more detail in the next section 2.1.1.2.

#### 2.1.1.2 Social Movements (SM)

Social movements (SMs) feature collective action (rather than individual) and are deemed externally focused (Haenfler et al., 2012); a lifestyle movement (LM) is seen as self-centred. According to current models, therefore, only SMs can create social change, in a way that lifestyle choice is unable to. The blind spot, alluded to by Haenfler et al., is filled by the following study and discussed in Chapter 4: that sXe is in fact an environmental movement, and, as a movement (and its activities), it slots into the space between LMs and SMs (Haenfler et al., 2012: 2). For the purpose of this study, that space between a LM and a SM shall be called 'tacit environmentalism' (TE).<sup>5</sup>

The strategy of being part of a lifestyle movement is, as argued by Haenfler et al., target based by participation. Wholly supporting this study, it can be said, therefore, that sXe indeed fits into the order of being a LM by being the following:

1. Mainly individualised and private
2. On-going (1980-date)
3. Aimed towards changing cultural and economic practices more than trying to overtly target the state

In their paper, Haenfler et al. assert that collective identity can be the site of social change (Haenfler et al., 2012: 9), and they conclude their paper by linking the relationship between LM and SM, even though LMs create cultural change and do not necessarily engage in public collective action. They argue that LM identities are customisable and can be interested in other social change causes. For example,

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<sup>5</sup> 'Tacit', for this purpose, is defined as interaction between people and their environment, as knowledge that is subconscious, and not immediately able to be articulated but related to experiences; something that exists in a human being and is embodied by their behaviour (Polanyi, 1966).

sXers conduct high-risk direct action, or start cooperative food movements, as lifestyle choices which can consequently lead to social change. Due to the networks which operate between society, industry and sXe, a kind of hybrid environmental movement within sXe was created to cause social change.

German sociologist Joseph Huber wrote a paper in 1989, cited eleven times on new social movements (NSM), saying, in his heavily theoretical paper about SMs, that it has all been done before and there is nothing really new. Huber argues SMs are a necessary part of/modernisation and cultural change. The purpose of this paper, and why I chose to review it, is not to diagnose any one particular movement, as each movement's 'résumés' are different and beyond the scope of his article, but to focus on the NSM aspects of it.

Under the heading *The Paradigm of Human Ecology and the Role Social Movements Play in the System's Socioecological Readaptation*, Huber maintains that a SMs main concern is to restructure "the relationship between system and environment" (Huber, 1989: 369).<sup>7</sup> Huber calls this a "sociocultural developmental impulse". This explains how sXe participants view change (social) from the freedom of substances, such as alcohol and drugs, and a persona in the form of substance-free expression, without needing the industries that supply substances.

Huber uses the word 'demand' to do justice and places this in a cultural context. In essence, a SM, according to Huber, can achieve a readaptation of the systems that govern them, to the needs of both the biophysical and sociocultural world, stating that SM are antitechnocratic, as they concern themselves with the 'life-sphere'. Huber then argues that a SM forces people (and nature) to unintentionally adapt, suggesting that a SM creates unwanted system change, as state, industry and the like adapt to stay one step ahead of adverse cultural change. This explains why sXe has no realpolitik, and does not readily get involved directly with political activism; instead it is expressed through self-realisation. It also goes some way to explaining Haenfler et al.'s (2012) gap between SM and LM, as sXe and punk in general are

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<sup>7</sup> Human ecology is the study of the relationship between humans and their natural, social, and built environments. For further clarification see *Human Ecology Theory*, Margaret M. Bubolz and Suzanne Sontag [http://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007%2F978-0-387-85764-0\\_17?LI=true](http://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007%2F978-0-387-85764-0_17?LI=true) [Accessed 04/03/2013].

apolitical. The approach from sXe participants is to govern oneself, and, through a sober revolution, make choices thus creating depoliticization.

In the final few paragraphs Huber offers an alternative: for SMs to choose whether or not to become a political movement. He says a SM can become a political movement (sXe is not, but the abstinence movement is), or feed a political movement to change the system. For example, sXe members support other environmental political movements as part of their secondary behaviour, which will be discussed in *Collective Identity in the Straight Edge Movement: How Diffuse Movements Foster Commitment, Encourage Individualised Participation, and Promote Cultural Change* (Haenfler, 2004). Greenpeace is striving to become a political movement as it positions itself to change policy, and it also has support from some sXers. Both Greenpeace and sXe want the power to change systems for the greater good. Straight edge, however, chooses not to enter into any form of political movement, as being punk implies a post-political viewpoint, and sXer's goals are for "personal transformation and reform in lifestyle" (Huber, 1989: 372).

#### 2.1.1.3 Collective identity and Participation

As mentioned above, Haenfler et al. (2012) argues that sXe, as a movement, falls into the cultural movement bracket. In another journal article by Haenfler, "Rethinking Subcultural Resistance: Core Values of the Straight Edge Movement" (2004), he says the overriding goal of sXe is not just to be drug free for individual gratification, but also as a social measure, which collectively creates social change and issues a strong cultural challenge (Haenfler 2004: 787). The collective identity of sXe, which is wholly unique for a non-religious based lifestyle of abstinence, gives it a strong argument for being a movement of some kind. With no formal structure, as its core roots are in punk, and through Internet-based social networking, it gained momentum to create world-wide cultural change and formed the basis of a movement via "submerged networks" (Melucci, 1998). The structure, Haenfler argues, for sXe being a cultural movement, is in music, the Internet, its use of do-it-yourself 'zines', and a collective identity, and these are critical for sXe as a diffuse movement. Participation in sXe, Haenfler says, is customised "to meet their own interests and needs" (Haenfler, 2004: 794). From a personal perspective, through longitudinal participant observation (Agar, 1996), sXe is unlike other movements, as its ethos, based in punk, means questioning everything, especially societal norms. The participation of a

person in sXe is based upon an inward reflection of one's own strength to stand apart from the norm of utilising substances, for a variety of reasons. Non-reliance, therefore, is a key theme of sXe, and, without needing to rely on other sXers, the bond of freely participating is formed on a non-dependency (McAdam and Paulsen, 1993: 154).

These behaviours change the sXers individual daily lives. Indeed, taking responsibility for ones own actions becomes more sustainable than taking all together high-risk actions, and offers participation in 'drip-drip' social change. Both Huber and Haenfler argue the same point: that movements like this can lead to other activism or political involvement (Haenfler, 2004: 800; Huber, 1989: 373). The only problem with such an inward looking subjectivity is possible inertia, and an 'I'm alright Jack' outlook. The sXe scene does offer a cocoon to live in sobriety, and this could possibly foster a nonchalant attitude.

#### 2.1.1.3.1 Continuum of Behaviours.

There are core behaviours that Haenfler calls 'Continuum of Behaviours'. In Table 2 these are broken into three: essential, secondary and peripheral (Haenfler 2004: 794).

<b>Essential (Abstinence)</b>	<b>Secondary (Individual choice)</b>	<b>Peripheral (Individual choice)</b>
<b>No drugs</b>	<b>Vegan/fruitarian</b>	<b>Avoid coffee</b>
<b>No alcohol</b>	<b>Vegetarian</b>	<b>Avoid prescription medication</b>
<b>No smoking</b>	<b>sXe tattoos</b>	<b>Avoid mainstream jobs</b>
	<b>Social causes e.g. animal rights environmentalism</b>	<b>Create music, art, zines</b>
	<b>Abstain from promiscuous sex</b>	<b>Attend sXe shows</b>

**Table 2 - Continuum of Behaviours. Authors own based on Haenfler 2004.**



These behaviours, Haenfler asserts, offers sXers a way to customise their commitment to straight edge (as is the nature of punk in general), and to interpret their individual participation (and values) to tailor their “identity to match their own biography” (Haenfler 2004: 794).

Haenfler’s paper argues the case that sXe, as a movement, is trying to bring about cultural change, as opposed to a political one (Scott, 1990; Polletta, 1997). Abstinence is more than a token effort; it is a lifetime commitment at grassroots level.

As sXe is a subculture-counterculture (Helton and Staudenmeier, 2002). It strives to exhibit cultural challenges to the norms by a lifestyle free from slavery to substances, and create an “alternative institution”, not involving mind/body altering substance (Haenfler, 2004: 797). Therefore it is my argument, as a participatory observer, that sXe is cultural activism situated within the countercultural movement of punk.

Haenfler concludes this paper by suggesting a new outlook on movements such as straight edge, one distinct from the current theories (SMO, CP and NSM), to cultural, lifestyle-based and diffuse movements. They will show, Haenfler argues, a new form of social change overlooked in current literature. The following study tries to explore this.

In summary, the diffuse nature of sXe could be interpreted as being a new type of environmental movement, uncategorised thus far, but one that certainly challenges, through its culture, the inertia within environmentalism. It is more than a gesture; it fosters behaviour through culture that, knowingly or unwittingly, creates social change through personal depoliticization, which will be discussed in the next section.

## 2.1.2 Politics

### 2.1.2.1 Contentious Politics (CP) vs Prefigurative Politics

The contentious politics (CP) model has become associated with social movements. However, Haenfler et al. claim that there is a scholarly blind spot, where individual action and movement participation have been trivialised. They argue that lifestyle choices can be used as a tactic for social change (Haenfler et al., 2012: 3). Alternative lifestyles movements (ALM), such as sXe or hardcore (hardline) punk, are

more difficult to define, as they are outside the norms in such an exaggerated way that they challenge predominant cultural norms and become an awkward social movement (ASM). Haenfler et al. assert that Armstrong and Bernstein's 'multi-institutional politics' theory explains, somewhat, how some movements do not fit neatly into the CP model rendering it an ASM.

Armstrong and Bernstein theorise that some movements exist to challenge multiple sources of power, and not just the state, but also, for example, economic outlets. Straight edge wants change both symbolically and materially via boycotting products (Armstrong and Bernstein 2008: 78). Being sXe is symbolic as well as material, as the target is many societal institutions (Haenfler et al., 2012: 3). Straight edge, therefore, appears to be an ASM, as it does not slot into the political process/CP models (Polletta et al., 2006); does not particularly target the state with direct action; and sXers do not consider themselves an oppressed group. Far from it, sXers feel the opposite: feeling enlightened due to being punks, free from substances/stimulants, which it is believed 'dulls' the senses.

#### 2.1.2.1.1 Prefigurative Politics

Haenfler et al. (2012) describe 'prefigurative politics' and how it is linked to lifestyle action, as it describes activists who want to create the kind of world they want to live in (Breines, 1989). Indeed, sXers want to live in a society which is not driven/fuelled by alcohol, smoking, drugs and promiscuity, and this cultural rather than political targeting is what being sXe is. Cultural targeting and challenging norms is the whole *raison d'être* of being sXe. Challenging authority structures (Snow, 2004), rather than party politics, is key to being sXe, and could be seen as depoliticization. These are the core values of sXe, a "collective individual improvement" (Maurer, 2002: 115) that, over time, will change the substance dependent and food culture we live with on a daily basis. As a SM changes over time and is on-going (not episodic), sXers believe this will change policy (through sobriety), bring respite to the environment, as well as set an example for future generations.

Haenfler et al. argues that on-going participation within a LM has a strong bent towards integrating those movement's values into every day life, where participants can become their "desirable self" (Teske, 1997), creating a strong identity. Straight

edge participants have always seen their identity as the most important tool in their kit. This is where the overlap occurs again, as it creates an obligation towards movement action, even if the participant is unaware of this intention.

In the next section on punk politics, sXe will be discussed as it has largely been ignored when researching this area. Shortly after the birth of punk, some four years later, straight edge punk emerged, but without the '*no future*' message.

#### 2.1.2.2 Punk Politics

Phillipov's paper, entitled "Haunted by the Spirit of '77: Punk Studies and the Persistence of Politics", was written for a media and cultural studies journal. I have included it in this section on politics, as it challenges the assumptions made about resistance, subversion and political radicalism.

Included is the subculture-counterculture (Helton and Staudenmeier, 2002) of straight edge, as well as punk, as they share the same roots. Punk and straight edge as cultural activism has had an impact on politics. Music is the 'weapon' of choice against the state and society, and its main aim is to question politics/policies. Is sXe music political? (Sabin 1999: 5). Straight edge music is written about political topics. Many of the lyrics speak for themselves. To some actors in sXe, they enjoy the music for pleasure, but for others it is the political and post-political message of the lyrics, which causes depoliticization (Phillipov, 2007: 392). The song lyrics of punk and sXe are discussed in Chapter 4.

Straight edge needs to be understood as both cultural and post-political, and not just as a musical format, aesthetic or a lifestyle choice. Phillipov criticises how the study of punk, in general, usually starts with the analysis of the progressive nature of punk. Instead, and perhaps more importantly, studies should ask how punk as a culture "might become articulated to radical politics?" She also goes on to critique the unwillingness of punk scholars to document the 'darker side' of punk politics. The one point that Phillipov raises is the need for a new vocabulary to theorise punk's political and post-political engagement, without slotting it into "a predetermined framework of radicalism" (Phillipov, 2007: 392). Her point is a salient one, as the culture of sXe, and as an ASM, is about resistance to societal norms and hegemony, and therefore is post-political.

