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Not the Same Old Show: An Exploration of Ruth Gregory's Iconic Designs for *Temporary Hoarding* (1976–1981)

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Abstract
This article explores the visual content of the Rock Against Racism (RAR) punk-fanzine-style paper *Temporary Hoarding* (1976–1981), with an emphasis on the impactful designs created by Ruth Gregory. RAR was created to counter racism in the music industry and the increasing influence of the National Front on youth subcultures. The essential role played by graphic design in this endeavor has been understated within the wider discussion on RAR. The paper's creators aimed to embody the anti-establishment ethos and language of punk and reggae, to promote anti-racism within a wider left-libertarian perspective. This contrasted with the dense, impenetrable political theory which characterized traditional left media, and enabled the paper to connect with their young audiences. The paper also introduced issues surrounding police brutality, feminism, apartheid, Northern Ireland, and the legacy of colonialism to its readership. This article explores the influence of Dada and Constructivism, as well as 1960s agit-prop and punk, on the design aesthetic, and draws correlations with the underground press (1960s–1970s). It explores the trajectory of the design aesthetic as the campaign hit unexpected heights, before having to respond to a new reality with the election of an authoritarian New Right government from 1979.

Keywords: Dada—Rock Against Racism—graphic design history—punk—fanzines—feminism

Introduction

This article examines the significance of the Rock Against Racism (RAR) punk-fanzine-style paper *Temporary Hoarding*, with an emphasis on the influential designs produced by Ruth Gregory. The formation of RAR was prompted by racist comments made by Eric Clapton during a concert performance in Birmingham in August 1976, in which he expressed support for Enoch Powell's infamous "Rivers of Blood" speech.[1] The founders, who were a mixture of members of the International Socialists (1962–1977) and agit-prop theatre group Kartoon Klowns, sent a letter to the *New Musical Express* music magazine, expressing their opprobrium, and calling for "a rank-and-file movement against the racist poison in rock music." The letter was reprinted in the International Socialists' paper *Socialist Worker* (1968–), which led to significant further engagement by party members. They proceeded to organize a small gig in London, late in 1976, and produced a first issue of *Temporary Hoarding* alongside it. Among those who answered the call were graphic artist Ruth Gregory, photographer Syd Shelton, writer Lucy Whitman, researcher

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Kate Webb, and the socialist activist, writer, and GP David Widgery, who became mainstays of an evolving group, which took over the production of *Temporary Hoarding*, producing fifteen issues over the following five years.

Despite RAR's considerable impact on youth culture, scant literature exists on the visual language of its key publication, *Temporary Hoarding*, and the design language it created to disseminate political ideas. Ruth Gregory's recollections of the movement are included in several key publications, while she also features in the film *White Riot*, directed by Rubika Shah (2019).[2] However, the focus in all these cases is on the workings of the RAR organism rather than its use of visual communication techniques. David Widgery's impassioned account of the movement, *Beating Time* (1986), was co-designed by Gregory and Andy Dark, and consciously adopted much of the visual language of *Temporary Hoarding*. However, as with the wealth of other reminiscences produced by people involved in RAR, it doesn't include any analysis of the role graphic design played in their endeavors. Daniel Rachel's oral history of RAR includes a section on *Temporary Hoarding*, but with a focus on the mechanics of production and distribution. Paul Gilroy, a protagonist in RAR, does analyze the contents of *Temporary Hoarding* in his renowned book on the cultural politics of race relations in Britain, but from a cultural and sociopolitical perspective.[3]

While little attention has been paid to *Temporary Hoarding*, photography associated with the RAR campaign has become increasingly fêted. Alongside the work of Red Saunders and Virginia Turbett, the striking photography of Syd Shelton has received particular attention. A solo retrospective, *Syd Shelton: Rock Against Racism*, was presented at the photo gallery *Autograph ABP* in London (2016). A large-format, glossy book released in conjunction with the retrospective contains a selection of *Temporary Hoarding* layouts, but the emphasis is more on Shelton's photography than on its use in the publication. An exhibition at Tate Britain, *The 80s: Photographing Britain* (2024–2025), also featured an impressive selection of Shelton's work.

Temporary Hoarding is featured within comprehensive roundups of fanzines, however the designs themselves are not discussed.[4] Teal Triggs' publication contains several spreads, while a book by Matt Worley places more emphasis on the writing. Within the essays featured in *Ripped, Torn and Cut*, references to *Temporary Hoarding* focus on the distinct contribution made by writer Lucy Toothpaste.[5] Two further important fanzine studies do not include *Temporary Hoarding* and its ilk at all, focusing more on the grassroots publications created by fans.[6] This article contributes to work in this area by focusing on the visual language that Gregory cultivated, together with the team at *Temporary Hoarding*, and is the first to situate its importance in the history of graphic design.

The functioning of *Temporary Hoarding*

Temporary Hoarding was conceived as a punk fanzine, crossed with a political journal, and it shows the clear influences of Dada, Constructivism, and agit-prop associated with the progressive political movements of the 1960s–1970s. Following the huge outpouring of support that resulted from the publication of their call to arms in the *New Musical Express* (NME) and *Socialist Worker*, the initial proponents of RAR, who came from an older countercultural and New Left-inspired generation, saw an opening to influence the direction of youth culture. The hope that had propelled these demographics and the political establishment more widely in the post-war decades had started to wane; and this change was clearly manifest in the advent of punk.

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The creators of *Temporary Hoarding* were inspired by the anarchistic, DIY attitude of punk, but they were also influenced by the radicalism and the aesthetic of the underground press of the preceding decade.[7] The precedent for a radical political stance being conveyed through independent press had a lineage from the USA in publications like *Black Mask* (1966–1967) and *Rising Up Angry* (1969–1975), with Emery Douglas' designs for *The Black Panther Party Paper* (1967) providing a particularly vibrant incarnation. These served the attendant cultural revolution.[8] *Temporary Hoarding* similarly rejected the objective, neutral tone prized by official journalism, instead employing informal language, including profanity and slang. This is notably the case in the writing of David Widgery, who consciously adopted the meter of punk and reggae to connect with the young readership. Widgery had formerly written for homegrown underground press publications *Oz* (1967–1973) and the left-wing paper *The Black Dwarf* (1968–1972), and his experiences there fed into his writing for *Temporary Hoarding*.

The first issue of *Temporary Hoarding* was planned and put together at the Soho studio of one of RAR's initial proponents, the photographer Red Saunders. This issue comprises a simple eight-page spread, including an important articulation of what racism is, in the wider context of the British Empire.[9] The A4 pamphlet folds out into an A2 poster, providing the potential for the imagery to continue its life in community centers and on bedroom walls long after the publication's release.

