

wonder if Kirkpatrick could have looked a bit further afield. Those that are listed, along with a number of magazine and online articles, provide a useful Boss bibliography. How much of this material will come as 'news' to the seasoned Springsteenologist, however, remains questionable, something that might be said for the book as a whole.

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***Extreme Metal: Music and Culture on the Edge.* By Keith Kahn-Harris. Oxford and New York: Berg, 2007. ix + 194 pp. ISBN 1-84520-399-2 (pb)**
doi:10.1017/S026114300832412X

Extreme Metal: Music and Culture on the Edge offers a comprehensive and long overdue documentation of the extreme metal scene and its bizarre and terrifying facets. Relying upon details derived from ethnographic research including fan interviews and participant experience, the opening chapters chase a history through extreme metal describing (if never fully defining) the generic distinctions that this scene holds for its fans. The reader is introduced to the complex fusion of death metal, thrash metal, black metal and more besides, with a nod to the preceding sound of heavy metal and an assured cementing of the influential role that the variants of extreme metal have had upon 1990s nu metal. Offering a variety of attention-grabbing case studies spanning the global metal scene (UK, US, Israel, Sweden and to a lesser extent South America and South-East Asia), stories of murder, (sexual) violence, death, war, religion, the state, the occult, Satanism, neo-fascism, racism and sexism are regaled yet not with an air of spectacularism. In fact, quite the opposite. Keith Kahn-Harris is at pains throughout to stress that, although visually and audibly shocking (he admits the music is at times 'formless noise' that 'may not appear to be music at all', p. 5), extreme metal is an intricate process and display of both the transgressive *and* the mundane.

The themes of transgression and mundanity are brought to bear within discussions of the extremes of musical practice, fandom and the body as compared to the everyday experience of community. How radical individualism and a drive for uniqueness are muted and indeed (paradoxically) shaped by 'an almost altruistic commitment to the collective' is but one query embroiled in the transgression and mundanity debate (p. 124). Drawing upon Bourdieu (and Thornton), Tonnies, and Giddens, Kahn-Harris sets about the task of developing post-subcultural thinking beyond the grapples of the Birmingham School's subcultural approach by way of theorising the struggle between communal experience and music as resistance within late (post/reflexive) modernity. The lack of a break from the 'us versus them' construction of (sub)cultural engagement does hinder this effort to push popular music studies beyond CCCS paradigms, something that Kahn-Harris is clearly aiming for. That said, the concepts of transgressive and mundane subcultural capital, and 'reflexive anti-reflexivity' (Chapter 7) – while admittedly at times rhetorically more sound than they could ever be in practice – do provide an additional pathway to contemporary theorisations of the factors involved in popular music participation.

With a consideration of national, local and global scenes and drawing upon issues of power, politics, status and capital to illustrate the internal and external positioning of extreme metal, Kahn-Harris delves into the complex realities of scenic involvement, portraying some of the complications of managing scenic and non-scenic existence and presenting examples of the bleeding of the two worlds (finances, friendships, careers and relationships). The solution for Kahn-Harris lies with the logic of mundanity. The everydayness of the scene suggests (to the outsider at least) chaos, irregularity and the spectacular, yet possessing a scenic career involves sacrifice and compromise in relation to the scene and life outside of it. Of course, the opportunity to control the moments of youth existence are less available to some components of the global scene (Israel's military service and social security system are cited as two such restrictions).

While the all-too-brief lyrical and discourse analyses leave the reader wanting greater and clearer definition of what exactly extreme metal music is, the case studies are impressive and insightful. In particular the tales of a Christian backlash and the subsequent moral panic in light of arson attacks on Scandinavian churches, band member murder and the foundations of the scene being centred upon tape swapping and pen-pals unveil the extent to which this scene is a captivating research topic.

Even if unwilling to follow the author's justification for this study on the grounds that extreme metal is ignored and thus a worthy subject for investigation, the reader is left in no doubt that extreme metal is, as Kahn-Harris declares, 'the most diverse, the most artistically vibrant, the most dynamic and also the most problematic aspect of metal culture' (p. 2). Anyone desiring to read further on post-subcultural thinking and the loaded issue of scene participation within late modernity, or, indeed, anybody with a passing curiosity about the 'fear-laden' culture that is extreme metal, will find much of interest within this book.

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