In summary, the politics of sXe are more to do with cultural change and activism than changing government with direct action. The goal within sXe is both internal and external, changing one person at a time. This is difficult to study or categorise, as sXe is decentralised across the globe, and many of its behaviours are invisible (Haenfler, 2008). However, Thomas Rochon astutely observes, in his book *Ideas, Activism, and Changing Values*, “that political and social transformation both occur in response to rapid culture change” (Rochon, 1998: 8). This autoethnographic dissertation can address the difficulty in understanding invisible or tacit behaviours in sXe.

## **2.2 Key findings of research context**

The following 6 points were highlighted during the literature review, as depicted in Figure 3.

1. To mobilise the goals of sXe, nongovernmental actors are challenged, more so than government. Therefore, as an awkward movement, sXe does not fit the polity model of society (Armstrong and Bernstein, 2008: 79), but rather questions norms and therefore is post-political. An ASM is categorised as:
  - Challenge multiple sources of power
  - Straight edge wants to change systems
  - Straight edge does not slot into current political processes or models, for example, CP
  - Straight edge does not target state with direct action
  - Straight edgers do not consider themselves as an oppressed group
2. Haenfler et al. (2012) describe ‘prefigurative politics’ and how it is linked to lifestyle action, as it describes activists who want to create the kind of world they want to live in (Breines, 1989)
3. Alternative lifestyles movements, such as sXe or hardcore (hardline) punk, are more difficult to define, as they are outside the norms in such an exaggerated way that they challenge predominant cultural norms and become an awkward social movement

4. Straight edge punk is more than a gesture; it fosters behaviour through culture that, knowingly or unwittingly, creates social change through personal depoliticization
5. The core values of sXe illustrate that subcultures are a reaction to other countercultures and to society as a whole (punk). It is a form of resistance, and many sXers engage in environmental or animal activism.
6. The politics of sXe are more to do with cultural change and activism than changing government with direct action. The goal within sXe is both internal and external, changing one person at a time. This is difficult to study or categorise, appearing to be a gap in current research, which is discussed in the next section 2.3. The theoretical context of sXe as a movement, and the personal politics, will be discussed further and synthesised in Chapter 4.

### 2.3 A gap in current research

Punk as a counterculture has been researched in-depth for many years, but sXe as a subculture of punk has not shared the same level of analysis. Academics such as R. Haenfler and R.T. Wood have addressed sXe in terms analysing its core values and behaviours as a lifestyle movement or a social movement (Haenfler, 2004: 408; Wood 2003). The review showed how sXe was placed politically; but a gap in research was identified on the depoliticization perspective within sXe, and on the question of whether it was a type of environmental movement.

Upon reading the literature on the disciplines surrounding this study, it may be useful to list why such a study has not been undertaken. This is not an exhaustive list of reasons. However, one could be that punk as an ethos naturally makes sXers difficult to categorise or research by non-sXe researchers. Penetrating sXe networks and eliciting information would be difficult for a researcher who is not sXe or punk, due to sXers being suspicious of 'outsiders'. Many sXers, especially vegans and hardcore types, have engaged or are engaged in high risk direct action and do not want to be exposed for their illegal activities, which are deemed criminal or terrorist by the establishment and might lead to imprisonment.

Youth studies are mainly concerned with the social habits of young people, which involve leisure activities such as the drinking culture or music cultures. But for some reason, sXe and the environmental element of it seems has been excluded from these type of studies. Environmental studies are missing extensive research into the part subcultures/countercultures (Helton and Staudenmeier, 2002) play in green politics or grassroots environmentalism. A further gap seems to appear in environmental psychology, which, from initial review, does not mention sXe. Haenfler identifies behaviours (Haenfler, 2004: 794) which could be researched within the field of environmental psychology. Research done in 2010 by Filippi M, Riccitelli G, Falini A, Di Salle F, Vuilleumier P, et al. (2010) suggests different motivational factors are responsible for their findings, due to individual preferences *and* moral attitudes (Appendix 3). Another reason could be the methodologies employed, because of the diffuse nature of sXe across the globe. Geographically large, concentrated pockets of sXers are difficult to locate. This is mainly due to the extreme lifestyle choice of sXe,

and therefore not many people commit to it per capita of the population (youth or otherwise).

The methodological approach to this study is discussed in Chapter 3, and Chapter 4 asks whether there is a link between the tacit nature of sXers to engage in environmental or social activism and the depoliticization process.



### **3 CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Aim and research questions**

The aim of this research is to ascertain whether or not sXe is a type radical environmental group, and attempt to fill the current gap identified in section 2.3.

In current literature it is clearly understood that radical environmentalism is defined as a grassroots collective, one that developed from an ecocentric-based viewpoint which mainstream environmentalism has ghettoized. It is the ideology behind a radical environmentalist. This autoethnographic project, with an ontological positionality, aims to answer the following question: through semi-structured interviews, secondary data and netnographic techniques, how does sXe allude to ecocentrism and the depoliticization process?

The aim therefore is to answer two questions:

- Chapter 4 – Is sXe a radical environmental movement?
  - Does depoliticization apply to sXe?

#### **3.2 Objectives**

The objectives are to answer the two questions in Chapter 4, and synthesise current literature on the unusual philosophical and ethical stance of straight edge.

By using qualitative methods and a humanistic approach, in-depth semi-structured interviews and participant observations were made to highlight human behaviour. As these behaviours are subjective, complex, often irrational and sometimes contradictory (Ley, 1974; Seamon, 1979), the main objective was to look for patterns in explicit behaviour and implicit or tacit beliefs. Quantitative methods of this project include a survey, using netnography to collect data from the Internet. As primary research, netnography is a computer-based tool using the World Wide Web, but based on the same concepts as ethnography, for scientific description of individual human societies (Kozinets, 1998, 2010).

A poststructuralist approach has been used to allow the voice of the participant to be heard in ways that are non-oppressive or exploitative. This was key, as it is an

autoethnographic project and epistemologically centric, thus making the positionality of the researcher as neutral as was possible (WFSG, 1997; Moss, 2001).

### **3.3 Research design and strategy**

Mixed methods were used in the research design. Quantitative methods were used to predict and model human spatial behaviour and decision-making (Clifford et al., 2006: 3; Johnson, 2003), and qualitative methods utilised interviews and secondary data. Along with the semi-structured interviews, which were insufficient for explaining inherent or tacit behaviours and actions, song lyrics were used as a secondary data source, and textual analysis was applied in order to determine their usefulness in activist and environmental attitudes. Lyrics are, it appears to sXers, a way of re-enforcing personal politics and a war cry on economics and societal norms. For that reason they have been included in Chapters 4.

Participants for the research were selected from four different sources:

1. Known cohort or peers from the punk and sXe community were chosen for a face-to-face semi-structured interview.
2. 'Snowball sampling' from participants to provide good quality respondents who could recommend relevant participants to be interviewed (Valentine, 1997: 112, 116).
3. A pilot survey questionnaire, and then a full roll out to the sXe online community utilizing the netnography process, at gigs and a vegan fair, using a touchscreen tablet device and applications (apps) to collect surveys.
4. Social networking platforms via Twitter and Facebook to contact sXe bands and sXe lifestyle sites that share sXe interests, activities and music. This was particularly important for collecting secondary data and song lyrics during desk-based analysis.

The research was designed to incorporate the views of those from, first, the punk movement, as sXe emerged from it; second, the vegan sXe (VsXe) movement; and third, other contributors from politics and environmental movements. Some of the participants contacted to take part in the study were unavailable in the allotted time.

Moreover, some did not want to sign the consent form for fear of investigation by the police, if their high-risk activities were published.

After identifying an initial list of six actors to interview, and represent those from the punk, VsXe and environmental community, 'snowball sampling' was used to extend the research to others within the sXe and vegan network. For this study it was relevant, as the sXe scene has a low visibility that required a personal introduction (Biernacki and Waldorf, 1981). Many VsXe also have a covert lifestyle due to their high-risk activism. Snowball sampling therefore was needed, as without it they would not have given an interview due to trust issues.

A pilot was conducted online, as a secondary data source, to find out what percentages of sXers were vegan, vegetarian or omnivore. It was also used to gauge activism involvement; to plan the semi-structured interviews; to fulfil the aims of addressing whether sXe is a radical environmental group; and attempt to fill the current gap identified in section 2.3. Further secondary data was gathered from the song lyrics of sXe and punk bands, and using textual analysis (discourse) the lyrics were used to research the implicit or tacit culture of activism within sXe. After the research context was complete and questions emerged from it, a full revised questionnaire survey was designed (Appendix 4) and then posted on a variety of Internet-based social networking platforms (Appendix 5). This received one hundred and eight replies.

Twenty people were approached for interviews; but due to time constraints and fear of police reprisal, the end total was fourteen. Out of the fourteen interviews, eleven were face-to-face and three were conducted via email, due to distance, or, if unavailable, voice over Internet technology was used. Friends of the Earth (FOTE) and the Animal Liberation Front were approached. However, neither responded to an interview invitation. FOTE gave a telephone interview, via the London headquarters, Supporter Information Team, but failed to return the consent form in the allotted time, so it was omitted. One of the interviews was conducted in a busy restaurant and was difficult to hear for an accurate transcription, so it was left out of analysis.

The research strategy and specific methods of data collection used for the research study were:

1. Participatory action research (PAR) combining secondary data collection, critical inquiry and action (Breitbart, 2003: 162).
2. Online survey questionnaires (netnography).
3. Semi-structured interviews.

PAR was employed as a research strategy for three reasons. First, it was deemed appropriate that the researcher had been a participant in the sXe scene for many years with an understanding of the purpose, ethics and behaviours of sXe. The critical inquiry approach was then translated for the purpose of this study to critical ethnography, which can be understood as critical theory in practice (Thomas, 1993). Second, participatory research for this project was less formal than other methods (for example, talking anonymously to sXers, either online or at gigs), as value by the researcher was placed on the knowledge of the sXe community as 'ordinary' people, not deemed as outside experts. It was through this dialogue or discourse that my insider knowledge would elicit and produce "a more complete understanding of a situation or environment" (Breitbart, 2003: 164). Third, the last principle of using a PAR approach was to find a trend within sXe, which belays it within a larger radical social agenda of post-environmentalism and post-politics.

Survey questionnaires are deemed an appropriate method for ascertaining behaviours and complex feelings within a milieu. A fixed response survey was used, asking five questions to make the survey quick and easy, and space was provided for the respondent to elaborate their answers (Appendix 4). An initial sampling frame was chosen from several sXe Internet sites in a pilot survey, to test the questions from an ontological viewpoint (McLafferty, 2003: 87). After fifty surveys were returned, the questions were updated to reflect the responses from the sample. The sample also revealed some bias in the questions, which were consequently changed to be more open-ended. The survey questionnaire was done mainly netnographically. A further one hundred and eight answers were collected from the revised questionnaire. However, the researcher used a touchscreen tablet device and app (device software application) to collect responses, face-to-face, at a vegan fair and at sXe gigs. This meant responses were more in-depth, due to autoethnographic

involvement of the researcher, and gave more meaningful answers (McLafferty, 2006: 93). The reason for the survey questionnaire being so short was to enable easier analysis and interpretation (Fink and Kosecoff, 1998). The data was then used in quantitative analysis, shown in Figures 8 and 9), and to answer both questions in Chapter 4.

As mentioned in section 1.2, in the shape and scope of study, the theory of DISC<sup>9</sup> was introduced. This was further developed by American psychologist John George Geier into a personality assessment tool, to test likely behaviours of an individual. Based on this theory, in 1991 I wrote a piece of shareware, which I released on the Internet, and went on to further develop it as an off-the-shelf product, licensed to blue-chip companies. Taking this past experience and concept, I wrote two questions for the online survey questionnaire, basically asking the same question in two different ways, to test the true intentions of sXers. They were:

1. Do you see yourself as a radical environmental activist?
2. Do you think sXe is a radical environmental movement?

The results showed a compressed internal profile of the respondents. This means the respondents expressed true motivations and desires of internal thoughts or feelings without external factors. External means the set of behaviours that an individual thinks is expected of them in a given situation. The outcome of the statistical data and the psychology 'locus of control' will be discussed in Chapter 4.

The semi-structured interview format was used in addressing the gap identified in research (section 2.3), and it was deemed appropriate to use the soft interview approach, as it was informal and conversational in style. The main reason for this being a PAR principle, combining critical inquiry and data collection, and the research focus was on affecting change on behalf of straight edge punks. For ethical reasons, and as a longitudinal participatory researcher, I felt an obligation to create a social space in which sXers could make a contribution to human geography for their own wellbeing, and not just be observed as objects for investigation (Breitbart, 2003: 162). An ethnographic approach was employed to interview sXers in a social situation, at

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<sup>9</sup> DISC is a theory based on behaviour types: Dominance (D), Inducement (I), Submission (S), and Compliance (C). See William M. Marston (1928), *Emotions of Normal People*.

sXe gigs and a vegan fair. Interviewing them in such surrounding gave an emic perspective and an important insight into their beliefs, behaviours and language. Interviews were then used to analyse/interpret these practices. A further reason semi-structured interviews were used was to discuss the meaning of sXe, its possible identity as activists, to explore the subjectivity of sXe politics, and the personal power sXers have. Grounded theory and discourse analysis (section 3.4) were the frameworks used, and the interviews were analysed to reverse engineer conceptual ideas. This was done due to the contradictory nature of sXe (for example, sXe falling between the gap of social and lifestyle movements). The participants' voice created the theory, which came from the data collection and discourse analysis.