A collage by Andy Dark and Roger Huddle is included, which features Enoch Powell, Adolf Hitler, and David Bowie, referencing the pop star's "flirtation with fascism," where he welcomed the notion of a right-wing dictatorship and claimed (in an interview with *Playboy* in 1973) that Hitler was the first superstar.[10] Below this, celebratory pictures of reggae sound systems are combined with images of police assaults on Black people. Duotone smudges of red ink are superimposed on the scene, which also features inspirational quotes by Bob Marley and American labor activist T-Bone Slim. The collage includes a quote by Hitler in which he acknowledges that the only way the rise of fascism could have been stopped was if "from the first day it had been smashed with the utmost brutality," thereby providing the rationale for RAR.

Prominently represented in the publication was the RAR logo itself, which had been designed by an associate of co-founder Red Saunders, Dave King, who had worked as a designer on the *Sunday Times*. Saunders recalls that the design was "… taken from the five-cornered star, which was designed by El Lissitzky for the Bolshevik Party."[11]

The logo (see Figure 1) provided strong visual branding, and was widely circulated, appearing on posters, leaflets, and other ephemera as well as recurring as a design motif within *Temporary Hoarding*. It was printed on badges, which provided a substantial income for the duration of RAR, selling 12,000 units in 1979 alone.[12] The funds raised were largely used to pay for printing future issues of *Temporary Hoarding*. Simultaneously, RAR branches were forming up and down the country, with fifty-two RAR groups organizing gigs in their locales by the end of 1977.[13]

Ruth Gregory became involved in RAR shortly after the first *Temporary Hoarding* was produced. She had moved to London from Australia, aged twenty-five, but was unable to take up a place at Goldsmiths art school as the fees for foreign students were too high. While living in squats in Brixton, she joined the local branch of the International Socialists (along with Syd Shelton and his then partner, Jayne Harrison) and was inspired to join RAR. Gregory had met Shelton while studying a foundation course in London in 1969, and he returned to Australia with her the following year. Gregory's family were heavily involved in the revolutionary strand of the Communist Party of Australia (CPA),

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Figure 1 David Widgery and Roger Huddle, *Temporary Hoarding*, Issue 1 (December 1976): front cover. With permission from Ruth Gregory.

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and while in Australia, Gregory worked in their press office, while Shelton started working for their paper *Tribune* as a photographer. Gregory comments, "That's how I became a graphic artist, making banners for May Day and posters etc and how Syd became a photographer."[14]

Gregory worked on *Temporary Hoarding* from Issue 2 onwards. This was published in June 1977 to celebrate the biggest RAR gig to date, held at the Roundhouse (London) on Mayday. As with the first issue, it was mainly monochrome, but featured a splash of pink in place of red. It contained twelve instead of eight pages, including two foldout posters. It reads less like a manifesto than Issue 1, featuring interviews with Johnny Rotten, Aswad, and Carol Grimes, and an article on Black and white female blues singers. Gregory's collage, "RAR Gives Space to Those who Fight Back" (see Figure 2), accompanies an article concerning the targeted arrest of young Black people under the infamous "SUS" laws, which allowed police to arrest people before they had committed a crime. A photo of a young Black man (Figure 2), with his hands up, is surrounded by text stating, "On a date unknown, you did conspire with people unknown, to rob people unknown." This is superimposed on photographs of massed riot police. The image consciously adopts punk ransom note lettering in the title, a motif that was promulgated by Sex Pistols designer Jamie Reid, as well as Helen Wellington-Lloyd, who produced the Pistols' early flyers.



Figure 2 Ruth Gregory, "RAR Gives Space to Those Who Fight Back, " *Temporary Hoarding*, Issue 2 (June 1977): 3. With permission from Ruth Gregory.

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1977 was to prove a huge year, both for RAR and the political organizations it was affiliated with. The International Socialists rebranded themselves as the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), as they moved from being a propagandist/pressure group to a registered political party standing in local and national elections. 1977 also saw an increase of racist activity on the streets as the National Front (NF) stepped up its attacks on immigrant communities. This followed a concerted campaign to recruit disaffected youth, from the football terraces and outside school gates.[15] These events, and more specifically the Battle of Lewisham (1977)—where the NF attempted an intimidatory march through Lewisham, which housed a large Afro-Caribbean population, under the guise of an "anti-mugging" march, only to clash with anti-racist protestors—inspired RAR to, in Widgery's words, "organise in earnest."[16]

A special four-page issue, containing two posters, was swiftly released in August 1977 in response to Lewisham. Gregory's poster, "A Year Under Heavy Mannners," juxtaposed punk iconography with a whistlestop tour through the movement's successes that year. Interspersed with these are references to Northern Ireland, prisoner conditions, campaigns to stop cuts to public services, apartheid, and gay rights, reflecting the perceived inter-connectedness of social justice issues in the minds of key RAR protagonists.

The events of 1977 also led to the SWP deciding to initiate the Anti-Nazi League (ANL), with the support of trade unions, the Indian Workers' Association, and several Labour Party members and MPs. As a campaign group, the ANL ostensibly had similar aims to RAR, but its focus was political rather than cultural, and more in the tradition of movements such as the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) that emerged from the traditional Left in the postwar years. Dave King again provided the visual branding, through a powerful logo, which features an arrow with three quills, with Anti-Nazi League written inside. It was derived from symbols of anti-fascism used in Germany in the 1930s.[17] The "lollypop" design, featuring a red arrow and black text against a yellow circle, was first seen at the first RAR Carnival (1978) and it featured prominently on posters, placards, and badges. King deliberately used the vibrant color palette to break with the more orthodox monochrome rectangle design favored within the left.[18]

The ANL made considerable impact, both in direct confrontation with the supporters of neo-fascist/extreme-right organizations and through influencing mainstream politics.[19] In exposing the Nazi affiliation of the people at the core of the NF, it appealed to a broad swathe of the population, not least older people who remembered World War II.[20] By contrast, RAR was characterized by the subcultural appeal it held for thousands of young participants. Gregory highlights the difference between the two:

> Sometimes we worked with the ANL, but it was very difficult to work with them because they were very hierarchical. People often had two hats. The ANL concentrated on the ballot box—getting influential people like Peter Hain involved. Getting important people to sign up and put voices out there. RAR was more organic and grassroots.[21]

RAR is historically best known for the huge anti-racist Carnivals it organized with the ANL in 1978 (London and Manchester) and in Leeds (1981), featuring mainly reggae and punk bands. The first of two carnivals to be held in London in 1978, at Victoria Park in April, featured prominent punk bands, notably The Clash, Buzzcocks, X-Ray Spex, Sham 69, reggae band Steel Pulse, and acts like The Tom Robinson Band, and drew a staggering 80,000 people.[22]

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Gregory designed a poster, which was included in a foldout special edition of *Temporary Hoarding* to accompany the Victoria Park carnival. In it, she repurposed King's arrow design for the ANL logo, stripping it of its quills. The three arrows have as their target the heads of politicians Prime Minister James Callahan and opposition leader Margaret Thatcher, and the head of the NF, Martin Webster. Callahan was criticized from the far-left perspective articulated within the pages of *Temporary Hoarding* for presiding over "Labour Party Capitalist Britain."[23]

The use of these stark symbols is akin to that of the clenched red fist to symbolize resistance to oppression by the *Socialist Worker* paper, and in left-wing movements throughout the twentieth century. The connection with the *Socialist Worker* was more than aesthetic, however, as through their association the makers of *Temporary Hoarding* had access to printing presses at the SWP print shop. They worked at night to access the spaces and equipment at the print shop, as during the day the studio was used for various other SWP purposes.

