Expressing Identity, Experiencing Belonging, and Everyday Life in Heavy Metal Music

Douglas Henrique Isaak SCHULZ

**Submitted for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy**

Division of Sociology and Criminology

Faculty of Management, Law and Social Sciences

University of Bradford

2022

ABSTRACT

Douglas Henrique Isaak Schulz

Expressing Identity, Experiencing Belonging, and Everyday Life in Heavy Metal Music

Key Words: Heavy Metal Music, Community, Social Identity, Belonging, Everyday Life

When heavy metal fans traverse through their everyday life, they are faced with countless opportunities to engage in social interactions with others. Such interactions question, establish, and strengthen fans' heavy metal identities whilst providing them with a sense of community and belonging through engaging with others who also share a preference for heavy metal music. This thesis is built on a qualitative research approach, complimented by an insider and ethnographic orientation in order to explore identity expression, the feeling of belonging and community, everyday life processes, and the role of heavy metal music in the everyday life of heavy metal fans. Through social interactions based on shared musical preference, heavy metal fans are able to meaningfully engage with others through which communal affiliations are strengthened and reinforced. Despite mainstream, and largely negative attitudes towards heavy metal, the music provides a safety net for listeners and is a driving force in their experience of the reciprocal relationship between personal identity and group membership and community. Due to the deep

connection listeners have with heavy metal, the music becomes something which fans are able to call theirs alone.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATIONS

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my late grandfathers, Otto and

Günther. Not a day goes by without missing you.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ATB - *After The Burial* (band)

BMTH - *Bring Me The Horizon* (band)

CCCS - Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies

NIN - *Nine Inch Nails* (band)

KL - *Knocked Loose* (band)

PMRC - Parents Music Resource Centre

PTA - Parent Teacher Association

CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

In 1986, a group of young heavy metal fans were filmed and interviewed for the short documentary *Heavy Metal Parking Lot*. The documentary, filmed in the parking lot of the *Capital Center*, a stadium in Landover, Maryland, where Judas Priest was due to perform later that day, showed young and inebriated tailgating heavy metal fans expressing their love for heavy metal music. A memorable scene from *Heavy Metal Parking Lot* was a tirade by a young, intoxicated fan, dubbed 'Zebraman':

> "Heavy metal rules, all that punk shit sucks. It doesn't belong in this world, it belongs on fucking Mars, man! What the hell is punk shit? And Madonna can go to hell as far as I'm concerned (…). Seriously, heavy metal definitely rules! *Twisted Sister*, *Judas Priest*, *Dokken*, *Ozzy*, *Scorpions* - they all rule!"

Individuals who oppose heavy metal, view it in a less enthusiastic fashion than 'Zebraman', leaving people divided over heavy metal (Dunn et al. 2005). Whilst countless fans spent their time listening to heavy metal, going to concerts, and living their life, critics believed that heavy metal was what unsophisticated people listen to (Dunn et al. 2005).

Music is a crucial aspect of our culture, and thus influences how we live and experience our everyday lives; and may also shape our individual identity in

profound ways (Kotarba et al. 2013: 2). Indeed, music generally has the ability to help us make sense of and order our life experiences in a consistent manner. DeNora (2000) argued that at the level of everyday life, music is implicated in the very dimension of agency - it influences how we compose and present our bodies, how we experience the passage of time, how we feel about ourselves, others, and events/circumstances. Music also has the ability to link with our own emotions - at a wedding for example, we will remember the song of our first dance, and it can always bring back that specific memory of that specific moment in time, or in more wider contexts: music which is viewed favorably will result in past events and times be regarded in a more favorable manner (Kotarba et al. 2013).

As a musical form, heavy metal music allows fans to interact with one another and can be a resource for identity and community (Snell 2012). Processes which contribute in the construction of identity and negotiation of community can be quite sophisticated, and are oftentimes left unquestioned and merely regarded as 'just how we do things'. It is important however, when focusing on everyday life, to pay close attention to such practices, which provide opportunities for identity and community to flourish, which helps us understand how people utilize music as a crucial aspect of their life (Snell 2012; Kotarba et al. 2013).

1.2: Research Questions

There are three research questions which are the main focus of this thesis:

1. How do heavy metal fans use heavy metal music to construct and express their social identities?

2. To what extent are notions of community and belonging arrived at through social interactions based on mutual music preference in a heavy metal context?

3. What is the interplay between identity, community and belonging, and heavy metal music in the everyday life of heavy metal fans?

1.3: Thesis Structure

This thesis is split into nine chapters, however has two aspects, the first of which is related to the academic and research context, the second is more interested in an appreciation of the data and the participants' voices and stories. Chapter One will continue with contextualizing heavy metal music, exploring the music's origins and developments. Chapter Two will explore heavy metal music in the academic arena - in particular in light of relatively recent developments in the study of heavy metal music with the emergence of heavy metal music studies as an academic interdisciplinary discipline, and the sociology and study of everyday life and the role of music listening in adolescence will also be explored. As theoretical frameworks, Social Identity Theory and symbolic interactionism will be explored and situated as core elements of the chapter. Chapter Three will focus on the research methodology employed for this research project, and also focus on aspects of data collection, data analysis, and the participant sample of this study.

The second aspect, the data and appreciation of participants' stories, beings with Chapter Four which explores participants' 'entry' into heavy metal music preference through parental and peer influence, and explore social interactions regarding their heavy metal identities throughout their adolescent years. Chapter Five focuses on expressing identity in the context of heavy metal music. Chapter Six will explore the feeling of community and belonging as a result of social interactions between heavy metal fans. Chapter Seven will examine gender in heavy metal, with a focus on the gendered experience of heavy metal fans. Chapter Eight resumes the academic discourse, through initiating discussions based on the findings of the thesis, whilst Chapter Nine will consist of conclusions, and examines how the research questions have been answered, and make novel contributions to knowledge.

1.3.1: Thesis Key Findings and Contributions

This thesis offers insights into several aspects of the inter-related nature of music, identity, community, and everyday life. First, it provides an insight into the formative years of heavy metal music fandom – exploring the pathways of becoming a heavy metal fan through parental and peer influences. Previous research such as Dunn et al. (2005) and Snell (2012), have explored already established heavy metal identities. This research explores some of the factors and influences which aid in the process of 'taking on' new identities based on both external social influence and internal personal motivation, whilst also exploring the role of music in management of fans' everyday life and early

social interactions regarding 'new' identities and learning to make sense of and navigating through the social world in the process of adolescence.

Furthermore, the thesis offers insight into showcasing heavy metal identities and the notions of authenticity, the importance of showcasing one's identity in the context of social interaction, and how identities can create a shared sense of belonging in heavy metal concerts (mosh pits) when people come together. Lastly, this thesis explores the relationship between heavy metal music and gender. Whilst many agree that heavy metal music is an inclusive environment and community, some of the accounts of the female participants contradict those notions. Methodologically, this thesis employed a friendship-as-method approach, where some of the participants had a pre-existing friendship with me. Whilst a number of participants were strangers to me, a certain degree of friendship did develop with some, and overall, the friendship-as-method approach in the context of heavy metal music highlights how mutual music appreciation can be used as a basis for the development of friendships for when a research project comes to its conclusion.

1.4: Contextualizing Heavy Metal Music

Heavy metal music is a style of music which is typically characterized through thick sounds, amplified and distorted guitars playing loud and 'heavy' riffs and masterful solos, emphatic beats, and overall loudness (Pierry 2013). Whilst some view and argue that heavy metal music is tacky, poor in quality, tasteless, and even intimidating, it has gained global popularity throughout the

1980s and a substantial fanbase has emerged across the world (Dunn et al. 2005; Olsson 2010). Critics have, however, perceived heavy metal as callow and unsophisticated, treating its fans and listeners in a similar fashion (Dunn et al. 2005). This section will contextualize heavy metal music and explore its cultural roots and foundations, as well as its developments once it became established as a broad genre in the 1960s and 1970s.

1.4.1: Roots of Heavy Metal - Blues

The earliest roots of heavy metal music can be traced back to country music and the rhythm and blues. Blues emerged from African-American folk music in the deep south of the United States and was predominantly performed by African-American slaves. Blues was incorporated into daily chores and activities as a means to make everyday life at the bottom of the social ladder more bearable (Joyner 2003; Kotarba et al. 2013). Frith (1983) referred to blues music as 'black music' - a term subjected to criticism as it was used in an unreflective manner, in which is seems assumed that it is the music *performed* by African-Americans rather than music *created* by them. One of the most prominent features of the blues is that emphasis is placed on how the music is performed, rather than how it is composed - songs are based on the primary effects of rhythm and melody, not the incorporation of themes and harmonies such as in classical music (Frith 1983: 16).

Country music, also regarded as a root of heavy metal music, developed in the early 1900s and is often referred to as the 'white man's blues' (Frith 1983: 24) as it is perceived as a *conservative* form of music, carrying certain

6

messages regarding views and attitudes of the people in the United States at the time. Furthermore, country music was considerably more popular than blues, and country musicians generally found it easier to enter the show business than their blues musician counterparts (Frith 1983). This was, according to Kotarba et al. (2013), due to country music being performed by white musicians, which was the mainstream, rather than by African-Americans who performed the blues, at the fringe of society. Even though blues and country may be seemingly different to one another, the two genres do share some similarities - both musically and culturally. First, the lyrics draw upon the mundane activities of the daily lives of the singer/songwriter. Second, both styles developed for roughly the same purpose: to meet cultural needs. Lastly, despite developing at different times, with blues developing in the latter half of the 19th century and country music developing in the early 1900s, both styles of music were sources for a number of practices such as collective excitement, religious expression, public celebration, secular entertainment, and social commentary (Frith 1983: 24).

Throughout the *Great Migration*, which began in the early 1900s, a large number of African-Americans moved from the rural southern United States to more urbanized areas such as New York and the Mid-West. Crop devastation, racial persecution, and labor needed in the increasing developments of mechanical and industrial industry motivated African-Americans to leave the south and explore new opportunities elsewhere. Baraka (1963) noted that the south was slow and behind the rest of the country in terms of economic opportunities and as a result, industrial cities such as Detroit, Pittsburgh, New

York, and Chicago became areas where a large number of African-Americans settled – in Chicago alone, approximately 60,000 people settled between 1910 and 1920 (Baraka 1963: 95). It was this large-scale movement of people across the United States which made the spread of blues music possible.

1.4.2: Electrifying The Blues - The Rise of Rock 'N' Roll

Longhurst (2007) notes that throughout the 1940s, blues musicians began to electrify their music in cities such as Nashville, St. Louis, and Toledo - cities which all became hubs for blues and country music. The electrification of country and blues in turn developed a new musical style - rock 'n' roll. The term rock 'n' roll was first established by Alan Freed, a radio DJ from Cleveland, Ohio, who regularly featured the music of the African-American bluesmen who first electrified the blues (Bennet 2001). Rock 'n' roll successfully fused disparate and diverse musical traditions in the pop music industry of the United States at the time, and is according to Joyner (2003: 187), a "summit of all the music that is America". With this in mind, Frith (1983) suggests that the impact that blues had on white popular music in the 1940s is an example of a process in which 'black music', with all its inherent styles and values, 'revitalized' white popular music.

Much like blues, rock 'n' roll made use of the understanding of how rhythms and sounds can create emotional and physical effects (Frith 1983). After World War Two, consumerism became an integral part for the many different sections of society - including teenagers and youth. Youth growing up in the United States in the late 1940s and early 1950s enjoyed unprecedented levels of free-time, independence, control of their own leisure time, and spending

power compared to previous generations. Furthermore, youth growing up in the late-1940s/early-1950s was the first generation of the 20th century to grow up in times of prosperity and safety (Gillett 1983). This new 'freedom' for the youth came considerably quicker and earlier in comparison to their European counterparts, who were more disrupted and affected by World War Two than youth growing up in North America (Bobcock 1993).

There were however, moral panics about this new style of music. One of the main reasons for the emergence of such moral panics was that rock 'n' roll sounded distinctively different to anything that previous generations listened to - the previous generation, which lived through the World War One, the Great Depression, and World War Two, listened to soft and romantic music while growing up (Billig 2000). Billig (2000) argued that that rock 'n' roll was innovative, and entirely new sound which appealed to the youth of the 1940s and 1950s - a generation growing up in times of safety and wanted to hear something different, something more 'dangerous'. The 1956 movie 'Rock Around The Clock' caused a series of small disturbances. In some cinemas, seats were ripped out and across a number of cities of the United Kingdom for example, young people were arrested and fined for behavior which was deemed "aggressive and insulting" (Street 1992: 304). Furthermore, there were disturbances reported in other parts of the world, including Toronto, Auckland, and Sydney (Shuker 1994). Given the effect that rock 'n' roll had on youth, Gleason (1972) noted that rock music managed to involve young people like no other form of art or popular culture ever managed to before.

Throughout the 1950s, rock 'n' roll continued to develop, along with new sub-genres. Psychedelic rock began to emerge, making use of effects in the music in order to enhance the effects of mind-altering hallucinogenic drugs and vice versa - the effect of hallucinogenic drugs on the production of music. In the 1960s however, psychedelic rock began to decline in terms of popularity and rock 'n' roll, as a genre, began to break down into three main directions: country rock, progressive rock, and heavy metal (Straw 1983).

1.4.3: The Emergence of Heavy Metal

In many respects, heavy metal portrayed a return to the grittier and more 'primitive' aspects of rock 'n' roll - in particular in regards to song structure and musical aesthetics. At the same time however, it retained to the use of technological elements in order to alter the sound and creating effects similar to those found in psychedelic musical forms (Straw 1983: 97).

In terms of the origins of the name and inception of heavy metal music, there exists a lot of debate among academics, fans, musicians, and commentators from the media. Over the years, there have been innumerable discussions about when and where the term 'heavy metal' became a term of popular usage. Discussions about the term's usage have included William S. Burrough's novel from 1962 *'The Soft Machine'* in which 'heavy metal' is used to describe addictive drugs, and for a character that is described as 'the heavy metal kid'. Burrough also used the term in his 1964 novel *'Nova Express'*. The band *Steppenwolf* incorporated the phrase "heavy metal thunder" in their 1968 release *'Born To Be Wild'*. Geezer Butler, bassist of *Black Sabbath*, argued

that his band was labeled 'heavy metal' in 1972 (Weinstein 2000: 19). The truth seems to be however, that 'heavy metal' has been used as early as 1971 to describe the musical characteristics of the genre's formative phase, and it was Lester Bands of *Rolling Stones Magazine*, who is credited with popularizing the term (Weinstein 2000).

In regards to the geographic origin, most academics, fans, and musicians agree that 'heavy metal' originates from the United Kingdom. Breen (1991) notes that heavy metal originated from Britain with the release of *Led Zeppelin*'s eponymous album of 1968. The American musicologist Walser (1993) and Canadian anthropologist Dunn et al. (2005) both suggest that if heavy metal music started off in one place, it would have to be in Birmingham, England. The city of Birmingham spawned a number of rock and heavy metal bands throughout the 1960s and 1970s, most notably *Black Sabbath* (Dunn et al. 2005).

The commercial success of British heavy metal bands such as *Led Zeppelin*, *Black Sabbath*, and *Deep Purple* for instance, paved the way for heavy metal to become a style of popular music in the 1970s and the establishment of becoming a youth subculture (Shuker 2001). Over the next decade, throughout the 1980s, a clear distinction was made between the more mainstream and commercially oriented bands and heavy metal styles developing in isolation. Bands such as *Bon Jovi* and *Poison* enjoyed frequent airtime and exposure through broadcasting mediums such as *MTV*, whilst

other bands, also enjoying popularity, such as *Guns 'n' Roses* and *Aerosmith* developing heavy metal music further (Shuker 2001).

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, new heavy metal styles began to emerge, such as speed metal and thrash metal - terms made use of by journalists for describing the non-mainstream, guitar-based, louder, and faster metal music (Shuker 2001: 151). Thrash metal in particular, developing and emerging in the San Francisco Bay area, drew upon influences from British heavy metal bands such as *Iron Maiden* and *Def Leppard*. Some of the most notable trash metal bands originate from the Bay area and wider-California, including *Slayer*, *Metallica*, *Exodus*, and *Megadeth*.

1.4.4: Heavy Metal Genre

Genre in heavy metal can be a complex affair, as few other musical styles have such variety of genres and subgenres, and place as much emphasis on [sub]genre as much as heavy metal does. Heavy metal is comprised of different subgenres, each with their own distinctive sounds, styles, practices, and fanbases (Ingham 2002).

Shuker (2001: 150) made reference to general characteristics of popular music genres which can be identified:

1. There exist stylistic traits in the music. There is a 'code of sonic requirement' which is produced according to established conventions regarding composition, instrumentation, and performance (Weinstein 1991)

2. The existence of non-musical stylistic features such as image and visual style. This includes iconography, album artworks, and performances such as make-up, dress, and other styles which are taken on by both the performer and fans. Musical and visual style coalesce in regards to how they operate in order to produce specific ideological effects or rather, associations which situate the genre within a wider musical context (Shuker 2001).

3. Genres have particular audiences. Genres are placed in specific places in a 'musical hierarchy' (Shuker 2001: 151) by fans, critics, and performers based around ideas of authenticity and commercialism. Furthermore, the relationship between genre and fans mediates certain aspects of performance such as cultural norms and expectations such as dress style.

Weinstein (2000: 5) referred to heavy metal as a 'bricolage' of many diverse elements, as there is no one single definition that may do heavy metal justice due to its overall richness and diversity. To Weinstein (2000), genre is a set of rules which provides an opportunity for fans and listeners to objectively determine whether or not a song, album, band, or performance can be classified in terms of belonging into the broader category that is heavy metal. In order for bands to 'belong' to the same genre, they need to share a common sound. In other words, genre requires a particular sound which is produced around specific conventions in regards to composition, instrumentation, and performance (Weinstein 2000: 6).

As a result of the emergence of new and different subgenres throughout the 1980s and 1990s heavy metal has become a diverse style of music which is

unable to be reduced to a formulaic term (Shuker 2001). The most accurate description of heavy metal is that it is louder, 'harder'/'heavier', and more fast-paced compared to conventional rock music and the emphasis and orientation towards the use of guitar remains a prominent factor (Shuker 2001). The main instrumentation however remains guitar, bass, drums, and occasional use of keyboards - there are however, a number of variants within the genre and more variation within each separate subgenre.

The table below, adapted from Shuker (1998), Ingham (2002), Dunn et al. (2005),and Snell (2012), explores some of the heavy metal subgenres which are discussed throughout this thesis, and provides some description of their individual attributes.

Sub-Genre	Characteristics	Band Examples
Black Metal	Vocals vary from high squeals to low growls/grunts	*Immortal, Watain, 1349*
Death Metal	Fast-paced, and a lot of emphasis is placed on musical virtuosity. The lyrics are shouted or growled, and the genre itself is notorious for gruesome album covers and lyrical themes.	*Cannibal Corpse, Cryptopsy, Death, Decapitated, Job For A Cowboy, Suffocation*
Deathcore	Fusion of different musical elements found in death metal, hardcore, and metalcore. Deathcore is typically fast-paced, but does have 'breakdowns' in which the music slows down and becomes heavier.	*Carnifex, Make Them Suffer, Martyr Defiled, Suicide Silence,*
Metalcore	Derives from thrash metal and hardcore music. The melodies on the guitars are quite melodic, lyrics are shouted of growled in the verses, but oftentimes sung throughout the chorus.	*The Amity Affliction, Currents, For The Fallen Dreams, Invent Animate, Miss May I,*
Nu Metal	Fusion of different musical elements from rap, hip hop, grunge, rock. Lyrics are sung and/or screamed, and at times rapped.	*Alien Ant Farm, Disturbed, P.O.D.,*
Progressive Metal	Has elements of metalcore in it, frequent use of complex rhythms, unorthodox harmonies, meter changes, and syncopation.	*Animals As Leaders, Meshuggah, Protest The Hero, Traveller*
Thrash Metal	Typically fast-paced, aggressive, and has a sense of 'urgency' to it. Guitars are quite melodic, lyrics are often shouted or yelled, and sung in an overdriven tone of voice.	*Municipal Waste, Megadeth, Shadows Fall, Slayer*

Table 1: Heavy Metal Sub-Genres[1]

---

[1] Listening examples from YouTube are available in Appendix 4 at the end of the thesis

It is noteworthy that there is an overlap between the different sub-genres which exist in heavy metal. Progressive metal for instance, borrows elements from metalcore, deathcore, and other genres, and fuses them. Thus, some bands may be classed as 'metalcore' and 'progressive metal' [resulting in 'progressive metalcore']. Table 1 is not extensive as new sub-genres are created on a regular basis due to the nature of music and musicians constantly developing and changing over time. The online resource *Map of Metal*[2] for example, identifies over 50 clear-cut and distinctive heavy metal sub-genres; and is expected to grow in the future (Pierry 2013: 142). There is however, some debate over the legitimacy and authenticity of some heavy metal sub-genres - most notably nu metal, deathcore, and metalcore have been subject of debate amongst music theorists, musicians, and fans (Hjelm et al. 2011: 14). This may be due to the fact that these sub-genres began to emerge as a result of the fusion of different styles of heavy metal. Thus, it is possible to have a range of definitions and understandings of what each sub-genres should sound like or entails (Snell 2012).

Given the large number of subgenres, 'heavy metal' is used as an umbrella term throughout the thesis due to the vastness and diversity as a musical form. Furthermore, different people and fans may have different understandings of what constitutes heavy metal, what it is, and what it should sound like – some fans may only listen to certain subgenres and neglect the rest of the vastness that the music has to offer. The umbrella term 'heavy metal' is particularly useful to help maintain a sense of unity in terms of music rather than jumping

---

[2] Available at: http://mapofmetal.com/

between subgenres, which would not be helpful to readers unfamiliar with the music and culture. For a more detailed analysis of the features of some of the subgenres, Hillier (2020) created a 'taxonomy' of heavy metal and its subgenres.

1.4.5: Heavy Metal, Controversy, and Moral Panics

Numerous discussions have emerged regarding heavy metal music over the past decades, exploring and placing and emphasis on heavy metal lyrical themes and the potential emotions responses which may arise from them (Snell 2012). Walser (1993) noted that heavy metal became a scapegoat for ongoing societal issues and the music has, ever since, been associated with an array of issues such as violence, devil worship, teenage suicide, and even mass murder. Prominent incidents such as the Columbine High School massacre in 1999, the fatal shooting in Red Lake, Minnesota, in 2005, and more recently, the Dayton, Ohio, shooting in 2019. In all cases, the perpetrators' preference for heavy metal music has been considered as a driving force and main motive for the massacres, leading to moral panics focused around the consumption and enjoyment of heavy metal music at the time (Snell 2012; Daly 2017; Pasbani 2019).

The term 'moral panic' was first used in a sociological manner in the early 1970s with the Cohen's *Folk Devils and Moral Panics*. Moral panics are perceived and understood as exceptional, and at times recurring forms of "irrational social action" in which society is threatened by overexaggerated typified people and social groups (Hier 2016: 415). In other words, a moral

panic is a 'moral disturbance' which focuses on claims in which a direct interest is at threat of being violated - the person or group which is the cause of the panic is oftentimes demonized and represented in stereotypical terms, through the involvement and focus of the media and other influential public figures (Young 2008). The process of stigmatization involves a narrative around the origin of the threat and the portraying of a group of people or particular person as the source of the problem, leading to the panic becoming increasingly amplified over time before eventually vanishing.

Moral panics oftentimes contain different types of emotional and conceptual dynamics. The moralization of the risks of everyday life - such as bad eating habits or smoking - create emotions which are associated with potential victimhood, harm, and sanction - worry, fear, and concerns (Hier 2016). Since risks and logic around risks is future-oriented, claims of risks are based on probabilities which are believed to encourage people to adopt behaviors which help them in avoiding potential harms in the long-term - such as adopting healthy eating habits to decrease likelihood of certain diseases, walking in groups at night to avoid confrontation, etc. (Hier 2016).

As heavy metal developed and became increasingly popular, the music has been dominated by a distinctive drive towards transgressive themes and over the years, heavy metal has both embraced and rejected the controversy around being transgressive (Hjelm et al. 2011). Whilst Dunn et al. (2005) noted that it is in the nature of heavy metal to *be* controversial, Hjelm et al. (2011) noted that this needs to be placed in a historical context. When heavy metal gained popularity, its content - lyrics in particular - gained widespread attention

as they were regarded as offensive, dangerous, and deemed a bad influence on young and impressionable listeners (Dunn et al. 2005; Hjelm et al. 2011). Due to the rapid increase in popularity, the controversy around the music became a battle over wider societal values which were 'at risk' and the boundaries of 'appropriate' popular culture (Springhall 1998).

Death metal in particular, which made use of violent and nightmarish imagery in its lyrics and album covers, gained attention over the use of potent images and themes in order to evoke responses. Bands such as *Cannibal Corpse*, and *Death* became household names through the use of gruesome and obscure album artwork [see below].

Figure 1: Cannibal Corpse - Butchered At Birth (1991) Cover

Figure 2: Cannibal Corpse - Tomb of the Mutilated (1992) Cover

Figure 3: Death - Leprosy (1988) Cover

Figure 4: Death - Spiritual Healing (1990)

Dunn et al. (2005) noted that on the one hand, artwork such as seen above exhibit a 'fascination' with the theme of death and the human body whilst on the other hand, there seems to be a fear related to death and an 'obsessive desire' to explore potent themes through images.

Whilst death metal plays with the macabre and violent imagery, black metal had instances in the 1990s where the violent imagery was taken further and manifested into physical violence. Some studies on heavy metal culture have regarded black metal as oppositional and alienated within heavy metal, it has become associated with violence and hatred on an unprecedented level (Kahn-Harris 2004). One of the many concerns in the 1990s was the potential effect that black metal had on younger listeners and vulnerable people. Nationalism and rhetoric of place, history, tradition, and identity - all themes

which have become endemic to black metal - lead to a rise in nationalism in Norway (Vestal 1999; Moynihan & Söderlind 2003). In 1993 and 1993, 15 members of the Norwegian black metal scene attempted to reaffirm the violent image of the subgenre through involvement in criminal activity (Phillipov 2012). Members of the Norwegian black metal scene were arrested for a series of charges such as burglary, rape, assault, murder, and arson. Furthermore, in that era, between 15 and 20 churches were burnt to the ground, resulting in widespread attention in terms of controversy (Phillipov 2012).

When discussing controversy, there are two important factors to consider. First, controversies are of material nature, they do not stem from ideas alone but rather: people create them (Beckford 1995). Second, controversies rely on their public nature and element. For instance, a teenager buying the latest death metal album and their family being angry about the purchase does not constitute controversy (Hjelm et al. 2011). Only when the resulting parental anger becomes part of public discourse such as blog posts on the internet or columns in opinion sections in newspapers which creates a larger wave of parental outrage, the initial anger transforms into controversy (Hjelm et al. 2011). Occasionally however, controversies cease to exist and what was initially deemed a threat to societal values will be labelled harmless - most notably: Ozzy Osbourne, who caused outrage by biting off a [fake] bat's head off on stage to having his own reality TV program, *The Osbournes*, in which he is portrayed as a family man (Dunn et al. 2005).

Despite people and society becoming more accepting of heavy metal, the music remains irrevocably branded as controversial as a result of the transgressive themes which made headlines decades ago (Hjelm et al. 2011). It is, at this point, important to note the importance of the word 'image' relating to controversy. In the case for heavy metal, controversy has been reactions in terms of *perceived* deviance, stemming from events and actions which deviate from established societal norms and boundaries. A definition of controversy might well be the actions of groups and/or individuals, who make claims about social conditions, and as a result, are labeled as threats to certain societal values (Goode & Ben-Yehuda 1994). As it heavy metal is considered a culture of outsiders due to its fringe status, it is a style of music not everybody is willing to accept or embrace (Dunn et al. 2005; Snell 2012), the fans however, find beauty in it (Weinstein 2000).

It is also noteworthy that controversy around heavy metal seems to ebb and flow. Whilst there existed a great deal of controversy around heavy metal music in the 1980s and 1990s, these have largely ceased and have been replaced by different, 'newer', controversies and 'dangers' - video games - in particular shooting games - and horror films (Dunn et al. 2005).

1.5: Chapter Discussions

The aim of this chapter was to introduce the aims which this thesis is set out to explore, address elements of this thesis such as research questions and thesis structure, and to introduce and conceptualize heavy metal music. Context is an important factor in research, and it cannot be assumed that everybody knows what heavy metal music is and where its origins and history

lie, as not everybody may have a clear understanding of it. It would also be dangerous to *assume* that everybody *knows* what heavy metal is. The controversies and moral panics that surrounded heavy metal were also important to highlight, as those are a discussion point in the data chapters of the thesis.

The upcoming chapter will explore scholarly perspectives on heavy metal music, identity, community, and everyday life.