The selection and recruiting of participants was achieved by utilizing known networks and via an online pilot survey questionnaire, which produced one participant. The survey was simple and asked if respondents were willing to take part in an interview which generated one respondent (Valentine, 1997: 114). However, this participant failed to return the consent form as was not included in the analysis. By being reflective and considering my own positionality, an initial group of participants were chosen, as I knew them. Two of them were original 1977 punks from bands, two were sXe, one was a friend of thirty years, and two were from outside the preceding groups. The rest of the participants were recruited from snowball sampling. As shown in Figure 4, below, the final number of participants included in the research was fourteen: five people from the punk movement (vegan, vegetarian and omnivore), seven from the sXe community (vegan), one sXe politician (vegan), and one expert from a radical animal rights movement (vegan).

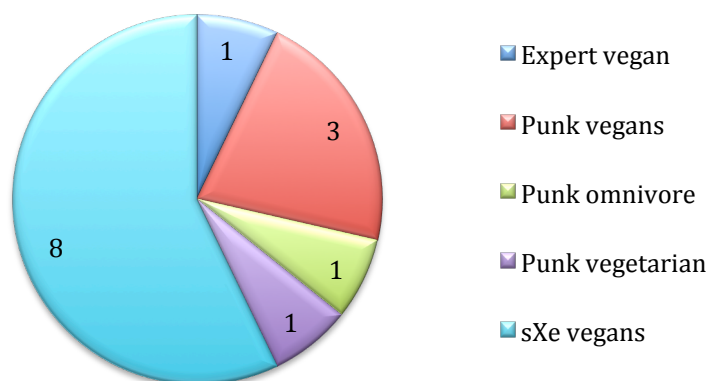


Figure 4 - Pie chart of participants

The questions asked were based around the same categories. However, these were customised for each interview to ensure flexibility and were “conversational and informal in tone” (Longhurst, 2003: 119). All the interview data was collected in a two-month period: 11<sup>th</sup> February 2013 to 7<sup>th</sup> May 2013. The information collected was fully transcribed from the recording device used during the interviews, and selections from those interviews are used as quotes in Chapter 4. Full transcripts and recordings were then stored for ethical reasons of confidentiality on a password protected hard drive and on a CD ROM. Further ethical considerations of confidentiality were given, especially due to some of the participants active involvement in high-risk direct action; and anonymity was assured, unless the participant otherwise stated they were happy to be named. A consent form was provided and signed before interview (Appendix 7). They were given an information sheet (Appendix 6) and told that a copy of the results would be made available in the form of an iBook, available as a free download on Apple devices, a free PDF for Kindle and other tablets, and posted in a weblog at [www.candacejames.com](http://www.candacejames.com). All interviews were done in a public place, on the telephone or online, to protect both the researcher and the participant.

### **3.4 Framework for data analysis**

#### **3.4.1 Grounded Theory**

There are four stages of analysis to qualitative research (Table 3), which starts with data collection rather than a hypothesis. Using inductive thinking and empirical autoethnographic research, the goal was to let a theory emerge from the data (Strauss and Corbin, 1998).

<b>Step</b>	<b>Stage</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
<b>1</b>	Coding	Open coding of a sentence or paragraph in a transcribed interview, document or song lyric to draw out major themes, ideas or phenomena. Phenomena are the central ideas that are represented as concepts and developed into categories. This is the analytical process of collecting data from the interviews, survey questionnaires and other nontechnical secondary data.
<b>2</b>	Conceptualizing	This stage was utilised to start building a theory. A concept or labelled phenomenon is used to group or classify findings from interviews, survey questionnaires and other nontechnical secondary data even if they were tiny individual elements on their own. As shared characteristics emerged to form an ethnographic account, conceptualizing attempted to show the perspectives of sXers and behaviours of participants into a nonfictional account with a common link.
<b>3</b>	Categories	This stage was conceptual ordering of step 2. Once the ordering of defined properties and those common items had been named, their properties were ordered according to their dimensions using axial coding. Through specifying and dimensionalization of the interviews, survey questionnaires and nontechnical secondary data, patterns were found and used as building blocks towards a theory.
<b>4</b>	Theorizing	This final stage offered an explanation about phenomena. They formed statements of relationships to explain who, what, why, when or how an event occurred. The emerging theory then tried to explain and predict events and explanations to the outcome or actions of sXe participants.

**Table 3 - Grounded Theory. Authors own based on Strauss and Corbin 1998.**

It was paramount for the voice of the participant to be heard, to enable a comparison with other environmental groups, and to gauge depoliticization. From the four stages, shown in Table 3, the voice of the participants interviewed, specifically from the sXe community, were extracted from the transcribed texts, song lyrics and other nontechnical secondary data. The aim was to formulate a hypothesis from the conceptual ideas of the researcher: that sXer's actions, attitudes and behaviours were tacit (ecocentric) and a form of radical environmentalism.

### **3.4.2 Discourse Analysis**

The critical ethnography approach was used within the framework of discourse analysis, to explore the deep-rooted thinking that may result from the tacit values of sXers. Using discriminate sampling of song lyrics, and other secondary data about environmentalism, punk and sXe, a relationship between discourse and power was



researched from an ethnographic perspective. The focus was to find naturally occurring language use, and explore the cultural aptitudes of sXers and the lifestyle of sXe from the representations (song lyrics) and practices (veganism, activism) of the sXe community and its embeddedness in punk.

The form, content and assumptions of the text (song lyrics) were analysed, looking specifically at how they were used, the power relations in the song lyrics, and other secondary data between the artist, listener and the target of what was being written about: for example, the government, corporations and hunters.

Discourse, according to Foucault's ideas, has a meaning that can be categorised as statements in the text, which goes on to give a structure to thoughts. This, in turn, is directly responsible for actions based on that thinking. Those actions will be discussed in Chapter 4. The song lyrics, and other texts which form an intertextuality within sXe, have their own rules and core values, which are produced and circulated via songs, zines and social networking platforms (Rose, 2002: 135).

The text within punk and sXe song lyrics therefore has one aim: to create a power in the listener. The power in the sXe discourse is from within the sXe community, and not from the top of society (Rose, 2002: 138). Knowledge is power according to Foucault:

We should admit '...' that power produces knowledge (and not simply by encouraging it because it serves power or by applying it because it is useful); that power and knowledge directly imply one another; that there is no power relation without correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations (Foucault, 1977: 27).

Therefore, discourse analysis has been used in this research to hear the voice of sXe participants, as power creates resistance (Foucault, 1979: 95), as discussed in Chapter 4; and to answer sub-question two: along with song lyrics, does depoliticization apply to sXe?

### **3.5 Validation**

The information collected from the mixed methods has been used in the process of triangulation, to enable a maximum understanding of the research question and reliability of the results appropriate for ethnographic study (Silverman, 1993). The three different sources as listed in section 3.3 were used to allay confusion. Interviews alone were insufficient for explaining tacit behaviours and actions; and this tacit knowledge from interviews and notes (taken during interviews, observations at gigs and a vegan fair) was used for analysis between interviews to ensure the gap in research was categorised into subsequent interview questions, and to validate the evolving theory (Strauss and Corbin, 1998: 295).

The research was conducted and written “from a place of insight and simplicity and real caring about the truth” (Lamont, 1994: 225). Taking this truth and forming the discussion in Chapter 4, it is the hope that the research is presented to give birth to science, bringing about new findings to fulfil the aims and objectives of this study. Due to friendships with influential punk and sXe bands, I took advantage of this opportunistic situation (Riemer, 1977) to gain useful insights into how the song lyrics were used for their intended audience. The use of non-technical literature was used to supplement the interviews, in the form of song lyrics and other secondary data, for example the Hansard transcripts. This was to make comparisons, to provide questions and to create “conceptualization for developing a general theory” (Strauss and Corbin, 1998: 53; 243).

Analysing and coding the discourse was achieved by transcription of the digitally recorded interviews. This was done verbatim and typed into a word processor. Coding of the data identified categories. The data was gathered through emergent, inductive analysis. This was achieved manually, as using Computer Aided Qualitative Data Analysis Software would have distanced the autoethnographic element from the data and analysis of a cultural system and its features, from the emic perspective of straight edge (Davis and Meyer, 2009). The data was gathered through emergent, inductive analysis (Becker and Geer, 1960).

## **4 CHAPTER 4: IS SXE A TYPE OF RADICAL ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT?**

### **4.1 Introduction**

Chapter 4 builds upon the research review outlined and discussed in Chapter 2. Through further discussion and analysis of the primary and secondary data gathered during the study, they describe the main findings and outline the results of the fieldwork. These will be discussed in three categories, utilising the pool of data. First, the network embeddedness of sXe in punk; second, the core values (resistance, abstention, self-realisation and social transformation), and the actions within the continuum of behaviours (Haenfler, 2004: 794); and third, results and the broader implications of the results in reference to the objectives.

This chapter answers the main question 1: “Is sXe a radical environmental movement?” It contemplates what forms a radical environmentalist or movement and how that relates to the data collected for this study. It will focus on vegan sXe (VsXe), as at least three out of four sXers are vegan or vegetarian (Haenfler, 204: 425), and, upon interviewing the sXe participants for this study, it transpired that all of them were vegan (Figure 4). Within question 1, a discussion of the depoliticization process that is part of the sXe phenomena, and sXe politics, will be integrated in the discussion answering the sub-question: “Does depoliticization apply to sXe?”

A brief overview, discussing punk rock and its roots, is relevant to this study, as during the field and desk-based analysis it became clear that sXe was embedded within the punk network. Moreover, the core to many of the sXers patterns of explicit behaviours (resistance, abstention, and social transformation), and implicit beliefs (self-realisation; veganism, environmental concern), came from listening to punk song lyrics.

## 4.2 Network embeddedness of sXe within the punk movement.

To first understand what makes someone behave radically within the sXe scene, compared to societal norms, sXe has to be traced backwards to four decades earlier.

No movement happens in a vacuum (Kaplan and Löw, 2002). Straight edge was born out of the punk movement, and the ethos of punk is one of resistance or self-governing behaviour (anarchy), and was influenced by a pro-Situationist International,<sup>10</sup> British-based group called King Mob (Figure 5).

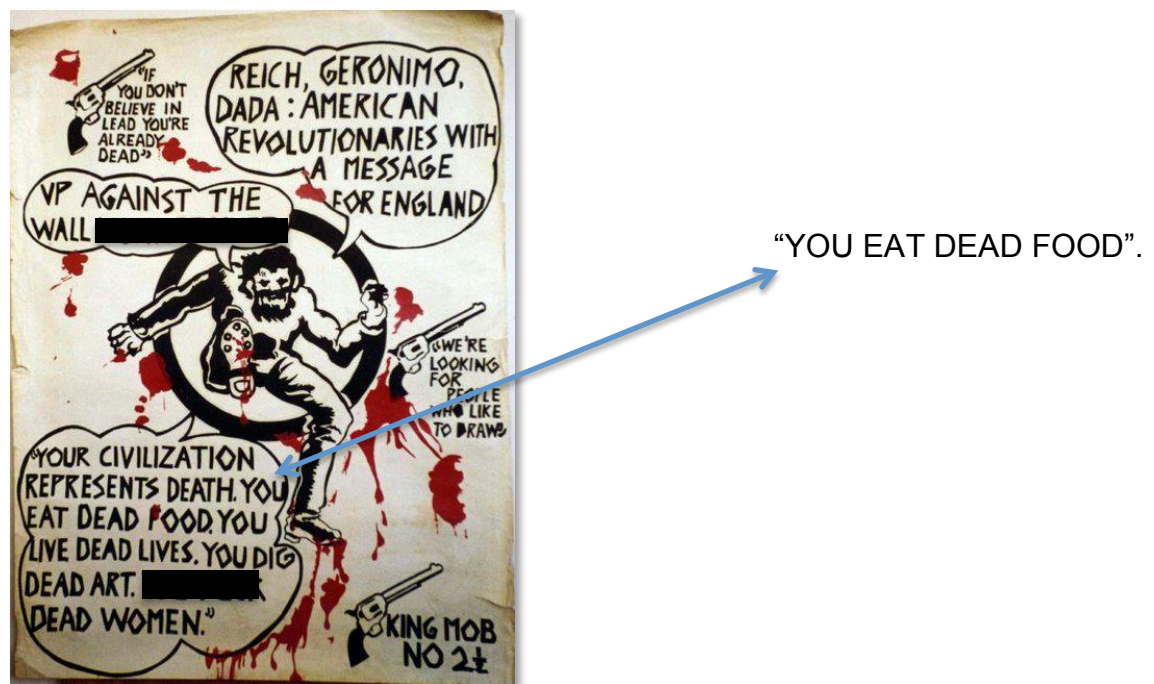


Figure 5 - King Mob poster from the 1970s. Photograph taken at a punk art exhibition at the Hayward Gallery, London, called 'Someday All The Adults Will Die'. Authors own photograph.

Malcolm McLaren was loosely connected with King Mob in the early 1970s, and Vivienne Westwood was his partner. Both were inspired by the ideals and direct action of King Mob. Vivienne Westwood, who is in 2013 a committed vegetarian and environmental activist (Figure 6 and Appendix 2), actively spreads environmentalism throughout her boutiques, media and online at <http://activeresistance.co.uk/>.

