

A Revolution Begins In A Million Pink Bedrooms: Riot Grrrl and Feminism in the 1990s

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Abstract

This thesis examines riot grrrl, a movement that used punk music as a conduit for social change and female empowerment. Riot grrrl encouraged girls to express their frustrations and anger through music and challenged societal norms by protesting for political change. This research uses riot grrrl to combine the scholarship of both the punk and feminist movements to showcase the progress and limitations in two significant social movements. The punk and feminist movements brought systemic racism and gender discrimination to the forefront of social discussion; however, both struggled to fully and equally include diverse peoples and voices. By examining these shortcomings, this study complicates scholarship that views punk and feminism strictly as either positive or negative movements. This research also uses riot grrrl as a microcosm for both the broader punk and feminist movements to explore the how lack of intersectionality causes division and instability in sociopolitical movements. Lastly, this research poses questions about ways in which political activism can include diverse voices, what it means to be an intersectional movement, and how uniting diverse communities can increase social impact and promote social change.