CHAPTER TWO - SCHOLARLY PERSPECTIVES ON HEAVY METAL, IDENTITY, COMMUNITY, AND EVERYDAY LIFE

2.1: Introduction

This chapter will explore the notions some of the academic material which has been published in relation to heavy metal music, identity, community, everyday life and is split into seven parts. Part two will explore heavy metal music in the academic arena, with a particular focus on 'metal studies' as a discipline and the research conducted in that field. Part three will explore music in adolescence and some of the factors in music listening and preference in youth. Part four examines scholarly perspectives on identity with a particular focus on Social Identity Theory, the looking-glass self, situated identity, and symbolic interactionism. Part five will explore scholarly perspectives on

community and the role and importance of communities and belonging on human beings. Part six will explore the sociology of everyday life, whilst part seven will be chapter discussions.

2.2: Heavy Metal Music and Academia

A large number of journal articles, book chapters, and books, make frequent reference to Weinstein's seminal contributions '*Heavy Metal - A Cultural Sociology*' (1991) and '*Heavy Metal: The Music and its Culture*' (2000), with the former being regarded as the first *full* piece of scholarly work exclusively concerned with heavy metal music. After Weinstein's (1991) work, the works of Walser (1993), Roccor (1998), and Berger (1999) followed, adapting sociological, ethnological, and musicological approaches to heavy metal music, allowing for a more 'mature' development of the study of the study of heavy metal (Guibert & Hein 2007).

Brown (2011) conducted research on heavy metal publications between the years of 1978 and 2010, noting that there were a total of 414 published works focusing on heavy metal music, of which 261 (63%) were journal articles, 80 (20%) book chapters, and 70 (17%) books, which Figures 5 and 6 below gives a more accurate overview of, particularly in terms of number of publications per year.
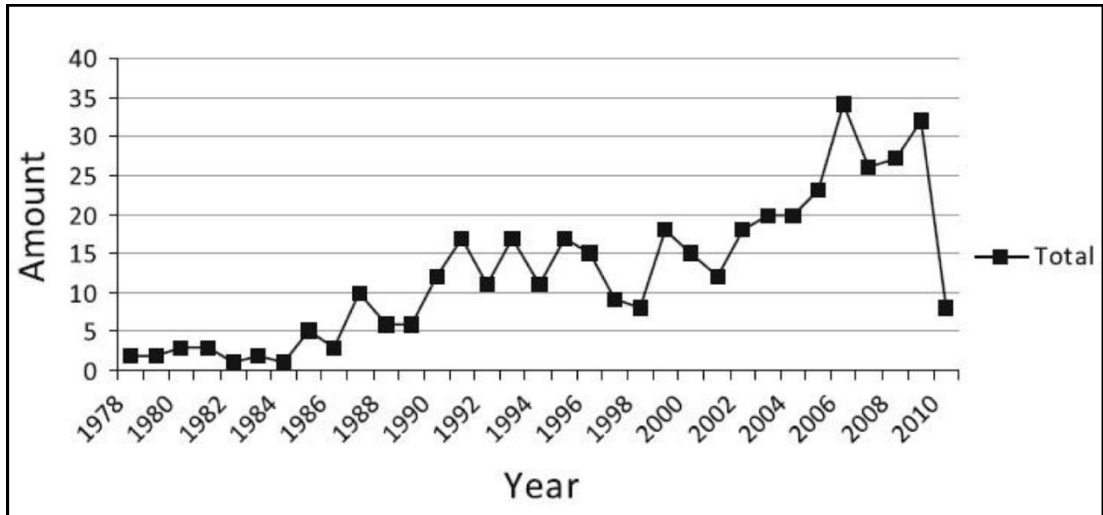
Figure 5: Total Number of Publications on Heavy Metal Music - 1978-2010 (Brown 2011)
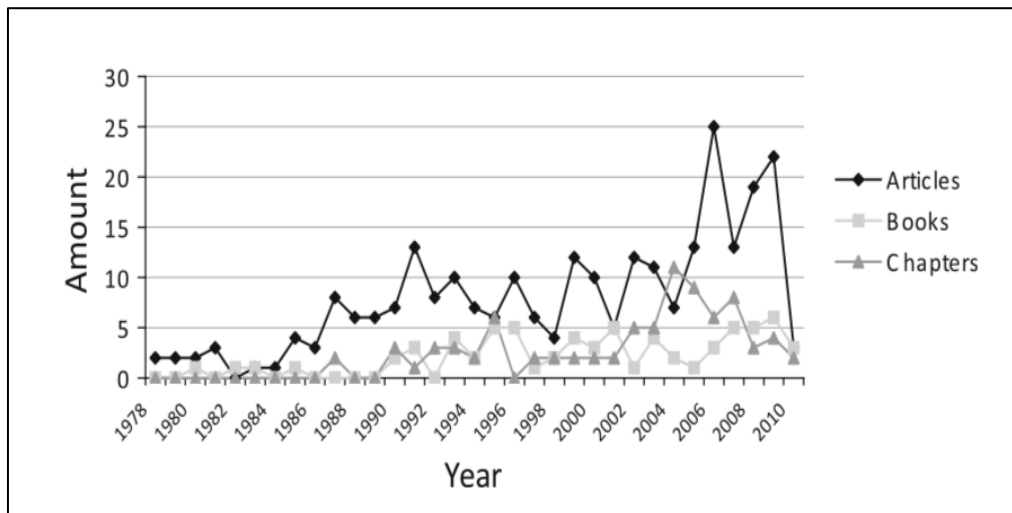
Figure 6: Number of Publications by Type - 1978-2010 (Brown 2011)

In terms of journal articles, of the 261 published articles between 1978 and 2010, 98 (37%) were in the field of psychology, 66 (25%) in sociology, 50 (19%) in musicology, and 47 (18%) in cultural studies.
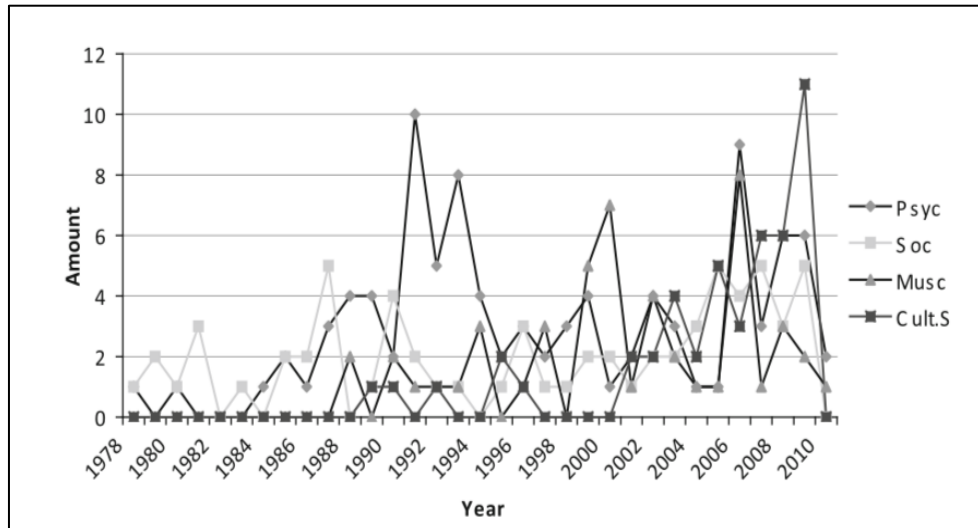
Figure 7: Number of Publications on Heavy Metal by Field of Study - 1978-2010 (Brown 2011)

In regards to the content of the publications, Straw's (1984) article in the Canadian University Music Review was considered as one of the first 'known' academic discussions focusing on heavy metal music (Friesen & Helfrich 1998). An earlier piece of research by Frith and McRobbie (1978), focusing on rock music and how sexuality was identified and communicated in the masculine aesthetic of the music of Robert Plant and the band *Thin Lizzie*, labelled 'cock rock', arguing that such music is predominantly, if not explicitly, about male sexual performance. One of the main features of 'cock rock' was the resemblance of collective experience, reminiscent of football games and other instances of male bonding activities and camaraderie (Frith & McRobbie 1978; Frith & McRobbie 2000). Elements of Frith and McRobbie's (1978) characterization are echoed in Hebdige (1979: 155) where the term 'hard rock' has change to 'heavy metal': "a curious blend of hippy aesthetics and football terrace machismo".

In the psychological studies and publications, the term 'heavy metal' first appeared in an article by King (1985) in the Journal of Tennessee Medical Association, and includes testimony from the PMRC - Parents' Music Resource Center - hearings of 1985, and is a document which offers no research or insight other than judgements made by a medical doctor and quotes from the song "Number of the Beast" by *Iron Maiden*. Another article, by Trostle (1986), was a study exploring demonic and satanic rituals, including grave robbing and animal sacrifices. Such and other articles published at the time derived their nature from the prevailing policy orientation, attempting to research and establish the 'problem' with heavy metal music, continuing from the research of the 'effects' of violence and sexual themes broadcasted in television at the time (Albert 1978) - a connection made in relation to heavy metal music as a result of the increase in popularity and frequent broadcast on MTV (Baxter et al. 1985; Brown 2011).

Throughout the 1980s, the framing of academic work began to change. In the social sciences, there was a 'fundamental disagreement' regarding the framing of the research and "diagnosis" of what the "problem" is, and how it can be best explored through appropriate and effective scholarly methods (Brown 2011: 229). The shift which occurred resulted in the focus on exploring common conventions of heavy metal music and the dominant themes within the lyrics and culture, through focusing on the understanding of the music of fans and musicians - such issues included substance abuse, environmental problems, the government and its relationship with corruption, organized religion and televangelism, and general alienation from 'life in general'

(Friesen &Epstein 1994; Friesen & Helfrich 1998). This shift occurred simultaneously to the approach which musicology took, exploring the aesthetic of heavy metal in relation to its composition and reception by society (e.g.: Walser 1992; Brown 1995; Berger 1997).

Whilst some research still tries to create links between heavy metal listening preference and various topics such as teenage self-harm, aggression, and antisocial behavior and attitudes, the difference is: contemporary negative views and constructions in research are no longer subject to the same level of contestation as previously (Brown 2011), suggesting that research taking place regards heavy metal more 'favorably'. In regards to the increase in heavy metal-related publications, Spracklen et al. (2011: 211) suggested that this may be the result of young researchers who are, or have been, heavy metal fans themselves, wanting to explore the cultural significance of their formative identity practices.

As of January 2022, with data taken from the *Metal Studies Bibliography Database*[3], which Brown (2011) also made use of, the number of publications relating to heavy metal can be visualized for the timeframe after Brown's (2011) study until the year 2021, as can be seen from the figure below.

---

[3] https://metalstudies.org/biblio/
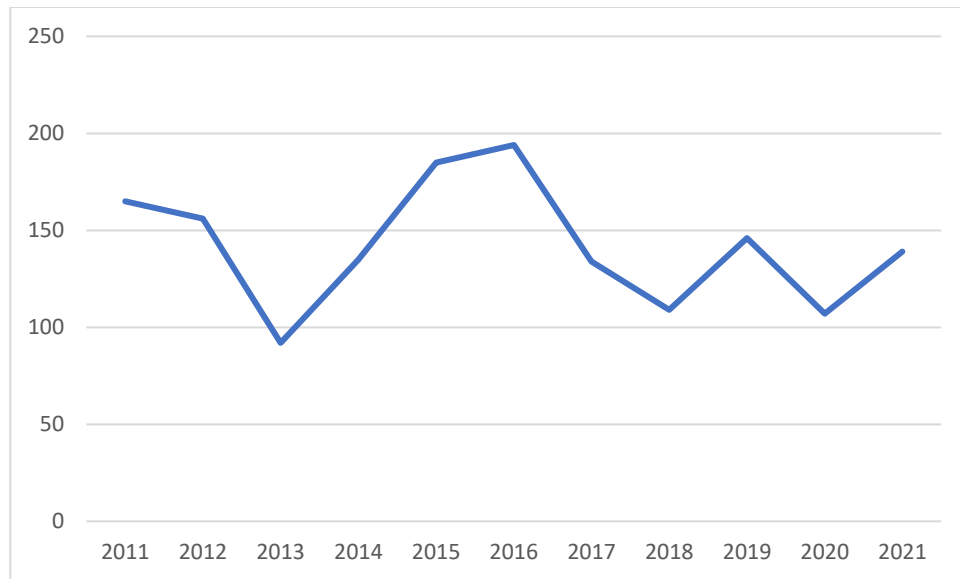
Figure 8: Number of Publications on Heavy Metal Music (2011-2021)

The data gathered from the Metal Studies Bibliography Database shows an increase in the number of heavy metal-related publications in the 2010s compared to the decade before (as shown in Brown 2011). As seen in Figure 8, the number of metal-related publications still fluctuate significantly, however leveling out overall. In terms of the numbers, there seems to be a significant discrepancy between Brown's (2011) data and the data found on the Metal Studies Bibliography Database - perhaps due to technological advancements between 2011 and 2021, leading to an update/digitalization of entries/records, being a cause for higher figures.

2.2.1: Metal Studies

The mid-2000s witnessed the rise and establishment of a new academic discipline: metal studies. Kahn-Harris (2011) argued that what brought the inception of metal studies as a discipline was scholars' intention and act of meeting up, collaborating, hosting conferences and seminars, publishing

journal articles, and working on novel academic material concerned with heavy metal music. The first conference solely for the study of heavy metal was held in Salzburg, Austria, in 2008. This conference catalyzed a sense of self-consciousness amongst scholars who, previously, conducted their metal-related research in isolation (Kahn-Harris 2011: 251). The simple act of meeting up and exchanging ideas generated new possibilities, new-found enthusiasm about the study of heavy metal, and encouraged collaboration. At the same time, the perpetually developing self-consciousness of heavy metal studies as a field of study, helped generate an increase of scholarly attention (Kahn-Harris 2011).

Indeed, over the past years, metal-related research has become increasingly diverse in nature. Up until the 2000s, the study of heavy metal culture seemed to have focused on two distinct aspects (Hjelm et al. 2011; Bilamava 2014):

1. The social relations to heavy metal music - in particular in regards to moral panics surrounding heavy metal music

2. The creation and reproduction of different types of heavy metal sub-genres

The last decade however, has witnessed research occurring in more niche topics - leading to the development and establishment of metal music studies, which will be covered in more detail in the next sections. Some notable examples of this niche research and dissemination includes Dunn et al. (2005) documentary '*Metal: A Headbanger's Journey*', which explored different aspects around heavy metal music culture; Kahn-Harris (2007) exploration of extreme metal genres such as black and death metal; Riches' (2011) examination of liminality in heavy metal concerts; Snell's (2012) study on

everyday life of heavy metal fans in New Zealand; and Hill's (2014) thesis on female rock and heavy metal fans.

The rise of metal studies also resulted in the creation and establishment of the journal *Metal Music Studies* via the publisher *Intellect*. The *Metal Music Studies* journal aims to provide a focus for theory and research in metal music studies and aims to provide a platform for high-quality research, and is regarded as the intellectual hub for the *International Society of Metal Music Studies* (Intellectbooks 2021). Through the rise and spread of metal studies, the study of heavy metal music and culture has brought an increase in the topics explored in relation to heavy metal music - which will be explored in the upcoming sections.

In more recent years, metal music studies gained an increased legitimacy as a field of study (Kahn-Harris 2011) and within this still growing area, scholars have begun to pay attention to a wide range of questions, with literature emerging around a variety of topics such as the history of heavy metal (Weinstein 1991; Walser 1993; Brown 2011); the culture of metal (Kahn-Harris 2007; Spracklen et al. 2011); heavy metal as a form of resistance (Scott 2016); fandom and community (Hill 2014; 2016) and a wide range of other topics such as gender identity, gender and racial inequalities, and methodologies applicable to the study of heavy metal music and culture (Savigny & Schaap 2018; Hill 2021).

2.2.2: Musical Aesthetics of Heavy Metal Music

Mynett (2019) noted that there exist a number of problems when attempting to classify musical parameters of contemporary heavy metal music, and highlighted factors such as tempo, rhythm, timbre [sound], and overall performance sound in the task of being able to define contemporary heavy metal music. Hillier (2020) noted that heavy metal music experienced a widespread 'fracturing' into different styles - or rather: subgenres - throughout the late 1980s and early 1990s, which resulted in subgenres falling under the broad umbrella term 'heavy metal'. The difference between subgenres can be of deep importance to many fans and musicians for whom genre is an integral element of their musical identity and authenticity as metalheads (Smialek 2015).

In regards to heavy metal music performance, research has been conducted on the musicological analysis guitar solos from early rock music to modern/contemporary heavy metal music (Slaven & Krout 2016) and the use and importance of 'breakdowns' in contemporary heavy metal music (Gamble 2019) have been two important studies published through *Metal Music Studies*, exploring the tonal elements of heavy metal music. Kahn-Harris (2011) however, noted that there is still a need to establish a widely accepted vocabulary for identifying the constituent features of heavy metal music.

2.2.3: Gender and Marginalization in Heavy Metal

Since Weinstein's (1991; 2000) influential sociological study on heavy metal, the notion of heavy metal being male-dominated and masculinist - in particular

in regards to subculture, sharing norms and values, and behavior which promote and valorize hegemonic masculinity - has informed and influenced a large number of studies which have been conducted on gender in the context of heavy metal culture. Hill et al. (2015) noted that the relationship between heavy metal music and marginalization has been pivotal to academic debates within metal scholarship. Other metal scholars such as Walser (1993), Weinstein (2000), and Phillipov (2012) for example, have discussed and argued how heavy metal as a musical genre preserves/maintains a position which is academically, culturally, and spatially marginalized. As self-proclaimed 'outsiders', a rhetoric of inclusion is frequently mobilized in order to establish and maintain an oppositional image, position, and relationship against 'the mainstream' (Hill et al. 2015). In regards to heavy metal research, gender remains a prominent analytical focus in examining practices of marginalization and exclusion. Thus, Hill (2018) noted that historical allegations against metal of sexism, violence, and perversion are an important part of how heavy metal fans understand the genre and culture.

In regards to gender and marginalization in online settings, Berkers and Schaap (2015) noted that the emergence of the internet and accompanying social media platforms such as *YouTube* led to the creation of virtual scenes, which created new modes of social conduct which could affect gender dynamics - particularly within social domains which have been predominantly and historically male-dominated. Hoad (2017) explored the creation and circulation of online fan fiction of heavy metal performers, which was overwhelmingly created and consumed by and for young women, allowing

them to not only actively assert themselves within music fandom, but also allows them to renegotiate hegemonic codes of hyper-heterosexual masculinity within heavy metal discourses. The constellations of gender, sexuality, and heavy metal fandom have thus enabled young women and female fans to redefine their own resistant spaces within a masculinist subculture (Hoad 2017).

Riches (2015) noted that the ongoing expansion of metal music studies has triggered an increased interest from scholars to critically explore women's participation and positions within heavy metal music, along with other aspects of identity, through a vast variety of methodological approaches and theoretical perspectives. The concept of marginalization has been central to scholarly discussions, in particular within feminist analysis, in order to prompt an understanding of the reasons and motivations behind female involvement in male-dominated subcultures such as heavy metal music (Riches 2015). Dawes' (2015) research on discussions on black and queer experiences within heavy metal subculture revealed that heavy metal's principle philosophy of inclusivity reproduces normative and 'mainstream' discourses which are oppressive to its participants. Dawes (2015) argued that black and queer heavy metal fans thus experience more both overt and covert discrimination that other marginalized groups which participate in localized heavy metal scenes.

2.2.4: The Spread and Globalization of Heavy Metal Music

As mentioned in the introductory chapter, heavy metal derived from the electrification of the blues, development of rock music, and growing popularity in the Western world - in particular the United States and Europe. The genre was, according to Dehart (2018), 'introduced' to Europe, North America, and Australia and New Zealand, and rapidly gained popularity in those regions before spreading into Latin America and, to a lesser extent, Africa and the Middle East.

Particularly in a North American context, where the rise and spread of heavy metal was amongst the most predominant, metal research began to look into the longevity of heavy metal fandom. Howe et al. (2015) focused on heavy metal fans' lives after three decades of continual exposure to the music and culture, and as fans of the music. Okunew (2016) explored how East German heavy metal fans established themselves as one of the largest subcultures in the German Democratic Republic throughout the 1980s, and how metal fans in East Germany lived and experienced heavy metal music behind the *Iron Curtain* accompanied by the regime attempting to deal with 'deviant' metal fans.

Within a more remote and localized context, Varas-Díaz et al. (2015) explored communal formation within smaller heavy metal scenes, with Puerto Rico as a case study. Whilst they noted that research on smaller heavy metal scenes around the world has been predominantly qualitative and ethnographic in nature, they argued that quantitative methods may potentially serve as a

valuable tool in order to also understand the communal experience of small and localized metal scenes across the globe if utilized and interpreted properly (Varas-Díaz et al. 2015). Rowe (2017) argued that the globalization of metal music and culture has led to an increase in the accessibility of heavy metal music for young people more than ever before. She also however, argue that access to participating in the global heavy metal subculture is not equal for all youth - which, in turn, shapes early metal identity formations in local contexts.

Similarly, Knopke (2015) - in the context for the metal scene in Nairobi, Kenya - argued that local metal cultures are dependent on urban settings which are able to provide electricity, performing venues, and the internet [for promotional content, spreading music, etc.] - and an existing and/or growing infrastructure through which local metal scenes are enable to 'grow'. In terms of the 'distribution of metal', Dehart (2018) thus suggested that a country's metal band per capita is correlated with economic output, creativity, and entrepreneurship. Dehart's (2018) results - based on the four variables (income per capita, level of democracy, region of the world, and binary indicator for Nordic countries) - suggest that metal bands are more concentrated in wealthy and democratic countries in the Western world, from where the genre originated.

2.2.5: Heavy Metal Music, Emotional States, and Well-Being

Kneer (2016) noted that studies from social and media psychology on the impact of heavy metal music are predominantly concerned with the negative impacts of the music on people's well-being. In early stages of research, heavy

metal music was believed to be associated with mental health difficulties - however, fans and musicians often describe it as a helpful tool for managing their well-being, and more recent research proposes that heavy metal music may play an important role in regards to processing emotions and as a positive community influence (Quinn 2019).

Simultaneously, the main reason to listen to any style of music has been neglected: the positive expectations (Kneer 2016). With this in mind, people do not listen to any kind of music purposely to drop their mood, but rather to improve it. Even people who do not listen to a certain style of music, such as people who do not identify as metal fans, would agree that improving one's mood should be the major motivation for people to select a certain style of music. This assumption is not only a logical assumption, it was also proven by media theories and scholars researching on mood management (Zillman 1988; Knobloch & Zillmann 2002).

According to research findings from mood management theory, media content is selected based on the state of the listeners' mind, and arousing content may be selected if a person is bored, relaxing content may be selected if the person is experiencing stress, etc. Still, what may be perceived as fun and exciting, or relaxing for example, depends on the person who actively selects the specific style of music and content (Oliver & Bartsch 2010).

In terms of metal music and mood management, some research has emerged and developed in a variety of contexts. Some notable examples include Eischeid et al. (2019) study on the impact of metal gestures on stress after

experiencing stressful situations; the emotional responses of doom and death metal fans - in particular as these two subgenres frequently occupy themselves with the darker aspects of human emotions (Yavuz 2017); and using Freud and Lacan, Copilaş (2020) proposed a psychoanalytic approach to the band *Slayer*, with a particular focus on the band's engagement with themes of violence and perversion.

2.3: Music Listening and Adolescence

The consumption of music is an important source of entertainment and enjoyment throughout people's adolescence. On average, young people actively spend between two and three hours per day listening to music (Zillmann & Gann 1997; Miranda & Claes 2009). Research has gradually begun to recognize the importance of music listening in adolescence, particularly regarding developmental tasks and psychological adaptive functions such as self-actualization, individual and cultural identity, socialization and integration amongst peers, and emotion regulation (North et al. 2000). Prior research has identified the varying functions of music-listening, beyond simple enjoyment, rather, social, cognitive, and emotional reasons for listening to music (Hargreaves & North 1999).

The developmental function of music listening throughout adolescence can be understood through two distinct motivations: social and individual. Social motivation is related to the processes of socialization within and amongst peer groups and being able to establish one's own sense of identity and self, whilst individual motivation is associated with mood-regulation and coping

mechanism for one's day-to-day personal circumstances (Bakagiannis & Tarrant 2006). Christenson and Roberts (1998) argued that perhaps one of the most discernible markers of adolescence is the development of a passion for popular music - the meaning and importance of music is seemingly related to teenagers' psychological development (Laiho 2002).

Laiho (2002) argued that music promotes the balancing of conflicting interests and needs for closeness and isolation occurring adolescence. Furthermore, music enhances feelings of connection with parents and peers, and simultaneously provides opportunities for privacy and separation from others (Laiho 2002). In other words, there is a duality regarding music: it is a source and medium for strengthening bonds between the individual and their family and peers, whilst also being a source of entertainment in the comfort of one's own company.

Adolescence is a phase in people's lives marked by a number of drastic transformations. Adolescents need to learn to gain increasing levels of separation and independence from their parents and families, learn self-regulation, and gain a sense of emotional autonomy and control over their everyday lives over the course of the biopsychosocial transition from childhood into adulthood (Lerner & Steinberg 2009). Furthermore, the transition from adolescence into adulthood is oftentimes a challenge for teenagers and their parents (Laiho 2002). Parents in particular see their children struggle with the multifaceted changes and challenges their children face on a daily basis, ranging from puberty and social pressures, peer relations, sexuality, and the search for identity and their own sense of self (Steinberg & Morris 2001).

Adolescence and young adulthood are generally viewed as formative phases for the development of youth preferences. Research has shown that the choice of music listened to throughout early adulthood is not only best remembered in later life, but also remains better viewed and liked, compared to music listened to at a younger or older age (ter Bogt et al. 2011).

Music provides a medium for self-exploration, through which people are able to reflect upon notions such as who they are, where they came from, and who they aspire to be (Rentfrow 2012). DeNora (2000) noted that people engage in reflexive processes of remembering and constructing their sense of self through the use of music, serving as a form of self-affirmation and discovery. Similarly, Larson (1995) noted that through music, adolescents are able to create symbolic personal spaces and declare their individuality, existence and personal preferences. The need for privacy increases during adolescence, and music is an important tool in being able to promote it (Larson 1995). Furthermore, music is a means for adolescents to distance themselves from parental influence and make decisions on their own conceptions and values (Kurkela 1996). Music is not only a means to being able to separate oneself from one's parents, but an opportunity to be able to reflect upon what is private and one's sense of self, and to develop the necessary skills in order to function as an autonomous being (Laiho 2004).

Music preference can be used as a sociocultural 'marker' or 'badge' which enables young people to self-identify as members of peer crowds of music-based subcultures (Miranda & Claes 2009; Miranda et al. 2015). Bakagiannis

and Tarrant (2006) argued that shared musical preferences bring about a superordinate social identities that are able to transform [negative] perceptions and opinions of others who are perceived and imagined as out-group members into positive and favorable opinions as in-group members.

Music possesses the ability to evoke feelings of belonging and unity. Listening to music together with a friend, being a member of a musical ensemble, singing in a group, attending concerts, or any other form of music-related activity with others is a possibility for shared experiences and feelings. It is through such experiences that one is able to feel a deep connection and involvement with others (Laiho 2004). Adolescents are socially encouraged and motivated to listen to music, given that being involved with music through some way enables them to become members of musical subcultures, providing a variety of social cognitions, attitudes, values, cultural symbols, identities, behavioral codes, sources of knowledge, role models, and a sense of belonging with peers (Bakagiannis & Tarrant 2006; Miranda & Claes 2009).

Although people are frequently exposed to music they did not actively and deliberately chose to listen to, people do however, choose music as an accompaniment for a range of everyday activities (Sloboda & Juslin 2010; Krause et al. 2015). New music technologies give enable people a greater choice and control over their music choice and how they are able to integrate music into their day-to-day life (Krause et al. 2015). Krause et al. (2015) thus suggested that control over music may further feelings of well-being, whilst Skånland (2011) noted that people used music in order to maintain their well-

being, making conscious efforts over music choice in order to make certain everyday situations more tolerable and bearable.

Similarly, Liljeström et al. (2012) argued that self-selected music was important in the experience of positive emotions as it offered a greater sense of control over the situations people find themselves in. Schwartz and Fouts (2003) summarized three processes by which adolescents are able to regulate their emotions with and through music listening:

1. Distraction from unwanted moods

2. Solace and validation of their personal circumstances and problems

3. Catharsis in relation to the experience of negative emotions

2.4: Scholarly Perspectives on Identity

Prior to the 17th century, it was believed that identity - and a sense of self - were both inherently relational in nature - identity and sense of self were believed the be the product of environmental factors and the result of interactions with other people (Carrier 1995). Mauss (1985) suggested that this perception of the self and identity underwent a change throughout the 17th century, and the belief began to prevail that humans were thought to be self-contained and autonomous. This view propelled the notion that the self is located within each individual, rather than mainly existing through relationships (Turner 1976). Burkitt (2008) argued that even today, in order to find a sense of self, people tend to turn to themselves, trying to 'look inside' themselves, while they examine and interrogate their thoughts, feelings, and emotions.