By the time Issue 5 was released in May 1978, Gregory had become instrumental to the production of *Temporary Hoarding*, which she largely co-designed with Roger Huddle and Syd Shelton. By her own account, and that of Widgery, who was a close friend, ally, and, at one stage, partner, Gregory assumed overall editorial responsibility. Widgery acknowledged her as "… the painter and graphic designer who was to become editor and the *force tranquille* behind the graphic power of *Temporary Hoarding*."[24] Red Saunders echoes this sentiment, while Huddle also recognizes her importance in cultivating their graphic language.[25] Alongside these core members, a rotating editorial team also featured Bob Humm, Kate Webb, and Lucy Toothpaste/Whitman, alongside many others including Rick Fawcett and siblings Paul and Darla Jane Gilroy (who contributed under the name of G. Roy and Rankin' Rarla).

By this time, much of RAR's activity was based in Bethnal Green, East London, which was home to the SWP print room, while Widgery also lived and worked in the area as a GP. Among numerous squatted and communal houses, Gregory lived for a time in nearby Stoke Newington, Hackney. Racist violence was widespread, with a shocking estimate of thirty-one Black people who were murdered in racist attacks in Britain between 1976 and 1981.[26] East London was particularly badly affected, with reports showing three times the national average of attacks.[27] The NF's headquarters were in Hackney, and their presence in the area was tangible.

The sixth issue of *Temporary Hoarding*, released in August 1978, focused on violence against the Bangladeshi community in Whitechapel, East London. Gregory's layout, "After the Tears, the Fury" (see Figure 3), collages a smattering of headline news reports on the incidents, interspersed with the dates when they occurred. A photo of South Asian children around Whitechapel is interspersed with line-by-line text by Rahim Ali, which recounts fifteen violent white youths marching and attacking them with bricks, bottles, and stones. It also highlights the police protection of the racists and their oppression of the Bengali community.

This collage shows Gregory using the rhetorical device of détournement to repurpose material from the national press, which she juxtaposes with specific elements to create a different story. This mirrors graphic design strategies used within the underground press[28] and within avant-garde art movements in the early twentieth century. The snippets taken from newspaper headlines create a climate of fear. By contrast, Gregory includes more empowering images of communities fighting back and lists the grim statistics, thereby providing a rationale for retaliation.

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Figure 3 Ruth Gregory, David Widgery, and Rahim Ali, "After the Tears, the Fury, " *Temporary Hoarding*, Issue 6 (Summer 1978): 5. With permission from Ruth Gregory.

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The aesthetic in Gregory's designs for *Temporary Hoarding* is resonant of that seen in the punk fanzines that grew up alongside it. The gloomy tone, gritty quality, and monochrome palette often highlight the everyday politics of life for disadvantaged young people. They feature urban sprawl, and council estates, once symptomatic of progressive idealism, which by then had acquired dystopian associations. The collage "Is this the best future we …" (see Figure 4) includes an account of a trip to the DHSS office, by Andy Giro (one of the pseudonyms adopted by David Widgery). It includes the graffitied slogan "Government is tyranny" (overtly referencing anarchistic ideology being popularized in punk).

Such works evoke a "declinist" aesthetic, similar to the one Jon Savage utilized in his collages for his contemporaneous, ground-breaking fanzine *London's Outrage* (1976), as well as one he created with Linder Sterling, *The Secret Public* (1978). Similarly to many of the contributors to *Temporary Hoarding*, Savage and Linder were university educated. Savage worked as a music journalist, having graduated from a degree in Classics at Cambridge University, while Linder had just completed her studies in Graphic Design at Manchester Polytechnic (1974–1977). In this they formed a continuum with art school-educated punk progenitors, such as Jamie Reid and Malcolm McClaren, who studied at Croydon Art School (1964–1968). Similarly to Savage and Linder, Reid produced agit-prop communicating a gritty proto-punk aesthetic, in his case to critique urban planning and corrupt local politics for the magazine *Suburban Press*.[29] Much of this material was later reworked for the graphics Reid produced for Sex Pistols. A comparator in San Francisco (USA) is the illustrator Winston Smith, who similarly crossed countercultural and postpunk milieus, reusing the designs he created for the independent magazine *Fallout* (1979–1985) in his satirical designs for Dead Kennedys' (1978–1986) record releases.

Alongside these skilled designers, punk had initiated an explosion of DIY publishing, as unresourced teenagers created their own punk-inspired fanzines in bedrooms across the country using basic cut-and-paste methods. This was enabled by the advent of cheap Xerox photocopying machines. By contrast, *Temporary Hoarding* was created using modern web offset lithography presses which revolutionized conventional printing in the 1970s. Therefore, while adopting a rough-and-ready punk aesthetic, it utilized more sophisticated techniques for its layouts.

Gregory comments:

> Before that it was hot metal. That changed everything because we laid things out on boards, and we could put them at various angles. It wasn't full-color printing. But we had much more control as designers. Some of us started breaking the boundaries of design itself. But I think *Temporary Holding* was about that, and it was about the fact that there was suddenly this idea that design could be something more than a bit of decoration.[30]

Temporary Hoarding was notable in elevating the importance of design alongside written content. Gregory comments: "There was this real sense on left-wing newspapers and in the press generally that the writing was the most important thing to convey an idea."[31] However, this visual language, which drew on punk graphics techniques such as subversion and appropriation of dominant symbols, and the formation of unlikely juxtapositions, to critique powerful forces in society, proved a potent means of connecting with their young audiences. As Gilroy articulates, punk supplied "… an oppositional language through which RAR anti-racism could speak a truly populist politics."[32]