<sup>10</sup> The Situationist International (SI) was a radical international organization of revolutionaries with an exclusive membership made up of avant-garde artists, intellectuals, and political theorists, active from its formation in 1957 to its dissolution in 1972 (Plant, 1992).



Figure 6 - Vivienne Westwood joins campaigners protesting in Parliament Square to urge Britain's government to ban the use of pesticides containing neonicotinoids, in central London, April 26, 2013. Reuters. [Accessed online 28<sup>th</sup> April 2013].

Together, McLaren and Westwood birthed the Sex Pistols as an art statement, which was intended to be a short-lived phenomenon. Punk rock music had been rumbling in the London pub-rock scene for a few years prior to 1977; but the Sex Pistols, managed by McLaren and fashioned by Westwood, gave it a voice and a visuality that could not be ignored by either the media, society, UK government (Appendix 1) or disenfranchised youths. Anarchy, revolution, self-expression and resistance were at the epicentre of the punk movement. Environmentalism was always present.

There was a lot more concern for the environment and I think that partly came about by the whole do-it-yourself ethic at the start of punk rock '...' I mean in terms of, what are we actually doing to the planet and what sort of planet are we going to leave behind? I think people [punks] think a lot more about that than they are given credit for (Burns, J. SLF. Interview 14 March 2013).

Being embedded in the punk network not only gave people support to resist adults, but also provided a vehicle to break societal norms of how youth (including girls) should behave or think.

Being a punk made me a direct actionist. The movement [punk] allowed people not to care what the neighbours thought and the stiff upper lip thing, which was still there

from the war, it was a load of bollocks and punk broke that down. It was more important to be individual than to follow others.

I was 12 in 1977 when I got into punk and shock waves rippled through the land, and I grabbed that because it was so amazing. It gave us girls in school who were into punk a power, and the way we were portrayed gave us a different stance with the boys and with the teachers. I felt like I had a bit of authority about me, I felt like I could challenge them because of being a punk and the way I was seen.  
(Woolley, E. Telephone interview 7 April 2013).

Straight edge has a direct link from the punk rock scene. As one anonymous sXer put it from the online survey: “Some sXe people are part of a radical environmental movement, but sXe is more about people trying to help the community with a clear minded spirit. But first, sXe is just a bunch of people who love hardcore punk”.

Chris, a VsXe, commented about punk, saying:

I am so grateful for punk rock it has made me the person I am and opened me up to so many new ideas, and who knows where I would have been if I hadn't discovered hardcore music and punk rock. I like the fact that I'm different to everybody else but not necessarily to be different but I just don't want to be some drone who just does what everybody else does. Punk rock and sXe is all the same thing, I don't know why there has to be any division 'cos it's all the same. Punk paved the way anyway, we just choose not to do all the drinking and stuff  
(Sanders, C. Recorded telephone interview, 16 April 2013).

John, a performer in high profile punk bands since punk's inception, said about being sXe that “It's rebellion against rebellion” (Robb, J. Interview 11 February 2013). A rebellion within rebellion to societal norms, and an sXers locus of control, started a core set of behaviours which would include a paradigm shift in thinking about their impact on the environment. This ‘meta-rebellion’ shows a contradictory nature: that sXers are willing to exhibit radical moderate behaviour within the radical counterculture of punk. But where does this oxymoron come from? The freedom from conforming within sXe mainly comes from the music. When somebody writes a good song lyric it makes sense to everybody. Lyrics and the energy from punk music is the enabler for the meta-rebellious behaviour of sXers.

It's a triple-energy it goes, WOW! WOW! WOW! What is this thing? And we are still trying to work it out [punk] years later. It's the same energy when John Lennon screams in his 1963 records, it wasn't words, it was screaming pure joy and freedom, and I think people got it and thought ‘fuck’ that's what joy and freedom sounds like  
(Robb, J. Interview 11 February 2013).

Being embedded within the network of punk, and having an inherent environmental outlook, can be traced back to one medium. Song lyrics and the energy in the music gave sXers an ethical intelligence to pursue subcultural-countercultural behaviours (Helton & Staudenmeiser, 2001), expressed through veganism or direct action for animal and environmental rights. The 'locus of control' sXers have, or the level of belief that an sXer can control their own lives, was a central theme in the interviews. The punk bands which influenced sXers the most were Crass, the Subhumans, and Conflict, because they sang about veganism, vegetarianism, animal, human and environmental rights. From autoethnographic positionality, the first out and out 'environmental' lyric that impacted on me was by the Ramones, in their song 'Ignorance is Bliss'. This made a lasting impression on me, and brought to my awareness, for the first time, something intrinsic called the 'environment'.

What's happenin' to our society?  
Disintegration of humanity  
Destruction of the environment '...'  
Politicians to confuse you  
What's good for them now it ain't good for you  
But there ain't nothin' that you can do

(Ramones (1989). Ignorance is Bliss. Brain Drain [CD]. London: Chrysalis Records)

I wanted to know why a seminal punk band was singing about the environment. Even though I had heard of the newly publicised ozone depletion over Antarctica, four years earlier, and stopped using CFC based products, I started wondering about the wider environment: Was it in danger? Who was attacking it? What could I do about rebelling against those who were harming it? Up until this point I had been an animal activist and concentrated on that element. However, after this point, a connection to the physical environment had been made, and I saw the Ramones' reverse psychological lyric (as is the nature of punk): "But there ain't nothin' that you can do" as a direct challenge to me, that I *can* do something, and this lyric has stayed with me ever since. Punk gave us all 'permission' to think for ourselves, whereas adults and government were saying 'do not think, listen to us' (Appendix 11).

I asked Jake Burns, lead singer and lyricist for Still Little Fingers (SLF), "Do you see punk as a resistance movement, as in your band and other punk bands gave us permission?"

Do you know I'm not even sure you can see that as resistance? This is something I took from punk in the first place, I didn't see myself as fighting against anything and I don't think a lot of people did, what I saw, and you used a good word there in terms of 'permission', punk gave us permission to think for ourselves, and whether that lead to you thinking I don't want to actually go and work for an insurance company, I'll be much happier going out and stopping people from killing foxes for example, and you contribute much more to society doing that I think than following the [other] path, but it was a liberating thing [more than resistance] because it allowed people to basically think for themselves and to think outside the box. You have to think outside the box and I think that's what punk helped people to do again because people were falling back [after the hippies] to thinking this is the status quo, this is how things work, and the very fact that we could think outside the box was almost like giving yourself 'permission' to think for yourself (Burns, J. SLF Interview 14 March 2013).

These sort of 'think for yourself' messages are regularly being plied in punk and sXe songs. A decade before the Ramones song 'Ignorance is Bliss', vegan punk bands like Crass, Subhumans and Conflict were paving the way for vegan sXers when the scene emerged, circa 1981 (Appendix 9). Thirty-five years ago, being vegan was perceived by normal society as strange. I posed this question to Fi, a vegan and singer in the punk band Dragster: "Was being vegan seen as freakish to punks back then?"

No, not at all because of bands within our movement like Crass and Conflict. It was out there, it was known (Fi from Dragster. Telephone interview 11 April 2013).

In summary, McLaren and Westwood (et al.) did not intend to ignite a global movement (punk). Similarly, Minor Threat, the sXe band, did not intend to mobilise a movement or scene with their song 'Straight Edge' (Table 1). But both movements did happen as a result of the visual, musical and song lyrics, and both are still subscribed to by millions of punks (sXe and non-sXe), over 35 years later. As a participatory observer, sXe as an 'alternative institution' (Haenfler, 2004: 797) could be described as cultural activism embedded within the cultural movement of punk, and a tacit environmentalism within the sXe movement, which is discussed in 4.3. Straight edgers had the freedom to be vegan or vegetarian within punk network embeddedness, which supported their food choice, as well as music, fashion and distribution of zines. These pull factors within the punk movement affected the social world of sXers (McAdam, 1986, 1988, Cherry, 2006: 165), and gave 'permission' to enter into environmental behaviours.



### **4.3 Core values; resistance, abstention, self-realisation and social transformation.**

Some of these behaviours did manifest as extreme. Hardline punk (VsXe) emerged, and their worldview was a deep-ecology and biocentric view, creating its own manifesto (Appendix 10). Rat, an English punk, who coined the phrase 'vegan straight edge' (VsXe) in the mid-eighties, and band member in several VsXe bands, said to me:

My music has always been to promote ideas, mainly animal rights. I've had 30 years of listening to the bullshit of animal eaters, so much so, that I care very little for humanity. I actually want to humanity to end. I feel it is the only way this planet will ever life in peace. I'll never give up the fight, it's who I am, I blame or thank punk for that, but I have no faith in humanity (Rat. Email, 15 March 2013).

Hardline VsXe envisioned a world where there was perfection (Appendix 10) and no killing of animals or humans. This scene eventually imploded due to its extreme views. The legacy from it, however, and the contribution by Rat and his music was vegan straight edge was born. It gave resistance a whole new meaning, through food politics and abstaining from participating in the meat and dairy industries, as well as the alcohol, drug and tobacco industries.

#### **4.3.1 Resistance and self-realisation**

Resistance or permission in this form was gained by enculturation (consciously and unconsciously), and was identified in the research review. It showed the subculture-counterculture of sXe meant there were no boundaries within its boundaries for sXe members. This is another seeming contradiction to standard labelling of a culture or movement, which places sXe as an ASM. Straight edge is not targeting the state, but anyone who is causing degradation to animals or the environment. The lifestyle aspect of it, however, the "individualist orientations" (Haenfler, 2004: 408), does lend to an sXer expressing their own set of personal politics, which also includes TE.

I set my own standards, like you set yours, my spirit flies free, yours just falls, you contradict, your every breath, I'm immortal, I know no death. Think about yourself, before you judge me, your innocence I debate, with my eyes I can see, your lack of respect, one big flaw, there's only one way, and that's my law (Statement. (1996). My Law, Genocidal Justice [CD]. Gloucestershire: Independent distribution).

In the above song lyric, resistance seems to come from an sXer (vegan or otherwise) making their own 'laws', but based within the sXe continuum of behaviours (Haenfler,

2004: 794) and prefigurative politics, creating the kind of world sXers want to live in (Breines, 1989). Abstaining from norms and capitalism, as well as substances, also plays a role in the sXe core values and beliefs.

An sXe way of living, in general, is not directly seen as a personal lifestyle *choice* or decision, but more a way of 'being' or personal politic, as *choice* implies alternatives can be had, and these alternatives to a VsXer are wholly unacceptable.

30 years of my life,  
lived in veganism,  
how dare you say,  
It's a personal decision

(Statement (1996). Unworthy, Genocidal Justice [CD]. Gloucestershire: Independent distribution).

Regarding the song 'Unworthy', written by Rat, I asked him to explain the line "It's a personal decision":

Because way too many people try and use that as an excuse to not go vegan. They will say "well, it's my personal decision (to eat animals)" get fucked!! I can easily say it's my personal decision to kill animal eaters. Neither is justified (Rat. Email, 6 April 2013).

Max Ferrin, an anarchist VsXe from London, who sings in a VsXe band called Hello Bastards, and vegan/vegetarian band STAB, said about personal lifestyle choice:

First of all it's not a lifestyle. A lifestyle is say being a punk for a couple of years in your life which changes how you act but I believe being VsXe is '*a way of being*' more than just a lifestyle (Ferrin, M. Skype interview, 29 March 2013).

Being VsXe is a political statement, and signifies resistance to saying no to marketing and brain washing of food industries and the establishment in general.

When an individual's basic worldview changes or "the politicization of self and daily life" (Taylor and Whittier, 1992: 117), a paradigm shift happens when enough people subscribe to that change. The self-realisation that sXers experience directly challenges mainstream environmentalism.

One of the key things about supporting these industries is it does destroy the planet and one of the things about being VsXe is this communion between being sXe and veganism and vegetarianism pushes you to have an attitude or opinion about caring for the environment. But it's not a 'leg' of sXe, it's an inherent part of the individual. There is a synergy between being sXe and being concerned about the environment even if it's subliminal. sXe doesn't knowingly challenge mainstream environmentalism because it's not that deeply thought out even though we don't support environmentally damaging industries (Ferrin, M. Skype interview, 29 March 2013).

The 'synergy' Max refers to is part of the continuum of behaviours for sXers, and the 'subliminal' can be rooted in song lyrics to make sXe a tacit environmental movement. The power relations in song lyrics, between artist, listener and the target of what was being sang about, is often subliminal or below the sXers threshold for conscious perception. In a recent study using fMRI, it has shown that messages in songs activate specific brain regions, despite participants being unaware this was happening (Brooks et al., 2012). The power in discourse, according to Foucault's theory, gives a structure to thoughts, and in turn this structure is directly responsible for actions based on that thinking. This power creates resistance within sXe (Foucault, 1979: 95) and a potential paradigm shift in current environmentalism.

Therefore, through song lyrics, a state of being is found for sXers, which in turn is expressed through an intertextuality within sXe, in the form of its own rules or core values, and circulated through the zines, social networking platforms and music (Rose, 2002: 135). This will be discussed in 4.3.2.