Supporters of this view, that the self is located inside the individual, approach identity as a cognitive experience located within the heads and minds of individuals (Snell 2012).This perspective can be associated with the Cartesian conceptualization of the self, where there is believed to be a dualism between the body and mind, and placing a focus on 'personality' which is restricted to the individual's mind (Jovchelovitch 2007). Trilling (1979) argued that as a result of this, proponents of this view explain the behavior of people through discussions of their individual motivations and choices which originate from personal motivations and desires. Viewing people in this manner led to groups being perceived as collections of autonomous individuals, with each individual having their own motivations and predispositions (Carrier 1995).

The conceptualization of the autonomous being has, however, been challenged. Throughout the 19th century, scholars began to re-emphasize the relational and interactional view of the self. This movement originated from Anglo-American psychology and can be traced back to the works of James (1890) with his influential distinctions between the *I* and *Me*. To James (1890), the *I* is the self-as-knower. This constitutes a sense of personal identity which showcases a sense of difference to other people, and information being taken on through experiences. The *Me* on the other hand, is the self-as-known. This consists of everything that a person is able to call 'their own' - things such as their body, possessions, and other people with whom they interact (Snell 2012).

This conceptualization recognizes, according to Hermans (2001) and Gergen (2006), that identity is not simply 'located' within the minds of people, but also something external and relational. This view also acknowledges that the personal and social are interwoven in a dynamic relationship; the self does not solely rely on others, not is it entirely contained and located *inside* the individual (Snell 2012).

According to Burkitt (2008), 'Who am I?', and other related questions regarding one's identity, is one of the most frequently posed questions in Western society. Jenkins (2004) notes that identity has Latin roots and has two basic meanings. First, it is the notion of an absolute sameness; when something is identical. Second, a sense of distinctiveness with a sense of continuity over the course of a given time period. With this in mind, notions of identity establishes potential relations of comparison between people and things [objects/ideas]: similarity on the one hand, difference on the other - involving the establishment of boundaries. These boundaries can locate the parameters of someone or something being similar or different to us (Woodward 2002). Those with whom we have an identity are marked as the same, which is featured by the use of pronouns such as 'us', 'we', and 'our', while those excluded, the ones we do not share an identity with, are characterized as 'them' or 'other' - this ties in with social identity theory, which will be examined in the upcoming section on Social Identity Theory.

A perspective based on ideas of similarities and differences, as explained by Woodward (2002), suggests that identity provides us with a way to think about

the connections between the personal and the social - identity is the meeting place of the psyche and society. This hints that identity is something relational, as we place other people in relation to us based on the relationship we have with them - further aided by the distinction of 'us' and 'them' (Woodward 2002). By relating to other people as we interact with them, our own identity is put into question, established, and reinforced (Jenkins 2004: 2). In terms of its relational nature, we are influenced by, and rely on the people around us. It is our family members, friends, colleagues, and other members of the social groups we are a part of, that help us consolidate our identity through the interactions that occur with them - making identity also something communal and collective while simultaneously being something inherently personal; something that belongs to us alone (Kroger 1996; Burkitt 2008).

Without the ability to identify ourselves, we fail to relate to other human beings in a consistent and meaningful manner. It would not, as Jenkins (2004: 7) notes, be possible to live our everyday lives if we did not have any means of successfully identifying one another, and knowing who we and others are. Our identity can be the most mundane of things, but also the most interesting or exciting (Jenkins 2004). The identities we take on encapsulate our sense of self, the essence of who we are as a person, the sense of being a member of a social group, and of course the essence of being a unique individual (Wall 2003: 157).

2.4.1: Social Identity Theory and Social Identity

Social Identity Theory is a theoretical framework which scholars use in order to conceptualize an understanding of the processes which result in people select their social groups, and how they consequently represent the social norms of their selected groups (Hogg & Reid 2006; Whitaker 2020). Social Identity Theory is situated within social psychology as a core foundation regarding social cognitive theories which attempt to describe self-concept, group processes, inter-group relations, and identity formation (Tajfel & Turner 1979; Turner et al. 1987;Hogg & Reid 2006). According to Turner and Oakes (1986), three principles are the essence of Social Identity Theory:

1): Individuals derive a part of their own self-concept from memberships of their social groups

2): A conceptual focus lies on the 'collective self' - the self is defined in terms of the social group and in relation to other mutual group members

3): The social identification of mutual features with group members results in the inter- and intra-group behaviors.

A key assumption of Social Identity Theory is that people possess a motivation to evaluate their own social groups more favorably and perceive them more positively than the groups that they are not members of, which enhances and maintains a positive sense of self (Verkuyten & De Wolf 2007). According to the principles of Social Identity Theory, establishing and maintaining a favorable view of one's group in comparison to other groups - or rather, through a sense of in-group favoritism - is helpful in achieving what Verkuyten and De Wolf (2007) call a positive group identity. In-group favoritism is

regarded as an integral means of securing a positive sense of identity and research on adolescents has demonstrated that in-group favoritism does positively and causally affect self-feelings (Verkuyten 2001; Verkuyten 2007). It is important to note however, that for Social Identity Theory, in-group favoritism is not an automatic result of group differences, but rather, the theory places and emphasis on the fact that psychological processes should be observed within a social context (Verkuyten & De Wolf 2007). With this in mind, one of the most distinctive features of social identity is its ability to combine and integrate both individual and social levels of analysis (Burford 2012).

Social Identity Theory is a useful theoretical framework which can be used to explore inter-group behavior and explain how people make sense of and use group norms in order to assess others' levels of sameness and difference in relation to themselves (Whitaker 2020). Individuals whose attributes appear to align with the most important and salient group norms and/or attributes are perceived as in-group, whilst those whose attributes deviate from the in-group 'standard' are perceived as 'out-group'. In order to enhance their own [perceived] standing, people behave in ways which perceivably maximize in- and out-group differences (Hogg & Reid 2006).

Hewitt (2007) noted that social identity has three main identifying attributes.
1): It locates the person in a social space and its duration tends to be longer-lasting than any particular situation.
Imagine a heavy metal concert. A concert takes place within the confines of a venue, and will last a certain duration. Every person present at that moment

in time will take on a situated identity - which will be discussed in more detail an upcoming section -, that may be band member, concert-goer, merchandise seller, security guard at the venue, etc. In order to claim the social identity of a heavy metal musician for example, is to locate oneself in relation to the other people in the world, particularly those who are and who are not heavy metal musicians themselves. The social identity of being a member of a heavy metal band is based on the participation of events, such as playing concerts or recording music. The social identity of being a metal musician will however, go beyond any particular concert or recording session - as it places the individual as a member of a social category which differs from other categories (Hewitt 2007). In other words, a social identity lasts longer than just the situation; a heavy metal drummer is not only a drummer when they are playing drums at a concert, but for as long as this particular social identity bears particular relevance within that person's social life.

2): Identification with a particular social category lies at the heart of social identity. In order to be a heavy metal fan, one needs to identify with others who are perceived as similar to oneself or whose presence [even if imagined presence] evokes positive emotions and feelings (Hewitt 2007). Thus, identification with other heavy metal fans implies mutual beliefs, values, and purposes, which elicits positive feelings. In other words, it feels good to think about them or occupying the same space and interacting with them, creating positive feelings.

3: Identification converts social categories into functional, but not always *functioning*, communities. Those members who identify with a social category, treat it as if it were a community in the classic sense. In the classic sociological

sense, a functioning community is a set of people who live in close proximity to one another for a prolonged period of time. Identification with a category as if it were a community in the classic sense does not make it so. From the individual's perspective however, it functions in the same way (Hewitt 2007: 104).

2.4.1.1: Self-Categorization

Self-categorization describes the ways cognitive processes facilitate how people construct their social identities, as Tajfel (1972: 292) noted: "an individual's knowledge that he belongs to certain social groups, together with some emotional and value significance to him of this group membership". Self-categorization explains how people use make use of their own personal frames of reference in order to label and describe groups of people based on shared attributes (Whitaker 2020). Furthermore, the way that people behave within their social group communicates information about group norms, and the group itself is influenced and configured through the norms (Hogg & Tinsdale 2005). In some groups, prejudiced and discriminatory norms and behaviors are used by in-group members as a grounds to deprive out-group members of resources which could aid in the improvement of their social standing. It is important to note however, that discriminatory behavior of in-group members towards out-group members may jeopardize the in-group's image and social standing (Whitaker 2020).

Individuals derive a part of their self-concept from affiliation with social groups and are thus motivated to create and maintain a sense of distinctiveness of

their group in relation to relevant out-groups (Tajfel & Turner 1979). This motivation, to create and maintain a sense of distinctiveness, is, according to Ellemers et al. (1999) greater amongst people who identify more greatly with the group than members who do not. Consequently, high identifiers are less likely to leave or abandon the group as a result of negative events and decreasing social standing (Ellemers et al. 1999), more likely to demonstrate higher levels of in-group bias as a response to threatening or jeopardizing information about their in-group (Branscombe & Wann 1994), and are more likely and prone to be engaged in behaviors which place the in-group in a more positive light (Castano et al. 2002).

In regards to in- and out-groups, there explicitly exists a potential for inter-group conflict (Burford 2012). As mentioned previously, members of the in-group will demonstrate a sense of in-group favoritism (Verkuyten & De Wolf 2007) and demonstrate negative attitudes towards members of the out-group. Alongside the favoritism and bias, the out-group is regarded as a homogenous group ['they are all the same'] whereas differences within the in-group are appreciated (Simon 1992; Dunn et al. 2005). Heavy metal music and culture is particularly notorious for positioning itself as 'outcasts' and against the 'mainstream' which is anything non-metal. There is however, a mirrored relationship between heavy metal music and 'the mainstream' - both camps have the view that the 'other' is a homogenous entity not worthy of recognition, investigation, and worthy of intense and prolonged social interaction (Dunn et al. 2005).

People have a number of identities available to them for the different social situations they may find themselves in. For any given social situation, people are presented with an opportunity to be categorized, or categorize themselves, into groups (Burford 2012). Some of these categories may be nested or even hierarchical - some may categorize themselves as 'a nurse' but also have the opportunity to categorize oneself into more superordinate groups such as 'healthcare workers'. In contrast, smaller and more exclusive groups such as 'cardiologist' may also be available (Burford 2012). Other groups may be cross-cutting - multiple identities are able to relate to each other, respectively, to different aspects of one's life such as gender, ethnicity, hobbies, nationality, etc. The identity with the most salience at the point of social interaction determines the content of self-perception, which thus determines the form and standards of social behavior (Oakes 1987).

In sum, conceptualizations of social identity recognize that there is a part of social identity which maintains a sense continuity (Snell 2012). Other theorists suggest that the self has the capacity to change and transform over the course of a person's life, also described as the transformative self (Strauss 1969). Combining those perspectives acknowledges that whilst there is a core sense of self which remains stable and consistent over time, there is an element of change. In other words, identity can develop from the ongoing interactions with people, and when shared with others - in particular members of the in-group - , people are able to experience a sense of community (Kroger 1996). Through showcasing identity and extending it into the social world, people develop social networks which enhance, support, and reaffirm their group

memberships. Like many group affiliations, music-based communities such as heavy metal begin through individuals sharing interests which bring them closer together and provides reference point for interactions (Marti 2009). Heavy metal music can serve as a common ground between individuals and identifying with people perceived similar is a crucial part of identity formation and maintenance (Ethier & Deaux 1994).

2.4.1.2: The Looking-Glass Self

The looking-glass self is a concept formulated by Charles Cooley (1902) and is a frequently and widely accepted theory in contemporary psychology and sociology. The notion of the looking-glass self was conceptualized by Cooley (1902) as he observed and examined the processes in which a person's experience of the self are created and altered through social interactions. The main idea of the looking-glass self contains two rudimentary principles. First, self-consciousness involves the continual monitoring and observation of self from the point of view of others - as Cooley suggested: we live in the minds of others. Second, 'living' in the minds of others, in an imaginative sense, results in the experience of genuine and intense emotions: pride or shame (Scheff 2005).

Gecas and Schwalbe (1983) referred to the looking-glass self as the idea that people perceive themselves through the eyes of others, much like our physical characteristics are reflected back towards us when we stand in front of a mirror and observe our reflections. Lundgren (2004) notes that the looking-glass self is made up of three elements. First, the imagination and idea of our own

experience to other people. Second, the thought and imagination of their judgement regarding our appearance. Third, our own individual experience of judgement based on the reaction we receive from others. Cooley (1902) argued that the reactions and responses we receive from other people about us provide us with a viewpoint from which we are able to define our attributes in a more meaningful and consistent manner, and alter them if necessary.

The looking-glass self suggests that a sense of self derives from the ongoing social interactions people have with each other during the course of their daily lives. The view of 'ourselves' originates from the contemplation of our own individual qualities and impressions of how others perceive us (Isaaksen 2013). In this sense, the way we perceive ourselves does not originate from who we *really* are, but rather, from how we *believe* other people perceive us. Thus, we create our own self-image in accordance to the responses and evaluations of others who are part of the same environment we inhabit with them (Isaaksen 2013). This also suggests that reference groups are crucial in regards to understanding the looking-glass self, as individuals do not internalize *all* of the perceptions and opinions that others have of them, but rather, carefully select which people's perceptions of them are the most influential, important, meaningful, and relevant (Reitzes 1980). With this in mind, Isaaksen (2013) noted that as long as people participate in social interactions with others, they are inevitably vulnerable to the judgements of other people about them, which means they are constantly engaged in thinking about and altering our self-image throughout the course of our everyday lives.

Picture the following scenario: Dylan is a heavy metal fan, and most people, if they were to describe him, would say 'the metal guy'. In regards to his appearance, Dylan regularly wears band t-shirts of his favorite band, dark jeans, had some colorful tattoos, some facial piercings. His looking-glass self influences the way Dylan feels about his appearance. When he gets ready to meet for a few beers with his friends, he will stand in front of the mirror and imagine the types of responses he will receive from his friends - which are mainly positive - so he has a sense of pride in his appearance. If he was to imagine how he would appear for a job interview however, he is aware that his facial piercings may hinder his job prospects. Additionally, with the recent death of a family member, Dylan knows he needs to remove his facial piercings for the funeral in order not to upset his grieving relatives. When he imagines himself being at the funeral in a band t-shirt, his tattoos on show, and his piercings being visible, he imagines the type of responses he may receive from his family - leaving him feeling a sense of shame. This was just a rudimentary example of the looking-glass self at work, it however highlights how people feel and think about themselves in relation to others.

2.4.1.3: Situated Identity

Throughout the course of social life and interaction, people are constantly occupied and engaged in locating themselves in relation to others. Additionally, people tend to think about themselves throughout everyday life, and in doing so, they rely on their self-image, which they continue to develop throughout the process (Hewitt 2007: 88). When people come together in a social situation and share a moment or situation, they are able to establish a situated identity without much difficulty. People readily identify with others and

place them in relation to one another, and Hewitt (2007) defined situated identity as taking on different roles throughout the different settings we find ourselves in, and how our behavior can radically change depending on the situation and the people present. In other words: our behavior has the ability to alter for every different social situation we find ourselves in. Our capacity to act according to one's identity in that moment in time, relies on the establishment and maintenance of a situated identity (Hewitt 2007). Lacking a response from the other person who acknowledges one's situated identity, results in not being able to act in terms of that identity, or enable others to act in terms of theirs.

Going back to the previous scenario of Dylan from the looking-glass self; Dylan is in the grocery store, looking for some ingredients for a meal but is unable to find one of the spices for the sauce he is planning to make for the meal, so he decides to ask the clerk for assistant. Chad, the clerk, is standing around and paying more attention to what is happening on social media, updating his Facebook status, messaging his friends, and generally not paying attention to what is happening in the store, being completely dismissive in his body language. Because Dylan is lacking Chad's acknowledgement, Dylan is unable to act as a customer in a meaningful manner, or getting Chad to act, if at all, as a clerk. Dylan, being a passive person, decides to visit another grocery shop to look for the missing ingredient for the sauce and walks down the aisle, where he spots Spencer, who is wearing a band shirt of Dylan's favorite metal band. Dylan walks up to Spencer and initiates a conversation "hey dude, nice shirt", to which Spencer replies and both quickly get talking

about heavy metal bands, eventually exchange numbers, decide to meet up for a few beers the next weekend, and end up becoming good friends who frequently attend metal concerts together.

The aim of this example was to demonstrate that what makes placements and announcements coincide is not merely their correspondence with one another, but something deeper (Hewitt 2007). An individual's correspondence relies on two social factors. First, the two individuals have acknowledged their presence together in a social situation which demands their joint activity. They are, and are aware that they, 'co-present' - they are in a situation together and have both mutually recognized that the situation demands their interaction (Hewitt 2007: 97). In the case for Dylan and Spencer, even if they just would have made eye contact, an interaction could have occurred based on Spencer wearing a shirt of Dylan's band. This was not the case however, for Dylan and Chad, as Chad was completely unaware of his co-presence as he failed to fulfil his role as a clerk. Second, the acknowledgement of a co-presence means that both individuals accept the other's right in the situation, and may make requests or even demands. For example, a doctor acknowledges a patient's presence in the examination room and right to medical assessment and treatment. In turn, the patient allows the doctor to touch his or her body and to issue commands (Hewitt 2007: 97). Furthermore, in the case for Dylan and Spencer, their identity as a heavy metal fan can be used as a resource in the establishment of group belonging and feeling of safety (DeChaine 2002).

2.4.2: Symbolic Interactionism

Symbolic interactionism is a micro-level theoretical perspective and framework within sociology which addresses how society is established and maintained through ongoing and repeated interactions with other individuals (Carter & Fuller 2016). The symbolic interactionist perspective emerged throughout the mid-20th century, with a significant influence from the works of the American philosopher George Herbert Mead (1934) and his theories regarding the relationship between the self and society. Symbolic interactionism developed in order to understand the operation of society from the 'bottom-up', altering the focus to micro-level processes which arise throughout the process of face-to-face interactions in order to explain how society operates (Carter & Fuller 2016).

The roots of symbolic interactionism have been linked to pragmatism, which emerged in the United States between the 1860s and World War Two (Chamberlain-Salaun et al. 2013). Mead (1936) considered pragmatism as a practical philosophy, which was evolving from rationalistic philosophies and a psychological approach helping establish processes of knowing within the process of conduct. The development, or transfer, of pragmatism into the social science took place in terms of 'functionalist psychology' as a means to understand activities and dynamics in terms of their function in people's problem-solving. At the time, human action was perceived as a simple reaction to external stimuli (Balzacq 2002: 472).

A central notion of symbolic interactionism is the idea that people utilize language and symbols in their communication with other individuals and groups. Instead of focusing how social institutions influence and impact individuals, symbolic interactionists examine the subjective viewpoints of people, and how they thus make sense of the world from their unique and personal perspective (Carter & Fuller 2016). Mead (1967) and Blumer (1969) - both of whom had significant contributions in the matter - emphasized how people react to [and in] social situations through altering their behaviors and actions as a response to the environment in which they find themselves in. Through this, symbolic interactionism assumes that individuals will in a pragmatic manner when they are faced with social situations through making judgements on, and creating to, the way they perceive they should be perceived by others in that social situation (Hughes 2016). For Blumer (1969) and Mead (1967), and other scholars such as Rizter (1983), reacting pragmatically to social circumstances is facilitated and carried out by the person, or 'actor', reading, interpreting, and making sense of the signs and symbols of the situations, and altering their behavior accordingly.

Some of the main principles of symbolic interactionism, summarized based on the works of Mead (1967) and Blumer (1969) include:

    1: Individuals act on the basis of meaning which objects have [to them]

    2: Interactions occur within specific cultural and social contexts in which physical [objects] and social [people] - as well as situations - need to be defined and categorized based on individual meaning and understanding

    3: Meanings arise through interactions with other people and society

4: Meanings are created and recreated through interpreting processes which occur during interactions with others

5: Human behavior is based on the meaning an individual places on a particular situation

6. Language plays a role in determining how individuals are able to interpret and express the meaning of a particular situation

7: Self-reflection is an important feature in aiding people understand the context of different situations

Thus, it can be assumed that a person's 'outward-looking' self is influenced by the way that they engage with and interpret the social environment such as values, behaviors, and beliefs, for example, in which they live and operate (Hughes 2016).

Furthermore, Mead (1934) felt that human intelligence emerged from a process of evolutionary adjustments and changes. He believed that the mind is not a disembodied and separate entity, but an integral aspect which can control the behavior of the species (Hewitt 2007). Through the use of symbols, people can act both purpose and meaningfully in and towards objects, rather than just responding to stimuli (Hewitt 2007: 35). People can thus define and redefine the situations that they encounter as they engage in social interactions with other people, make roles which can achieve individual and collective goals, and put themselves into the perspectives of others through the process of role-taking (Hewitt 2007).

For Hewitt (2007: 41), there are three elements which are crucial to the impact of symbols on people. First, symbols can change and modify the very nature of the environment in which the individual is located. Second, symbols allow for attitudes and behavioral dispositions to be reproduced in other people. Third, symbols enable an individual to be part of the very environment that he or she responds to. With this power, symbols can transform and alter the human environment through the creation of a named environment, and in the simplest sense, names substitute things, and therefore all us to bring the external world into our minds - we can imagine the external world - where we manipulate it in a rather but economical fashion. Symbols are able to transform the human environment by altering it into a *named* environment - in the simplest sense, names substitute things, and thus enables people to located the external world into the minds.

Over the last decades, a number of scholars have applied and incorporated an interactionist framework in order to understand the self and identity processes. One notable study regarding an interactionist approach and framework relating to identity was Turner's (1956) role theory, which emphasized role making, or rather, the process of creating and altering definitions of oneself and one's roles as the orienting mechanism in the process of interactions.

2.5: Scholarly Perspectives on Community

The word 'community', derived from Latin 'communitas', has been used in English since the 14th century, was however not used in terms of everyday

local associations until the 20th century (Kaufman Shelemay 2011). Newby (1980) reduced the term 'community' to three basic definitions:

1. Community can be understood as a fixed and bounded locality - a geographical location like a settlement, village, or town.

2. A social system - a set of social relationships which take place within a defined location.

3. A type of relationship - more particularly: a sense of mutual identity which exists between individuals.

The German sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies (1887 [2001]) was amongst the first to focus on the study of community, and conceptualized a distinction between *Gesellschaft* and *Gemeinschaft*. Whilst *Gesellschaft* refers to civil society, *Gemeinschaft* refers to a community based on individual social relationships and sense of togetherness. Furthermore, *Gesellschaft* is comprised of different people and communities [or *Gemeinschaften*], whilst *Gemeinschaft* is more superficial and can be seen as a feeling experienced by the aggregate of people that make up the community or occupy and participate within a space.

Sarason (1974) was amongst the first to conceptualize and introduce a concept for a psychological sense of community, which provided a basis for a model which was developed by McMillan and Chavis (1986). This model identified four components which are crucial for the formation and development of a sense of community:

1. Membership - being a part of a community. This aspect includes and embraces the perception of shared boundaries, symbols, histories, a sense of emotional safety, and personal investment in community life

2. [Mutual] Influence - people can actively participate in community life, make their own contributions, and witness the impact of collective decisions and actions of the community. Additionally, there is a heightened awareness of how one's choices and decisions are affected by the community.

3. Fulfilment of needs - the benefits that people derive from their community membership and the positive relationship between individuals and their community - to the extent that the community helps its members meet their personal and group needs.

4. Shared emotional connection - sharing of mutual and common repertoires such as shared histories and significant events, which strengthens the quality of social ties within the community.

Traditional humanist forms of community all rely on common being: members share similarities in some crucial way - this could be race, religion, nationality, gender, a sports team, music, etc. (Nancy 1991; Snaza & Netherton 2016). What community members share is the bare fact of their mortal existence and in relation to a social 'playing field', or what Latour (2004) referred to as a 'matter of concern'. Nancy (1991) referred to community as 'common being', something which constituted a sense of closure as it assigns community a *common* being, whereas community is a matter of something different, namely, of existence inasmuch it is *in* common, but without being absorbed into a common substance. Being *in* common does not refer to communion, or

fusion into a body or identity which would no longer be exposed, but rather, 'in common' would mean no longer having an element of a substantial identity - having a lack of identity (Nancy 1991). Community is thus not only about sharing something, but also being exposed to a particular group (Snaza & Netherton 2016).

A second transformative work which appeared after Anderson's (1983) '*Imagined Communities*' was Cohen's (1985) '*The Symbolic Construction of Community*', which proposes perceiving and understanding community not as a structure to be defined and described, but rather, as a mode of experience which has meaning to people who consider themselves to be a part of it. According to Cohen (1985), a community is a matter of feeling which is experienced by the members of it and is based on the sharing of specific symbols such as ritual orders, or in the context of heavy metal: music. Through this work, Cohen (1985) disputed one of the key concepts in the social sciences: the idea of community as something that is fixed in time and space. Cohen (1985) noted that community is thus a largely mental construct.

Another type of community, linked to the notion of community being a mental construct, is defined largely by affinity, emerges and first and foremost from individual preferences which is quickly followed by a desire for social association with others who also share an individual preference (Kaufman Schelemay 2011). This is particularly relevant for heavy metal music, as people will have the individual preference for metal music, yet seek and wish to share their musical preference with other metal fans. According to Kaufman

Schelemay (2011) music is a powerful mechanism for catalyzing a sense of affinity linked to communities, in which aesthetic and personal preferences may, but not necessarily intersect, with other markers of identity such as ethnicity, age, or gender. Ultimately however, affinity communities derive their strength from the presence and proximity of a sizeable and tangible group, and for the sense of belonging and prestige that the affiliation has to offer to the individual (Kaufman Schelemay 2011).

A number of theorists have suggested that a drive for social relationships, and forming and maintaining them, is an innate human feature and tendency which is paramount for human survival (Ainsworth 1989; Lambert et al. 2013). Baumeister and Leaury (1995) argued that there can be repercussions to one's physical and mental health if people fail to form interpersonal attachment, and chose to make use of the term 'need to belong' in order to describe the innate human drive to form close and positive relationships with others. Whilst it is possible to form and maintain close relationships with others, there is no guarantee that one can experience a subjective experience of belonging - in other words, one can belong but not necessarily *feel* that they belong - albeit perhaps a rare experience (Lambert et al. 2013). According to Baumeister (2005), human beings have a biological need for social relationships, and the thirst for belonging and the capacity to understand larger systems of meaning are inextricably linked to the human psyche. Thus, we can expect the idea of having a 'meaningful life' to depend on, in some way, on a sense of belonging and community membership.

Psychologists have also focused on the functional aspects of communities through a range of variables and concepts such as 'sense of community', 'social capital', 'social support', and 'ingroup vs outgroup dynamics' (Montero 2009). These variables have been utilized and examined in order to explore the purpose of communities, in particular what people gain from participating in communal practices during which they may experience losing their individuality in a group/community (Wenger 1998). Talò et al. (2013) noted that a sense of community signifies a healthy community and exhibits a sense of emotional interconnectedness which is observable in collective lives. In other words, and in the context of heavy metal music and culture, a sense of belonging signifies that the overall metal community is strong and healthy.

Group identification has long been implicated in the maintenance and enhancement of psychological well-being, and research suggests that group identification may lead to enhanced perception of 'meaningfulness' (Haslam et al. 2009). Having a sense of belonging is to have a relationship with people, or a group of people, which results in the feeling of security and fitting in (Lambert et al. 2013). As such, Lambert et al. (2013) argued that a sense of belonging is not only the simple act of having social relationships with others, nor similar to having close and positive relationships with others. Rather, Lambert et al. (2013) regard *belonging* as an appropriate term for describing group membership with an element of fitting in with others, with a sense of 'meaningfulness'.

The power of affinity can be so severe that a chance encounter is able to spark a lifelong engagement and commitment towards a community, or in this instance, music. Musical affinity can be driven by sheer sonic attraction, stemming from a desire for the familiar or search for something new. The role of a charismatic musician or performer is also a particularly powerful factor which plays a role in the creation of affinity (Kaufman Schelemay 2011). Regardless of the basis of initial attraction, an affinity community assumes its shape based on initial individual volition, and desire to pursue it, including a certain degree of personal investment (Kaufman Schelemay 2011).

One of the most positive implications of heavy metal music in the social arena has to do with community formation, with the music being overwhelmed with references to the communal (Varaz-Diaz et al. 2015). Shared experiences through music, geographical spaces, dress codes, styles of dance, and common symbols such as the devil horn hand gestures are just a few examples which point towards the importance of a mutual or shared experience in the process of creating or consuming heavy metal music (Snell & Hodgetts 2007). Albeit seemingly contradictory, in light of the importance of celebrating individuality in the music (Fellesz 2012; Olson 2012) - in particular in sub-genres such as black metal - the communal experience of heavy metal is potent and visible to anyone attending a concert. Heavy metal music makes frequent reference to the concept of community, even if it is not uniformly spread or visible across subgenres (Varas-Diaz et al. 2015).