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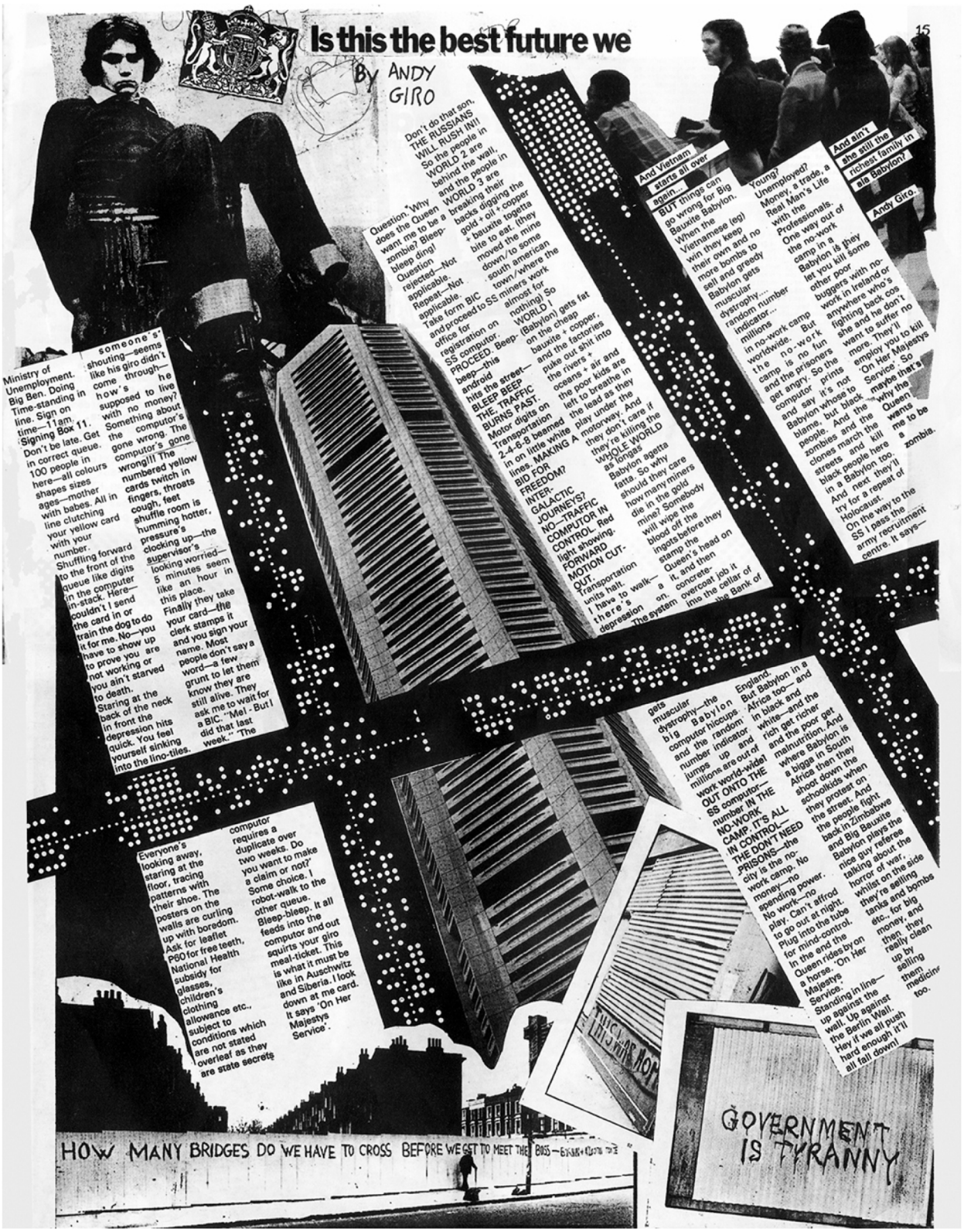


Figure 4 Ruth Gregory and David Widgery, "Is This the Best Future We …," *Temporary Hoarding*, Issue 7 (Winter 1978): 15. With permission from Ruth Gregory.

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Similarly to the early punk progenitors such as Reid, Maclaren, and Savage, the makers of *Temporary Hoarding* were predominantly older than the punk generation, with some notable exceptions such as office manager Kate Webb, aka Irate Kate (known for her exceptional organizational skills, passion, and dedication),[33] who was just seventeen when she joined the team. Young punks were often skeptical about the countercultural generation's attempts to encroach on, define, and/or co-opt the new culture they forged, through their influential positions in the traditional media.[34] Some of *Temporary Hoarding*'s readers likewise expressed skepticism concerning RAR and the fanzine being merely the mouthpiece of the SWP. However, most bands and young people who interacted with the fanzine via interviews and the letters pages were enthusiastically responsive to the writing and visual approach.[35] RAR operated at a time when certain designers had a huge impact on fanzine and music graphics. Jamie Reid's designs for Sex Pistols were endlessly regurgitated as a shorthand for punk, while Gee Vaucher's designs for Crass were endlessly imitated in the relatively niche sub-genre of anarcho-punk.[36] *Temporary Hoarding* adopted and adapted these same influences and marked a first attempt by political designers to seriously engage with youth subcultures already familiar with the style.

Younger RAR activists such as Gregory shared RAR's political orientation, while being more attuned to contemporary music genres. She reflects: "I was a bit old to be a punk and a bit young to be a hippie."[37] Nonetheless, *Temporary Hoarding* shared the egalitarian ethos of punk fanzine production. Gregory comments: "*Temporary Hoarding* was more aligned to fanzines, because even though it was done on the newspaper presses, we published material written by anybody, like Sharon Spike, who wrote in to tell us about skinheads who were anti-racist."[38] "Sharon Spike" became a regular contributor to *Temporary Hoarding*, underlining the cross-fertilization of the fanzine scene and RAR. Spike had already created her own fanzine, *Apathy in Ilford* (1977). It perfectly reflects the amateurish feel that typified punk fanzine design, featuring grainy photos (amplified by the xerographic photocopying) with often hand-written scrawl. The message took priority over production finesse, and the lack of finesse was often a statement in itself.

The writing in *Temporary Hoarding* shows clear echoes of that seen in punk fanzines. In its coverage of bands, it uses a similar tone to pioneering punk fanzines such as *Sniffin' Glue* (1976–), *Panache* (1977–), and *Ripped & Torn* (1976–1979) in its criticism of "sell-outs," i.e., the bands interested in becoming the new establishment rather than feeding back into the punk scene. Widgery's article "And, They Still Say Wanking Will Turn You Blind" is featured alongside Bushell's contribution to the eighth issue of *Temporary Hoarding*.[39] Both writers reflect on punk in the face of its commercialization following its initial flourish, echoing a wider conversation being held in punk fanzines.[40] Widgery's article champions the potential of punk as a revolutionary force in the wake of it becoming commodified. Visually, it also adopts an amateurish punk language in its smudged title, aligned vertically and flanked by typed text on both sides, and through the inclusion of various typos. The article accompanies Gregory's "Punk Women" collage (see Figure 5).

