

**Grandma Smith and Grandpa
Cooper-Clarke: Investigating the
Godparents of Punk Poetry: Patti
Smith and John Cooper Clarke
By Claire Allen**

'I haven't fucked much with the past, but I've fucked plenty with the future.' (Patti Smith
'Babelogue', *Easter*, 1978)

Next Gen?

- Luke Wright
- Kate Tempest.

- “Originally rock music played in a fast, aggressive, or unpolished manner [...] a genre of rock music originating in the late 1970s, characterized by a deliberately outrageous or confrontational attitude, energetic (and often chaotic) performance, and simple or repetitive song structures.”
(OED online)

- Paul Du Noyer: “In our heads we can all imagine a noise called punk rock. It’s nasty, brutish and short. It’s played on cheap guitars at high speed. [...] The general effect will not be pretty or romantic. It might even be downright ugly” (6).

Patti Smith

- 'Senses truly opened' in order to question authority and to seek an alternative: 'to redeem the work of fools' (People have the power').

Just Kids

- “I wanted to infuse the written word with the immediacy and frontal attack of rock and roll” (180).
- “I wanted to be a poet but I knew I would never fit into their incestuous community” (214).
- “Performing poetry night after night to an unreceptive and unruly crowd who were primed to see the New York Dolls [which] proved a challenging education” (218).

Laura Marcus, *Auto/biographical Discourses* (1994)

- “Autobiography has been [...] enlivened and in many cases transformed by feminist, working-class and black criticism” (1).

Cont

- “Autobiography was a central case for feminist criticisms in the 1980s, exposing processes of exclusion and marginalisation in the construction of literary canons” (1).

Gobbing

- “By the mid-1970s, the music industry promoted a state of passivity. In contrast, punk sought to erase the boundary between performer and audience, whether ideologically (anyone can do it) or physically in the practice of spitting on the group (gobbing)” (Savage, 147).

Body

- Smith often presents a body in process, overt about sexuality: 'I have no guilt. I seek pleasure. I seek the nerves under your skin.' ('Babelogue') and her physical human existence: 'I would measure the success of a night by the way by the way by the amount of piss and seed I could exude over the columns that nestled the P.A.' ('Babelogue').

Disturbance

- “Punk at its best was a period of creative confusion, from which astonishing things could grow. [...] It is by its nature disruptive. It creates excitement, produces heat and promotes disturbance. Punk takes traditional elements and disorganizes them.” (Du Noyer 7-8)

Material

- *“bring down to earth, turn their subject into flesh”* (Bakhtin 21).
- Spitting, sex and excretion remind us that the body is continually in process
- *“a metamorphosis, of birth and death, growth and becoming.”* (Bakhtin 24).

Nicola Allen

- “The grotesque represents an ancient artistic urge to create a text that will challenge the traditional progressive mode of understanding, and prioritize instead a newer or a previously unheard narrative” (135).

Cooper Clarke

- grotesque
- Shithouses
- discharge
- bad breath
- STIs
- rotting
- death
- babies die in boxes ('beezley street')

- dons a leather jacket due to its 'wipe clean' properties (*Newsnight Interview, 2013*).

Chicken Town

- “the fucking food is fucking muck/ the fucking drains are fucking fucked/ the colour scheme is fucking brown/ everywhere in chicken town” (stanza four).

Tempest

- 'Wake Up'
- 'feel every decision you make, you must hold it ('Hold your own')
- 'Let them Eat Chaos'
- "Is there anybody else awake, will it ever be day again" ('Let them Eat Chaos')
- "the water levels rising, the animals, the elephants, the polar bears are dying. Stop crying, start buying, but what about the oil spill, shh, no one likes a party-popping spoil sport. Massacres, massacres, new shoes" ('Let them Eat Chaos').

“During 1976 and much of 1977, there was this all-consuming concentration on the now. Everything had to be new, and this impulse galvanised a generation into facing the world and reporting back in blunt, sarcastic, and ringing tones. That is one definition of popular culture at its best, and that’s why punk continues to resonate in another century”
(Savage, 149)

Change

- “Picasso didn’t crawl in a shell when his beloved Basque country was bombed. He reacted by creating a masterpiece in *Guernica* to remind us of the injustices committed against his people” (*Just Kids*, 65).

Luke Wright

- 'The panel'
- 'stare into [our] little phones at things [we]'ve never had' ('The Panel')
- 'Apocalyptic Friday sales and zero-hour contract fails. Austerity and bedroom tax, whilst banks and businesses tip-their hats to politicians flush with chips and health care firm directorships. You think that Nige will sort that mess? And save our treasured NHS?' ('The Panel')

Cont

- Public School man, former banker, how refreshing, stop your rancour. Working fellows needn't fret with ring-wing Tories in his set. So cross his box, let him lose, commit this act of self-abuse. Britain, smitten on a lie, still strung up by the old school tie." (Luke Wright, 'The Panel')

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