Community psychologists have written extensively about the role of geographical proximity in the creation of communal consciousness (Sánchez 2000; Rappaport & Seidman 2006; Varas-Diaz et al. 2015). After all, shared spaces are a vital part of getting to know one another - in the context and case of heavy metal music, these communal spaces include concert halls, bars, malls, and other metal-related and themed localities.

2.6: The Sociology of Everyday Life

Everyday life is a concept which has, over the recent decades, gained an increased role and importance in the various areas of the social sciences, being explored and studied by historians, sociologists, psychologists, and anthropologists (Ghisleni 2017). Within sociology in particular, the topic of everyday life has witnessed an increase in the interest - in particular in the second half of the 20th century and most notably between the 1960s and 1990s when the 'sociologies of everyday life' contributed in the rebuild of the subject within sociology (Ghisleni 2017). Back (2015) commented about the oxymoronic notion of everyday life, after all most, if not all, forms of life occur every day. Back (2015) further noted that everyday life makes sociologists regard society not as a fixed set of 'structural arrangements' but rather, as a dynamic and moving entirety which has rhythm and temporality. He further noted that everyday life makes us take the mundane seriously.

If we wish to comprehend everyday life and its episodes, researchers need to turn to the methods of observations practiced by ethnographers and social anthropologists since the 20th century as everyday life is something visible to

everyone and thus observable (Sztompka 2008). Sztompka (2008: 24) recalls a conversation he had with a German sociologist who mentioned:

"If I want to really understand Italian society I do not send out questionnaires, but go to the café at the corner, if I want to understand German society I go to the Bierstube, and if I want to understand British society I go to the pub. And in all these places I just look around."

Sztompka (2008) made several crucial points regarding everyday life. First, everyday life is the observable manifestation of social existence, and thus always includes the relationships people have with others. Everyday life takes place within a social setting. Even when we are alone, others are constantly virtually present in our thoughts, memories, and dreams - the people we love, the ones we hate, our colleagues, friends, family, etc. Second, people are constantly engaged in what Archer (2000) called an 'internal conversation', which becomes an integral component of shaping our actions and motivations. Third, everyday life events are repetitions of events, sometimes occurring cyclically and become routine rather than unique and spontaneous events. These events occur day after day, or at certain and fixed occasions throughout the year. Examples include meeting up with friends everyday Tuesday for 2-for-1 cocktails, attending sporting events every weekend, beach trips in the summer, snow sports trips in the winter, attending church on Christmas eve with family, etc.

With this in mind, everyday life has an element of locality - things need to occur *somewhere*. Events in everyday life occur in - what Merton (1996) called - 'structurally expected durations'. The character of the event influences the expected length that people interact at them - an afternoon of going to the pub

with a few friends before and after a football game will have a different expected duration than meeting colleague for a beer after work. Lastly, everyday life flows in an un-reflexive manner, not following routines and habits that the actor is aware of (Sztompka 2008).

Historically, Rousseau (2007 [1762]) based his conceptualization of the 'social contract' and his perception/vision of the good society on a perception what the family, which is embedded in people's everyday life, was the natural form of social organization. Durkheim explained divisions of labor (1893), the forms of religious life (1912), and the effects of anomie (1897) in terms of everyday life, providing examples from relations in families and communities. Central to Marx's (1975 [1844]) concern with the evils of the capitalist social system was the view that due to the working conditions, there was a 'loss of self' which obliterated the ties between individuals' friends and families. People were left with the simple concerns of eating, drinking, procreating - aspects of everyday life which are not 'fully human' (Kalekin-Fishman 2013).

With the turn of the twentieth century, Simmel (1971) described the task of sociology as describing and finding the 'rules' for people's togetherness and act of being together. His was to compile a description of how, in an everyday setting, groups act as units, when individuals simultaneously try to establish their own sense of uniqueness. Benjamin (find reference) saw *Aktualität* [actuality] in everyday life as the basis for understanding historical events. In his view, the world of the everyday was not only an arena of and for human action, but also the core of human thoughts. According to Habermas (1987),

the *Lebenswelt*, or life-world, is the space within each individuals' reach which includes the performance of daily tasks and routines, as well as the social aspects of life such as family and reference groups, extending to communities, the country, and global society.

Elias (1991) was concerned with analyzing and explaining everyday life, and regarded everyday life as a civilizing process which took centuries to develop. Simultaneously, in the 20th century, the explicit theme of everyday life emerged through the work of Thompson (1964) who examined the life of workers and Williams (1958) who explored the importance of culture as human beings conduct their everyday life, are just two notable examples. The Centre for Contemporary Cultural studies at the University of Birmingham developed and theorized critiques and cultural practices which were prevalent win British everyday life (Kalekin-Fishman 2013).

In North America, and particularly in the United States, theoretical interest in the study of everyday life has tended to focus on details and scenarios regarding human relations as indicated in Mead's (1934) theorization of how the self is formed in and through family interaction and broadens to fit into the role-governed games which comprise social life. Here, details of performance are at the focus of theorizing the everyday (Blumer 1969) and a justification for the study of how people interpret situations and mutually signal intended meanings - the main focus of symbolic interactionism, as discussed in the previous section of this chapter.

2.7: Chapter Discussions

The aim of this chapter was to explore some of the past scholarly work conducted in the field of metal music studies - a main influence of this thesis and thus locating the research in the field of metal music studies - , explore the role of music listening in adolescence, and to conceptualize an understanding of identity, community, and the sociology of everyday life. These topics in particular are relevant and important as they will be explored in more depth and in the context of heavy metal music in the upcoming chapters, as they have become prominent themes of discussion and analysis for this thesis.

Social Identity Theory is a useful theoretical concept which can be applied in the everyday lives of heavy metal fans, as they are continually engaged in locating themselves in relation to others - mainly along the lines of metal fans and 'the mainstream' (Dunn et al. 2005). Symbolic interactionism is also a useful tool in order to examine and conceptualize an understanding of identity formation and expression through interactions based on mutual heavy metal music preference. Heavy metal is heavily symbolic, with meaning already attributed to the symbols which are prevalent within the music and culture. People act and interact with the symbols they encounter and such interactions imply that people do not interact with *only* the object, but rather, experience *through* the objects which are interacted with.

Cooley (1902) argued that our sense of self evolves from the social interactions we have, and how we believe other people perceive us. Whilst

this notion, along with the looking-glass self is relevant, one question does arise: how much do people *actually* think, or worry about, how others see and judge them? This links with an argument brought forward by Burkitt (2008), where he notes that identity relies on the interactions and engagements with other people. Lastly, Mead (1934) suggested that the 'social self' is constantly undergoing development, which is the result of the recurrent and ongoing interactions which people have with one another, and how they interpret such interactions. The personal and the social, the individual and the collective, thus harmonize as they repeatedly influence each other (Snell 2012).

This thesis is an endeavor to explore how heavy metal fans showcase their identities throughout their everyday life. Thus, it was important to cover some of the most important concepts before delving into the depths of fans' everyday life and heavy metal practices. It was important to cover topics such as identity, community, and everyday life for the context for this thesis - similar to covering what heavy metal music is in the introductory chapter, rather than *assuming* that everybody *knows* what heavy metal, identity, community, or everyday life are, respectively. It is also noteworthy, bearing in mind section 2.3 'Music Listening in Adolescence', that whilst this study does not focus on heavy metal music in adolescence, music can play an important role in people's lives and can be an important facet of people's adolescence - which will be further highlighted in the data chapters. The focus on music in adolescence was important as this was a time of participants' lives in which they were exposed to heavy metal, influencing their sense of self then, which influenced who they are today.

The next chapter will cover the methodology for this thesis, exploring the philosophical approaches of this research, participant recruitment, data collection and analysis, and ethical concerns throughout this project.

CHAPTER THREE - METHODS

3.1: Introduction

Interest in this subject matter has been informed through a long-term and personal involvement with heavy metal music and the heavy metal community. When thinking about how to accurately capture and represent fans' heavy

metal identities for this PhD project, it became apparent that an appropriate methodology would mirror and showcase the long-term impact of being a member of the heavy metal community.

Research is driven and influenced by a question, which is then served with an appropriate method (Zografou 2012: 84). Just as particular research methodologies are required for particular kinds of questions, particular questions require particular methodologies. For instance, for a research question centered around how many people listen to heavy metal music in the UK or Europe for instance, the most appropriate, time-saving, and cost-effective method would be a qualitative method - a method that would yield large numerical data. If, however, the research was more focused on how people feel when they listen to heavy metal music, then a qualitative method and approach would help reveal relevant answers.

The aim of this chapter is to explore the methods used in order to conduct this project. It will explore the research philosophy - ontology and epistemology -, the process of data collection and analysis, and provide a brief overview of the participants who took part in this study.

3.2: Research Philosophy

A research philosophy is what the researcher believes to be the truth, knowledge, and reality (Ryan 2018). A study's research philosophy outlines the beliefs and values which are a factor in the design of - and collection and

analysis - of data. These choices are informed, influenced, and complemented by the researcher's philosophical principles (Ryan 2018).

3.2.1: Ontology

Ontology makes reference to the study of being, concerned with the fundamental nature of the world and existence (Crotty 1999). Bryman (2016) argued that ontology of research within the social sciences is concerned with the nature of social entities, and in earlier works (Bryman 2008) noted that ontology relates to the values a researcher holds in regards to what can be known to be a reality and what is factual. Ontologically, reality can be perceived and understood in both an objective - free of the observer - and subjective manner - created from and through the perceptions and actions of people (Bryman 2012).

3.2.1.1: Interpretivism

Interpretivism argues that truth and knowledge are subjective, as well as historically situated and based on people's experiences and their understanding of specific events and experiences. Interpretivist studies aim to attempt to understand phenomena through the meanings ascribed to them through people. The central notion of interpretivism is the aim to *understand* rather than *predict*, thus, dependent and independent variables are not predefined and focus can be placed on the human complexity of sense and meaning-making as situations emerge through the course of ongoing interaction (Kaplan & Maxwell 1994).

The position of interpretivism in relation to ontology and epistemology is that interpretivists believe the reality is multiple and relative (Hudson & Ozanne 1988). Lincoln and Guba (1985) explained that these multiple realities also depend on other systems for meanings, which make it even more difficult to interpret in terms of fixed realities (Neuman 2000). The knowledge acquired is this socially constructed rather than objectively determined and perceived (Berger & Luckman 1967). Interpretivists avoid rigid structural frameworks such as in positivist research and adopt a more personal and flexible research approach and structure which are receptive to capturing meanings in human interaction and make sense of what is perceived as reality. Furthermore, the presumption exists that researchers and their informants/participants are interdependent and mutually interactive (Hudson & Ozanne 1988).

The goal of interpretivist research is to understand and interpret the meanings in human behavior rather than generalizing and predicting causes and effects. In other words, interpretivist research requires methods which accommodate for the distinctiveness of individuals, focusing on individual people and their actions rather than trying to find consistencies in the data and in order to deduce rules and laws (Bryman 2012). For an interpretivist researcher, it is important to understand motives, meanings, reasons, and other subjective experiences which are context-dependent (Hudson & Ozanne 1988).

In regards to the researcher, the role of the interpretivist researcher is important in terms of interpreting and understanding the meanings which people attribute to the occurring phenomena which is under investigation, including contextual dynamics (McNabb 2004). Consequently, adopting an

interpretivist approach in this research project allows for an opportunity to explore identity and community dynamics in heavy metal contexts in an in-depth manner whilst being able to provide a thick and rich description.

3.2.2: Epistemology

Epistemology is concerned with the nature of knowledge and the ways of knowing and learning about social reality.

3.2.2.1: Symbolic Interactionism

As discussed in Chapter Two, symbolic interactionism has three core principles (Blumer 1969):

- People's behavior is based on their own meanings

- Meanings are generated from social interactions

- People may adapt meanings based on their perceptions of their experiences of them

Symbolic interactionism is a social science perspective on the study of human group life and conduct (Blumer 1969). Mead is credited with developing symbolic interactionism, and the theory and conceptualization of symbolic interactionism developed between the late 19th and mid-20th centuries within the Chicago School (Musolf 2003; Chamberlain-Salaun et al. 2013). Blumer (1969: 2) noted that:

> "human beings act towards things on the basis of the *meanings* that
>
> the things have for them… The meaning of such things is derived

from, or arises out of, the social *interaction* that one has with one's fellows. (…) These meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretative process used by the *person* in dealing with the things he encounters."

Throughout the first half of the 20th century, realist philosophy and psychological ways of accounting for the origin of meaning were particularly dominant. A realist account of the origin of meaning would consider meaning as being intrinsic to all things. Therefore, a hoodie is a hoodie. A psychological view of the origin of meaning would contend that meaning is an expression of sensations, memories, feelings, ideas, attitudes, and motives which are brought into play in connection with a person's perception of things (Blumer 1969). Thus, a hoodie may be viewed as a fashion statement or clothing that keeps the wearer warm. From a symbolic interactionists perspective, objects such as hoodies do not possess an innate and permanent character, they cannot be isolated from what happens to them (Mead 1959). Meanings arise in and from the process of interactions occurring, meaning is not fixed and immutable - it is fluid, modifiable, and open to reappraisal (Mead 1934; Chamberlain-Salaun et al. 2013).

3.3: Data Collection Overview

The process of data collection commenced in March 2019, after obtaining ethical approval from reviewers of the Research Ethics Panel of the University of Bradford. The main aspect of data collection included conducting semi-structured interviews with my participants, which will be discussed in more

detail in the upcoming sections of this chapter. The majority of data was collected between April and November 2019, with a small number of spontaneous interviews taking place sporadically between January and March 2020 before being brought to a halt by the global Covid-19 pandemic.

In regards to ethical approval of data collection, ethical approval was obtained for conducting interviews, conducting observations, and for the use of screenshots from social media outlets such as *YouTube* and *Twitter*. Ethical approval for conducting interviews and observations was initially received in March 2019, and second 'set' of ethical approval was obtained in October 2019 for the use of screenshots from social media outlets/platforms throughout the thesis.[4]

3.3.1: Ethnography

Based on the premise that social life can divulge information and data, this study adopted an ethnographic approach towards data collection. This was carried out in order to understand how heavy metal identities are constructed and showcased in everyday life whilst simultaneously negotiating and fostering a sense of community based on social interactions. Ethnographic studies focus on the production and reproduction of everyday life of 'other' groups. Studying 'other' groups can reveal social structures, power relations,

---

[4] As agreed with the University of Bradford Research Ethics Panel, relevant screenshots from social media sites such as YouTube and Twitter will be cross-checked before submission of the thesis. Relevant changes to the thesis will be made if the original source of the screenshots is no longer available.

histories, meaning, and group identity - things which non-group members may previously not have been aware of (Lather 2001).

The choice of an ethnographic approach was informed by the idea that research, which places a focus on material objects, culture, and situations, is important for the individuals under investigation (Foster-Fishman et al. 2005; Griffin & Bengry-Howell 2008). One key assumption of ethnographic work is that through interactions which take place in close and prolonged proximity with the community that is being studied, ethnographers can gain a better understanding of the practices and beliefs which are customary to that particular community. This is particularly the case for the taken-for-granted aspects of everyday life (Hammersley 1992). Particularly in regards to everyday life, Back (2015) argues that it forces us to take the mundane seriously and to ask what is at stake when we are involved in interactions with other people around us.

Previously, ethnography was understood as a straightforward cultural description of a group of people which was based on an author's/researcher's first-hand experience of that group - in particular regarding groups and communities which were alien to both the author and subsequent readers of the work (van Maanen 1995: 1). More generally, ethnography refers to the study of culture which is shaped by people (van Maanen 1995: 4). At the same time however, ethnography is not only a method of study, but also a result of study. Simply put: when used to indicate a method, ethnography refers to fieldwork which is conducted by an ethnographer who lives with and like the

community under investigation. When used to indicate a result, ethnography refers to the written representations of culture (van Maanen 1995).

An ethnographic approach enables the observation and witnessing of heavy metal fans' fluid and uninhibited practices within the environment in which they commonly occur (Lawrence et al. 2004). Ethnography is based on an "ongoing attempt to place specific encounters, events, and understandings into a fuller, more meaningful context" (Tedlock 2000: 455). This kind of approach allows for an in-depth engagement with participants over a prolonged period of time, provides opportunities to witness and contextualize developments and changes that occur in participants' lives, and to construct research *with* them rather than *on* them (Hodgetts et al. 2010).

The rich descriptions of participants' everyday life in relation to heavy metal music can be used in order to understand the significance of such experience. An ethnographic approach allows the researcher to understand social realities through investigating the concepts and practices of the people which are involved, the interplay of pragmatic and cognitive relationships, and the structural and institutional contexts in which all this occurs (Olivier de Sardan 2005). Discussing experiences with participants who are perceived as different or 'other' allows for a broader understanding of the dimensions of human life (Scott 2008: 272).

Experiences are negotiated through memories and emotions. Treating experiences in this manner, draws upon Stanley's (1992) work on

autobiography, in which the ways through which we are able to make sense of ourselves and incidents which took place in our lives, putting things together and making use of fictive devices to construct a self:

> "Because memory inevitably has limits, the self we construct is necessarily partial; memory ties together events, persons and feelings actually linked only in such accounts and not in life as if it was lived; it equally necessarily relies upon fictive devices in producing any and every account of the self it is concerned with" (Stanley 1992: 62)

It is also important to note that when conversing with participants, not all interview data is constructed through memories *per se*. Some interviews with participants may feature hypothetical scenarios in relation to their heavy metal fandom. For example, participants may be asked about different experiences of a feeling of community at heavy metal concerts. While some instances, which will be noted as examples, are imagined accounts of what the experience may be like, fiction draws upon previously lived experiences and participants' knowledge of heavy metal music and culture. In other words, hypothetical scenarios are constructed based on participants' understanding of heavy metal music and their own personal experience from potentially similar situations which have occurred in the past.

3.3.1.1: Insider Ethnography

In research, the dichotomy and dilemmas of 'insider' and 'outsider' and that of objectivity and subjectivity in research is, according to Woodward (2008), too polarizing. Researchers are not entirely 'inside' or 'outside', but rather, involve

a negotiation and interrogation of 'situatedness' and how being 'inside' relates to lived bodies, their experiences, and practices (Woodward 2008).

Insider research, in this instance, insider ethnography, can be useful in terms of understanding the day-to-day lives of communities as it provides a variety of interpretations and experiences from both participants and researcher (Rappaport 1993; Ellis 2004). Giatzitzoglu and Payne (2018) note that insider ethnography - a common practice in the fields of anthropology and sociology - is also practiced in other academic disciplines such as nursing, education, and geography, and conceptualized a three-level model of 'insiderness' for researchers being active in insider ethnography.

Level One

In Level One, there is a presence of fundamental and objective markers of shared identity - such as gender, class, or ethnicity (Giatzitzoglu & Payne 2018). In this first, most basic level of insiderness, the ethnographer has a lived familiarity with the field, with the participants sharing the same age, gender, race, ethnicity, or social class as the researcher (Herbert 2000). According to Giatzitzoglu and Payne's (2018) model, in this level, there is an assertion that only certain researchers are able to understand certain participants - only black researchers are able to understand black participants' experiences, such as a number of feminist scholars assert that only women are truly able to access and qualitatively understand other women's experiences based on similar experiences which are created due to the shared gender (Cooper & Rogers 2015; Oakley 2016: Giatzitzoglu & Payne 2018).

Level Two

In Level Two, the researcher is able to gain access to the field, establish rapport with participants not only on the basis of the researcher and participant having a mutual understanding of the field, but through the means of a mutual cultural capital and an ability to reproduce and negotiate 'norms' and act out routine behavior. Giatzitzoglu and Payne (2018) argued that in this level of insiderness, the researcher's objective identity resembles that of the participant - varying in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, etc. - yet is similar to their participants in terms of how they showcase their identity. In the context for heavy metal music, the researcher readily identifies as a heavy metal fan, and is objectively similar to the participants, whilst going through the 'effort' of subjectively presenting themselves as heavy metal fans. In the second level, the researcher is able to make use of their background, allowing them to behave in an appropriate manner, as certain behavioral codes are learned over time and become part of the researchers' own routine (Giatzitzoglu & Payne 2018).

Level Three

In Level Three, the researcher possesses complete familiarity with the nuances of the culture and is a 'competent player' in terms of involvement and 'articulator' in analyzing and describing events and practices in the field as they occur (Giatzitzoglu & Payne 2018). A level three insider ethnographer is, according to Giatzitzoglu and Payne (2018), able to be an active participant in the culture. A level three insider level is not about establishing rapport with

members of the community under investigation based on 'talking the talk', but rather also about 'walking the walk' (Giatzitzoglu & Payne 2018: 1154). In level three, the researcher's academic status has relatively little relevance and impact on the fieldwork in terms of as far as the individual participants are concerned. One example of this is Monaghan's (2002) study on nightclub security personnel. Despite being informed of Monaghan's university affiliation, Monaghan was 'good enough' in terms of performing the duties of a bouncer, which resulted in him being treated as such by other security colleagues, rather than being seen as a researcher (Monaghan 2002).

In terms of my own insiderness and positionality, my membership within the heavy metal community means that my position is that of both a fan and as a researcher. This study resulted in conducting research on 'my own' community, and as a 'hybrid researcher' as Snell (2012) named it, I am both a community member who participates in shared heavy metal practices and an observer who documents and analyzes the community practices which occur. Given my own position in terms of the heavy metal community in relation to me and my research, I am, according to Giatzitzoglu and Payne's (2018) model, a level three insider ethnographer - there is a complete familiarity with the nuances of the field and culture which are being analyzed, and I am a 'competent player' and articulator of what occurs in the field (Giatzitzoglu & Payne 2018).

An appropriate level of insider knowledge can, however, aid participants in feeling comfortable to disclose information (Hodkinson 2002). Participants

who perceive the researcher to having a genuine interest in and appreciation for their community, provide richer detail in their responses which may not be facilitated through interactions with 'outsider' researchers (Crewe & Maruna 2006). In other words, my insider status aided in establishing potentially deeper research engagements with participants. My membership within the heavy metal community allows for familiarity with participants, while simultaneously having the potential to overlook processes and practices as I may be used to them and take them for granted. This is where my doctoral supervisors came into the picture. Both of my supervisors, who are outsiders to the heavy metal community are constantly able to identify things which I may have overlooked or are left unclear to an 'outsider' due to me 'being used' to processes and practices as they are deeply embedded in my own everyday life and identity as a heavy metal fan (Pike 1967; Snell 2012). In this way, both positions [insider and outsider] coalesce in the analysis of gathered empirical data.

Whilst this research project is informed through my personal community membership, it is not about me - it is about the participants and how they construct and present themselves as heavy metal fans and navigate through their everyday lives in relation to everyone else that includes their social world and realities [me included].

3.3.1.2: Insiderness and Reflexivity

Reflexivity is an important concept in ethnography, referring to a 'turning back on oneself, a process of self-reference' (Davies 2008: 4). Reflexivity focuses

on the effect of the researcher on their research conducted - the influence of the researcher's different identities such as gender or ethnicity, for instance, on the process of data collection and analysis (Gelir 2021). According to O'Reilly (2009), the researcher is part of the world which is under investigation, meaning that the relations the researcher has with participants are a factor in the process of collecting data and the subsequent observation of social interactions and processes - reflexivity this showcases the researchers' awareness of their influence on the research process (Davies 2008; Lichterman 2015; Gelir 2021).

Reflexivity allows the researcher to show the reader a sense of 'recognition' that the knowledge claims made in the research are partial and conditioned, and being reflexive allows for the exploration of the question of how researchers' individual social positions may affect research and knowledge claims (Lichterman 2015). My own membership of the heavy metal community and my preference for certain types of heavy metal music may have affected the kind of concerts I attended to recruit potential participants, the types of people I would encounter and subsequently interact with, and ultimately, how my own preferences may have shaped the interactions and outcome of the research.

3.3.2: Participant Recruitment

The selection criteria for participation was relatively straightforward - the main attribute or requirement was to have a preference for heavy metal music and to identify as a fan. Due to Bradford's close proximity with larger metropolitan

areas such as Leeds and Manchester, I was able to frequently travel to these cities in order to conduct interviews and undertake observations at heavy metal concerts.

3.3.2.1: Friendship as Method

When I initially began my PhD in February 2018, some friends expressed an interest in finding out more about my research, and mentioned that they would be interested in participating and share their experiences. One of my initial worries was linked with the tradition of researching 'other' groups and representing them through my research, which would require me, as a researcher, to step back and keep a distance in order to achieve and maintain an unbiased view (Yuan 2014).

Douglas and Carless (2012) highlight that the traditional positivist paradigm requires a separation between the researcher and research participants. This is based on the notion that any form of personal involvement would: a) bias the research, b) disturb the natural setting, and/or c) contaminate the results. However, in qualitative research, particularly in field work, the 'friendship as method' approach to recruitment has been utilized in an attempt to 'get to know' other people in a sustained and meaningful manner (Tillmann-Healey 2003). The friendship as method approach seeks to diminish the traditional separation between researcher and participant, and is oftentimes accompanied by efforts to establish and maintain relationships, and maintain an ethic of caring which invites expressiveness, emotion, and empathy

between the researcher and participant - all which may lead to richer data generation (Tillmann-Healy 2003).

While the friendship as method approach may seem like a suitable and straightforward endeavor, Howton and Allen-Collinson (2013) highlighted a number of potential problems regarding this type of method. There may be a number of interactional issues, which leave both the researcher and participant 'vulnerable' to each other - including the vulnerability in terms of rejection, particularly when more of 'self' is invested in a friendship is subsequently terminates. Thus, researchers conducting this kind of method need to carefully consider the ethics of care. This is not only in relation to participants, but also in relation to themselves (Howton & Allen-Collinson 2013).

Furthermore, as noted by Taylor (2011), researcher-friend friendships can sometimes become confusing and unstable due to a role-confusion, conflict, feelings of betrayal, and the inevitable withdrawal from the field. Regardless of these factors, due to a shared investment in culture, mutual identification, and a personal history which pre-dates the research engagement, the disparities between researcher and participant are lessened, although never absent (Taylor 2011: 7). Coupled with an existing insider status, in my case being a heavy metal fan, it is likely that researcher and participant have some form of a pre-established relationship or are able to establish a friendship based on mutual interests in a quick fashion. As noted by Tillmann-Healy (2003) and Hodgetts et al. (2010a) however, ethnographic research is

conducted *with* participants rather than *on* them. If friendship as method is utilized in an attempt to 'get to know' others in a sustained and meaningful manner, it is implied that both researcher and participant develop a degree of friendship, regardless.

In regards to already existing friendships between myself, as the researcher, and potential participants, I abided by the principle of voluntary participation. At this point, it is worthy to note that I reached out to a number of people who expressed an interest in participating in my study before I formally commenced my data collection, rather than 'pounce' on friends who I was certain would share their stories. Furthermore, Yuan (2014) suggested that the intention of friends participating in researchers' studies are likely to be different to those intentions of 'strangers'. The primary intention for participants who are friends is likely that of showing support and having an interest in the subject matter, rather than an extrinsic desire to share their stories and experiences for gain (Yuan 2014). With my participants, however, there was no sign of any other desire than a willingness to participate and share their stories.

3.3.2.2: Recruitment at Heavy Metal Concerts

Brown and Knox (2016) note that the popularity of watching live music has gained an increase in attention of an unprecedented scale, which meant that heavy metal concerts were an ideal way of identifying and recruiting potential participants through a random sampling mode. Black et al. (2007: 155) suggest that experiencing a live performance gives fans a different type of

satisfaction than simply listening to a recording of the same artists, as well as forming a unique bond between fans and artist.

At concerts, sampling was carried out by striking up a conversation with people in the queue outside the venue or in-between bands performing. After some informal conversation, I informed them about my research. The majority of the time, the outcome was positive and along the lines of "that sounds really cool, I'd very much like to talk about heavy metal and my experiences with you". Following this, I exchanged details and kept in touch. In some cases however, contact was lost with a few people before being able to meet up and interview them, and any attempts to re-establish contact failed to revive any interactions.

3.3.2.3: Recruitment via Social Media

Social media can be described as the use of web-based conversational media and applications which aid and allow for the creation of contend in different formats such as audio, visual, word, and picture - all amongst communities who meet and interact with one another to share and spread information, knowledge, and opinion (Safko & Brake 2009; Koch et al. 2018). Hoffman and Fodor (2010) conceptualized four key motivations which drive people make use of social media: a) connecting with others, b) creating content, c) consuming content, d) control. As a social media channel, *Facebook* can be classified as a social networking tool which allows its users to share information about themselves through an online profile that they created themselves (Safko & Brake 2009). *Twitter* falls under the category of

'microblogging' and allows users to communicate a message in 280 characters or less (Koch et al. 2018).