Gregory's punk women are dressed in fetish clothing, underwear as overwear, fishnet tights, studded dog collars, chains, and high heels. The two provide a vibrant riposte to female pinups, contemporaneously featured in the media and advertising, through their defiant stare, unconventional makeup, short spiked hair, and buttoned-up jackets, which bar a glimpse at their breasts. Also featured are anomalous elements such as the school tie. Overall, their appearance is a punk bricolage, which upsets established notions of femininity. The wall against which they stand is spattered with abstract geometric shapes, echoing the patterning in their clothes. In this respect, rather than being rooted in a

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Figure 5 Ruth Gregory, "Stop Page 3 Punk Women," collage, *Temporary Hoarding*, Issue 8 (Militant Entertainment Issue) [March/April 1979]: 3. With permission from Ruth Gregory.

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gritty reality, the women and backdrop comprise an energized and exciting vista, symptomatic of the new horizons opened by punk.

Young punks such as the women Gregory depicts deliberately made themselves look unemployable, in part as a way of distancing themselves from the values of the society they were rejecting. Gregory, however, connects punk disillusionment to the reality of unemployment. "It was the idea of 'No future'; that people were being thrown on the scrapheap."[41]

In another layout created by Gregory, "Sex vs Fascism," writer Lucy Toothpaste's incisive text explores how sex complexes were inherent to a Nazi ideology, and evident within the western capitalist patriarchy. A recurring theme in *Temporary Hoarding* is how this psycho-sexual conditioning manifests in attacks on gay, queer, and feminist people as well as those on non-white ethnicities by the extreme right.[42] Toothpaste was another contributor from the younger generation, and her contributions to *Temporary Hoarding* continued the radical feminist stance she articulated in her pioneering feminist fanzine *Jolt* (1977). The "Sex vs Fascism" article was collaged by Gregory with images of female performers waving swastika flags at the German Gamesat, 1935. It also featured a photo of a musclebound male figure, and one of a mass hanging of Polish partisans. Together these allude to the masculinist idolatry of the far right, which legitimized the subordination of people of differing race, gender, and sexuality. Continuing the theme is an exaggeratedly phallic nuclear missile surrounded by Nazis, and John Heartfield's (born Helmut Herzfeld, 1891–1968) famous montage (published in *AIZ*, December 1935) "Hurrah, die Butter ist alle!" (Hurrah, There's No Butter Left!). The title parodies a speech by Hermann Göring, which—as the militarization of Germany's industrial capacity led to an unintended shortage of basic provisions including butter—instructed the population to reject such indulgent foodstuffs, instead embracing the nation's strength in iron. Accordingly, the family enact a literal interpretation of this absurd instruction, tucking into pieces of iron, against a backdrop of wallpaper adorned with Nazi flags.

Punk and post-punk designers were often inspired by the work of the Berlin Dadaists. The Heartfield photomontage used here also featured as the cover art for the 7-inch single "Mittageisen" (Iron Lunch) by Siouxsie and the Banshees (Polydor, 1979). Seemingly contrarily, the use of Nazi regalia was also adopted by punk performers, including Siouxsie Sioux, as a means of shocking the older generation, still reeling from the horrors of World War II and the Holocaust. The use of the swastika in punk iconography was short lived and widely criticized (Lucy Toothpaste, for example, wrote a scathing piece about it in Issue 2 of her fanzine *Jolt* in 1977), but it reflected a rejection of the cross-party political consensus that punks saw as reflective of the old order. This points to some of the tensions between RAR and punk, with some young punks refusing overt identification with the former's overtly socialist politics.[43] In fact, punk anarchism was something that RAR saw as problematic, with its nihilistic associations offering a potential inlet for fascism. Indeed Widgery[44] saw the same social crisis fueling both punk and the NF. More often punks were politically left or left-anarchist orientated, as well as anti-racist/fascist, but often resisted allegiances with political organizations. Gregory's use of Heartfield's photomontage is unambiguous politically. It functions to comment on the dangers of fascist ideology with hindsight, to highlight the present-day threat. Siouxsie and the Banshees' use on their single sleeve is less overtly didactic. The song presents a dystopian future totalitarian world in which humankind is enslaved by machines, but there is no overt political commentary to let us know how to interpret it beyond a doom-laden, industrial feel to the music.

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Gregory created several other layouts, often combined with Toothpaste's writing, that conveyed expressly feminist concerns. Her layout for "An Everyday Nightmare," featured in the fifth issue of *Temporary Hoarding*, features cartoon sketches accompanying a horrific account by a sixteen-year-old girl, Anne, of her experience of sexual and physical violence perpetrated by British soldiers in Northern Ireland.[45] In "Wouldn't You Like to Rip Him to Shreds?" in the sixth issue of the fanzine, Toothpaste somewhat interrogates punk pinup Adam Ant in interview concerning his schoolgirl/dominatrix fantasies.[46] Other articles on sexism and/or misogyny include "Reclaiming the Night," on the police breakup of a feminist protest concerning a curfew imposed on women in the wake of the Yorkshire Ripper's reign of terror (1976–1980).[47] "You Could Get to Touch Her if Your Gloves Are Sterilised,"[48] produced in the wake of Margaret Thatcher's seismic election victory in May that year, looked at the threats posed to women under her leadership, despite her being lauded as the first female Prime Minister. This whopping issue (thirty-one pages) more widely highlights the drastic changes threatened by the new administration.

Particularly striking is Gregory's collage "Abortion Rights" (see Figure 6), which features an ensemble of geometric shapes depicting a woman's body. The woman's hand holds the key to her sexuality and reproductive capabilities. The article features an interview with a young girl about the harrowing process of becoming pregnant in an abusive relationship and highlights the necessity of her accessing abortion facilities. The text was