#### 4.3.2 Social transformation and abstention

Having analysed resistance and the new set of norms of "politics of self-actualizaion" (Giddens 1991 214-15), analysis will now focus on the power of that resistance. These new set of norms became part of a cognitive shift for sXe punks, and along with that power came a personal politic about food, abstinence and consumerism. Many bands were making songs which reflected animal and environmental rights. Punk bands, such as Ramones, Conflict, Subhumans, Vice Squad, the Damned and Crass, were all singing about the plight of the non-human sphere and how it is being exploited.

I asked Beki Bondage, a vegan punk from the punk band, Vice Squad, why she wrote about animal rights:

I write lyrics to express my feelings and the treatment of non - human animals has always been a subject close to my heart. Animal Rights are closely linked to Human Rights so even if you have no natural affinity with other animals you can't pretend that our treatment of animals has no effect on the human population (Bond, B. Email 7 May 2013).

I then asked Beki to explain the backstory to one of Vice Squad's songs, called 'Voice of the People'.

It was inspired by the 'Diaries of Despair' which were leaked documents originally exposed in September 2000 by Uncaged Campaigns. Imutran and Novartis were involved in gruesome pig to primate transplant experiments and reclassifying the suffering of the animals as 'moderate' rather than 'severe'. There was an attempt at a cover up and the documents were only made public when the vivisectionists lost their case at the High Court. In spite of the fact that MPs receive more letters about animal rights and welfare than any other topic, there is still no proper legal protection in place for lab animals as those who are supposed to protect them tend to have a vested interest in the continuation of animal experiments. The cover-ups merely prove that what vivisectionists are doing is likely to cause public outrage.

The line of the song 'Voice of the people, they ain't gonna listen, A million letters better left unwritten', is my way of saying that the UK is only democratic if the elite say so, we are told to campaign peacefully while acts of terrorism take place legally every day (Bond, B. Email 7 May 2013).

With these newly-assimilated norms within the punk movement, about animal and earth rights, it caused many punks to become vegetarian and vegan, and some of these punks became sXe. Kerry McCarthy, who is a Member of Parliament (MP), was from the punk scene in the early 1980s, and was straight edge. Kerry is one of three vegans in the British parliament and campaigns on green issues in her Bristol, UK constituency. I asked her, in a telephone interview, how she was involved with environmentalism, and did being a vegan influence that?

Veganism gives concern for natural environment. Flows from the vegan side of things to start with, being in tune with and not wanting to harm the natural world, and wanting to preserve it and help it thrive, they kind of tie in and you can't separate the two (McCarthy Kerry, MP, telephone interview, 10 April 2013).

Therefore, this attitude filtered into the sXe scene, and, as Cherry notes, "when these newly created norms surrounding animal rights and food replaced dominant cultural norms they manifested themselves in assumptions" (Cherry, 2006: 166). These assumptions then became so inherent that TE happened, in the osmosis of the sXe ASM.

#### 4.3.2.1 A description of a radical movement

The connection to punk itself is an ingredient for being radical (McAdam, 1986, 1988). Straight edge was about rebelling against the drinking and drug taking within the punk scene, while still embracing the music and the song messages. It was the meta-rebellion that gave sXers a punk attitude of resistance without the hangover, thus allowing for a greater awareness of social and environmental injustice.

The key here is to be politically aware because once you open your eyes you can't ever close them again. It will push you to actually do more, or at the least make you aware of your actions, and small individual changes can actually create big change (Ferrin, M. VsXe, Skype interview, 29 March 2013).

Actions manifest themselves as actively seeking social transformation via radical activism. Radical movements, such as Sea Shepherd Society, Hunt Saboteurs, Animal Liberation Front, Earth Liberation Front and Earth First!, tend to be a leaderless group of deep ecologists, who may or may not operate within the law. Radical environmentalism is a grassroots collective, one developed from an ecocentric-based viewpoint which mainstream environmentalism ghettoized. Scholar Christopher Manes calls it "a new kind of environmental activism: iconoclastic, uncompromising, discontented with traditional conservation policy, at times illegal" (Surhone et al., 2012).

The Sea Shepherds Society, who are an international direct action conservation organisation, founded in 1977 by Paul Watson, has a fleet of four vegan ships. It has an emotive flag that shows the mind-set of its adherents (Figure 7).



**Figure 7 - The Sea Shepherds Society flag, inherently punk and explicitly showing the mind-set of those involved with the organisation**

Three people also mentioned it in the interviews. Here is one excerpt:

I like the whole Sea Shepherd thing, they don't talk about saving the whale they just go and do it, and Crass made me think is it about pacifism or activism? And that's what split Crass up in the end. It's fractured though, do you put yourself in front of the whaling vessels as a pacifist or do you ram it? It's difficult. You know there are a hundred thousand people like us who don't want this shit but fifty million people who will pay loads of money to have it, how do you change them? Little changes make a big difference if we just keep doing them (Robb, J. Interview, 11 February 2013).

I asked one of the Sea Shepherd directors, Gilli Graham, "Would you say Sea Shepherd are a radical environmental movement or animal conservation group?"

We are a wildlife conservation group but I think the work we do affects the environment so in a round about kind of way yes we are an environmental movement but as a status I would say we are a wildlife conservation movement (Graham, G. Interview, 13 April 2013).

This "round about kind of way" could be deemed as tacit environmentalism. The do-it-yourself attitude of direct action is similar to the radical beliefs and actions of famous vegans/vegetarians. These figures include Ghandi (started a movement), Mother Teresa (came from an affluent background to live in poverty and help others), Princess Diana (walked through mine fields and publically held someone's hand with HIV AIDS), and Albert Einstein (who turned to vegetarianism). Einstein theorised it was the only sensible and sustainable way to live: "It is my view that the vegetarian manner of living, by its purely physical effect on the human temperament, would most beneficially influence the lot of mankind" (Einstein, Letter to "Vegetarian Watch-Tower", 27 December 1930). Their own brand of do-it-yourself actions were felt globally, and their behaviour was radical in the eyes of the media; hence the attention they got. This is ultimately no different from the ethical beliefs of sXers. None of the four people mentioned would one associate with environmentalism. However, their levels of empathy, which are greater in vegans and vegetarians (Appendix 3), all spoke of great concern for human rights, which hinges on environmental protection. Their explicit behaviours also showed TE. This implies that maybe a greater awareness of the core values and TE of sXe, within the academic and public sphere, would reveal sXe as a sober, caring and active movement, concerned about the welfare of the planet and people in general. Instead, the public's general perception of any form of punk is that its adherents are engaged with substance abuse and do not contribute to society.

The Sea Shepherd Society attracts a large number of sXers, who support them, and become crew on the fleet of five ships currently in operation.

I know that Paul Watson himself [founder of SS] would say we are not a vegan group, we are not an animal rights group, we are not a straight edge as a group, but a lot of people who are like that are enticed to our group, so we have a large amount of people who are vegan straight edge, the whole fleet of ships are vegan. At least a two-thirds of people on them are straight edge (Graham, G. Interview, 13 April 2013).

The reason for this is due to the direct action stance Sea Shepherd takes; that is, appealing to the punk in an sXer, and that all the ships in the fleet are vegan. I asked Gilli: “Would you say that sXers have a concern for the environment as well as conservation?”

I would say yes and that being straight edge is not just a label and it's not just about dietary choices, it's about environment, it's financial as in where our money goes and ethically that's a sound thing. All of those things come into the one thing, a choice to become straight edge (Graham, G. Interview, 13 April 2013).

This self-realisation, which deems sXe as an ASM due to its cultural activism, shows radical behaviour (Armstrong and Bernstein, 2008: 78) of a SM, but fulfils the internal or self-centred altruism of a LM (Haenfler et al., 2012: 2). Radical behaviour of sXers is defined by the core values of sXe.

In summary, with such a strong emphasis on the punk do-it-yourself ethos and culture within sXe, the same tacit ecocentric view would apply to their own brand of environmentalism and the “self-actualization” (Giddens 1991: 214-15) sXers experience, thus creating a paradigm shift in twenty-first century green politics.

#### **4.4 Results**

Straight edgers who were interviewed all expressed, at one time or currently, an involvement with radical movements and had a decidedly iconoclastic viewpoint as well as ecocentric-based thinking. In the online survey questionnaire, when asked if they belong to an environmental group, eighty-seven sXers answered, and twenty-one sXers declined to answer (Table 4). 30% of the respondents said yes and 70%

said no. Eighteen of the eighty-seven respondents mentioned being a member or supporter of the Sea Shepherds.

Would you say you belonged to any group that preserved or protect the environment?			
Yes	No	Declined	Groups listed that sXers belonged to.
26	61	21	
			350 Anarchists Anti-vivisectionists Earth First! Greenpeace Green Guerillas Habitat for Humanity Hardcore Help Foundation PETA <b>Sea Shepherd Society</b> Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles (SSAR) sXe (social activists) Veganism Vegitarianism Surfrider Trust World Tapir Day Zeitgeist Movement

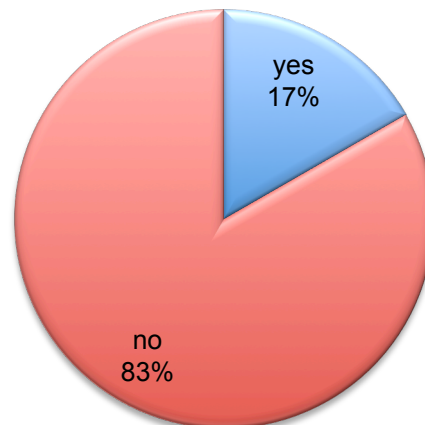
**Table 4 - Online survey questionnaire**

To an sXer, the rules of societal norms do not apply, due to being punks and subscribing to post-politics, and in this stance enables a re-politicization with a set of sXe core values. These values have been in the making since 1981, and form the pillars on which sXe rests. This includes the categorical imperative of doing the right thing to help the environment, or responding to other social injustices (animal or human rights). These injustices came through in the discourse analysis more than the online survey. However, talking to VsXers for the survey questionnaire at the Vegan Fair I attended did elicit a deeper insight into the feelings surrounding the research.

Even though 83% said no to thinking sXe was a radical environmental movement (Figure 8), nearly half (46%) said yes to considering themselves as an environmental activist (Figure 9). This shows either confusion to the question, or true motivations not influenced by external forces, and offers an explanation to the hypothesis that; sXe is deeply tacit, participants are unaware that they practice it. That outcome was not fully explored in this research due to time constraints.

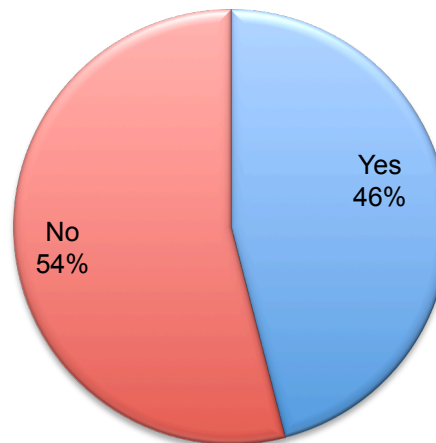


**Do you think sXe is a radical environmental movement?**



**Figure 8 - Online survey question 1**

**Do you see yourself as a radical environmental activist?**



**Figure 9 - Online survey question 2**

The questions were deliberately posed in such a way as to test the implicit nature of sXe and its links to environmentalism. This shows a significant percentage and an explanation (Appendix 8), though would certainly benefit from further analysis and research.

Non-sXe punks were used as the control group yet they demonstrated the same values and used the same discourse in the interviews as the sXers. Axial coding was employed to find the number of times that words/statements were used during interviews. This was achieved by utilising the coding paradigm system to make explicit relationships between the categories (Table 5). The aim was to formulate a hypothesis from the conceptual ideas of the researcher: that sXer's actions, attitudes and behaviours were tacit (ecocentric), and a form of radical environmentalism.

<b>Analytic Code</b>	<b>Number</b>
A	14
AR	47
DA	7
E	48
G	17
HH	8
HR	4
P	39
RM	10
R	8
V	91
VPB	14

**Table 5 - Axial coding results**

#### CATEGORIES:

A = Anarcho-punk, anarchy.

AR = Animal rights, animals.

DA = Direct Action.

E = Environmentalism, environmental damage, green issues for example CO<sup>2</sup>.

G = Government, parliament, governance.

HH = Human health, rights.

HR = High risk.

P = Politics, politicians.