In recent times, social media has become increasingly important and widespread in regards to recruiting participants for research projects (O'Connor et al. 2014). As people are accessing community information and news in a digital format, the consumption of traditional media channels is changing at a rapid pace (Wilson & Usher 2017: 37). One of the main advantages of social media is that it is cost-effective, with the majority of social networking sites such as *Facebook*, *Twitter*, and *Reddit* being free of charge. In regards to participants' experiences, they have the ability to get in touch with the researcher, can take their time to consider participating, without having to feel under pressure to participate when coming across calls for research participants - it is entirely up to potential participants whether they choose to participate or not.

In order to recruit participants for my project via social media, I posted in groups on *Facebook* and *Reddit*. Posting in several groups/discussion threads on *Reddit* did not result in any recruitment, unfortunately - even though my posts were 'upvoted' by some users, engagement with my posts remained largely nonexistent. *Facebook* on the other hand, was a lot more successful. I joined a number of metal-related groups, posted in them and explained what I was trying to achieve. My posts attracted a fair bit of attention and several of my participants were successfully recruited through posting in different *Facebook* groups - in both English and German-speaking heavy metal groups.

3.3.3: Semi-Structured Interviews

The interviews conducted focused around participants' experiences of heavy metal music and aspects of their identity in relation to heavy metal. Discussions focused on topics such as becoming a heavy metal fan, people's reactions regarding their heavy metal identities, the role that music plays in their everyday life, and how their affiliation with heavy metal music helps them experience a sense of community and belonging as a basis of ongoing social interactions with other people. While general interview themes were used, the interviews remained largely unstructured and open-ended. This style of interview, semi-structured interviews, attempts to understand the complex practices and values of participants without limiting their responses or imposing any forms of restrictions to their responses (Fontana & Frey 2000).

Participants had the opportunity to use and provide photographs as part of the interview which they felt were symbolic and meaningful to their heavy metal identity. Some participants who talked about their tattoos and certain material objects sent me photos of the discussed artefacts after the interview. Due to the taken-for-granted nature of practices (Snell 2012), there was a potential for participants having difficulty expressing and articulating their everyday experiences. Photographs can provide insight into the day-to-day routines, practices, and processes through which heavy metal fans construct themselves as social beings. Images and related discussions regarding the images can help link the individual's personal life into a wider societal context about the social identity of heavy metal fans (Snell 2012). Incorporating

photographs in the study, encouraged participants to consider their own identity and gave them an opportunity to express themselves and their symbolic world (Denzin 1989). Photographs can also act as a "means by which people in everyday life can narrate experience, and in this way we can come to some understanding what those experiences mean" (Harrison 2002: 109)

When discussing photographs, context plays an important role as photographs on their own are largely meaningless. Providing a context for the photographs allows participants to explain what they are trying to show (Kracauer 1993). In this way, photographs and the things which can be seen in them can stand for wider social processes and affiliations (Selden & Widdowson 1993). Through this, events, relationships, and practices can also be traced and represented physically. These context are also co-constructed by both the participant and researcher. The participant chooses what is to be presented and how they describe its presentations. The researcher then chooses how the discussed photographs and interview data are presented and discussed in the research results (Reavey & Johnson 2008). Photographs are treated as 'versions of reality', co-constructed between the researcher and the participant (Pink 2005). This type of discussion and use of artefacts such as photographs provided participants with an opportunity to explain their lives and why they had chosen to portray themselves in that way for this project.

3.3.4: Observation at Concerts

Much like in-depth interviewing builds on ordinary conversations, participant observation evolved as a more formal version of the everyday activity of

watching what other people do and sometimes joining in (Rubin & Rubin 2012). There are many instances in which observation is the most appropriate method of data collection. For example when we want to learn about interactions taking place in a group setting, study dietary patterns of a population, monitor the processes of factory workers, or study the behavior of an individual, observation is a useful tool to help carry out the necessary data collection (Kumar 2014).

Kumar (2014) describes participant observation as when a researcher participates in the activities of the group that is being observed. This occurs in the same manner as its members, with or without their knowing, are being observed. There have been a handful of anthropological studies which have been conducted and completed using this approach (Kumar 2014: 174). In research which utilizes participant observation, it is the researcher who is the main 'instrument of social investigation' (Burgess 1984: 79). On this basis, participant observation facilitates the collection of data on social interaction, on situations as they occur. The value of being a participant observer lies, according to Burgess (1984), in the opportunity which is available to collect rich and detailed data which is based on observations based on social interactions within natural settings.

Furthermore, the researcher has the opportunity to obtain accounts of situations and interactions in the participant's own language which gives access to concepts and ideas which are used within the participant's everyday life. The researcher can, consequently, construct an account of a social situation on the basis of the various accounts which are obtained from

participants/informants (Burgess 1984: 79). With this in mind, there is an opportunity to collect varying and differing versions of events. Then, it is the researcher's aim to compare the accounts given with one another, and with other observations that have been conducted during the course of the study. The result is that researchers can utilize their observations together with their theoretical insights in order to make seemingly irrational or paradoxical behavior comprehensible to those within and beyond the situation which is being studied (Burgess 1984: 79). For example, in this research project, I may observe people's behavior at a heavy metal concert, and write about it in a manner which allows for non-heavy metal fans to understand the activities which occur within them.

Observations can also be used to support or refute notions about human behavior and can help generate questions which may be used for future research (Emmett & Morgan 1982; Anderson & Lee 1982). Schwartz & Schwartz (1955) recognized that participant observers are involved in face-to-face relationships with their participants, and that the observers, the researchers, are themselves, part of the context that they are observing. This is important to note, particularly in the context of heavy metal concerts - I will be there observing the environment, but will also be a part of the environment that is under observation.

3.4: Data Analysis

The engagements with participants left me with a vast collection of empirical material and resources which included 31 interview transcripts [one transcript per participant interview], a total of 113 photographs, and extensive field and

interview notes, covering specific events and points made in the interviews. The next two sections will explore the method of analysis, thematic analysis for interviews, and other modes of analysis in relation to fieldnotes and photographs.

3.4.1: Thematic Analysis

As described by Braun and Clarke (2012), thematic analysis is a method for systematically identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns of meanings - also known as themes - across a data set that is under investigation. A theme, according to Sandelowski and Leeman (2012) as a coherent integration of disparate pieces of data which make up the findings. This means that themes are significant statements which occur in interviews. Some scholars such as Braun and Clarke (2006; 2012; 2017) and Creswel (2013) note that thematic analysis is a commonly used method in qualitative research. Thematic analysis is flexible, not difficult to master, produces rich descriptions of experiences within data analysis, and provides basic skills which are necessary in order to engage with other approaches in qualitative data analysis.

3.4.1.1: Thematic Analysis Procedure

In this section, I will briefly discuss the process of data analysis and the four main steps I went through with every individual interview. These four steps included transcription of interview, becoming familiar with the data, coding of data, and conceptualizing themes.

Step 1: Transcription of Interview

Following each interview, I transcribed the interview of the audio recordings. I transcribed the interviews personally for a number of reasons: financial, contextual, linguistic, and data familiarity. Firstly, financial, whilst some postgraduate research students within my faculty occasionally pay undergraduate and masters students to help transcribe their interviews, I did not have the funds to afford such undertakings. Secondly, contextual aspects of the interview - in particular with specific heavy metal terminology. Some topics and themes discussed with my participants were relatively niche, such as heavy metal band names, which would have been potentially difficult for an outsider to understand or transcribe - in particular bands which names spelled differently to how a word is pronounced[5]. Thirdly, linguistic reasons as some of the interviews were conducted in German with German-speaking participants. Lastly, data familiarity, through conducting the interviews, taking notes throughout them, and transcribing them, I became more familiarized with my data - being able to jot down ideas of which data or participant accounts to use in which part of the thesis.

Step 2: Becoming Familiar with the Data

After the transcription process, I read through the interview transcripts several times to get a feel for what data stood out the most and seemed to have some initial early importance, and added footnotes to the transcribed document related to observational points and thoughts I made during the interview. Since I conducted the interviews and transcribed them myself, immersion was a

---

[5] E.g. the band *Suffokate* as opposed to the verb 'suffocate'.

straightforward process, rapidly becoming increasingly familiar with my participants' accounts.

Step 3: Coding of Data

Codes from the data emerged through continuous re-reading of the interview transcripts. Creswell (2013) noted that not all information within the transcripts is used, as some of the data may be redundant. The coding was thus only used for information which was relevant in the scope of the research objectives. In regards to software, I initially made use of NVivo and its abundant tools helpful for qualitative analysis. There were however, some issues regarding the use of NVivo. Whilst the University of Bradford provides licenses for students, there was no compatibility between opening and editing files on different computers, further exacerbated through the use of different operating systems in my own routine - Windows 7 on the university PCs and Mac OSX on my personal laptop. Furthermore, the use of NVivo was made unnecessarily complicated by my license expiring and the new license not allowing me to import and open old files. This was negated through the use of traditional color-coding of data on Microsoft Word. The manual process of coding data was helpful in being even more immersed in my participants' data.

Step 4: Conceptualizing and Structuring Themes

Prior to conducting interviews, interview questions were grouped into broader themes - such as identity, community, gender, heavy metal music influence, etc - which made coding and collating of themes more straightforward, since I already 'knew what I was looking for'. Some themes emerged out of the

overarching themes which were pre-established - for example the theme of social identity in early music preference settings in Chapter Four, for instance, arose out of interview data regarding reactions to heavy metal identities.

3.4.2: Other Methods of Analysis

Photographs:

Some participants provided photographs which we discussed during the interview, whilst some provided photographs after the interview - particularly photographs of things which were deemed important at the time. The use of photographs added to the depth of information about every participant and was a useful method in defamiliarizing participants' everyday experiences. Discussing photographs of material objects was useful in turning something familiar and everyday-usage-object into something unfamiliar as participants were 'forced' to consider their taken-for-granted activities and routines which were integral to their everyday life (Chaney 2002).

Photographs were evaluated based on their relationship to the interview transcript. The main concern with photographs was how communal and everyday life was represented in each individual photographs. In this process, analysis shifted between the image and texts for each individual participant, in a case-by-case basis, and then between participants who made similar points and what they made references to in relation to being heavy metal fans. This process had two main aims: firstly, determining links between specific sections of the interview transcript and particular images/photographs, in order that pictures and things depicted in them may be seen as exemplifying an aspect

of the participants' heavy metal fan experience. Secondly, to uncover in their accounts the ways in which being a metal fan can be represented symbolically, spatially, and visually.

Field Notes:

During the course of data collection, I attended a number of heavy metal concerts where I not only recruited participants for this study, but also carried out observations of events occurring organically at heavy metal concerts - such as communal activities such as moshing or band-crowd interactions. The field notes also provided some 'back up' for some theoretical explanations, in particular in Chapter Six, where I make reference to the mosh pit. Whilst participants and I discussed heavy metal concerts and the feeling of community at concerts, for example, observations proved helpful in being able to uncover some of the points that participants made.

3.4.3: Presentation of Themes and Data in the Thesis

Prior to conducting interviews, analyzing interviews, and writing up of the thesis, I came up with different interview themes which were covered in every single interview - see *Appendix 2: Interview Themes* for more information - which provided a 'skeleton plan' of the overall thesis. Prior to writing up of the thesis, whilst analyzing data, some themes became increasingly apparent, which aided in the structuring of the overall thesis.

I intended to cover themes in a logical and coherent manner - starting with how participants initially became involved in heavy metal in Chapter Four,

which lead into the expression of heavy metal identities in Chapter Five, before weaving into the experience of feeling belonging and a sense of community in Chapter Six, and gender in Chapter Seven. In Chapter Five for instance, there are a number of accounts of participants making reference to being engaged in social interactions with other metal fans, which logically sets up the step for diving into Chapter Six.

3.5: Ethical Considerations

Due to the nature of this study, there existed several ethical concerns which were flagged up by the Research Ethics Panel of the University of Bradford, which were all followed up and clarified through the byzantine and Sisyphean task of ethics checklists and reviews. These ethical issues, and how they were appropriately circumnavigated, negotiated, and resolved, are outlined in the following sections below.

3.5.1: Consent and Anonymity

Consent was sought and obtained from every single participant. Every participant received an information sheet [see Appendix 1], a consent form [see Appendix 2], and the interview themes [see Appendix 3] which allowed them to read through it and be prepared for some of the questions and themes that would be discussed during the interview. Furthermore, consent was sought and obtained before the interview formally began.

This was however, not the case for non-participants who happened to be in the same social setting as myself and my participants. Whilst attending

concerts and taking observational notes, informed consent was not obtained as it was not feasible (Lee 2000). As a result of being in a public space and participating in the events unfolding, those who are actively engaged in the activities which take place are not able to refuse their involvement - at least without affecting their participation and thus their experience of the event. When in a public setting, people may not expect social sciences researcher to be present, they should however, expect that their behavior is observable and may be subject to scrutiny by others (Capron 1982; Lee 2000).

Participants had an opportunity to share photographs with me, which were either discussed during the interview, or to be used to complement and support some of the topics covered. In regards to protecting my participants' anonymity, I ensured that their privacy is protected by blurring/blacking out their faces/eyes, and the faces of their peers. According to Lee (2000), it is integral that participants' privacy is protected, and researchers are required to act vigilantly and diligently when dealing with subjects who may be identified in some way. With some faces however, such as bystanders at concerts, blurring/blacking out every face is impossible as it renders such photographs unusable. In this instance, participants' and their friends' faces would be blurred/blacked out, but bystanders would 'enjoy' the anonymity of the crowd.

In regards to naming participants, each participant had an opportunity to pick a suitable nickname/alias. Some of my participants could not think of a nickname, and allowed me to choose one for them. Subsequently, I chose

nicknames based on band and music preferences [e.g. Thrash-Fan; *Metallica-Fan*], or the participants' occupation or hobby [e.g Chemist; Bassist].

3.5.2: Researcher Safety

As highlighted in Section 3.3.4, 'Observation at Concerts', some observations took place at heavy metal concerts. In the first stages of obtaining ethical approval from the University of Bradford Research Ethics Panel, one of the primary concerns was researcher safety.

Due to the nature of concerts, there exists a persistent, yet remote, likelihood of accidental harm to individuals. This risk is however, minimal and a usual feature of concerts. Moshing in particular, a commonly witnessed activity at heavy metal concerts and can be described as a furious form of dance (Riches 2011), seemed an obvious threat to researcher safety. This risk was however, overcome through insider knowledge and situational awareness.

Understanding situational 'threats' such as a mosh pit may lead to a broader appreciation of participants' and fans' experiences, thus enhancing the validity of generated data. Despite this, and with this in mind, the safety of researcher and participant remains of paramount importance and remains a central theme throughout the planning and execution of research (Lee-Treweek & Linkogle 2000). In the instance that dangers at heavy metal concerts become too great, I removed myself from the situation - as suggested by Jipson and Litton (2000: 164). Throughout the process of observation, only one mosh pit became too big - to the point where I actively began to navigate to the side of the venue as

too many people became involved in the mosh pit and it seemed to become too 'out of control'.

In regards to observing mosh pits, it is also important to note that I made clear-cut distinctions in terms of my presence at concerts as a fan and researcher. Whilst I attended a number of concerts as a researcher, where I took observational notes, I did not participate in any way - as opposed to attending a concert as a fan in which I would actively participate in moshing. It was important for me to maintain this fan-researcher dichotomy in the case of any injuries and ethical implications. Whilst I did not participate in moshing or any concert-related activities with the exception of observing as a researcher, I did not conduct any observations or gathered any data whilst attending concerts as a fan.

Being an active observer and participant within hazardous environments is not a new occurrence within the academic arena. Additionally, there is a growing list of precedents in which the risk to the researcher is present but accounted for. This can be done through exit strategies or through weighing up the risks. The production of valid and insightful data may not be guaranteed if there is a lack of interactions in situations in which there is a risk potential. Some notable examples of researchers being immersed in environments where emotional and physical discomfort and threat is imminent are Linkogle's (2000) account of the Santo Domingo festival in Nicaragua; Monaghan's (2003) study on security personnel in pubs in the UK; and Holme's (2013) ethnography on border crossing from Mexico into the United States.

3.5.3: Data Storage

One particularly crucial aspect of my data was its storage, especially the forms, transcripts, audio files, and photographs provided by my participants. Throughout the entire process, all the files were accessible to only me and stored securely on my personal online drives, as agreed with and approved by the University of Bradford Research Ethics Panel.

3.5.4: Screenshots from Social Media

As part of the research, highlighting certain points in upcoming chapters - Chapter Four and Chapter Seven -, I made use of screenshots taken from the social media site *Twitter* and the online video sharing platform *YouTube*. The University of Bradford Research Ethics Panel granted permission to make use of screenshots, based on the condition that the original source/comment screenshotted is still available near the point of submission of thesis[6].

3.6: Participant Profiles

31 participants took part in this study, with an age range between 18 and 47 at the time of our interview. The average age of participants of this study was 27.6 years, the majority of participants lived in the United Kingdom, the second most common country participants originated from/lived in was Germany, followed by one participant from Finland and the United States, respectively. In terms of the gender-spilt, 19 participants identified as male and 12 identified

---

[6] All screenshots used in the thesis were still available at the original source as of 20/12/2021.

as female. The table below summarizes the participant profiles, followed by a brief description of their involvement with heavy metal music. Participants were free to choose their own alias, and their gender, and location were self-defined and self-selected, respectively.

Alias	Age	Gender	Location
Archaeologist	28	Female	York
Archer	38	Female	Bradford
ATB-Fan	25	Male	North Yorkshire
Bassist	36	Male	Berlin (GER)
BMTH-Fan	24	Female	Castleford
Bones	25	Female	Huddersfield
Charlie Sharpe	33	Male	Leeds
Chemist	24	Male	Bradford
Crash	32	Male	Pudsey
Doc Martens Girl	28	Female	Bradford
Drummer	22	Male	Bradford

Forensics Student	22	Female	Nottingham
I Prevail-Fan	28	Male	Leeds
Julie	19	Female	Kansas City (US)
KL-Fan	23	Female	Berlin (GER)
KoRn-Fan	23	Female	Cardiff
Megadeth-Fan	23	Male	Banbury
Metallica-Fan	18	Female	Cologne (GER)
Moose	47	Male	Shipley
Mr. V	33	Male	Manchester
Mr. X	25	Male	Wakefield
Navigator	41	Male	Bradford
NIN-Fan	34	Female	Shipley
Scotty	26	Male	Corby
Slam Drummer	26	Male	Weinheim (GER)
Suffocation-Fan	25	Male	Shipley
Swift	19	Male	Halifax
Thrash Fan	25	Male	Turku (FIN)
Tine	24	Female	Coventry
Trig	31	Male	Bradford
Watain-Fan	30	Male	Berlin (GER)

Table 2: Participant Profiles

Archaeologist is a 28-year old student from York. She was introduced to heavy metal music through her father listening to rock music when she was younger. She noted that there have been several instances in which other heavy metal fans did not believe her fandom and authenticity, and she had to 'prove' to be an *authentic* heavy metal fan. Archaeologist also made reference to the difference in the local heavy metal scene in her hometown of York and Sheffield, where she studied as an undergraduate.

Archer is a 38-year old international marketing officer living in Bradford. She was exposed to heavy metal music at a young age through her half-siblings, who were into the music and biker culture. She was one of the few metal fans

in her school and felt more accepted by the heavy metal community in her hometown. She also notes that due to the nature of her work, she has to de-emphasize her heavy metal identity, particularly her facial piercings when working with an international clientele.

ATB-Fan is a 25-year old metal fan from North Yorkshire. *ATB*-Fan used to discriminate against the metal community, but listened to the music in secret. He notes that the heavy metal community is much like a second family. Much like Archer, he oftentimes feels that his heavy metal identity has to be de-emphasized due to the nature of his work as a naval officer. His nickname derives from the band *After The Burial*, whose concert we both attended when we first met in August 2019.

Bassist is a 36-year old customer service specialist living in Berlin, Germany, but originally from Switzerland. He began listening to heavy metal music in his late-teens and became involved through some friends playing in a metal band. He frequently attends open mic nights in in Berlin where people get together and jam heavy metal songs.

BMTH-Fan is a 24-year metal fan old from Castleford. She began listening to heavy metal music as a way to 'rebel' whilst growing up in a strict religious household. *BMTH*-Fan notes that there have been many instances where people, in particular her family members, comment on her appearance, dressing differently to 'normal girls'. Her nickname derives from her favorite band, *Bring Me The Horizon*, of which she has two tattoos of.

Bones is a 25-year old research student from the Isle of Man, currently based in Huddersfield. Noticing the class-divide on the Isle of Man and through her father's influence on her metal music taste, she felt that she did not want to fit in with the 'rich group' and notes that the more she got into heavy metal, the more friends she made through it. Bones also has a number of material objects scattered around the house which express her metal identity.

Charlie Sharpe is a 33-year old video producer from Leeds. He notes that his heavy metal music fandom goes hand in hand with wrestling - where metal music is frequently played. Charlie Sharpe argued that while he listens to heavy metal music on a regular basis, he turns it down when his partner and three-year old son are in the room. His music taste is different to what his partner listens to, and there is a lot of negotiating in terms of music in the household.

Chemist is a 24-year old metal fan who lives in Bradford. While he listens to death metal and other varieties of metal music, he does not associate the visual aspect of heavy metal music with his music habit - he does not consider himself as someone who actively expresses himself as a metal fan in day-to-day life.

Crash is a 31-year old lecturer from Pudsey, West Yorkshire. He has listened to heavy metal ever since he was a teenager and notes that he spent countless

nights in the various metal clubs of Leeds. Some of his all-time favorite bands are *Rammstein*, *Slipknot*, and *KoRn*.

Doc Martens Girl is a 28-year old administrator working in higher education, based in Bradford but originally from Suffolk. While she considers herself a metal fan, she prefers to listen to singles rather than entire albums. Doc Martens Girl and her friends would spend time at the same park as other youth groups in her hometown, and the park became a negotiated space where different youth groups had their own 'designated' areas. Her nickname stems from her wearing Doc Martens boots on a regular basis and because she did not have a favorite band to be named '-Fan' like other participants for this study.

Drummer is a 22-year old student from Bradford. He used to play in a metal band with whom he toured around the UK. Drummer is into a variety of subgenres and has many band-related tattoos, including the logos of *Lamb of God* and *Slipknot* on his legs.

Forensics Student is a 21-year old student from Nottingham. She notes that she is more into the metalcore music. Forensics Student also claims that people tend to be shocked when they find out she is a heavy metal fan. Like other female fans in this study, she notes that women sometimes have it hard being a heavy metal fan.

I Prevail-Fan is a 28-year old student from Leeds. His favorite bands include *I Prevail* and *Halestorm* and he is a regular concert-goer - in particular the

Manchester Arena. He notes that while he would like to attend concerts more frequently, money is sometimes a problem as attending concerts also means buying merch - which can be quite expensive at times, particularly buying band merch at every concert.

Julie is a 19-year old student from Kansas City, Missouri, USA. She notes that her father was a big influence in her heavy metal music preference, but also admits that she does not *look* like an everyday metal fan. While Julie admits that her father encouraged her metal music taste, her mother was never entirely in favor of it. While being in university in the US, she commented about experiences with people who were against heavy metal music. Julie is a vehement supporter of the idea of 'live and let live' when it comes to music preference.

KL-Fan is a 23-year old student living in Berlin. She was introduced to grunge at an early age which led her to listen to heavy metal music. She plays bass and frequently attends heavy metal concerts, participates in body modification practices such as tattooing, stretching the ear lobes, and has dreadlocks. She also notes that sometimes, women have it a bit difficult to 'prove' that they are heavy metal fans. KL-Fan's nickname stems from one of her favorite bands, *Knocked Loose*.

KoRn-Fan is a 23-year old student from Cardiff. She notes that she listened to heavy metal a lot more as a teenager than nowadays. *KoRn*-Fan's heavy metal influence stems from her parents being fans of the music, too. Like other

female participants for this study, she also notices that female heavy metal fans are 'looked down' on. She notes that female heavy metal fans come together when they interact - and that it would be great if there were more women involved in heavy metal.

Megadeth-Fan is a 23-year old designer from Banbury, Oxfordshire. He is more a listener of heavy metal music than an active participant. He enjoys playing thrash on his guitar and frequently listens to *Megadeth*. He also argues that there is nothing [visually] 'heavy metal' about him and some people are at times surprised to find out that he is a metal fan.

Metallica-Fan is an 18-year old student from Cologne, Germany. Her metal music preference stems from her father listening to the music and she notes that she grew up with the music. *Metallica*-Fan is into the old-school metal bands from the 80's, and considers herself one of the few people who find *Iron Maiden* overrated. While she would like to express herself in a more metal way, she shows an awareness that she will have to de-emphasize her metal identity once she finishes her degree and works full-time in her industry - particularly in terms of facial piercings and having dyed hair.

Moose is a 47-year old student living in Shipley, West Yorkshire. Moose was very vocal about the heavy metal community and the feeling of belonging - especially in terms of how inclusive he finds the metal community. He notes that heavy metal music and the community is something that is larger than oneself. He is open to body modification practices, rocking a 10mm nose-ring.

Mr. V is a 33-year old student from Manchester. His father, a jazz teacher, encouraged music listening at a young age. At age 16, Mr. V and his friend snuck out of their house and went to a metal festival in Milton Keynes - without their parents knowing until the morning. He plays guitar and sings, having played in several bands in the UK, Thailand, and Australia. While he is at university now, he still makes music in his spare time and noted that heavy metal still heavily influences his song writing.

Mr. X is a 25-year old student from Wakefield, West Yorkshire. His first contact with heavy metal music was through a video game and hearing stories of a deceased relative who had a passion for heavy metal music. Throughout his teenage life experienced ostracizing for being a 'nerd' and for being into heavy metal. Mr. X was one of the participants that I have maintained regular contact with, even towards the end of my data collection phase, and our friendship continues to foster.

Navigator is a 41-year old engineer from born and bred in Bradford. His earliest interactions with heavy metal music stem from when he was secretly listening to 'Appetite For Destruction' by *Guns n Roses* at age 12. Growing up in Bradford, he witnessed the decline of the local metal scene. Having a family, he now 'shocks' his daughters when they discover bands that he listened to when he was their age, making him the 'cool dad'.

NIN-Fan is a 33-year old research administrator at a university in Yorkshire, living in Shipley, West Yorkshire, and originally from Nottingham. Her heavy metal influence stems from her father, and heavy metal music has been a constant in her life ever since. Being an avid concert-goer, *NIN*-Fan notes that heavy metal has been a refuge for her and has kept her going all these years. Her nickname is an abbreviation of one of her favorite bands, *Nine Inch Nails*.

Scotty is a 26-year old warehouse operative from Corby, Northamptonshire. He cites his father listening to heavy metal music as an influence. He attends a couple of concerts a year, and modifies his body with tattoos and piercings - which he gets a lot of attention for.

Slam Drummer is a 26-year old IT-support worker from Weinheim, Germany. He is an active member of the metal scene in Germany and played drums in a band, with whom he has performed in Germany, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. Spending his teenage years, and his first years of being a metal fan in Shanghai, China, he noticed being different from the 'normal kids' at school.

Suffocation-Fan is a 25-year old cinema employee from Shipley, West Yorkshire. His favorite band is the death metal band *Suffocation*, whose logo he has tattooed on his forearm. His favorite style of music is death metal, and he briefly sang in a local grindcore band. *Suffocation*-Fan notes that he used to be an elitist heavy metal fan but then 'grew up' and became more open minded to people listening to different styles of metal and music.

Swift is a 19-year old student from Halifax, West Yorkshire. He discovered heavy metal music through a friend listening to it on an MP3 player and has been a fan ever since. Swift notes that his parents never encouraged him to listen to the music, and he considers himself as an inconspicuous metal fan.

Thrash Fan is a 25-year old student from Turku, Finland. His earliest experience of heavy metal [as told by his parents] was listening to 'Paranoid' by *Black Sabbath* on the radio and headbanging at six months old. While he doesn't consider being a metalhead as the most defining part of his character, it is something that is an apparent feature in his everyday life.

Tine is a 24-year old finance worker and part-time student from Coventry. Her first introduction to heavy metal music stems from her father listening to old rock records. Growing up, her parents did not allow her to have piercings or to dye her hair. She now has multiple piercings and colorful hair to express herself. She feels that the metal community is approachable and welcoming. While she enjoys the music, she does not attend concerts.

Trig is a 31-year old student from Bradford. He is an active member in biker and heavy metal groups. Growing up in Bradford, he has witnessed the decline of the heavy metal scene in the city. He notes that back in the day, everyone was grouped together, but nowadays there is a massive divide in taste and attitudes throughout the city.

Watain-Fan is a 30-year old marketing manager from Berlin. He notes he has listened to heavy metal approximately half his and discovered the music

through *Linkin Park* while he was looking for his 'own' music to listen to. He is a regular concert-goer and has attended countless festivals both in Germany and abroad. Having been in a choir as a child, he never stopped being a performer - he currently plays in local heavy metal bands in Berlin.