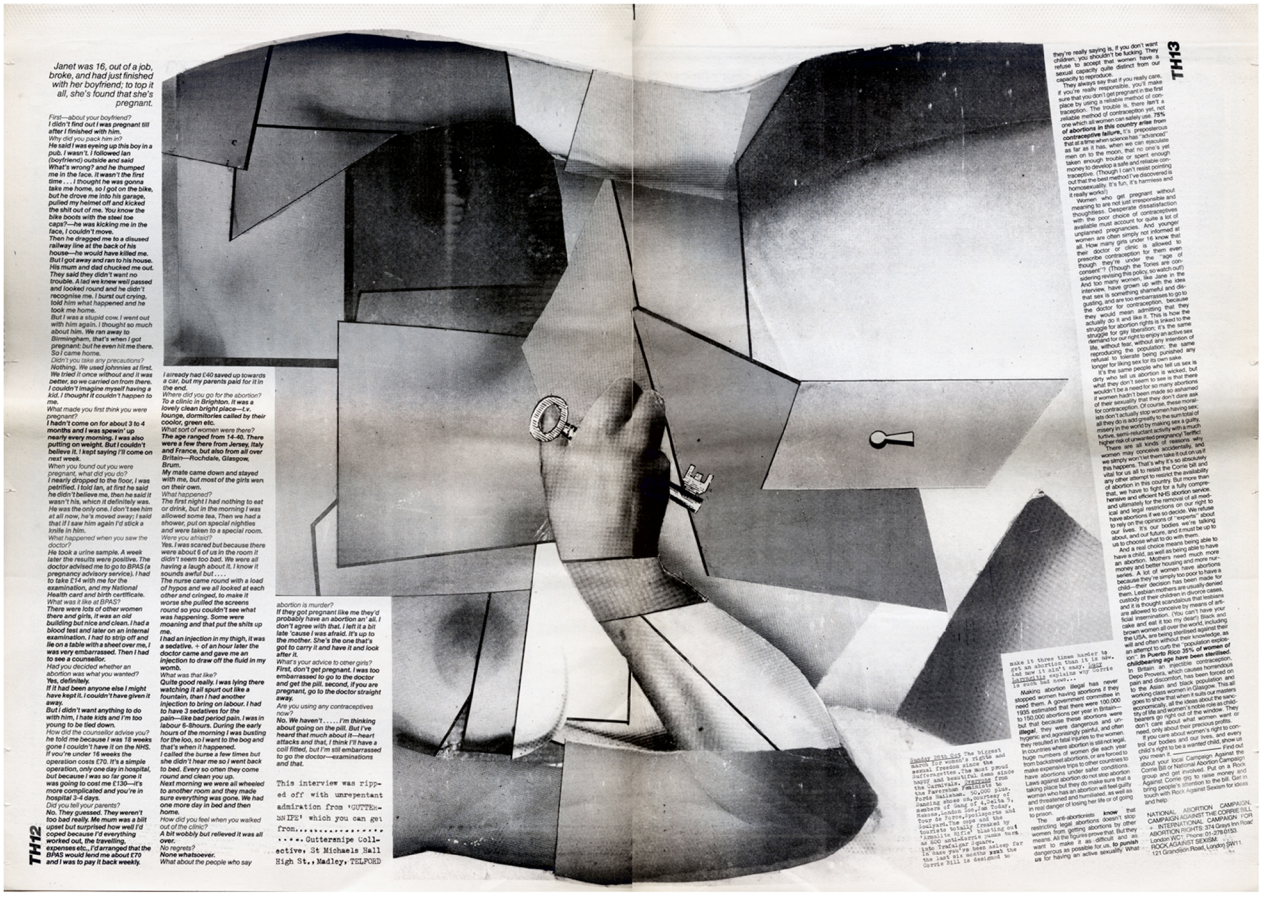


Figure 6 Ruth Gregory and Lucy Toothpaste, "Abortion Rights, " *Temporary Hoarding*, Issue 10 (November 1979): 12–13. With permission from Ruth Gregory.

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taken from *Guttersnipe* fanzine, again underlining the interconnectedness of the fanzines and *Temporary Hoarding*.

Within the left at the time of RAR, women's liberation was part of a wider struggle that encompassed class, gender, and race. Men involved in the left-libertarian struggles of the late 1960s–1970s were sometimes involved with movements for women's and gay rights, as well as sexual liberation. Both Widgery and Nigel Fountain (another *Temporary Hoarding* contributor with roots in the underground press) worked on the anti-sexist men's magazine *Achilles Heel* (1979–1999) as well as on *Temporary Hoarding*. The socialist underpinning to second-wave feminism in the UK was considered essential to activists such as Gregory, who mourned its loss in the radical, separatist version of feminism that emerged in the late 1970s. By contrast, Toothpaste embraced radical feminism, something which drove the formation of Rock Against Sexism (RAS) and its associated fanzine, *Drastic Measures* (1978), which she shaped along with several other RAR members. RAS was initiated in response to sexism within the music industry and the marginalization of this concern within RAR, where gigs sometimes featured bands who gave overtly sexist performances.

The anti-racist and anti-fascist stance expressed in *Temporary Hoarding* reflects a wider cultural political position against western capitalist imperialism and the class system. *Temporary Hoarding* exposed racist oppression occurring internationally, as well as on the domestic front. The struggles for liberation carried out by people in occupied countries, as well as those occurring on the domestic front, made a united struggle against racism viable.[49] A substantial number of those involved with RAR, the ANL (e.g., co-founder Peter Hain), and the SWP (e.g., political theorist and editor of *International Socialism*, 2009–2020, Alex Callinicos) were white South Africans or Rhodesians who were at the forefront of the anti-apartheid movement. For Gregory, it was her exposure to the plight of Aboriginal people in Australia that proved a catalyst for her deep-seated concern with social injustice and specifically racism. During her childhood, she lived on an Aboriginal reserve (Palm Island). The discriminatory treatment and segregation of the Aboriginal population made an indelible mark on her. Interestingly, she points to the egalitarian means by which the progressive Whitlam government (1972–1976) in Australia established land rights for the Aboriginal people as the inspiration for her approach. As the indigenous Australians saw themselves as custodians rather than owners of the land, they were without legal documentation. She comments: "What the Whitlam government allowed them to do was to dance and paint their ownership. All their heritage. The waterholes, the sacred sites; the land itself." She adds: "Can you imagine being able to submit that as proof of ownership? It was such a non-hierarchical thing to do."[50]

Temporary Hoarding features several layouts, comprised of articles interspersed with photos assembled by Gregory, concerning events connected with apartheid in South Africa, including the Soweto uprising of Black teenagers and its brutal suppression by police, as well as the death of Steve Biko in custody. See for instance "But, How Did Biko Die?" in Issue 4 and "Soweto Sunrise" in Issue 14, which contains just four pages.[51] Various struggles against racist white western imperialism, covering African countries including Rhodesia (revolutionary name, Zimbabwe), The Congo, and Ethiopia, were sometimes discussed within the same article.[52]

Similarly, The Troubles in Northern Ireland were framed in terms of the imperialism of the occupying forces and discriminatory treatment of the Catholic population. This position was reiterated in letters from readers in Northern Ireland, which connected the experiences of Black people to those of Catholics.[53] Pages 8–9 of Issue

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10, published in November/December 1979, featured a green, black, and white chequerboard collage, overlaid on a Brian Aris photo of young Catholics being charged by British soldiers, created by Gregory. Within a wider Marxist paradigm, Gregory relates colonialism, as an adjunct of modern capitalism, to the historic oppression of the working class in Britain and highlights how their consciousness of this fueled the Labour movement.[54]