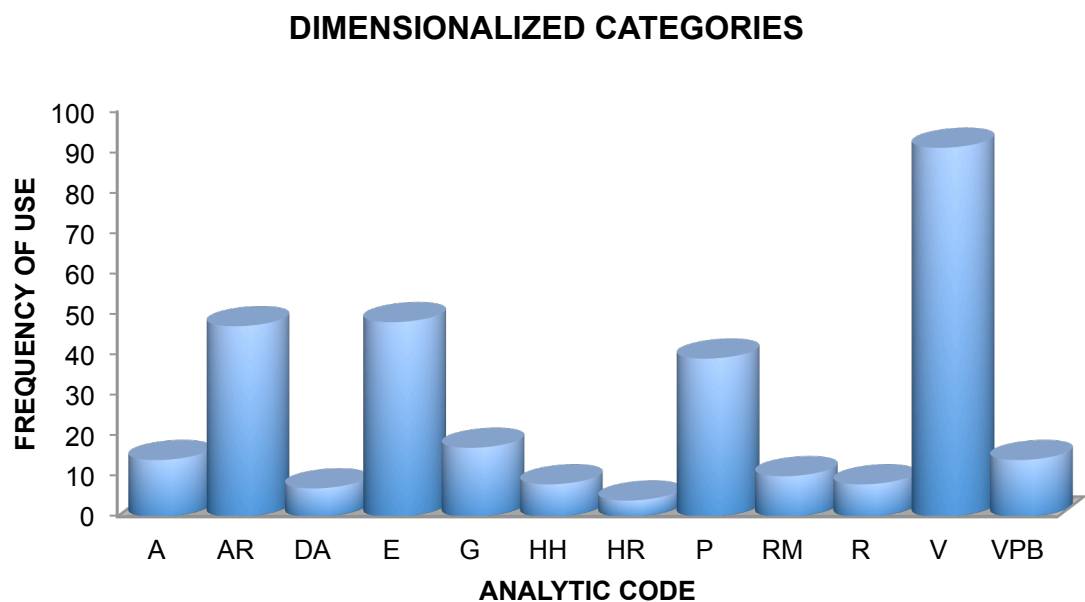
RM = Radical movement; Sea Shepherd, Hunt saboteurs, A.L.F etc.

R = Resistance, rebellion, rebellious.

V = Vegan, vegetarian.

VPB = Vegan punk band; Crass, Conflict, Subhumans, Vice Squad.

Grounded theory was used to hear the voice of the participant, and extract a theory from a concept of sXe by a systematic examination of the phenomena through discourse (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). From Table 5, a column chart was formed to show the relationship of the analytic code and its frequency of use (Figure 10). Animal rights (AR), environmentalism (E) and politics (P) were dominant, as well as veganism or vegetarianism (V). This would account for the high number of vegan participants, whereas the AR, E and P offer an explanation of the phenomena that sXe is concerned with the natural world. Also ten out of the fourteen participants were currently in performing punk bands. The interviews formed statements of relationships to explain who, what, why, when or how VsXers feel an implicit connection with the environment. Therefore, this confirmed the hypothesis that sXe participants have a TE, due to their higher empathy levels compared to omnivores (Appendix 3).



**Figure 10 – Dimensionalized Categories of words and themes found in the semi-structured interviews.**

The emerging theory tried to explain and predict events and explanations to the outcome or actions of VsXe participants. This was more difficult to achieve and was not categorised as further research and study of this aspect was highlighted at the conclusion of this research. This was due to the late discovery of academic papers, which became available towards the end of the research but were too late to include (Appendix 12).

Although the aims and objectives were reached within the allotted time there were limitations which became apparent by the end of the research period. First, the research was autoethnographic and provided a rich source of participants. However, a larger group needs to be sought in order to provide more accurate empirical data. Second, a control group of non-punks would help formulate a more complete hypothesis. Third, the online survey questionnaire was short and offered insightful responses; but this would have been more valuable if there was a higher level of response from participants. This failed due to time constraints.

In summary, sXers seem to implicitly recognise that the natural world is also straight edge. This research demonstrated that this empathy, often demonstrated explicitly, is the direct result of the core values and behaviour of 'being' sXe. This can be viewed in terms of environmental psychology, and, as research confirmed, vegetarians and vegans have more measured empathy than omnivores (Filippi M, Riccitelli G, Falini A, Di Salle F, Vuilleumier P, et al 2010).

#### **4.5 Broader implications of the study**

One of the implications of this study is that it is multi-disciplinary, and, in hindsight, possibly writing it from an environmental psychology stance would have been better suited to the research, as the core values and answering the main question is all about behaviours. The choice to research it from a cultural anthropological view was taken from the existing research review on sXe, which is in this field. Nothing in environmental psychology has been studied on sXe that any desk-analysis or research revealed. This only became apparent during the desk-analysis after papers had been selected for the research review. However, time constraints and word count prevented further study, to include papers which were touching on the implicit nature of environmentalism.

The main essence of punk trickled down into sXe, except the substance use, and this includes depoliticization and the radical environmental attitudes of punk bands such as Crass, Subhumans, Conflict and Ramones (Appendix 9).

It's true that 'Whomever you vote for the government gets in' and Punks want personal freedom not governance, plus some feel that by using their vote they are condoning the system. I think Punks should vote, as they are often some of the most

intelligent people around. If you think about it many Punks have been ' political ' since their early teens and they often know more about what's going on in the world than the rest of the public (Bond, B. Email 7 May 2013).

One implication of this attitude is that MPs have to alter their modus operandi, if that is they want to reach “some of the most intelligent people around” that have depoliticized themselves. Kerry McCarthy MP explained to me:

We need to reach out to people who are really angry about it [current green politics] but also very cynical about politicians, or they don't feel politicians are interested in working with them. Quite a few colleagues feel this way but only a few are used to doing things a traditional way, talking to the unions and so on. Certain generation of MPs, people in their 40s, are up for doing more of this (McCarthy Kerry MP. Telephone interview, 10 April 2013).

As James Evans explains when talking about alternative futures and modern eco-activism:

Eco-activism, a form of direct action undertaken by individuals and groups to achieve political, economic, or social goals, was arguably the starting point for modern environmental NGOs like Friends of the Earth who protested directly against actions they deemed to be environmentally irresponsible (Evans, 2012: 200).

Further study in the field of environmental governance would benefit society, political relations and sXers, to maximize the definite affinity most sXers have with the whole environment. “Governance is about asking what sort of world we want to inhabit” (Evans, 2012: 14), which is symbiotic to the views of sXe. The analytics of governance and “notion of governmentality” is framed in power. One implication of this power, and returning to Foucault, in what he calls “technologies of self” states: “individuals are the vehicles of power, not its point of application” (Foucault 1980: 98). James Evans states that this helps to understand environmental governance, by demonstrating the internal or tacit priorities of subjects. Basically, sXe has been governing itself, and is not an object of external governance by any other agency (Evans, 2012: 23, 25), holding the power to create its own form of TE. Vegan sXers use ratiocination to make sense of their world, and that process of using logic sXers have, offers the conclusion that caring for the environment is the right stance to adopt.

In summary, the more empathetic a person is, the more radical a person appears. Radical, in these terms, means standing out above the norms, as we saw Gandhi, Mother Teresa and Princess Diana all appear as radical, and all were either vegan or vegetarian. There is a linear relationship between enacting resistance in the form of abstinence, self-realisation, veganism, social transformation or depoliticization (self-governance), and environmentalism, which could be deemed as being radical, and answers question 1: that sXe is a type of *radical* environmental movement, and supports the claim that, within this, there is a tacit environmentalism. However, further study needs to be done to see if this TE has a place in society to benefit other networks outside sXe or punk, as a model of any sort, as this thesis was constrained by time and word count.

## 5 CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

Using grounded theory, this study focused on the objectives of:

- Synthesising current literature on the philosophical and ethical stance of sXe
- Looking for patterns in the explicit behaviour and tacit beliefs of sXe

The aim was to measure whether or not sXe is a new type of radical environmentalism by answering the question posed in 3.1.

Being a vegan sXer, or committed to active environmentalism, relies not only on the self-realisation of the participant, the psychology and brain function of food choices, but it also appears that the social network embeddedness of sXers plays an important role in being sXe. Within its network, post-politics and post-environmentalism occurs by the core values and ethics of sXe. The eco-centrism and 'do-it-yourself' ethos offers its own realpolitik and TE to many sXers, especially VsXers. Therefore depoliticization occurs. Being aware of the dysfunctions of the mainstream environmental agenda, and rejecting it as a part of the sXe milieu, and engaging in either essential or secondary behaviours (Haenfler 2004: 794), it is the claim of this study that sXers are radical environmentalists. As enough people within sXe appear to share that outlook (all eight of the sXe interviewees were vegan, and had, or currently do engage in activism, for both animal and earth rights; 47% of the respondents of the online survey questionnaire were vegan; and, according to Haenfler in his study, at least three out of four sXers are vegan or vegetarian (Haenfler 2004: 425)), this demonstrates there is a tacit environmentalism within sXe, and, as a movement, it should be investigated as a new type of REM, as it slots into the space between being a LM and SM.

Max Ferrin said, "sXe doesn't knowingly challenge mainstream environmentalism because it's not that deeply thought out even though we don't support environmentally damaging industries". Kerry McCarthy said about the implicit actions of sXers: "It's quite an internal thing, how you live your own life and associate with other people who have the same values rather than it being something you take out beyond your community there's a pride in being different from others". Matt Martin said, when I asked him, "does your lifestyle make a difference to the environment?"

It's all linked but it's completely impossible to be totally ethical, there's always something your gonna slip up on. But my veganism and activist links are all very much tied environmentally and my environmental thoughts are always there.

Animal rights and earth rights are linked. It's basic. We are all the same thing, we are part of the earth, we need it to survive, and without that we are nothing.

Actually there is no link to be made though, there is no trying to find links for things, it is just all the same thing! (Martin, M. Interview 11 February 2013)

Cultural anthropology, however, does have its weaknesses. Anthropologists attain that culture *is* nature, and this leaves room for abstract interpretations of sXe lifestyle and behaviours. Straight edgers internally ask, "what if everyone did that?", which raises the question of deontological ethics. Tacitly, sXers want to create a world they themselves want to live in, where clear thinking and care for nature is paramount.

To bridge the gap between philosophy and ethics, critical ethnography, as described in Chapter 3, uses reflexive inquiry, as sXers tend to shape their own norms, ethics, and depoliticize. Critical ethnographers also explore what happens within a group or culture (sXe as an ASM), to disrupt tacit power relations and perceived wrongs in society (the vegan sXers, for example, questioned and heavily criticised the meat and dairy industry), and from outside the paradigm of hegemonic cultural norms. This complements the research questioned posed in this study. However, further studies in these areas or those researching REM may develop a greater understanding of hard to categories ASM, and explore where this tacit environmentalism comes from (Thomas, J. (1993) & Simon, R. I., & Dippo, D. (1986)).

Further study is needed to see if this is nurture or nature, and to examine the brain responses, under fMRI testing conditions, of sXers and other types of punks. Finding out if behaviorism or biology is responsible could help human geographers find praxis within sXe, and be studied by cultural anthropologists in cultural variations of behavioral between-group differences (sXe and normal society). Collecting data from these studies could then form ideas about the impact an sXe lifestyle can have on global and local economies, as well as on environmental and political processes.

This research benefited from my autoethnographic involvement and the special relationships I have with high profile punk bands and members of both the sXe and punk communities. This network embeddedness offered a novel insight into a



network often closed off to outsiders. This research focused on showing the tacit environmentalism in sXe. However, if more time had been available, I could have, first, researched further the contribution punk has made to environmentalism; and second, persuaded direct action animal rights (AR) and earth rights (EA) activists, who are engaged in illegal activities to be included in this research. AR and EA punks and sXers would contribute to the study of cultural anthropology, or critical, human geography, and therefore offer an opportunity for further research.

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## 6 PARTICIPANT INTERVIEWS

Classification of participants interviewed and collection method

Name	Date of Interview	Type of Interview	VsXe/Punk//Expert	Used
John Robb	11/02/2013	Face-to-face	V	Y
Matt Martin	11/02/2013	Face-to-face	P (vegan)	Y
Max Ferrin	01/03/2013	Skype	V	Y
Jake Burns	14/03/2013	Face-to-face	P	Y
Pat Poole	19/03/2013	Email	V	Y
Andrew Moore	20/03/2013	Face-to-face	V	N
Mike Dearden	02/04/2013	Email	V	N
Katie McConnell	09/04/2013	Skype	V	N
Elayne Woolley	07/04/2013	Telephone	P (vegetarian)	Y
Kerry McCarthy	10/04/2013	Telephone	V	Y
Fiona Friel	11/04/2013	Telephone	P (vegan)	Y
Gilli Graham	13/04/2013	Face-to-face	E (vegan)	Y
Chris Sanders	16/04/2013	Telephone	V	Y
Beki Bond	07/05/2013	Email	P (vegan)	Y

**Table 6 - Participant interviews**

## 7 APPENDICES

### 7.1 Appendix 1 – Hansard transcripts form 1977 Parliament sitting discussing punk in derogatory terms.

‘Some of the dangers and potential dangers have been exacerbated by the development of the phenomenon of **punk rock**, which originated in the United States. I refer to another source of information that is not often quoted in the House. In an article last week, the Sunday People analysed **punk rock**. It may have overstated the case, but the paper said that the verdict of its investigators on the cult was: “*It is sick. It is dangerous. It is sinister. And their findings are a warning to every family. Our investigation has uncovered a creed which glorifies violence, filth, sadism and rebellion.*” Unemployed young people or those with limited job prospects provide a fertile ground for the proponents of **punk rock**.’

There may be a danger of exaggeration, but I have been to a couple of **punk rock** concerts and seen how even quite respectable youngsters respond to this phenomenon. Despite the total opposition of the Press, a **punk rock** record by the Sex Pistols has shot to the top of the hit parade. Young people are listening to this new phenomenon and it is one about which we should be concerned.

Mr. Bruce George (Walsall, South), POP CONCERTS HC Deb 14 June 1977  
vol 933 cc334-46. 8.43 p.m.