3.7: Chapter Discussions

The aim of this chapter was to explore this projects' philosophical outline and influence. Ontology and epistemology are influenced by the researcher's background and worldview, therefore, it was important to highlight the influences and directions of this research project. This chapter also highlighted the process of data collection [and different methods/routes of doing so] and analysis. Furthermore, the last section of the chapter *introduced* the 31 participants who took part of this study. The upcoming chapters are data chapters, and without context - or at least having some insight into who the participants are - participants would have become perhaps de-personalized. It is important to remember however, every participant had their own story to tell and differing levels of involvement with heavy metal music, which is worthy of highlighting.

CHAPTER FOUR - BECOMING METAL: PATHWAYS INTO HEAVY METAL MUSIC AND EARLY INTERACTIONS

4.1: Introduction

Heavy metal has been the focus of research as being a risk factor in youth and adolescent development. Over the past years however, there has been a significant shift in the study of heavy metal music and its culture. This shift occurred simultaneous to research becoming gradually sympathetic towards heavy metal fans, yet little research has been conducted on young people's pathways into forming heavy metal identities (Varas-Díaz et al. 2015: 90).

A large amount of literature concerned with heavy metal identities focuses on already established heavy metal identities, rather than early formation and 'recruitment' into the subculture (Rowe 2017). One exception of this is

Larsson's (2013) study on heavy metal authenticity which reported that participants' biographies were underscored by a continual and long-term engagement with heavy metal music preference dating back to childhood and teenage years. It is therefore, important to consider some of the participants' 'pathways' into heavy metal and associated experiences before delving deeper into their identity expression in everyday life and sense of belonging in community in the next chapters

The aim of this chapter is to explore some of the ways that this study's participants first became involved with heavy metal music and actively started being heavy metal fans. This chapter is split into five main parts. The first part, the continuation of the introduction, will briefly explore fandom. Parts two and three will explore the role of family and peer influence on heavy metal music preference, respectively. Part four focuses on heavy metal fandom and judgement from non-metal fans, and how some participants navigate through the course of negative judgement based on their heavy metal fandom. Part five will be chapter discussions.

4.1.1: Conceptualizing Fandom

Jenkins and Tulloch (1994) define a 'fan' as someone who is an active participant in fandom and who possesses the social identity of being a fan. This definition is far too simplistic however, and perhaps more suitable would be: an individual who participates with other people and identifies an affiliation towards an object - this may be any area of social life such as a hobby, sports team, or cultural things such as a TV show or a heavy metal music, for

example. Fandom, used as a term to describe the action of 'being' a fan, can be used as a means to understand other people (Knudsen et al. 2019). Fandom is more than just a form of socializing, but is a way which allows people to communicate with one another, present themselves as a passionate person, and as someone who is credible as such (Knudsen et al. 2019: 19). This includes investing resources into constructing the fandom, knowing the appropriate language, and other aspects of the culture which may be relevant for fans. In the case for heavy metal music culture, this means a fan knows what being a metal fan entails, the words and jargon associated with metal, practices, and a mutual understanding amongst other fans what heavy metal music is and sounds like.

Fandom is a very common feature of popular culture. Subcultures, made up of fans, choose from a wide repertoire of media and celebrities, and celebrate them in a number of ways (Fiske 1992). Kozinets (2001) describes fans as loyal consumers who invest a lot of their time and resources in their consumption. They engage in a form of consumption which diverges from traditional means of consumption (Derbaix & Korchia 2017). Music fans, or fans of specific bands even, travel across the country to see a band perform, collect albums and posters, memorize lyrics, study their meanings, and so on (O'Reilly et al. 2013) - music is deeply embedded in their everyday life, deeper and with more impact than just occasional listeners, for example.

4.1.2: Conceptualizing Subculture

In the last century, the study of subculture has been informed by the influential Chicago and the Birmingham School (Castillo-Villar et al. 2020). Early studies, from the Chicago School, explored the relationship between deviant youth 'gangs' and the localities from which such gangs emerged (Bennett 1999). Early definitions of subculture from the Chicago School defined subculture as groupings of deviant and undesirable elements found within [healthy] mainstream society, which were a 'threat' to the cohesion of society due to the oppositional and non-conformist standpoints of its members (Cohen 1956; Becker 1963; Bennett & Kahn-Harris 2004; Ulusoy & Firat 2018). The Birmingham School, or Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies [CCCS], and subsequent published research from the institution, shifted their focus on the way that youth cultures were explored and examined in two ways. First, the emphasis of youth 'gangs' shifted towards a focus on style-based youth cultures such as rockers, skin heads, and Teddy boys, which were from the 1950s onwards, a prominent part of British culture. Second, based on some of the understandings from the Chicago School, CCCS research placed aa focus on deviant behavior of youth subcultures as understood to be a collective reaction from youth themselves - working class youth in particular - in relation to the structural changes occurring in post-war Britain at the time (Bennett 1999). Based on the research conducted on the style-based working-class youth cultures, CCCS defined subculture as a legitimate counter-force of political resistance (Castillo-Villar et al. 2020).

In sum, the study of subcultures changed from perceiving them as deviant threats to society to exploring how they found ways to resist against the dominant structures [the mainstream] (Hebdige 1979).

Since Hebdige's (1979) influential *Subculture: The Meaning of Style*, social science researchers conducting research in the field of youth cultures have used the concept of subculture as a means to explore music and style-based cultural phenomena. Participation within has been characterized through the consumption of certain styles of music and clothing aesthetics, and participating in localized music scenes (Williams 2006). In three decades on youth subculture research, a number of theorists have produced influential and crucial research studies with the intention to understand some of the links between music, culture, and identity (e.g: Thornton 1995; Frith 1996; Bennett 2000; Hodkinson 2002). According to Frith (1996), music is an integral component of a number of contemporary youth subcultures and was not interested in how particular music reflects particular people, but rather: how an experience is created through music as subjective and collective identities are taken on (Frith 1996: 109).

In a similar fashion, Cushman (1995) regarded music as not only a cultural object which is produced and consumed, but also a code of resistance which can be used in the creation and expression of new forms of collective and individual identity. There are two main points related to this notion. First, there is a dialectic relationship between music identity and music - music is consequential in the creation of subcultures as well as a consequence of them.

Second, through experiencing music - both listening and creating - people are able to locate and position themselves in specific subcultural formations (Williams 2006). There are a number of examples for the first notion, exploring how people actively use music to construct and exhibit collective identities and create ritualized identity processes, most notably Thornton's (1995) study on club cultures and Hodkinson's (2002) study on goths. The second point, that people 'are or become part of something which is larger than themselves' through experiencing music, requires a conceptualization beyond music - this conceptualization has, traditionally, been 'subcultures' (Williams 2006).

In terms of the usage of the word 'subculture', theorists such as Blackman (2005) and Conner and Katz (2020) criticized that perhaps one of the most contested fields of study within sociology is subcultures - in particular in terms of methodologies, theories, and the use of the term on its own. Some scholars have argued that the term marginalizes the group under investigation as not ordinary - much as in the case of deviant groups (Conner & Katz 2020). A second criticism with the term was in terms of positionality, leading to the creation of the term 'counterculture' or 'contraculture' - in order to differentiate between those groups who actively place an emphasis on the resistance of values of the dominant culture and those who do not (Yinger 1960). The argument which arises from the usage of such terms is one of labeling: 'subculture' implies that it is labeled from the outside whilst 'countercultre' and 'contraculture' implies an active resistance from the group members themselves (Conner & Katz 2020). Despite some criticisms regarding the term 'subculture', scholars such as Blackman (2005), who particularly notes that

some of the recent scholarship regarding subculture is based on the symbolic interactionist tradition, as such, an emphasis is on the role and importance of 'outsiders' in the creation of subcultures (Conner & Katz 2020).

Heavy metal remains reliant on an image which maintains an element of opposition to rock music and the mainstream (Haenfler 2013). Whilst heavy metal can be considered a style of popular music and the majority of sub-genres are not *actively* against the 'mainstream' or the dominant culture, there is however, at a very basic level, the fostering of a sense of an oppositional consciousness (Gracyk 2016). Due to the number of sub-genres, as discussed in section 1.4.4., the sheer amount of them create problems, as there are disagreements regarding what the genres are in relation to the overarching heavy metal community (Kahn-Harris 2007; Gelder 2007).

4.2: Parental and Family Influence in Heavy Metal Music Preference

One of the most frequently studied subjects in sociology and one of the most important institutions in society is the family. The family is what sociologists refer to as a 'primary group', as it is among the groups which are most closely involved in the processes of socialization of children as they grow up and transition into adolescence and adulthood (Kotarba et al. 2013). Families are regarded as more central and important than most other social groups in regards to the socialization process. While interacting with parental figures, a child acquires key symbolic resources for the development of a sense of self. Not only does family interaction aid in the development of a self-concept,

identity, values, belief systems, etc., but also contributes to nurturance and protection (Kotarba et al. 2013: 42)

> Thrash Fan: "My dad, of course, listened to heavy metal (…). I grew up around different music like blues, reggae, punk, and prog. *Led Zeppelin*, *Iron Maiden*, *Judas Priest*, *Black Sabbath*, *Mötorhead* - all that kind of stuff was definitely played around the house. And then, by myself, there was this Finnish metal band, *Lordi*, who won the Eurovision - that was probably the first metal band I listened to [when I was] in the second grade."

> *NIN*-Fan: "I grew up listening to heavy metal music. My dad is a big music fan and metal is one of them - so I grew up listening to *Black Sabbath*, *Led Zeppelin*, *Cream*, *AC/DC*, and that kind of stuff (…). I was 13 in 1998/1999, so that was when music really took off for me - I started going to gigs with my dad. I grew up in Nottingham, so Rock City was where I would go to. My dad took me to see *Silverchair* when I was 13, and he was always very supportive of my love of loud, progressive music."

Both Thrash Fan and *NIN*-Fan cite their families as major influences in their metal music preference - both being exposed to heavy metal music from a

young age. For *NIN*-Fan, family was a highly influential factor in her involvement with heavy metal music, with her father's active encouragement and involvement as a parent in particular. Research has shown that the family is an important context and influence in the acquisition of cultural behavior (Mohr & DiMaggio 1995; Nagel & Ganzeboom 2002). Culture is consumed in a family context. In recent times, van Eijck (1997) and Nagel (2004) argued that family and parental influence have a larger effect on culture than education. In other words, cultural influences from parents and family are more prominent than education. Thus, throughout the process of socialization, parents can affect their children in a conscious and unconscious manner. Parents may actively pass on their musical tastes to their children in a similar way they pass on attitudes, behaviors, and habits (Grusec & Davidov 2007).

> Scotty: "Heavy metal came into my life at a dead-early age. My mum and that don't listen to heavy metal but my dad does, from when he was younger. So it came from him and then my auntie and her mates listen to it, so I started hanging around with my auntie a lot at the time, it came from that. So probably from the age of four, five, I can't remember starting to listen to it."

Scotty's account of having a heavy metal influence from his father, aunt, and her social group illustrates Kotarba et al's. (2013) notion that adults who grow up listening to popular music may maintain their musical interest and preference throughout their adult life. At the same time, this means that while

people such as Scotty's father grew up and became parents, their interests in music was channeled through their children as they grew up. This kind of process can act as a bridge between generations (Kotarba et al. 2013). Furthermore, and in terms of socialization, it is important to consider that socialization in the family does not only include immediate family members, but also extended family members such as grandparents, and much like in Scotty's case, aunts and uncles (Arnett 1995).

> Julie: "When I was little, [my dad] he had a car, so we were just driving around and there were two radio stations and they were always blasting some kind of metal or some kind of rock. They call it *Kansas City Classic Rock Station* - they take themselves very seriously, so that is probably where I got my music taste from. And when I got older, when I got a phone in high school, it has internet and I could listen to music with my headphones, and on long drives and plane rides, showing my dad like 'hey, listen to these songs' and he'd go 'listen to these songs' and that's where I'd get a lot of music from - and listening on the radio on the drive to school and work and stuff."

> *Metallica*-Fan: "I've grown up with it because my father always used to listen to it. But I only started listening to it on my own at 12 or 14. Before, it was always played at

home. My father bought the *Metallica* concert DVD and that was played 24/7. He also listens to music when he's cooking, which means it's constantly there."

Julie was exposed to heavy metal from a young age through her father listening to rock/metal radio stations whilst driving in Kansas City, and giving her music recommendations on long trips. Similarly, *Metallica*-Fan made reference to her father listening to heavy metal music around the house, before she actively began listening to it as a teenager. Music is likely to be a major theme in contributing to family cohesion, which in turn may have positive effects on a young person's well-being.

The family is the first socializing agent in a person's development, in which the majority of early bonding and attachment occurs. Within the family context, music has been found to be one of the most widely used leisure activities, and becomes part of family everyday life, much like in *Metallica*-Fan's account of her father listening to heavy metal music when cooking (Boer & Abubakar 2014). Moreover, music is an important component of family routines and 'rituals'. The use of music as part of family rituals begins very early in a person's life, contributing to strong emotional bonds (Parncutt 2009). Across different cultures and cultural contexts and settings, the singing of lullabies, for example, is an important part of a child's bedtime routine. As children grow older, parents shift from singing *to* the child to singing *with* it (Boer & Abubakar 2014). In this process, the child becomes an active participant in using music within a family context - which may influence their interest in music and music preference.

> *Megadeth*-Fan: "I think what really kind of started me listening to music, it's going to sound weird, but when I saw the *Magic Roundabout* movie, when I was probably like seven or eight, and 'Mr Blue Sky' [by *Electric Light Orchestra*] was in it, that kind of kickstarted me with *E.L.O*, so then I started listening to more rock kind of stuff. My dad's musical taste is more classic rock kind of stuff. *AC/DC* was kind of the starting point to proper rock and from then onward, gradually developed into more heavier kind of stuff. I don't know if there's a particular point that I thought 'yeah, I'm a metal fan now'. That's kind of how that progressed."

Megadeth-Fan's account highlights the development of musical interest through seemingly mundane activities such as watching a movie. *Megadeth*-Fan's account is also an example of music preference being something gradual, rather than something drastic. Whilst he notes that his father's musical taste played a role in his music influence, *Megadeth*-Fan gradually found his own style and freedom, developing into an autonomous fan - a fan with his own style and music (Laiho 2004).

4.3: Peer Influence in Heavy Metal Music Preference

Empirical findings suggests that music is a factor in the formation of friendships, peer groups, and peer culture (Selfhout et al. 2009). Not only is

music preference linked to selecting friends with similar music tastes, but particular preference for certain types of music have been linked with the development of externalizing behavior (Franken et al. 2017).

> *Suffocation*-Fan: "So I was in school at the time, I wasn't really into metal but a lot of my friends were. They were all listening to *Slipknot*, *Slayer*, *KoRn*, and just from hanging with them, I started to listen to a lot more of like, like: 'this ain't half bad'.

Similarly to *Suffocation*-Fan, Swift also noted how he was introduced to heavy metal through a friend.

> Swift: "I was introduced to it when I was about 8. Just at school with my friend, if I remember right, he was listening on his small MP3 player and I heard it through his earphones and asked him 'what is that?' because all I heard was this heavy, rock, fast-sounding music. He said it was metal, and I had no idea what he was talking about at the time. . . So I just asked him if I can have a listen, he gave me one of his buds, and from there on I just kept getting hooked"

Christenson and Roberts (1998) note that a passion for popular music is one of the most explicit markers of adolescence. The meaning and importance that

music holds to adolescents may be related to psychological development (Laiho 2002; Laiho 2004). Adolescence is a period in which a number of transitions, changes, and challenges occur in a young person's life. Adolescents need to separate and become more independent from their parents, learn self-regulation, and gain a sense of emotional autonomy and control over their own lives.

> *Watain*-Fan: "I started when I was 14-15. I've listened to heavy metal practically half my life. I was in a choir and played violin, such things. But at the time, I was on the search for my 'own' music and noticed quite quickly that I can't find that on the radio and one of the friends bought the, at the time, latest *Linkin Park* album, *Meteora*. He copied it for me and that's how it began."

Watain-Fan mentioned that he was introduced to heavy metal through a friend copying him a version of the album *Meteora* of the band *Linkin Park*, which first sparked his interest in heavy metal music, as he was on the quest of finding a style of music 'for himself'. The consumption of music is an important source of entertainment and enjoyment throughout people's adolescence. On average, young people actively spend between two and three hours per day listening to music (Zillmann & Gann 1997; Miranda & Claes 2009). Research has gradually begun to recognize the importance of music listening in adolescence, particularly regarding developmental tasks and psychological adaptive functions such as self-actualization, individual and cultural identity,

socialization and integration amongst peers, and emotion regulation (North et al. 2000).

> *I Prevail*-Fan: "Heavy metal itself probably around 13-14 (…) a lot of it massively coincides with my best friend (…), he was getting into music at the same time but he started getting into *System Of A Down* (…) and kind of slithered into that, and progressively throughout my teen years (…) I kind of snowballed into the heavier stuff."

> Bassist: "I started being involved [with heavy metal music] because a friend of mine actually was really involved in the scene - they were proper heavy metal fans. And some of them - I play bass guitar - proposed [to] me to join a band. And I started discovering *Children of Bodom*, *Immortal*, those were my first two bands of black metal. That's how I started: because of friends. I got involved because of friends and musical opportunities."

I Prevail-Fan became involved with heavy metal through his best friend, 'snowballing' into heavier music as his music tastes developed and became more salient. Bassist admitted that he listened to heavy metal to a small extent, there was an undertone of himself not considering himself to be a *proper* fan like his friend who was involved in the local heavy metal scene. Bassist joined

a metal band and became instantly immersed in the music. This account highlights Dijkstra et al. (2013) account that peer group affiliation is an influential aspect of adolescents' social life as peer group has well-defined implications on individual development.

> Doc Martens Girl: "It was in Year 9 when the emo thing [phase] kicked off and then people started coming to our friendship group. So 6 people turned into 50 because we were all looking the same. And then we'd all go out to an under-18s rock club together - they put a night on for under-18s once a month in the town hall. So then all the similar people from all the different high schools would show up there, so we just met there. And you could request songs, so we would request songs which were like our friends 'anthems'. I was kicked out of one friendship group and then another, and at that point I was like: I'll start being me, not because of the music they all listen to. So I stopped trying to fit into the social groups and went to listening to what I enjoyed."

Doc Martens Girl noted in the interview that she was one of the first people in her group/school year to get into the emo phase in the mid-2000s, and other students followed suit - until a small group of friends became an overwhelming group. Due to the nature and dynamics of peer groups, in particular in school and adolescent environments, Doc Martens Girl found herself navigating

through different friendship groups, before 'doing her own thing' in terms of music and being true to herself, rather than trying to fit in with groups.

> Charlie Sharpe: "I'm gonna say at about 16-17 years old, so it would have been my later years of secondary school. (…) So I'm assuming it was influenced through a friend with older brothers (…) I think that's the way it was sort cascaded down to me. (…) There was a CD guy in the Leeds Corn Exchange, where he got all his CDs imported from America and it would be £10-12 a pop and we'd always take a bit of a chance each week, getting one [CD] from different genres. So as a group, we kind of shared out CDs but everyone kind of liked metal. (…) Wrestling and metal go hand in hand. We watched wrestling all the time, especially with the more extreme wrestling, heavy metal was no shame. Wrestling, gaming, and metal just kind of drove our fashion and attitude."

Figure 9: Charlie Sharpe (right) with a friend at a wrestling show

Charlie Sharpe and his friends used to purchase albums at the Leeds Corn Exchange and share their music amongst each other. He also noted that wrestling and video games, along with listening to heavy metal music, was one of his groups' activities. Heavy metal has, with the rise of popularity of wrestling, been co-opted by mainstream professional wrestling (Pruitt 2019). Tompkins (2009) identified a comparable relationship in the late 1990s in the use of heavy metal music as soundtracks for horror films, and record labels and the film industry collaborated together to establish links between horror film imagery and heavy metal music with the intention to target certain market segments. For Tompkins (2009), this metal-horror branding synergy is founded on the assumption that horror films and heavy metal music have a mutual core audience. Wrestling also made use of this strategy, the mutual

core audience, and WWE [World Wrestling Entertainment] began to collaborate with record labels in order to have 'official' theme songs which heavily featured in advertising for wrestling events and were played at wrestling shows (Pruitt 2019). In the case for Charlie Sharpe, and his friends who frequently attended wrestling shows, were influenced by the influence of heavy metal had with wrestling in regards to style, but were also influenced by wrestling making use of heavy metal.

> Crash: "My peers at the time, my friends were all into pop punk and emo, and to be honest, that goes into there as well. But the real kind of crazy influence was when I was about between 15 and 16 and got my first real job, probably working in a supermarket (…). Our crowd was the metal crowd. (…) And we'd do Friday night in *Stark* in Leeds, the what was then the rock club, and we'd all be on shift on Saturday morning. We'd be out at the night club, go home and have a shower, and put the uniform on to go to work. The amount of times I've rolled up on shifts still hammered from the night before *laughs*. That was my, that was the friendship influence in that."

Crash mentioned that whilst his circle of peers listened to pop punk and emo music, his main heavy metal influence stems from his colleagues and friends who worked at the same supermarket as him - which eventually also led him

to being involved in the festival scene, having attended *Download Festival* almost a dozen times at the time of our interview.

4.4: Heavy Metal Fandom and Experiencing Judgement

Figure 10: Archer (top) and Her Friend

Archer: "I grew up on a council estate and more people were, I guess we call them 'chavs' now, but back then we called them 'scallies' or 'townies', (…)maybe of the 300 people in my school year, only three of us were metal

fans (…) and I used to get quite a lot of abuse for wearing combat pants and my Doc Martens when they saw me outside of school. I was a lot more popular when I was with my metal friends. I wasn't popular with all the normal kids and 'townies', for instance. I felt a lot more attractive. The boys liked me in the metal scene, certainly a lot more than in high school, apart from my friends who were the strays and the geeks."

When children transition into adolescence and thus middle/high school, the pool of peers and range of social networks in which they operate and are active participants in, becomes much larger. In this context, affiliation with peers is important for the development of identity and a sense of self. The status of a peer and relevant peer groups is a salient determinant whether or not an individual group is avoided or not. Dijkstra et al. (2013: 1242) suggested two mechanisms which may help explain how adolescents become similar to the peers they associate with: selection and influence. Selection is the mechanism by which adolescents select friends who are similar to themselves. Influence is the mechanism by which adolescents adopt characteristics of their friends.

Mr. X: "In high school, I had long hair and obviously my peers at the time would react to it, like 'dirty mosher, get a wash'. There'd be a lot of that. Yeah, people do react - like chavs who don't like moshers, but you don't get much of that anymore. Like because I'm obviously sat here and

I'm a fat nerd - that's who I am - I was ostracized as a kid

for that. So I don't… I'm not even sure what happened

first: me getting into metal or me being ostracized for

being a fat nerd. But either way, I was ostracized for

being a fat nerd who listens to metal. So it's like, and then

when you get the long hair and when you got the

sweatbands on, I think there is more of a sense of

community because there is an understanding that, you

know, there is an 'us' group and a 'them' group - and the

'them' group are the ones who are mean to us, and the

'us' group is trying to get on with our lives."

Archer's and Mr. X's accounts are pertinent examples of peer selection and

social identity. Identifying with other people who are perceived as similar can

evoke positive feelings and emotions. Identification with other people implies

that everyone shares similar beliefs, values, and purposes, and identifying with

other like-minded people has a positive effect. Much like Archer was a lot more

popular with her heavy metal friends and felt a lot better about herself, it feels

good to be surrounded by people who are perceived as similar to oneself as it

can evoke a good mood and produce positive emotions (Hewitt 2007).

Archer's and Mr. X's reflections revolved around social identity - the use and

distinction of *us* and *them*. Social identity was a very prominent notion in

participants' responses and will be explored in a lot more depth in the next

chapter on heavy metal identities. In the case for Archer, and as mentioned by

Mr. X, their social identity as metal fans means than they are like other individuals of a particular social group. A social group can be defined as a set of individuals who view themselves as members of the same social category. Social identity thus refers to a person knowing that they are a member of a social group.

> Mr. V: "Where I grew up, (…) it was a council estate in south Manchester. There wasn't, in them days, many alternative folks around. Everybody who would look a bit different would get some shit. Like I could've just gone to the shop and ended up in a fight just because I was wearing baggy jeans. But I faced it head on, I liked fighting back in the day."

Similarly, Mr V's account also revolved around the notion of social identity, with the added element of discrimination and at times, physical altercations between himself and other people. Mr V mentioned getting into fights simply because of his appearance, mixed with a lack of alternative people in the area, resulting him to 'stick out' even more. He did however, admit to enjoying the altercations. With this in mind, Mr V's account is a pertinent example that the expression of identities can tangible repercussions and effects.

Navigator made an interesting point about insider-outsider status regarding heavy metal fan, furthering Mr. X's point about being a nerd.

Navigator: "I can see how that association could be made. You tend to think of your comic book geeks as sitting in a circle, reading the comic books and allowing nobody else in. And then, with heavy metal, nobody wants to go in. You're heavy metal, and if you're not heavy metal, to everybody else, I'm not sure about it now but when I was into heavy metal, everyone assumed you stank. 'Sweaty mosher' was the phrase. So yeah, they are two separate groups that are not particularly interacted with by other groups."

Navigator commented on how associations between two separate cultural or social groups, nerds and metal fans, share certain similarities. He further noted that comic books geeks do not tend to let anyone else in apart from other comic book geeks, and the same could be applied to metal.

Navigator: "Comic book geeks and metal fans may find solace in a group that nobody else wants to be in, if you get me."

Social identity thus refers to a person knowing that they are a member of a social group. Additionally, they see and understand things from the group's point of view (Hogg & Abrams 1988; Stets & Burke 2000). Researchers studying social identity have found that individuals who identify with a group have strong attachments to the group as a whole, regardless of individual

attachments within the group (Hogg & Hardie 1992). In order to create a feeling of collectivity, people need to have at least one thing in common, no matter how vague or mundane it is (Jenkins 2004).

> Mr. X: "The thing with metal, more than any other genre of music, is that metal is sort of where the outcasts are. If you're a metalhead surrounded by other metalheads, there is a sort of symbiotic relationship going one where it's like 'I have long hair because I am a metalhead and because I have long hair, I'm an outcast', but part of that is also 'I was an outcast anyways, [and] not I've grown my hair out because I'm a metalhead' and it's all like a chicken and egg situation."

> Slam Drummer: "With the metal came the long hair, which made me stand out - especially in Shanghai. My classmates said the typical 'it's just screaming'. But in my group of friends, there were no major reactions. In my peer group, they heard it too."

In the process of self-categorization, identity is formed and through categorization, things are split into their respective categories - rural-urban, male-female, us-them, etc. After categorizing, we can locate ourselves as being members of some groups or categories, but not of others. After identifying, the social comparison process follows (Stets & Burke 2000). Individuals who are similar to us are labeled as members of the in-group, while

people who are different to us are labelled as members of the out-group. Through this process, we are able to create the distinction between us and them (Stets & Burke 2000). In-group identification means that individuals show a lot of commitment to the group, and showcase less desire to leave the group - even when group status is perceived as low (Ellemers et al. 1999).

> Bones: "I also think it was a self-defense mechanism as well, because my dad is disabled. Growing up, I had to look after him and I looked after my sister, and kids are really cruel, it was always like 'your dad's a cripple, why can you walk but your dad can't?'. So to stop them from talking to me, I'd look as scary as I could, just so they would leave you alone."

> Moose: "I've had reactions for the way that I dress from people for a very long time. (…) I was bullied when I was a kid. I am six foot three, not a small man, but then… I was not very confident but my music gave me confidence. I also have friends who were into gothic music (…), I was listening to goth and very much got into it and loved it, and it was the first time, my hair was about to my shoulders at that point, and I back-combed my hair and put it into a mohican. When I had it in a mohican, I remember this vividly, I was walking down the street and I've seen people cross the street ahead of me, to make

sure they weren't passing next to me. That gave me an incredible feeling of power - that I've never ever had before. I then felt: I'm a goth, a metaller, it made people get the hell out of my way. Therefore, this gives me a feeling of power, so I belong to this. This feels like something that is giving me power, so I am an ambassador for this subculture"

Taking on a 'scary' metal persona was used by Bones as a useful strategy for avoiding social interactions with her peers. The metal subculture can be understood as a 'safe space', this is particularly important for young people and their limited options for managing social threats - especially in a school environment, where students oftentimes are not able to avoid being drawn into power relations (Macklem 2003). Music preference may work much like a badge, which communicates opinions, values, and attitudes (Frith 1981). Similarly, Moose made reference to a feeling of empowerment through metal music, which he was able to use to keep people at bay - whilst simultaneously becoming an 'ambassador' for the heavy metal and goth subculture. He also noted that in the 1980s, people would react to unusual styles and dress codes and be prejudiced and judgmental.