Temporary Hoarding also reflected the Marxist critique emanating from the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) Research Centre at the University of Birmingham, which put a focus on rising state and police repression and institutional racism.[55] Two years after Lewisham, running battles occurred at Southall when an anti-fascist demonstration was organized to counter an NF march orchestrated to intimidate the local, largely Sikh, population. The protest has gone down in history for the killing of the teacher Blair Peach, who died having received a fatal blow by a police officer using an unauthorized weapon.[56] This was one of the tragic results of the excessive use of violence by the Metropolitan Police's militarized squad, the Special Patrol Group (SPG). *Temporary Hoarding* reported thirty people receiving skull and genital injuries, [57] while the SPG invaded a local community center, causing serious injuries to several RAR activists.[58] These included Clarence Baker, a member of the reggae band Misty in Roots, who had appeared at numerous RAR events. Baker received head injuries which resulted in him being put in a coma.[59]

The Southall violence occurred just weeks before the election of the Conservative government of Margaret Thatcher in May 1979, and the increasingly oppressive environment for protestors and Black and brown communities that followed was to preoccupy the pages of *Temporary Hoarding* from Issues 9 (June 1979) to 14 (July 1981). Issue 10 features a layout created by Gregory, which takes its title from an ominous quote by the Metropolitan Police Commissioner David McNee in response to the protestors at Southall: "So Long as You Stay Indoors & Don't Cause Any Trouble, You Have Nothing to Fear from the Police."[60] For this, Gregory utilized a grainy monochrome palette, interspersing the text with images of derelict housing and tower blocks (see Figure 7). Gregory acknowledges the influence of Constructivism on her designs,[61] and echoes of an El Lissitzky composition are evident in this composition. Rather than the components being stripped down to bare geometric shapes, however, Gregory reveals a dystopian representation of the urban landscape. Her image portrays a sinister, paranoid surveillance state, with floodlights uncannily emanating from the buildings. The text by Fred Yabayaba (a pseudonym of Red Saunders, referencing the *Flintstones* animation series) highlighted instances of unprovoked police violence and the failure of the "system" to hold the force to account. As with Gregory's newspaper coverage of the East End racist murders, which she used for her collage for the ninth issue of *Temporary Hoarding* (see Figure 3), a sense of dread is conveyed.

The increasingly pessimistic tone of *Temporary Hoarding* following the events of 1979 was accompanied by a shift in emphasis. Anti-racist campaigners, and the ANL in particular, had made huge inroads in combating the NF's political ambitions,[62] while the new Conservative government had rendered them redundant by co-opting much of their rhetoric on immigration, notably through Margaret Thatcher's "swamped" speech on the ITV series *World in Action* on January 30, 1978 in the runup to the elections.[63] Thatcher's administration embodied the "authoritarian populism" Stuart Hall (*Marxism Today*, 1979) identified as characterizing the New Right, which mobilized popular discontent about the postwar political landscape to gain power and legitimize the imposition of an authoritarian state. Ironically perhaps, the ANL and RAR had contributed to the

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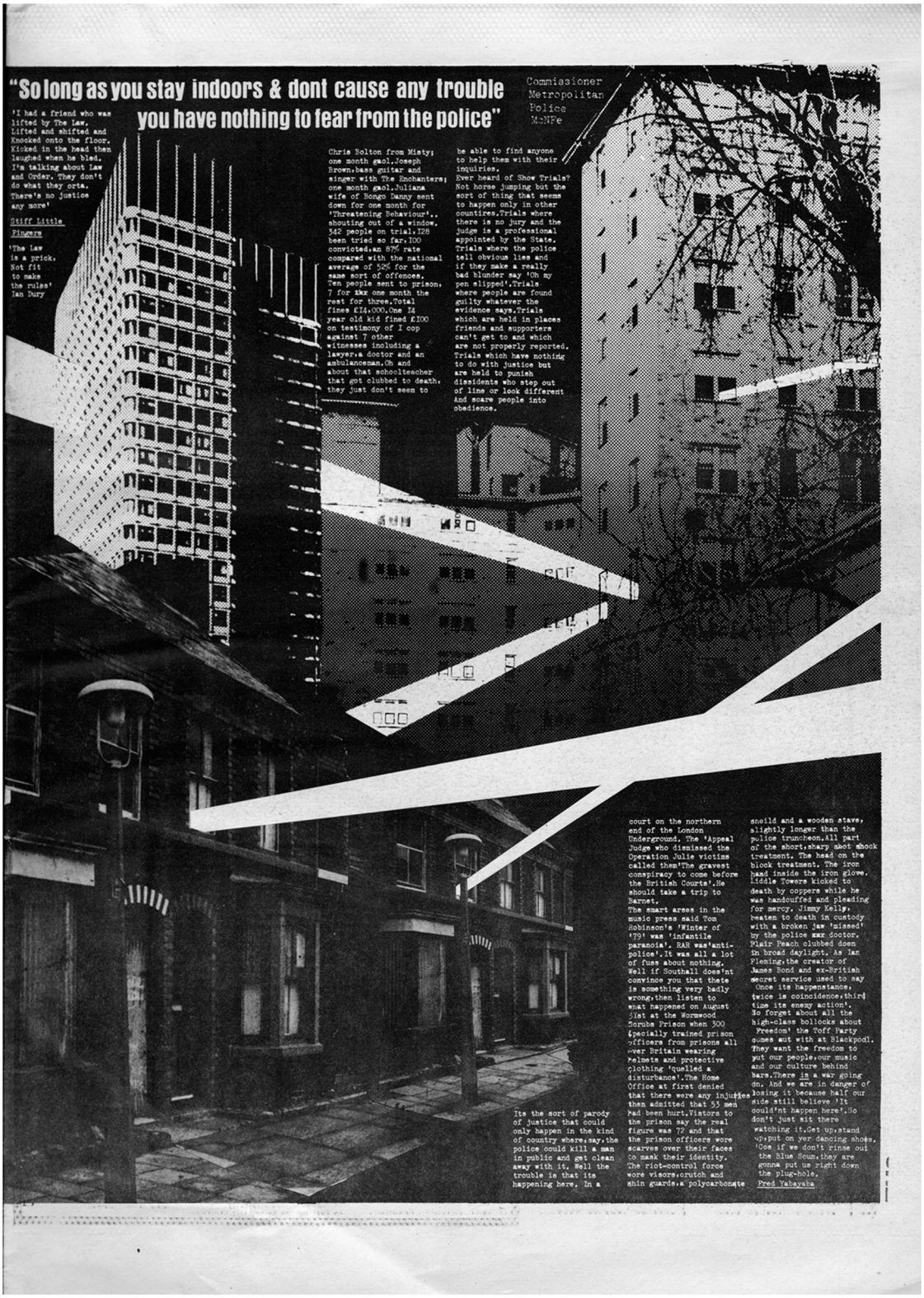


Figure 7 Ruth Gregory, David Widgery, and Red Saunders, "So Long as You Stay Indoors and Don't Cause Any Trouble, You Have Nothing to Fear from the Police, " *Temporary Hoarding*, Issue 10 (November/December 1979): 3. With permission from Ruth Gregory.