[http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1977/jun/14/pop-concerts#S5CV0933P0\\_19770614\\_HOC\\_380](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1977/jun/14/pop-concerts#S5CV0933P0_19770614_HOC_380) [Accessed 20 March 2013]

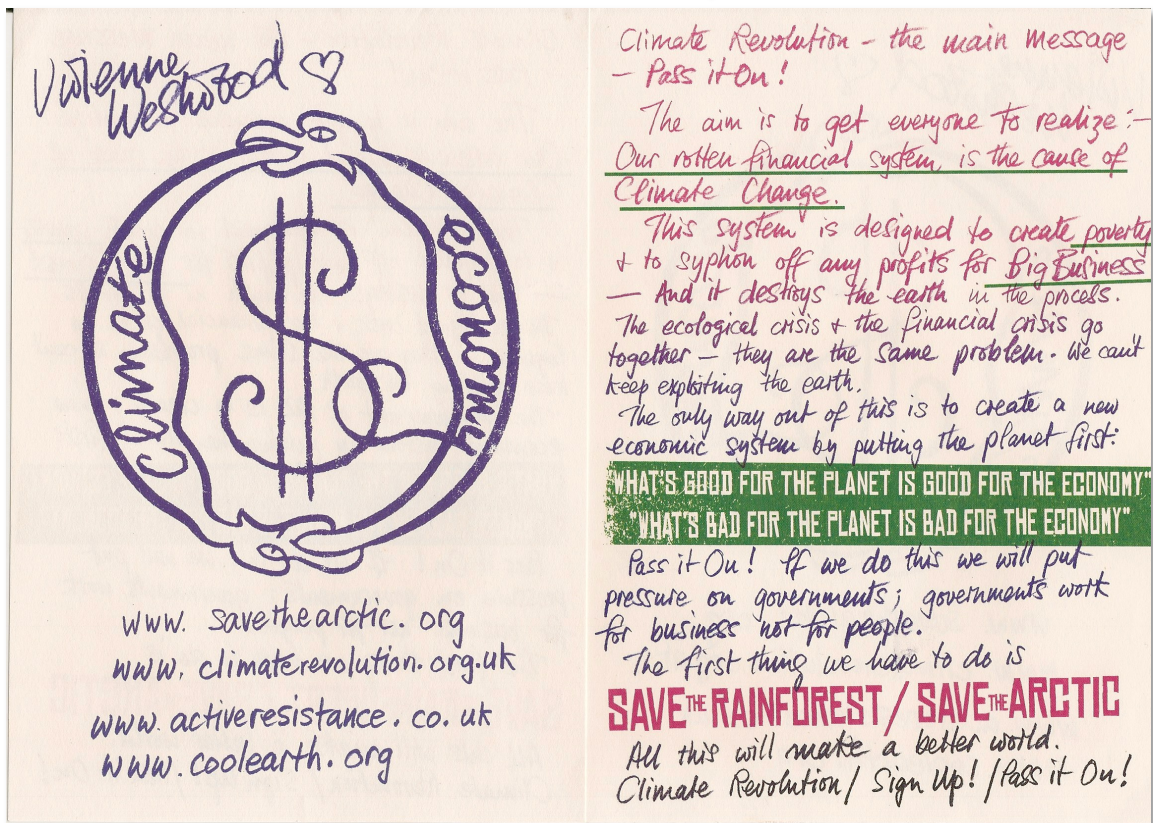
One of the problems with **punk rock**, as with the groups of the early 'sixties, is that the whole idea is to be against the Establishment and the adult population. ... But there is something rather more frightening. My hon. Friend quoted the Sunday People, but it is not only the popular papers, which have been giving attention to this problem. The Economist said: “*The fans describe themselves as the 'blank generation', 'hate' and 'destroy' slogans are frequently used, the lyrics of the better groups, such as the Clash, who have dubbed themselves the 'Sound of the Westway'—*” with my former responsibilities for transport, I know what is meant by that ... refer to urban decay, unemployment among the young and life in high-rise blocks. Mr. Mick Jones, of the Clash, once claimed that he had never lived below the 17th floor, though his fellow guitarist Mr. Joe Strummer went to a public school. The Economist says: “*The new wave is unlikely to produce a new Mozart. But if it causes Mr. Callaghan, Mrs. Thatcher and the rest—*” presumably that means the rest of us— “*to wonder why Britain's young people go around with safety-pins in their noses it may serve a useful purpose.*” So that is part of a much larger problem ... and my Department has done a great deal of investigation and work on that.

The Under-Secretary of State for the Environment (Mr. Kenneth Marks), POP CONCERTS HC Deb 14 June 1977 vol 933 cc334-46. 8.43 p.m.  
[http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1977/jun/14/pop-concerts#S5CV0933P0\\_19770614\\_HOC\\_380](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1977/jun/14/pop-concerts#S5CV0933P0_19770614_HOC_380) [Accessed 20 March 2013]

'We can all—or, if we cannot, we should certainly try to imagine—the psychological effect and the frustration that that causes to the individual youngster, but we should be desperately concerned also about the prospect of a long-term growth of unemployment among young people and about the implications that that has for our political system and for social peace in our cities. We must recognise the attractions of the National Front, the Socialist Workers' Party and others on either side, which will claim to provide some simple solution to the problem of unemployment of young people, or the growth of football hooliganism or the **punk rocker** syndrome, which we have seen in my constituency, for example. All these things will grow and flourish unless we are seen to be doing something constructive' (Mr. Nicholas Scott (Chelsea), DEBATE ON THE ADDRESS HC Deb 03 November 1977 vol 938 cc10-135).  
<http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1977/nov/03/debate-on-the-address> [Accessed 20 March 2013]

## 7.2 Appendix 2 – Vivienne Westwood Boutique, King Street, Manchester.

Authors own photograph and scan. Permission was given to take photograph by the store manager. There is usually Vivienne's free-give-away manifesto on the display in the gap but they had run out due to it being so popular.





### 7.3 Appendix 3 – Brain functional networks of vegans, vegetarians and omnivores.

The main finding was a commonality of the functional architecture of emotional processing in vegetarians and vegans. It found that the vegetarians and vegans had a higher activation of empathy, related to areas of the brain, than omnivores, during both negative human and animal scenes, regardless of species. The part of the brain network that causes this is thought to be associated with emotions and social behaviour (D'Argembeau, A., Stawarczyk, D., Majerus, S., Collette, F., Van der Linden, M., et al, (2009).

Filippi M, Riccitelli G, Falini A, Di Salle F, Vuilleumier P, et al. conclude that brain responses are evoked via negative images of suffering and significantly differ between vegetarians, vegans and omnivores as a comparison group. Also, there was a significant difference between the vegetarians and vegans. They suggest, therefore, different motivational factors are responsible for this, due to individual preferences *and* moral attitudes. (Filippi M, Riccitelli G, Falini A, Di Salle F, Vuilleumier P, et al 2010).

Table 6 and Figure 11 show each feeding groups outcomes from the fMRI, and a questionnaire based on an empathy assessment, showing an Empathy quotient (EQ) score.

Omnivores	Vegetarians	Vegans
Responded more to human suffering than animal suffering.	Displayed more emotional empathy to human suffering than both the omnivores and vegans but slightly less than the vegans to animal suffering but more than the omnivores.	Responded the most to animal suffering than the vegetarians and omnivores and only slightly less than the vegetarians to human suffering, however it was more than the omnivores.

**Table 6 - Feeding habits and empathy response to human and animal suffering images. Authors own.**

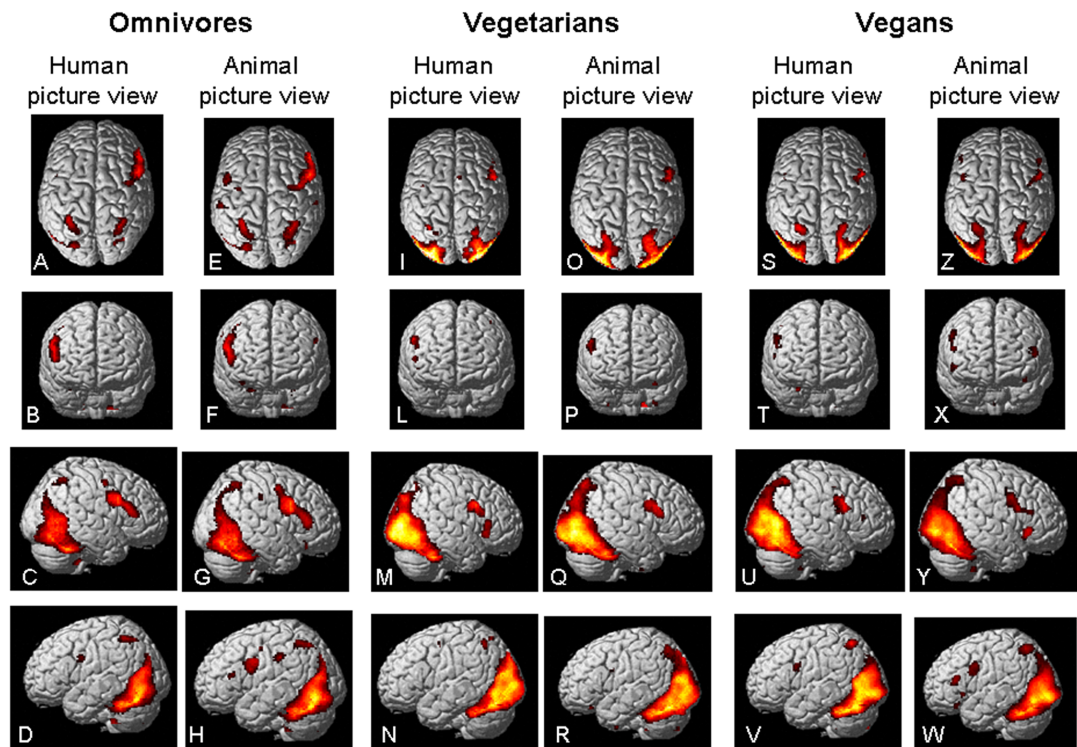


Figure 11 – fMRI Within-group analysis of activations. Cortical activations on a rendered brain from omnivore (A–H), vegetarian (I–R) and vegan (S–W) subjects during observation of pictures showing negative valence scenes of humans (A–D, I–N, S–V) or animals (E–H, O–R, Z–W). Images are in neurological convention. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0010847.g002' (Filippi M, Riccitelli G, Falini A, Di Salle F, Vuilleumier P, et al (2010).

## 7.4 Appendix 4 – Final questionnaire survey via Surveymonkey.com

Please feel free to make a video response to this survey and email it to [punkgirlcandy@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:punkgirlcandy@hotmail.co.uk)

**\*1. When did you become straight edge?**

**\*2. Are you a vegan or vegetarian?**

☐ Yes

☐ No

**\*3. Do you see yourself as an environmental activist?**

**Please say why to either answer.**

☐ Yes

☐ No

Please say why to either answer

**\*4. Do you think sXe is a radical environmental movement?**

**Please say why to either answer.**

☐ Yes

☐ No

Please say why to either answer

**\*5. Would you say you belong to any group that preserves or protects the environment?**

**If yes, please list.**

Thank you for taking time to complete this survey, your answers will really help me complete my thesis.

If you would like to participate further by allowing me to interview you or you would like to send me a video of your views please email me at [punkgirlcandy@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:punkgirlcandy@hotmail.co.uk)

Done

## **7.5 Appendix 5 – List of social networking sites used for the questionnaire survey**

Straight Edge, more than ink <https://www.facebook.com/xMoreThanInkx?fref=ts>

Straight Edge sXe

<https://www.facebook.com/messages/sxelives>

Straight Edge Society

<https://www.facebook.com/sXeSociety>

UK Against Blood Sports

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/104906946229378/>

Vegan Straight Edge UK

<https://www.facebook.com/xVxUKx?fref=ts>

Straight Edge

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2204815402/?fref=ts>

UK Straight Edge

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/152634504814387/?fref=ts>

Pumpkin Records

[https://www.facebook.com/pumpkinrecordsuk?group\\_id=0](https://www.facebook.com/pumpkinrecordsuk?group_id=0)

Autonomads (D.I.Y Dub-Punk and Ska band from Manchester)

<https://www.facebook.com/autonomads?fref=ts>

Manchester Hunt Sabs

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Manchester-Hunt-Sabs/376472612370010>

Untoxicated - Drug Free For LifeUntoxicated - Drug Free For Life

<https://www.facebook.com/Untoxicated?fref=pb>

Twitter

[Accessed between 07 January 2013 - 15 April 2013]



## 7.6 Appendix 6 – Participant information

University of Manchester  
School of Environment and Development

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### **Straight Edge Punk a paradigm shift in the environmental movements market**

### **The environmental activism of Straight Edge**

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#### **Participant Information Sheet**

**What is the title of the research?** Straight Edge Punk a paradigm shift in the environmental movements market. The environmental activism of Straight Edge.