Adolescents are sensitive to the images that they themselves and their peers/peer groups project. At the same time, they hold normative expectations about the characteristics of fans of popular music styles (North & Hargreaves 1999). Through showing their 'badge', adolescents identify themselves as

belonging to, or desiring to belong to specific peer groups. Within a school and everyday environment, as Archer, Bones, and Mr. X. reflected, the use of metal music can be seen much like a survival strategy for people who find themselves in marginal or minority positions (Raby 2005). Being an 'outsider' is a common self-conception of seasoned/experienced metal fans, musicians, and scholars. The heavy metal subculture is thus a relevant and good example of 'chosen' identity work. 'Chosen' identity is highly empowering and an effective means of countering unchosen identities and establishing a feeling of resilience (Rowe 2016; Rowe 2017). The role of the music helps individuals feel safe and is something that they can call *their own.*

[Peer] selection implies that adolescents who are similar in social status select one another as friends. It is also suggested that the individual's status remains stable, but the status of their friendship may be subject to change. Influence implies that adolescents' individual status may increase or decrease - depending on the status of their friends. In regards to influence, the friendship remains stable while the individual status depends on the status of the friends. In their study on adolescent friendship networks and popularity, Dijkstra et al. (2013) found that friendship selection indicated that youth were more likely to select peers as friends who had similar levels of popularity rather than dissimilar. It was also found that adolescents' popularity was influenced by the popularity of their peers (Dijkstra et al. 2013: 1248). It is important to note however, that popularity is something based on peer-reports and reputation - one group of students may be deemed popular in one school, while being seen as unpopular in another school.

> *BMTH*-Fan: "Yeah, they're both devout Christians, it happened… It's not like we sit down and listen to music together or anything like that, I just kind of do it in my room. But a lot of the time, say if I am downstairs and put *Kerrang* on or whatever, my mum will come in and go 'uuh, I don't like this'; 'uuuh, what's this?'; 'why are you listening to this?' - it's like the same reason you're listening to your Christian music: because I fucking want to."

BMTH-Fan reflected on her upbringing within a Christian household and gave examples to some of the interactions she had with her parents, her mother in particular, whilst she was listening to heavy metal music. *BMTH*-Fan expressed listening to music separately, in her room, there was however, a constant clash of tastes in the house. Whilst there was a mutual understanding of differing music tastes, *BMTH*-Fan was met with frequent questioning and a lack of understanding of her music preference.

Similarly, Forensics Student revealed that her family was not too pleased about her consumption of heavy metal music.

> Forensics Students: "Lots of complaining, turning the volume down. I think it was a change [difference] in the stuff that my sister was listening to and the stuff I was listening to … my mum wasn't too happy about me going

to concerts when I was younger. She just kind of had to

accept it, but I think they're fine with it now."

Like *BMTH*-Fan, Forensics Student's family was not very understanding of her music taste. In both instances/accounts, there was a sense of rebellion from them towards their family's lack of understanding in their music preference. Adolescents can, and do, rebel against parental authority through their music choices. By immersing themselves with music which is deemed brash and deviant, adolescents gain and experience a sense of independence from their parents. Throughout the different stages of development, individualization is a crucial task, and teenagers may choose to listen to music which is, to their parents, too loud, repulsive, and vulgar (ter Bogt et al. 2011).

Charlie Sharpe: "So metal was on that list of what Marilyn Manson, *Placebo*, *Eminem* - you know, the media just love to fucking hate them. And so without listening to, or knowing them, really, there was a kind of negative feeling within the household about listening to metal music. (…) Maybe it was because it was more of an American influence than a UK influence - I don't know. Something like that, from my family was really frowned upon. It was kind of seen to be, not even rebellious or teenage angst, but it was associated with a lot of teenage problems and anger and hate, and maybe like mental health issues. It

was a very negative image music-wise and listening to it,

you would get judged on it."

Charlie Sharpe's account reflects some of the attitudes towards heavy metal music at the time [in the 1990s]. Even dating back to the 1970s, the term 'moral panic' came into popular usage, accompanied by the term 'folk devil'. Much like controversy, a moral panic is a condition in which a person or group or people is labelled as a threat to the interests of society. Heavy metal music has been the focus of research as a risk factor during youth development. The discourses around heavy metal which followed after the Columbine High School shooting in April 1999, was a well-publicized example of the perceptions that the public had about heavy metal music and its lyrics. Media reports quickly created a relationship between the two shooters, Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold, enjoying heavy metal, in particular the music of Marilyn Manson, as being linked to being a motive for the massacre (Daly 2017).

More recently, in the mass shooting in Dayton, Ohio, in 2019, there were several news reports of the perpetrator wearing merchandise of the band *The Acacia Strain* (Pasbani 2019), which band and singer distanced themselves from and condemned the actions.

Figure 11: Twitter screenshot from journalist Jim Heath[7]

In response to the allegations of the gunman being influenced by the lyrics of

The Acacia Strain, the band's vocalist, Vincent Bennet, took to Twitter:

Figure 12: Vincent Bennet (*The Acacia Strain*) Twitter Response[8]

Another reference of Charlie Sharpe's was heavy metal's association with

'teenage problems'. Whilst the act of listening to heavy metal music is not a

category in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Health Disorders*,

---

[7] https://twitter.com/JimHeathTV/status/1157951499688747008
[8] https://twitter.com/xDIAMONDCUTx/status/1158008670728478720

there is a long history of heavy metal being associated with various symptoms of mental illness and being attributed a causative role in mental health problems (Winegarner 2013). A common perception is that heavy metal music and culture either leads to mental health problems, or attracts people as such. Heavy metal and its associated practices such as dress style and body modification have likely contributed to negative social perceptions and stereotyping of heavy metal music and its followers as being undesirable and deviant members of society (Kahn-Harris 2007; Winegarner 2013).

Upon closer inspection however, there is very weak evidence for a causal link between heavy metal music preference, metal identities, and mental health issues - the majority of claims were invoked through stereotypes and sensationalized media reports based on moral panics (Rowe 2017). Heavy metal's negative image dates back to the early days of *Black Sabbath* - when mainstream audiences were confronted with dark lyrics, which were unprecedented within popular culture at the time, but became increasingly popular due to *Black Sabbath*'s popularity at the time (Rowe & Guerin 2017).

At the same time, research on heavy metal followed public opinion and contributed to them - media and moral panics gave rise to political and academic elites exploring the "problem of metal" and pathologizing adolescents' metal music preferences, rather than talking with fans and members of the community, and observing their actual cultural involvement and practices (Rowe & Guerin 2017). Furthermore, public opinion which is informed by media reports on heavy metal, often contains distorted

interpretations of studies regarding heavy metal music. An example of this is the media's treatment of McFerran et al's. (2012) study, which came to the conclusion that while young people who are at high-risk for distress might be drawn towards heavy metal music, it is important to note and understand that the majority of them use heavy metal music to manage their moods. Despite this caveat, McFerran et al's. (2012) study was reported with sensationalistic headlines such as "Heavy metal fans more exposed to mental illness, study finds"[9] - amongst other numerous sensationalist headlines (Rowe & Guerin 2017).

> Julie: "My mom, for no reason at all, through *AC/DC* stood for 'After Christ, the Death of Christ' - which makes no sense. One day I was listening to one of those top 40 CDs, and my mom went 'you do know what *AC/DC* stands for? look it up' like there would be some internet wide database about the *AC/DC* conspiracy theory. One website states it stands for 'Anti-Christ Death Child', which makes more sense but no sense… she was more like "I can't believe you like the stuff" - she didn't say Satanic but… she thinks it's ridiculous and loud. (…) In freshman year in college, I was introduced to this guy who was a junior [third year], and we studied together

---

9 Herald Sun (2011): https://www.heraldsun.com.au/archive/news/heavy-metal-music-can-trigger-mental-illness-study-finds/news-story/698799dad3c546376e7ab57ed8a84d13

and talked, and we listened to music one day and he said something like "it's probably Satanic because it says 'hell'. You need to be careful." And I'm like okay... It wasn't even something overtly satanic. (…) I don't like this... Like during Columbine, it was like 'heavy metal causes school shootings' but now it's video games. If you played albums backwards, you'd find Satanic messages, and then it was subliminal messages like, Satan, is he keeping up with the times? Like they're coming up with more and more bullshit that's getting harder and harder to prove. They're always gonna find something that is too *different* for old, white people - there is probably another race - but someone old. It's always gonna be too much for some. 'I don't like them wearing eye liner' - who cares. People aren't content with their own lives, so they have to ruin others', I guess."

Julie was very vocal with her experiences of heavy metal's bad reputation - in particular some of the attitudes towards the music in the United States. She also talked about an incident at her university, where one of her friends warned her about 'satanic messages' in the music they listened to whilst studying. Heavy metal music has been the focus of research as a risk factor during youth development. Much like Charlie Sharpe, Julie made reference to the public debates about Columbine and heavy metal's influence in the shooting. In the

United States in particular, various parent and religious groups have vehemently opposed heavy metal music.

Weinstein (2000: 43) noted that it was members of the PMRC and PTA, a number of fundamentalist ministers, and leading psychiatrists in psychiatric wards who testified against heavy metal in the mid-1980s at a number of Senate meetings, discussing heavy metal's power and imagery which projects images and themes which mainstream society at the time was actively trying to supress. The PMRC requested for record companies to pressure broadcasters not to broadcast overt violence and explicit albums and music videos, and to reconsider record companies to re-consider their contracts with artists who open broadcast violence and over-sexual behavior (Weinstein 2000: 265).

4.5: Chapter Conclusions

The aim of this chapter was to explore and discuss some of the participants' 'pathways' into heavy metal music preference, with a focus on parental, family, and peer influence. Furthermore, this chapter explored the formative years of heavy metal identities whilst also highlighting aspects of social identity and the need to learn to 'navigate' through a changing social world filled with [at times] negative attitudes towards heavy metal in light of its bad reputation. At this point, it is important to note that there may be other factors which may play a role in the development of music preference, family and peers were however, the most main two influences which participants discussed.

As noted previously, music listening is one of the most frequent and prevalent leisure activities which take place throughout adolescent development. Family and peer contexts are the most powerful, important, and immediate social environments which help shape an individual's development (Bronfenbrenner 1979). During adolescence, a developmental shift occurs, in particular in regards to engagement with activities. Peer involvement becomes increasingly salient as young individuals try to achieve an increased sense of autonomy from their family (Steinberg & Silverberg 1986).

From early adolescence through young adulthood, a significant amount of time, money, and resources is spent on activities that focus around music (Selfhout et al. 2009). A substantial amount of activities revolving around music are shared with peers. Shared musical preferences and activities contribute to friendship formation throughout the course of adolescence (Boer et al. 2011). With this in mind, it is understandable that peer-related are more prominent research topics than the family. However, developmental research has shown that although involvement with peer groups intensifies throughout adolescence, the relationship between peers and the individual does not weaken the relationship and individual has with parents and family members. Rather, family activities regarding music gain a more symbolic meaning with increasing cognitive development (Fiese et al. 2002).

Adolescents are socially motivated, and at times encouraged by their parents, to listen to music. Through an involvement with music, young people have the opportunity to become part of different musical subcultures which may provide

a range of social values, cultural values, behavioral codes, sources of knowledge, identities, and a sense of belonging amongst other likeminded people and peers (North & Hargreaves 1999; Bakagiannis & Tarrant 2006). Zillmann and Gan (1997) suggested that music consumption is deeply embedded in the transition from youth to adolescence and adulthood.

Work from Bakagiannis and Tarrant (2006) suggests that musical preferences can contribute to the formation of social identity in adolescence, and bring young people from different social groups together by creating a larger social category based on mutually shared music preference. Raviv et al. (1996) suggest that sharing music preferences and music listening activities with others can help provide a sense of belonging. This, from these considerations, musical subcultures may be considered as peer groups. As people bond over music and music preference, these interactions can contribute to the creation, development, and maintenance of collective identities (Tarrant 2002). The need to be in a group is a universal motivation and when people feel accepted, liked, and part of a group, they experience enhanced emotional and psychological well-being and better stress relief (Häusser et al. 2012).

One notion which was prominent was the notion of social identity and the distinction of 'us' and 'them', in particular in terms of social interactions and negative attitudes between participants and non-metal fans within their environment - in particular in a school setting, as noted by Archer, Mr. X, and Slam Drummer. Due to media accounts regarding tragedies such as school shootings and massacres, heavy metal fans continually get 'pushed' into

corners and fringe positions, further increasing difficulties for metal fans to navigate through their lives (Dunn et al. 2005). Whilst social identity was a theme in this chapter, it will be explored in more depth - and in relation to material culture and other means of identity expression - in the next chapter, on the expression of heavy metal identities.

CHAPTER FIVE - EXPRESSING HEAVY METAL IDENTITIES

5.1: Introduction

The previous chapter explored the different influences in participants' heavy metal music preferences, and some of the interactions they have with other people, in particular in light of heavy metal's reputation within mainstream society. Throughout some of the sections, participants made references along the notion of social identity and the distinction between 'us' [metal fans] and 'them' [non-metal fans]. This chapter aims to explore how the cohort of participants express their heavy metal identities throughout the course of their everyday life and how they use the music in everyday situations.

This chapter is split into seven parts. Part two will explore how participants make use of heavy metal music in everyday life situations. Part three will examine heavy metal identity expressions. Part four will consider the use of material objects throughout the course of heavy metal identity expression. Part five examines the role of the human body in the expression of identity, with a particular focus on body modification such as tattoos, piercings, and hairstyles. Part six will explore heavy metal identities and everyday social interactions, and lastly, part seven will be chapter discussions.

5.2: Heavy Metal Music in Everyday Life Situations

Heavy metal music is, for fans/participants, not only simply a style of music they can consume. Instead, it is related to a way of life which provides a sense of meaning and feeling of belonging (Phillips and Cogan 2009: 6). Phillips and Cogan (2009) noted that members of the heavy metal subculture share the

belief that listening to heavy metal is to live heavy metal - and to live metal is thus to dress, talk, and follow the 'rituals' which are associated with the music and understanding the symbolic features of heavy metal. In other words, listening to heavy metal and thus 'living' it showcases authenticity - being 'true' to oneself and heavy metal.

With the increasing digitization of music in the last decades, music can be all around us. Throughout the course of our everyday life, we are exposed to music both actively and passively. As passive listeners, music surrounds us in in TV advertisements or in the background whilst shopping in the mall. As active listeners, we choose the music we listen to, such as on the way to and from work, whilst traveling on public transport, or whilst working on projects for work or university. Rentfrow (2012) suggested that after sleeping an average of eight hours per night, the average person spends approximately 15% of their waking hours listening to music. This includes both active and passive listening, but it can assumed that active listeners easily surpass the 15% threshold. Drummer and *Megadeth*-Fan both made reference to their constant consumption of music:

> Drummer: "If I'm not with somebody, my headphones are
> in. If I'm on the bus, my headphones are in. If I'm not at
> work, my headphones are in. So it's an impact in terms
> of that it feels a bit like a security blanket – even if I don't
> think about it like that. It's part of my life, it's automatic. I

don't know whether it's habitual. I have it on my phone,
it's always easy to access.

Megadeth-Fan: "Most days, most of the time when I am
not actually at work, I will probably be listening to music.
Whether it's on my iPod on the way into work or on the
way home, or if it's just background noise at home when
I am doing whatever. I pretty much always listen to
music."

Drummer's and *Megadeth*-Fans' listening habit illustrate their appreciation of
the music, but also make reference to the increasing availability of music.
Sloboda et al. (2001) note that primary functions in music in contemporary
everyday life appear to include the enhancement or distraction of attention
from a mundane task to enhance states of relaxation. This point made by
Sloboda et al. (2001) was pertinent in *Megadeth*-Fan's account in which he
mentioned that he listens to music on the way to and from work and as
'background noise at home' when he is occupied with other activities.
Furthermore, in the case of Drummer, who mentions heavy metal being much
like a safety blanket, whilst listening to music in public transport, could even
be used as a means to avoid social interactions, as a means of shielding from
outside stimuli.

Mobile technologies allow the consumption of music to become increasingly
straightforward. People tend to spend more time and money actively

consuming music, as music provides a medium for self-exploration, and allows individuals to be able to reflect on who they are, where they come from, and who they aspire to become (Rentfrow 2012: 409). Furthermore, music is no longer restricted to being a live performance or radio broadcast, but rather, can be accessed via novel digital methods and devices such as smartphones, tablets, computers, via applications and streaming services on demand such as *Spotify* or *Apple Music* (Krause et al. 2015). These new technologies give people greater control and choice over what music they can listen to and how they integrate music into their everyday lives (Krause et al. 2015). Merriam (1964) proposed that there is no other cultural activity which is as actively practiced, prevalent, and reaches, shapes, and controls human behavior as much as music listening does.

> Archaeologist: "I've always got music on in the background. To me, heavy metal music is soothing and calming (...) if you have like a long riff or tune (...), I just find it so easy to tune out to"

> Swift: "Umm, if I have any sort of negative feelings throughout the day, for whatever reason, it helps me remain calm or just think about what has been going on throughout the day so I can put things into perspective. Or if I just want to hype myself up for something, I'll put something really fast-paced on."

Archaeologist and Swift made reference to using music and mood regulation. By using music to become more calm, Archaeologist and Swift use heavy metal music as a form of release, which allows them to feel more relaxed (or hyped up). Swift in particular, uses music to maintain his well-being and by being able to use music to reflect, situations can become more tolerable and clear (Skånland 2011). Music that is self-selected allows people to experience more positive emotions, as they have a greater sense of control over the music and the situation that they find themselves in (Liljeström et al. 2012). There is a noticeable change in mood as a result of being able to choose music (Sloboda et al. 2011), meaning that Archaeologist and Swift can always rely on the cathartic nature of heavy metal music.

> Forensics Student: "I listen to it at the gym, I think it motivates you quite a lot. If I'm in a really bad mood, I go to 'Animal' by *Three Days Grace*, that's my anger song. It depends, the band I listen to depends on the mood I am in. If I'm [studying] in the library, probably not heavy rock music but if I'm storming home, then probably."

Similar to Archaeologist and Swift, Forensics Student made reference to using heavy metal music for mood management - in particular for when in a bad mood, she has a 'go-to' song. Forensics Student also made reference to using music in different situations in her everyday life, such as when studying in the library, on her way home, or at the gym, for instance. Bull's (2005; 2006) study

on iPod usage revealed how music can be used in a range of everyday activities, as exemplified by Forensics Student. In particular when traveling or being occupied with specific activities such as exercising, people are able to create 'auditory bubbles' through specifically selected soundtracks which help change one's perception of the world around them, 're-spatializing' their experience of their environment (Bull 2005: 348). Furthermore, music listening has been found to energize people whilst participating in their activities - in particular when working out for example.

> *ATB*-Fan: "I very much split it from my daily life. So, at work, unless I know I'm with a crew where there's crew members who listen to that sort of music, it tends to not really come up. When I am back here, I work in a rock club in Harrogate, so I'm open about it: that's my friendship group here, that's the people I work with, et cetera. I'm very open about my identity in that sense. (...). With me being an officer in the navy, you have a certain stature to live up to - and I get it enough just have having tattoos, where people are like "are you sure you're an officer?" and they're very funny about it, so I tend to subdue it and keep it to myself, the sort of music that I am into and what I get up to."

ATB-Fan noted that he does not have as many opportunities to listen to heavy metal as much as he would like to. Due to work constraints, his heavy metal

identity and fandom is mostly hidden, and almost constitutes a double life and identity. *ATB*-Fan was one of the few participants who noted that he is constantly having to make distinctions between being at work, where he is not allowed to reveal any forms of self-identity, and being back at home whilst on leave, being immersed in the local heavy metal community. *ATB*-Fan has perhaps the most stark contrast between his work-life, in which heavy metal is rarely a topic of conversation, and his personal life, when he is deeply immersed in heavy metal when opportunities arise. In his role as a naval officer, he has a standard and stature to live up to, however during our interview, did not seem too bothered about it - heavy metal seemed more of 'his own' thing, which he does not necessarily share with colleagues. With this in mind, *ATB*-Fan's account is a reminder that throughout the course of our everyday life, we are different things to different people throughout the different events and circumstances we encounter (Jenkins 2004). Having to make these distinctions between work and personal life further reinforces the idea that identity is something communal and collective - which he shares with his friends - but simultaneously something inherently personal - when he is at work (Kroger 1996; Burkitt 2008).

> *I Prevail*-Fan: "[my girlfriend] likes *I Prevail* - she liked
> seeing them. She's not massively into [heavy metal], but
> she likes some stuff. She likes more the rock-side of it,
> certainly not with the screaming, she can't get on board
> with any of that. (…). It would be nice not having to skip
> some songs in the car, actually. It works out kind of well

that she's not into the heavier side of stuff, as it does

leave some for me and my best friends who do, and I

don't have to invite her along"

Charlie Sharpe: "My partner, she's never got it. So it's

quite an intimate thing for me. I will listen to [heavy metal]

at home but if (…) my thee-year old son or my partner, is

in, it's not something I put on because it's not something

they would enjoy. (…). It's a kind of private thing".

I Prevail-Fan and Charlie Sharpe were the only participants who noted that their partners did not share their own levels of enthusiasm for heavy metal music. While *I Prevail*-Fan's girlfriend occasionally attends concerts with him, there was a feeling of negotiation in terms of which bands they can watch live and which bands they cannot. While he noted that it would be nice if he did not have to skip certain songs while they are traveling in the car, it did not come across as disappointed or in a resentful way. Rather, the excitement of the chance to listen to his favorite bands with his best friends sort of 'made up' for the fact that his partner does not listen to certain types of heavy metal. Charlie Sharpe was a lot more 'mindful' of the fact that his partner and his three-year old son do not listen to heavy metal. Both however, suggest that there is a private element to heavy metal music and their sense of who they are. The music is *theirs* and *theirs* alone, or at least theirs with some friends, but not something that is shared directly with a partner.

> *NIN*-Fan: "[My partner and I] We immediately had this bond over heavy metal music, and it turns out that is not the only thing we have in common, but it is such a big part of our relationship and the things we do and the things we see, and we listen to a lot of music together, and we go to a lot of live music together."

NIN-Fan and her partner bonded over heavy metal music when they initially met and has been a conversation starter for them, eventually forming a considerable part of their relationship and important resource for their identity. Jenkins and Osberg (2005: 124) noted that one's partner is one of the main reasons people remain together and get married or spend their lives together. Other scholars such as Mohr and DiMaggio (1995) suggested that there is a crucial relationship between cultural participation and spouse selection. Mohr and DiMaggio (1995) argued that cultural participation has an influence on spouse selection, however the inverse is also true and applicable - spouse selection having an influence on cultural participation (Lazzaro & Frateschi 2017). *NIN*-Fan and her partner sharing heavy metal music and the music being an important part of their relationship, is also known as 'joint arts participation' which is a rewarding activity which partners who are both involved in full-time work 'prioritize' participating in shared activities - such as listening to music together or attending concerts - over doing them separately and individually (Kraaykamp et al. 2008: 328).

5.3: Expressing Heavy Metal Identities

This section will explore some of the ways my participants express themselves as heavy metal fans, in particular through the use of material culture and through their body throughout the course of their everyday life. Throughout the course of our daily lives, we encounter a large and varied social world. In order to make sense of the social world, people oftentimes view themselves and the others around them in terms of their group affiliations and memberships (Nezlek & Smith 2005). To some extent, the world we inhabit and the people that we meet can be viewed through the lens of in-groups and out-groups - the groups we are members of and the groups we are not members of. Tajfel and Turner (1986) refer to this as "social identity" - the way that group memberships are internalized and how self-concept influences our sense of self. Allport (1954) was amongst the first to propose the idea that we view the world in terms of 'us' and 'them', or rather, in-groups and out-groups, perhaps the most comprehensive and influential treatment of the subject was provided by Henri Tajfel and his *Social Identity Theory.*

> Moose: "I have a very large nose ring (…), I've got two lip
> rings, a large beard, very long hair, and tattoos. In terms
> of what I look like, people will obviously come to their own
> conclusions."

> Thrash Fan: "I think heavy metal is the biggest part of my
> identity. If I go to school [university], I am still a heavy
> metal person. If I go to airsoft, I still have long hair and

listen to heavy metal. Heavy metal is a part of my identity that I take everywhere, it's not really 'optional' - it 'comes' with me because it *is* me. I'm a metalhead, not that that's the most defining part of my character, but it's definitely something that's around all the time."

The accounts by Moose and Thrash Fan do not do their appearance justice. Moose's description of himself is very straight to the point - people *know* that he is a heavy metal fan as soon as they see him. Standing at 6'3", his long beard, big septum ring, and wearing a band shirt, make him appear like the archetypal and stereotypical heavy metal fan. Even before starting my PhD, when I first met Thrash Fan in secondary school in 2005/2006, he was visibly a heavy metal fan. He wore camo pants, chains, and various band shirts, and was the 'heavy metal kid' in our grade. Both Moose's and Thrash Fan's heavy metal appearance is very *in your face* and obvious.

Tajfel (1978) notes that social identity is part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his or her knowledge of their membership of a social group, together with the emotional significance that is associated with that group's membership. People are constantly engaged in locating themselves in relation to one another and think about themselves in their everyday life and rely on their own self-images, which they continue to develop (Hewitt 2007).

5.4: Material Objects in Metal Identity Expression

Scholars within the disciplines of anthropology, cultural geography, and sociology have shown an increased awareness of the significance of material

objects for some time (Jacobs & Gabriel 2013). The meaning of material objects alone is not able to be obtained purely by studying the objects themselves, but rather, material objects carry cultural meanings which may only become apparent and clear once the objects are examined within the context of their everyday use and appropriation by their consumers (Miller 2008; Jacobs & Gabriel 2013).

Similarly, according to Dant (1999), while anthropologists have long understood the significance to engage with material objects as a means of interpreting the social and cultural meanings of them, sociologists remained somewhat 'agnostic' in this respect for many years. Interest in the materiality of social life stems, therefore, from a desire to examine how the social and material are interrelated in such a way that one is always a reflection of the other, rather than one being the product of another (Jacobs & Gabriel 2013). By trying to understand material culture as an element within social life, the ways in which materiality connect with the aesthetic of popular music, particular in terms of memory and enshrinement in specific personal narratives related to music. Dant (1999: 2) noted that:

"Material *culture provides the evidence of the distinctive form of a society. It provides this evidence because it is an integral part of what that society is (…) material culture ties us to others in our society providing a means of sharing values, activities and styles of life"*

> Bones: "Yeah, I have skulls on my bookshelf, I have a
>
> collection of skulls; so I have a flaming skull, a skull with

a bowler hat, a skull with a rose in its mouth, I have a

coffin mirror - it's a mirror but in a coffin shape with like a

rose vine all the way around. I have a model which is like

a skeleton on a bike (…). We have one rule in the house:

the living room and the kitchen are neutral. So I'm not

allowed any skulls and my boyfriend is not allowed any

cars - because he's a mechanic - so I'm not allowed any

skulls other than on the top floor of the house - the rest is

neutral."

For Bones and her partner, the house is much like a negotiated

space. According to Altman and Gauvin (1981), the way that the home is

personalized, maintained, and how traces of physical activities can be seen,

are all potential sources of information about the people that reside in that

space. The home is a 'primary territory' which is integral to the lives of its

occupants as it affords them with a sense of security and control which is rarely

experienced in such strength in other locations (Altman 1975). Through

decorating their home with heavy metal and car-related artefacts, Bones and

her partner express their sense of 'control' over their four walls and a sense of

pride which is related to their day-to-day activities as they embellish their

home's appearance (Altman & Chemers 1980). Bones' home thus becomes

an extension of her sense of self [and her partner's] and provides a support

for her/their self-image (Harris & Brown 1996). Material objects, things, and

indeed the home itself have been viewed predominantly in terms of their

symbolic meaning of utility – the way they signify things for those who live in the home or how the objects are made use of (Jacobs & Gabriel 2013: 213).

Figure 13: *Metallica*-Fan's Pins

Metallica-Fan: "I bought a new school bag, but for me, it was more about being distinctive and expressing myself - like: yo, I listen to this music. If you had buttons/pins, it was more like you *actually* listen to the music. There were a lot of people in my school who wore *Metallica* shirts from H&M because it looked cool."

Metallica-Fan used pins for her bag when she was in high school. She made use of these pins in order to 'stand out' as a genuine heavy metal fan, unlike

her peers in her school, who would wear heavy metal t-shirts and clothing because of the aesthetic look. *Metallica*-Fan also made reference to her teachers initiating conversations with her regarding her heavy metal identity. Using something as small and innocuous as pin badges was her way of showing that she is an active and genuine heavy metal fan, rather than just someone who wears a heavy metal t-shirt because it 'looks cool'. The bag is not only a functional item which can be used to carry things, but can also be appropriated to act as a creative outlet for identity and community membership throughout everyday life (Campbell 1995). By selectively appropriating objects, people like *Metallica*-Fan discover and create new pathways to creatively rehearse identity. Objects can thus get more personal meaning and significance than originally intended and their personally inscribed aesthetic value replaces the object's original economic value.