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Figure 8 Ruth Gregory and Red Saunders, "Whitelaw Fucking Wally—Tory Looters, " *Temporary Hoarding*, Issue 14 (July 1981). With permission from Ruth Gregory.

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demise of the NF as a political force, but they were now facing a mainstream government that embodied many of its values.

Musically, youth culture was changing too, and *Temporary Hoarding* switched its attention to championing the emerging 2 Tone phenomenon. It is well documented that RAR was a campaign run predominantly by white people (both centrally and in its many regional manifestations) that was focused on transforming white youth culture. The gigs, concerts, and carnivals they staged drew largely white audiences. From the start, however, they had featured black and white musicians, to demonstrate their political commitment to overcoming societal racial division.[64] The success of 2 Tone, in which bands including The Selecter, The Specials, and The Beat combined black and white musicians, embodied these aims, and pointed towards a future the early RAR protagonists had hoped to engender. They were delighted when the final RAR Carnival in Leeds (1981), featuring Barry Ford, The Specials, Aswad, Misty in Roots, and the Au Pairs, attracted a more ethnically mixed audience.[65] A hastily put together final issue of *Temporary Hoarding* (1981) covered the event, and also featured an interview with The Specials. It featured a rundown of the five-year history of the movement, which ended with an exhortation to help them keep going, but the battle lines had moved. Issue 14 was created in the wake of widespread rioting across the UK, which shifted the emphasis of anti-racist activism towards its systemic presence in British state institutions and the police. Gregory's final major collage for *Temporary Hoarding* (see Figure 8) reflects this change, with a cynical critique of the government. In this it was reflective of the new generation of punk fanzines that were emerging in the aftermath of 1979. The figure of Margaret Thatcher was particularly pervasive, and Gregory has rendered her here with red eyes, lending her an unambiguously demonic look. The collage in general, which features crudely rendered cutouts from newspapers, diverges from the sophisticated geometric patterns she had increasingly used in *Temporary Hoarding*. Intersecting the collaged photographs of politicians, police officers, and looters are riffs on the word "white," reflecting the character of government. Alongside the appropriately named new Home Secretary Willie Whitelaw, the words Whitehall, whitewash, White Paper, and white lies are rendered in haphazard fashion, inverting the meaning of the associated imagery. Lots of other familiar RAR tropes—unemployment, police brutality, Northern Ireland—are also present, but what is conspicuously missing is positivity and hope.

Conclusion

This article has explored how the visual language of *Temporary Hoarding* communicated key political ideas within a wider libertarian Marxist framework. Drawing inspiration from the underground press, the makers of the fanzine aimed to provide an alternative to the mainstream media. In this they paralleled RAR's autonomy from the commercial imperatives of the music industry, something which resonated with punk and reggae cultures. *Temporary Hoarding* provided a forum where political views could be aired, and opinions expressed that would otherwise have been stifled due to media bias and the record companies' PR constraints. While it had clear left-wing leanings, it was open and democratic, gaining input from its readers through the letters page and submissions of poems and articles.

Drawing on strategies of avant-garde art movements of the early twentieth century, and the agit-prop of progressive political movements of the 1960s–1970s, the contributors to *Temporary Hoarding* were able to fuse their political leanings with cultures of resistance, as they saw it. Simultaneously, they deployed the visual strategies and rhetoric

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associated with punk to successfully engage with their young subcultural audiences. The fanzine's content, which situated racism in the UK within a wider critique of western imperialist intervention abroad, provided an educational and agitational role for its young readership. This fed into the burgeoning anti-apartheid movement in Britain, in which ANL and RAR associates would play a key role. The Specials founder and musician Jerry Dammers, who was involved in organizing RAR concerts featuring 2 Tone bands, and was closely aligned with the politics, wrote the seminal track "Free Nelson Mandela" for The Special AKA (a band that evolved from The Specials), which was pivotal in galvanizing momentum for the movement.[66]

Temporary Hoarding succeeded because of its visual appeal, which provided a vivid contrast to dour leftist newspapers with their emphasis on the written word, their orthogonal layouts, and their monochrome palette. While there was considerable skepticism within the left towards cultural engagement, RAR and *Temporary Hoarding* succeeded in reaching younger audiences and impacting social change. In doing so, they marked a turning point in the relationship of left-wing organizations with youth culture, and throughout the 1980s movements such as Red Wedge built on their approach, using constructivist design language (Red Wedge references an El Lizitsky painting) to engage young voters with their aim of unseating the Tory government at the 1987 general election.

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4 See for instance, Teal Triggs, *Fanzines: The DIY Revolution* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2010); and Matt Worley, *Zerox Machine: Punk, Post-Punk and Fanzines in Britain, 1976–88* (London: Reaktion Books, 2024).
5 See Caz Blaze, *Ripped, Torn and Cut: Pop, Politics and Punk Fanzines*, ed. The Subcultures Network (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018), 78; and Matt Worley, *Ripped, Torn and Cut: Pop, Politics and Punk Fanzines*, ed. The Subcultures Network (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018), 57.
6 See for instance Russ Bestley and Alex Ogg, *The Art of Punk* (London: Omnibus Press, 2012); and Johan Kugelberg, *Punk: An Aesthetic* (New York: Rizzoli, 2012).
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31 Gregory, interview, May 2024. Also see Gilroy, *There Ain't No Black*, 165–66.
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39 Gary Bushell and Andy Xerox, "And They Still Say Wanking Will Turn You Blind," *Temporary Hoarding* 8 (March/April): 2.
40 See Binns, op.cit., 129–150.
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42 Also see Lucy Toothpaste's article, "No more normal," *Temporary Hoarding*, Issue 4 (1977): 11.
43 See Binns, op.cit., 77–97.
44 Widgery, "What Is Racism," 61.
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52 See for example an article (no title) by Andy Xerox and Grisley Peach (aka Nigel Fountain), *Temporary Hoarding* 6 (Summer 1978): 7.
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60 Fred Yabayaba, "So Long as You Stay Indoors, and Don't Cause Any Trouble, You Have Nothing to Fear from the Police," *Temporary Hoarding*, Issue 10 (Nov/Dec, 1979): 3.
61 Rachel, *Walls Come Tumbling Down*, 39.
62 See Widgery, "But, How Did Biko Die?," 111; and Virdee, *Against the Grain*, 225.
63 Goodyer, *Crisis Music*, 6.
64 Goodyer, *Crisis Music*, Intro; and Gilroy, *There Ain't No Black*, 164.
65 Gregory, interview, May 2024.
66 Rachel, *Walls Come Tumbling Down*, 470.

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