**Who will conduct the research?** Candace James

**What is the aim of the research?** To identify an unknown environmental movement

**Why have I been chosen?** Due to your environmental activities and/or being a Punk

**What would I be asked to do if I took part?** Take part in a semi-structured recorded interview to give your experiences as a Punk and any thoughts you have on environmentalism

**What happens to the data collected?** It will be analysed as data and written up as part of my research

**How is confidentiality maintained?** The university as a data protection policy

**What happens if I do not want to take part or if I change my mind?** You are free to do this and your interview will not be used

**Will I be paid for participating in the research?** There is no payment for the interview

**What is the duration of the research?** An interview lasting between 30 minutes to an hour

**Where will the research be conducted?** At a mutually planned venue where you feel secure

**Will the outcomes of the research be published?** Yes, in my dissertation that will be available to read in the university's library

**Contact for further information** Candace James XXXXX XXX XXX

**What if something goes wrong?** Contact the school on 0161 275 6897

## 7.7 Appendix 7 – Participant Consent form

University of Manchester  
School of Environment and Development

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### **Straight Edge Punk a paradigm shift in the environmental movements market**

**The environmental activism of Straight Edge**

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#### **Consent Form**

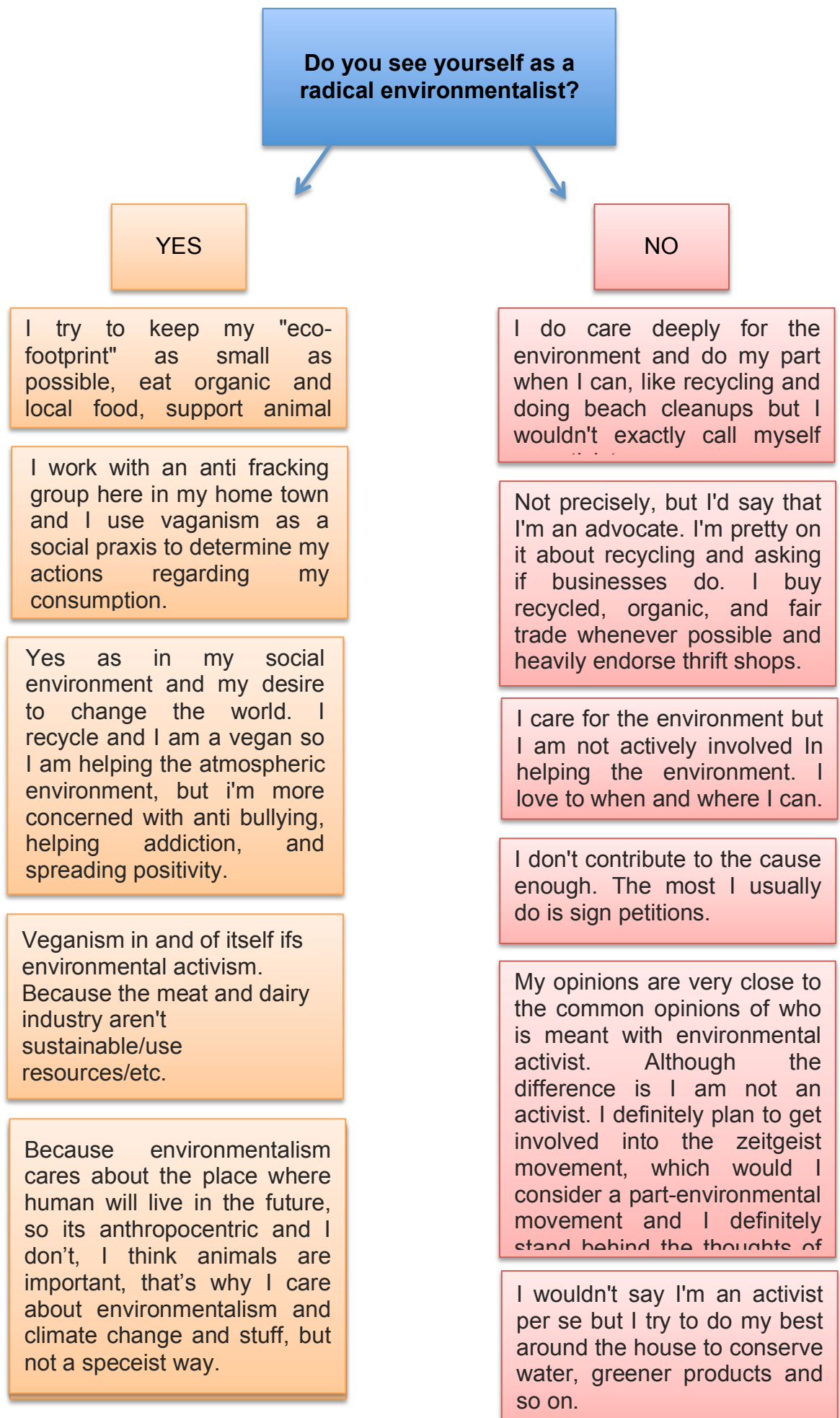
If you are happy to participate please read the consent form and initial it:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. I confirm that I have read the attached information sheet on the above project and have had the opportunity to consider the information and ask questions and had these answered satisfactorily. | <div>Please<br/>Initial<br/>Box</div> <div></div> |
| 2. I understand that my participation in the study is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without detriment to any treatment/service                   | <div></div>                                       |
| 3. I understand that the interviews will be audio/video-recorded  | <div></div>                                       |
| 4. I agree to the use of anonymous quotes   | <div></div>                                       |

I agree to take part in the above project

_____ Name of participant	_____ Date	_____ Signature
_____ Name of person taking consent	_____ Date	_____ Signature
_____	_____	_____

## 7.8 Appendix 8 – Discourse from the online survey questions



Do you think sXe is a radical environmental movement?

YES

It's definitely a radical environmental movement. Think about it: we aren't polluting the air with smoke from cigarettes or weed, we aren't leaving cigarette butts or the butts or joints all over the ground, we aren't causing a hazardous environment but "accidentally" leaving dirty needles and left over drugs all over the place for young kids to find, and we aren't causing any "disasters" that are usually caused by alcohol or drugs.

For the small few, yes. I believe it has the potential to be. Definitely among the vegan straight edge community.

Damn right it is, it is a fast growing movement that is affecting a lot Yes, because refraining from smoking is better for the environment. of young lives.

Yes, because refraining from smoking is better for the environment.

Not so radical, but yes

People are the most easily changeable portion of the environment.

NO

sXe is a personal choice to stay "clean" and "clear minded" and in my opinion has nothing to do with environmental issues...at least not primarily

Environment as in nature, no. Environment as a broader term, maybe. If you could equate it to cleaning up the beach by not littering, then sure. I'm an activist

I only say no because there are so many ways people interpret being Straight Edge. To one person being an active part in saving the planet can be a major part of their life while to another can be all about disease awareness or anti abuse or about nothing at all. That is one of the beautiful things about being straight edge you live the life you want to live however you interpret that to be without drugs and alcohol of course.

Straight edge is simply a rebellion against the rebellious drug use in the punk culture. Vegetarianism, veganism and other environmental activism are just movements that people involved in straight edge are also often involved in.

## 7.9 Appendix 9 – Song lyrics

Band	Punk/ sXe	Song	Lyric
Subhumans	Punk	Evolution	And the monkeys in the zoo they look so tame In the name of science they removed their brains To think that man evolved from this beast Civilised savages down from the trees The animals who run these laboratories
Ramones	Punk	Ignorance is Bliss	What's happening to our society? Disintegration of humanity Destruction of the environment
Conflict	Punk	This is the A.L.F	Animal lovers, vandals, hooligans, cranks; recognise the labels? They say we don't care about human beings. We say all sentient beings, animal or human have the right to live, free from pain, torture and suffering. They say because we are human and speak the same, we matter more. Is our pain and suffering any greater or lesser than that of animals? Human v. animal rights is as much a prejudice as black v. white or the nazis versus the Jews an affront to our freedom.
Crass	Punk	Sentiment	Fighting amongst ourselves, leaving bits of flesh on barbed wire A little blood on the floor Locks and bars across the door Well versed in violation Our children beat each other in the garden Our failure to accept the earth, we talk of love but push it to the edge
Vice Squad	Punk	Humane	Is it really so hard to open your eyes See through a cruel government's disguise Use your voice for those who have none Or has the system struck you dumb? Maiming and killing, setting your traps Animal loving nation, a load of crap You have no emotions, you're devoid of pity The lowest part of humanity.
The Damned (Captain Sensible)	Punk	Torture me	Torture me Why don't you carve my body up Throw me into a pot Make it hot And you'll have a lovely meal. And if I can suffer more I'll improve your life for sure And if I can suffer more And if I wimper just ignore me
Earth Crisis	sXe	New Ethic	This is the new ethic. Animals' lives are their own and must be given respect. Reject the anthropocentric falsehood that maintains the oppressive hierarchy of mankind over the animals. It's time to set them free. Their lives reduced to biomachines in the factory, farm and laboratory. Dairy, eggs and meat, fur, suede, wool, leather are the end products of torture, confinement and murder.
Hello Bastards	sXe	Environmental Holocaust	Decimating all natural resources The pillage of this planet We are facing / an environmental / holocaust! We are facing / an environmental / holocaust Wiping out forests / contaminating / the / whole / earth There is no end For our brainless greed!
Statement	sXe	Traces of Blood	Innocence grasping for life Superiority denies the living soul Reign of terror, the blood trickles

## 7.10 Appendix 10 – Hardline Manifesto

The time has come for an ideology and for a movement that is both physically and morally strong enough to do battle against the forces of evil that are destroying the earth (and all life upon it). One that cannot be bought, nor led astray by temptation. A movement free of the vices that sedate the mind and weaken the body. An ideology that is pure and righteous, without contradictions or inconsistencies. One that judges all things by one standard and emphasizes personal responsibility and accountability above all else. An overall view on life that not only deals with the external, but also the internal -- realizing that a physical entity of oppression, such as the capitalist system (where all life is deemed an expendable resource), is merely an outward manifestation of the warped values held by the people who run the institutions that control our lives, influence our culture and destroy the earth.

It must also recognize the intrinsic flaw of single issue causes, where the concept of justice is always a selective one (with each special interest group fighting for the rights of those that fall under their personal concern, while neglecting, or in some cases, opposing those rights for others) -- moving beyond such failed approaches -- to a logical and all encompassing system of thought and program of action, which can and will succeed.

That ideology, that movement, is Hardline. A belief system, and a way of life that lives by one ethic -- that all innocent life is sacred, and must have the right to live out it's natural state of existence in peace, without interference. This single ethic ensures that all life, from a foetus, or a grown human (black, white, male or female), to an animal, or its habitat, is guaranteed equal rights, with liberty for all, regardless of someone's personal bias against them. Under the principles of the Hardline ideology, all shall be permitted to do as they please as long as their actions do not harm, in any way, the rights of others. Any action that does interfere with such rights shall not be considered a "right" in itself, and therefore shall not be tolerated. Those who hurt or destroy life around them, or create a situation in which that life or the quality of it is threatened shall from then on no longer be considered innocent, and in turn will no longer have rights.

Adherents to the hardline will abide by these principles in daily life. They shall live at one with the laws of nature, and not forsake them for the desire of pleasure -- from deviant sexual acts and/or abortion, to drug use of any kind (and all other cases where one harms all life around them under the pretext that they are just harming themselves). And, in following with the belief that one shall not infringe on an innocent's life - no animal product shall be consumed (be it flesh, milk or egg). Along with this purity of everyday life, the true hardliner must strive to liberate the rest of the world from its chains - saving life in some cases, and in others, dealing out justice to those guilty of destroying it.

Only with this dedication, and conviction -- living a life that is in harmony with our stated goals and beliefs, gaining strength from our purity of body and mind, while actively opposing those who are guilty of destroying the world with their poisonous thoughts, deeds and pollution, can we be victorious in the struggle.

<http://www.angelfire.com/ok2/sxethic/hlmanifest.html> [Accessed 15 March 2013]

## 7.11 Appendix 11 – At the Edge. Stiff Little Fingers.

Back when I was younger they were talking at me  
Never listened to a word I said  
Always yap, yap, yapping and complaining at me  
Made me think I'd be better off dead

I don't want to talk about it  
I don't want to hear no lip  
Take your share, don't shout about it  
That's your lot, remember you're a kid

They would always teach me that to swear was a sin  
Always speak your mind but not aloud  
Think of something that you want to do with your life  
Nothing that you like, that's not allowed

I've no time to talk about it  
All your stupid hopes and dreams  
Get your feet back on the ground, son  
It's exams that count not football teams

And I'm running at the edge of their world  
They're criticising something they just can't understand  
Living on the edge of their town  
And I won't be shot down

Taught me to defend myself and to be a man  
How to kick someone and run away  
Gave me everything that any young man could need  
But don't understand why I won't stay

Here's your room and here's your records  
Here's your home and here you'll stay  
Here's somewhere I don't believe in  
Wish someone would take it all away

© Stiff Little Fingers

## **7.12 Appendix 12 – Academic papers not included.**

**Eden, S.** and Bear, C (2012.) *The good, the bad and the hands-on: constructs of public participation, anglers and lay management of water environments.* Environment & Planning A 44, 1200–1240

**Seyfang, G.** and Haxeltine, A. (2012). *Growing grassroots innovations: Exploring the role of community-based social movements for sustainable energy transitions.* Environment and Planning C 30 (3) 381-400

**Seyfang, G.** and Smith, A. (2007). *Grassroots innovations for sustainable development: Towards a new research and policy agenda.* Environmental Politics Vol 16(4) pp. 584-603

**Seyfang, G.** (2006). *Sustainable consumption, the new economics and community currencies: Developing new institutions for environmental governance.* Regional Studies 40(7): 781-791

**Shove, E** (2013). *Putting Practice into Policy: reconfiguring questions of consumption and climate change.* Contemporary Social Science.