



The Punk and Hardcore Youth Subcultures in the USA Since the 1980s

Beate Gansauge

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Seminar paper from the year 2005 in the subject American Studies - Culture and Applied Geography, grade: 1,0, Dresden Technical University, course: The Reagan 80s and the Clinton 90s, 17 entries in the bibliography, language: English, abstract: This paper works with the underlying assumptions of Dick Hebdige's study of subcultures. Here, the word subculture is used synonymously to youth culture, which is a contrast to Stefanie Grimm's *Die Repräsentation von Männlichkeit im Punk und Rap*, where she defines subculture as a necessary step for groups that are rejected by the mainstream and thus have to find their semi-invisible niche. She specifically names the gay culture. Youth cultures, Grimm writes, are at the border of subcultures and popular culture.¹ But since youth cultures are as much a mystery to mainstream society as for example the gay culture, I choose not to make a difference between the words.

After a short introduction to the theory of subcultures and especially theory in punk and hardcore, this paper aims to discuss the youth cultures' similarities and differences, the reasons for changes and continuity in the scene, and the relation to politics. Sources cited will include academic texts, popular texts like Andy Greenwald's book *Nothing Feels Good. Punk Rock, Teenagers, and Emo*, as well as original voices from the scene, for example collected in interviews by Beth Lahicky for her book *All Ages. Reflections on Straight Edge*. As music is the starting point of all discussed youth cultures, there will also be comment on exemplary lyrics.

Most of the last chapter on the latest form of punk rock, emo, will be in interview style. To date there is one book written on emo. The author Andy Greenwald offers his readers an online messageboard to discuss his work, emo and everything related to it. He actively participates in the discussion and was so kind to answer my questions.

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