A recent shift in the music industry is the re-emergence of live performances as one of music's core products. In a tangible sense, measured by both popularity and revenue, live performance has benefitted from the digital era and now accounts for almost a third of the global revenue of the music industry (Bennet & Rogers 2016). As such, it was not a surprise that participants included concert tickets and other concert memorabilia when discussing the material objects which help express their sense of self.

Me: "Do you keep tickets?"

NIN-Fan: "Yeah, I keep them. They are going to get framed eventually, I was going to make a collage of pictures at gigs with my tickets, but I haven't got quite enough to fill it out just yet. But it will happen. I have kept that one, I have not been to a gig in years before that, and it was phenomenal – I was just standing there with my beer, and my phone, and open mouth at how good they were. Absolutely stormed it. Probably the best gig I have ever been to."

Figure 14: *NIN*-Fan's Concert Tickets
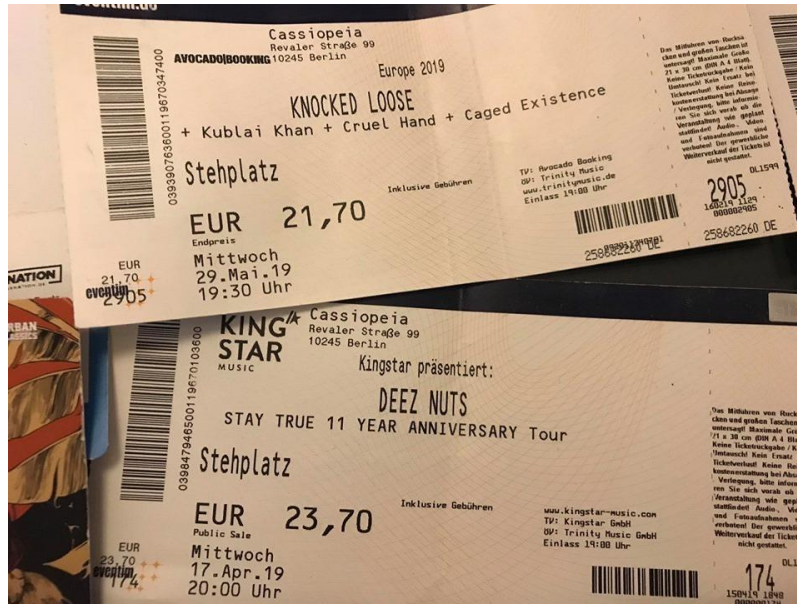
Figure 15: *KL*-Fan's Concert Tickets

Figure 16: *KL*-Fan's Festival Wristbands

KL-Fan also collected several wristbands from *Rock Im Park*, an annual music festival which takes place in Nuremberg. As can be seen from the individual wristbands, she has been to *Rock Im Park* every year since 2016. In terms of band t-shirts, Weinstein (2000) notes that the older the t-shirt, the stronger is the commitment to the music. This can also be applied to *KL*-Fan concert/festival evidence – the more concerts and festivals she attends, the stronger her commitment to heavy metal music. Concert tickets and festival wristbands can be kept by fans as souvenirs. Stewart (1993: 135) describes the souvenir in practical terms:

"The souvenir distinguishes experiences. We do not need or desire souvenirs of events that are repeatable. Rather we need and desire souvenirs of events that are reportable, events whose materiality has escaped us, events that thereby exist only through the invention of narrative"

For Stewart (1993), souvenirs present the collector, or keeper, with both a metonymic piece of a past experience and a prompt to re-enter and re-live the narrative of that particular experience - much like *NIN*-Fan notes that the *Nine Inch Nails* concert was the best concert she has ever attended. There is an excess or surplus of memory, signification, and importance that can be seen to operate in one of two ways. The first, and most immediate, example includes that metonymic attachment: the concert ticket as an integral 'part' of the concert. Once used to gain access to a concert venue, the value of the concert ticket is based almost entirely on memory and the affective experience of the concert. After the concert, the concert ticket is, objectively speaking, just a piece of cardboard with details, the price, the bands which perform, and

times/dates printed onto it. Simultaneously, this objective piece of cardboard is just cursory compared to the affective experience itself. However, the details listed on the ticket can provide the basis for the second function of the ticket: it can act as a record which helps cataloging and displaying/recalling past memories, and as a proof of attendance (Bennet & Rogers 2016).

Figure 17: *Watain*-Fan's *Watain* Tape

Watain-Fan: "It's a video tape and it's been produced 77 times. It was a promo for their first video clip. The cover was placed in some bad-smelling liquid and they put it into a black cover so it looked like a letter bomb. (…). I unpacked it and it wasn't a bomb, and held this thing in my hand – without a band name, but just a bunch of

cryptic symbols. Only over time, I realized what I am

holding. Even the music collection data bases don't know

what it is. The singer [of *Watain*] once told me that

presumably not all 77 tapes are still in circulation, and

some people may not have been as trusting as me and

just threw them away."

By collecting various different items which are related to heavy metal music, each collected item validates and reinforces his heavy metal identity (McCracken 1986; Luna & Gupta 2001). Possessing a lot of memorabilia regarding the band *Watain*, the continuous collecting of such memorabilia becomes a driver in creating and maintaining *Watain*-Fan's self-expression, social standing, and evidence of personal identity continuity (Formanek 1991). On the subject of his wardrobe, which is filled to the brim with band t-shirts and other clothing, there is evidence of the close interrelating relationship between possessions and the individual – and how that individual uses objects to represent and confirm elements of his sense of 'self' (Belk 1998). Rare souvenirs, such as the *Watain* tape, can also be used in positioning for status, and have been termed sub-cultural capital in which objects are used to indicate community membership. Objects which are more difficult to obtain or less frequent in circulation, such as the video tape of which there are only 77 copies, constitute a higher level of sub-cultural capital (Thornton 1995).

Figure 18: Trig and his concert shirt

Trig: "Every time I am at a gig, I always try and buy a t-shirt from that particular tour. I got *Slayer* - the fifth time I saw *Slayer* - was the *World Painted Blood* tour. That's one of the reason I very rarely have sleeves, actually. There's a scar down my arm 'cause I was in the [mosh] pit and someone went *slashing sound* and it just went, ripped into my arm and the sleeve off. Fuck, I'm gonna have to do the other side, someone give me a hand *slashing sound again*, come on. And from there on, I take the sleeves off of most of my shirts - just because it shows off the guns [biceps]. But if it's a t-shirt I don't touch very often, there's a damn good chance that it still has sleeves. All my favorite ones, I've ripped the arms

off. There's a sense of freedom when moving around,

especially at concerts."

The incident of someone ripping his t-shirt's sleeves off at a *Slayer* concert was a catalyst for Trig to rip off all the sleeves off his favorite t-shirts. Trig was one of the few participants who mentioned tour t-shirt and tour merchandise. Merchandise such as tour shirts are some of the most highly valued and sought after objects in the heavy metal culture (Weinstein 2000). Merchandise bought at tours, such as Trig's *Slayer* shirt from the *World Painted Blood* tour are a visible sign of what Weinstein (2000) calls an 'allegiance' to the heavy metal community. By cutting/ripping off the sleeves of the t-shirt, Trig also notes that he since felt a greater freedom in terms of mobility, with the sleeves not 'holding' him back when he moves around. Furthermore, Trig's habitual tendency to remove the sleeves from his t-shirts is a way for him to express himself in a certain aesthetic, which reinforces his own sense of self and heavy metal identity in the process.

Figure 19: *Suffocation*-Fan's Signed Poster

Suffocation-Fan: "My favorite band of all time. In Manchester (…) I was right up at the front, I bought a poster and they signed it. That's like my pride and joy. It's right up on my wall, signed by all members of the band."

Through decorating his room with his *Suffocation* poster purchased at their concert in Manchester, *Suffocation*-Fan created a space that represents his identity as a fan, his community membership within the fan community, and the wider heavy metal community. When looking at the poster, he can feel connected to the concert and the band. At the same time, the poster is an

expression of identity leaking into the surrounding environment through the process of decoration. Additionally, posters on bedroom walls can work in ways which link the past with the present (Strong & Whiting 2018). A reminder of past days, and a sense of continuity [Suffocation-Fan's identity and connection to the band] and are a clear representation of *Suffocation*-Fan's music taste and culture.

> Chemist: "I had a *Slayer* poster. It was a proper old-school one from like the 80s when they first started out - Kerry King has got hair on it - I just like that poster, it was one of the first I got of one of my personal favorite bands. At the time, I was quite focused on playing drums, it was up behind my drum kit and it would always kind of be an inspiration: this is my goal, this is why I do what I do."

Similar to *Suffocation*-Fan, Chemist made use of a poster in order to communicate his sense of self and metal fandom. Much like posters can link the owners past and present (Strong & Whiting 2018), they also have the ability to evoke personal aspirations - Chemist, who plays the drums, used the poster as an inspiration, driven by his connection to the band *Slayer*.
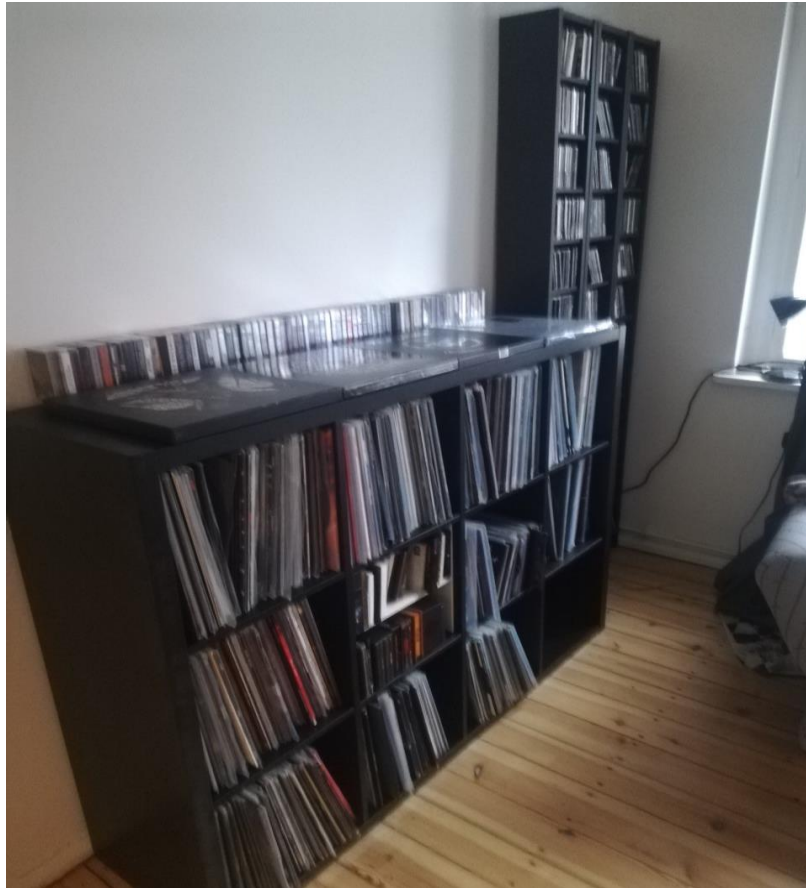
Figure 20: *Watain*-Fan's Album Collection

Watain-Fan: "Currently, I have over 1,200 records. Of that, most of it is CDs - about 60%. My favorite medium however is vinyl - I have approximately 350 - and I have some tapes. I am a big fan of the classic demo tape. I am so happy that more bands are starting to do that again, especially louder things. In black and death metal, I like tapes as it supports the entire aesthetic. (…) I have a lot, and I have never sold one - even though I was in a financial situation where I needed money. I have some special editions, which mean a lot to me."

I Prevail-Fan: "I like to buy albums that I like now. I have *Apple Music* and I like to download quite a lot, it really gives you a chance to listen, and if I really do like the band, I'll acquire the album or vinyl, but it's all financial. When I was last in HMV, I saw that they have *I Prevail's* new album, and I love it, bought the vinyl. I still have a massive CD rack of all the CDs I have ever owned and I would like to have one more and it's something that I am planning to do. In many ways, it's a facet of who you are. I very much like to surround my living space with things that I like and like to look at."

Figure 21: Part of *I Prevail*-Fan's Music Collection

CDs and vinyl were another discussion point for participants. Whilst the majority of participants mentioned that they collect CDs to some degrees, the extent of the conversation revolved around participants' favorite CDs/records. There were only a handful participants who reported that they actively bought CDs and vinyl as they are released - this does not mean that the remaining participants are passive consumers of heavy metal music, but rather, simply do not collect music to the same extent. Shuker (2014) notes that purchasing the different forms of music such as CDs and vinyl for example, is important to the consumption of music. Collecting CDs and records can be seen as a form of control over one's music and capital, which allows metal fans to enjoy their music at any time they wish (Shuker 2014). These physical artefacts are able to act as a form of evidence of group identity - possessing heavy metal music in its concrete and physical form showcases a level of authenticity and involvement in the culture.

Collecting music also demonstrates substantial knowledge of the genre and acts as a form of cultural capital. Dunn et al. (2005) notes that there is something 'authentic' about having physical copies of music. CDs can be displayed in shelves around the house, further exhibiting one's identity as a metal fan and one's relationship with heavy metal music (Snell 2012).

5.5: The Body in the Expression of Identity

Since the 1960s, body modification - tattooing in particular - has witnessed an increase in popularity (Orend & Gagné 2009). Whilst a t-shirt or hoodie can be thrown into the laundry basket after being worn and then stowed away in the

wardrobe for extended periods of time, changes to the body such as tattoos and piercings are permanent and remain visible. This section will explore the way that participants use their body in their expression of identity through body modification practices such as tattooing and through piercings.

5.5.1: Tattoos

Tattoos have, in the Western world, been predominantly been associated with sailors, criminals, and members of the lower social classes (Govenar 2000). By tattooing, people are able to express their identities in a social manner, and can communicate with others through their body, helping them express who they are (Ferreira 2011). Western society has an extensive history of individualism and placing an emphasis on expression, self-experience, social recognition, and performance by permanently inscribing into it (Burkitt 2008; Ferreira 2011).

Although tattooing is a way of constructing one's body in a desired image, it is also a phenomenon which reflects cultural influences (Kosut 2000: 80). The body is the principle means by which others know us and the way we can distinguish ourselves. Giddens (1991) notes that the body is not just a physical entity which we possess, it is an action system, or mode of praxis, and its practical immersion in the interactions of day-to-day life is an integral part of the sustaining of a coherent sense of self-identity. The meanings of tattoos are often derived from, or related to, the bearer's self-identity (Kosut 2000: 90).

My first interaction with *Suffocation*-Fan was in the middle of my data collection in the summer of 2019, visiting a cinema in Bradford, where he was working at the time. *Suffocation*-Fan had his sleeves rolled up and his tattoo was visibly on show. It was during another visit to the same cinema, when he was working again, that I introduced myself as a doctoral student and he seemed interested in participating in my project. Our initial interactions highlight the interactional nature of material objects, tattoos in this case, and having a mutual affinity towards a certain band, eliciting feelings of belonging and community when shared with other people (Bradley 2000).

Figure 22: *Suffocation*-Fan's *Suffocation* Tattoo

Suffocation-Fan: "I saw *Suffocation* a few years later (…),

they were playing with *Nile* in Manchester. I didn't have

my tattoo the first time I've seen them, but then I did. I

was a bit drunk at the time and forgot my tattoo was on

show, so when I was buying the t-shirt with the *Despise*

The Sun artwork, I was there, passing him my money and the guitarist, Terrence Hobbs, gripped my wrist and he's like 'holy shit, man, your tattoo' and I'm like 'oh shit, I forgot I had it'. He's got his phone out, took a photo, and called the other members of the band to come and have a look at it and they're taking photos."

Watain-Fan: "I have the *Watain* trident on my neck. I've had it for about half a year. I have the cover of the last *Necrophobic* album on my right calf. It's not that old. I have been reluctant to get band tattoos for a while because I've always found it… I don't know, too much. And I can't even tell you why that's changed. I guess these bands have accompanied me for a while now and have given me strength, have helped me when I felt like shit, have given me strength when I felt good, but also at times have influenced my worldview quite a bit – or even inspiration. It's become like, it's so much of a part of me, I can show it. I think it's exactly what a tattoo should be."

Figure 23: *Watain*-Fan's *Watain* Trident Tattoo

Figure 24: *Watain*-Fan's *Necrophobic* Album Cover Tattoo

Figure 25: *Watain*-Fan's *Necrophobic* Album Cover Tattoo (Sideview)

The act of getting a tattoo is a powerful way of drawing together people, places, events, and asserting one's relationship towards a community (Te Awekotuku et al. 2007). *Watain*-Fan's tattoos are embodied statements and expressions of identity and community membership, as a fan of *Watain* and *Necrophobic*. His tattoos have the ability to trace the history of his participation and relationships with the bands, and express his claims to belonging to

specific social groups and communities (Snell 2012). While he notes that the tattoos are a part of him that he can show, his tattoos do not only represent his self-image in day-to-day life as an active heavy metal fan, but also showing loyalty towards the band, and act as an expressive medium of aesthetic expression (Sanders 1998). Furthermore, *Watain*-Fan's account follow Smith's (1990; 1994), Brown and Duguid's (1996), and Frohmann's (2004) notion that tattoos have a social function. This idea stems from the presumption that tattoos have the ability to speak to its surroundings about who the individual bearer is and where they culturally 'come from'.

Figure 26: *BMTH*-Fan's Umbrella Tattoo

BMTH-Fan's tattoo depicts the umbrella which is displayed on the album cover of *Bring Me The Horizon's* 2015 release *That's The Spirit*. Underneath it is the

phrase 'Don't let me drown', which is a line in one of their songs. She told me that her and her best friend got this as a matching tattoo as they are both fans of *Bring Me The Horizon* and the idea that the album covers themes such as mental health, speaks to them on a personal level. Having had several interactions with *BMTH*-Fan over the course of my research, some of their other albums, most notably *Suicide Season*, which was released in 2008, had profound influences on her heavy metal music preference and heavy metal identity.

Figure 27: Slam Drummer's Shanghai-Forest Tattoo

Figure 28: Slam Drummer's Shanghai-Forest Tattoo (side view)

The two tattoos shown above depict the outline of the skyline of Shanghai, China. Running through and above the skyline is a forest theme. While he notes that there is no particular heavy metal association or meaning in terms of heavy metal, the forest makes the tattoo "quite metal". Other tattoos Slam Drummer has include a quote of the band *The Agonist* and a tattoo dedicated to his mother. Tattoos mark and maintain memories and can act as a form of permanent documentation of important events and affiliations (Kosut 2000). Having lived in Shanghai, Slam Drummer thus links having lived there and the experiences he had while living there permanently on his body. Tattoos are not limited to external representations of internal phenomena, showing things *happening inside* an individual's mind, but also are a way of portraying parts of the external world on the skin (Back 2004). In other words, the body is

shaped, decorated, and altered in order to reflect interactions with other people, places, objects, and events.

Sanders (1998: 222) divides having tattoos into five distinct categories. First, the tattoo is a symbol of an interpersonal relationship. Tattoos can be chosen with someone else, much like *BMTH*-Fan and her friend got matching tattoos, or a partner's name, or relationships. Second, displaying loyalty – much like *Watain*-Fan has a tattoo of an album cover and a trident of the band *Watain*. Third, the intention of representing one's primary interests or activities which showcase one's day-to-day life. Fourth, self-image – meaning the tattoo represents some part of one's individual identity. Lastly, decorative and aesthetic expression, such as choosing a design which is aesthetically pleasing.

Having a tattoo that is influenced by heavy metal marks the wearer as a member of the heavy metal community (Weinstein 2000). Heavy metal tattoos may represent relevant bands, musicians, and link the wearer to specific places, events, people, and experiences. When discussing tattoos, the wearer of the tattoo takes the viewer on what Snell (2012: 105) called a 'tour' of their bodyscape. This tour is not only about the body of the person, but also about the wearer's cultural place in the world, and the events and experiences which are central to their social identity as metal fans and as a person.

5.5.2: Piercings

Body piercing is defined as the cosmetic piercing of any part of the body with the aim to be able to insert objects such as rings, studs, or pins into the hole created (Holbrook et al. 2012). *KL*-Fan talked about her tunnels and her usage of them in her everyday life. Tunnels are worn in stretched earlobes, and *KL*-Fan has a variety of tunnels stored away which she can put in at any time she pleases. She told me her current tunnel size is 20mm, which she considers 'relatively big'. The practice of body stretching and earlobe piercings is a relatively new fashion trend in the Western world (Williams & Majumder 2010). African tribes have, for centuries, pierced ears and placed gradually increasing disks into the earlobes, hung weights from the ears and placed increasing numbers of bands around one's neck in order to stretch it out, and to stretch tissues out for aesthetic purposes (Williams & Majumder 2010).

Figure 29: *KL*-Fan's Tunnels

Responding to the question whether or not she gets reactions from people - metal fans and non-metal fans - regarding her piercings, *KL*-Fan responded:

> *KL*-Fan: "Yeah, way too much. Way too much… It sucks. I have 20mm tunnels, they're relatively big as you can see, and it's always quite funny when some people, which doesn't happen in Berlin so often but when I was home over Christmas, someone just stuck their finger in my ear. Things like that happen. Also people who like to touch your hair, where I am thinking: 'just ask' - just like with my ears. I'm sorry, but no. I don't want a stranger's finger in my ear. Also quite often, people who, I think I

was 16 when I started getting piercings. When I was 16, I got my septum pierced, and back then it was still like a 'bulls [nose] ring' and it was honestly no nice reactions from classmates, I was an outsider anyways so it didn't matter, and then from other people who thought [and said] 'it looks like a booger'. Nowadays, it seems like every other person has a septum piercing and it's acceptable like 'wow that looks so cool and it's so nice'. I think it depends. Especially with tunnels and dreads, you get told a lot of things. (…). I come from quite a conservative part of Germany, I often hear things like 'you must really like pain' - where I think: that doesn't have anything to do with it."

KL-Fan made reference to some of the differences to Berlin, where she lived and studied at the time of our interview, and her hometown, in the south of Germany - in many respects more traditional and conservative - and the difference between those two places. She also made reference to some of her peers' reactions to her piercings in school, and the bullying nature of kids and teenagers - 'it looks like a booger' - in a school environment. *KL*-Fan also hinted at the change of views within society, with piercings being more accepted these days than before.

Scotty: "People are like: 'will that ever grow back?', 'are you ever gonna have normal ears again?', 'how big are you going to go?'. And people will be like 'can I stick my finger in your ear?' – that I don't mind, as long as I know them"

Figure 30: Scotty's Facial Piercings

Scotty's piercings are a very noticeable and prominent feature of his physical appearance. What cannot be seen in the photo is that Scotty has several holes and piercings in both ears, even having stretched out the cartilage at the top of one of his ears. He mentioned that people show a high level of curiosity to his piercings, his ear lobes in particular, further highlighting the interactional nature of material objects.

Figure 31: Moose and his Piercings

Moose: "My nose piercing is very difficult to ignore. It's very much like a bull ring, it's very much in your face. So because of that, I tend to get quite extreme reactions to the piercing itself. It is very arresting visually. Some people react with 'that's a cool piercing' and sometimes I see people talking behind their hands. And it's just something that shows me that I would not want to associate with these kind of people."

Moose, who besides from the septum piercing also has two rings in his lips and a pierced tongue made reference to his piercings eliciting reactions from people - both positive and negative reactions. Through experiencing negative

reactions, Moose made reference to how that is an indicator of whether or not he wishes to associated with such people.

Similarly, Tine was very vocal about her piercings. Tine used her piercings as a way 'rebel'. Growing up in a fairly strict household, where she was not allowed to even dye her hair until she was 18, Tine uses her piercings as a form of expression of the 'liberation' of being old enough to get pierced. She also notes that her father does not know about the majority of her piercings. While studying at the Open University at the time of our interview and simultaneously working as a bar manager, Tine noted that she does not feel that her appearance hinders her job prospects. She was very vocal about if somebody does not wish to hire her based on her looks, rather than her skills and qualifications, she does not want any business with them. While Tine's responses reinforce the notion of heavy metal being rebellious in nature (Weinstein 2000), there is also strong evidence of her own (and in his case, Moose's) values. Evidently, such elements of identity play in tandem with one another, rather than being isolated experiences.

> *Metallica*-Fan: "I would like to stretch my ears but not too
> big - maybe 6mm. I probably won't do that [soon], though,
> because I am not sure about future employment. My
> [septum] piercing is the only visible thing at the moment."

At the time of our interview, *Metallica*-Fan's septum, along with some other ear piercings, was the only piercing she possessed. A few weeks after our

interview, she began to stretch her ear lobes, as she expressed in the interview. At the same time, she showed an acute awareness of job prospects and employment with piercings in the medical field, as some people and employers may still be relatively conservative regarding body modification and how employees should present themselves. Despite being the youngest participant for my study, she showed a strong awareness of body modification and the field of work she may be going into. *Metallica*-Fan noted that if, after completing university, if she works in a lab and it doesn't matter what she looks like, she'd consider getting a visible tattoo and stretching her ears out to 6mm. If she works for a company where she has to work with a lot of clients or goes into academia and needs to look more professional, she mentioned she will worry about that closer to the time.

> Archer: "I work with internationals a lot and I think that's one of the reasons I dress smart all the time - the office dress when you work with internationals is super smart. What I found sometimes, when I do exhibitions overseas, or important visitors coming here, I remove my facial piercings - and not look as intimidating. Once I forgot and I was doing an exhibition in Africa and the kids were asking more about my tongue piercing or my facial piercing more than the course I was trying to tell them. So it was more of a distraction than my actual job role was. When I go to my normal meetings (…), I keep them in everyday because it's less hassle. But also because

people have grown used to me and know what I can do. (…) The only time, apart from the bullying nature of high school, I've experienced a bit of fear from me in my professional life is from people who aren't from Britain, and one of my colleagues who was from South Korea, when she first started with me, she was scared by me before she got to know me - because she saw the facial piercings. She said to me, months later down the line, "I didn't know what to do. Who is this girl, sat there, with all these scary things in her face, yet was trying to help me all the time" and obviously, she became educated in the fact that facial piercings didn't make me any more intimidating. The stares that you get in other countries - Africa, China, the Middle East - are quite intense because they haven't had people in charts with piercings."

Similarly, on the subject of employment, Archer also noted that she used to have 21 piercings, but has since 'gone down' to 17. She also mentioned her tattoos do not tend to cause any problems in her day-to-day life and at work, however she tends to remove her facial piercings when interacting with international clients at work. Archer also made reference to clients from international backgrounds have different views on facial piercings, as she suggests is due to people having less exposure to people with piercings through popular culture mediums such as music. As noted in Chapter Two, heavy metal music spread through Europe, North America, and Australia and

New Zealand before spreading through to the remaining parts of the world (Dehart 2018). Whilst this is only the case for heavy metal, never gaining the following in Africa and the Middle East as in Europe and North America, this may also the be the case for other forms of popular music, where body modification practices are common - resulting in countries in Africa and far-East Asia not being exposed to the same level of Western influence in popular culture.

5.5.3: Hairstyles

In Chapter Four, Moose mentioned that he had a mohican, which resulted in people cross the street to avoid crossing his path. Through this display of identity, Moose experienced a sense of power and made him feel like an ambassador to the subculture. Other participants modified their hairstyles in order to express themselves creatively.

> Navigator: "It were a glorious day, I said: 'right, I'm going
> to get a mohawk', my wife said 'what?' and I went to the
> barber and got a mohawk. I've had it for a few years and
> it was a variety of colors."

> Me: "What kind of reactions did you get to it? Did people
> react to it?"

> Navigator: "Young kids, they were like 'look at that man's
> hair, mummy'. And then you got a few teenagers who

were like 'hahaha you're sooo funny' - fuck off. You'd get

a little snide comment, but it was mainly teenagers who

were acting up."

Navigator mentioned the responses he received from strangers, mainly kids and teenagers. Wanting to go into teaching at the time of our interview, he also commented on appearances, in particular in terms of his mohawk and earrings and stretched ear lobes:

Navigator: "Because of where I want to work, which is a

little bit wrong in my eyes, you want to be ticking boxes -

if you wanna work in a school, you can't have bright red

hair, you can't have visible tattoos. You're supposed to

be teaching to be an individual who can make the world

a better place but you have to sit in this stereotype."

Navigator made an interesting comment, pointing out the contradiction of teaching: whilst young people are encouraged to be individuals who can make a difference, the people who are supposed to nurture this are required to fit certain criteria of how teachers should be like - another instance of people having to de-emphasize their individual identities.

Metallica-Fan: "I know my name isn't easy to pronounce

for English speakers [at university], so [dyeing hair] was

something pragmatic. I've also always wanted to do it. It's got practical reasons, too - I'll be the girl with blue hair."

Scotty: "When I came up to study [at university], I was like: ah, fuck it. I've wanted it for a while, I'm gonna be away from home so I might as well just get it done. Like it's me being me, sort of thing."

Both *Metallica*-Fan and Scotty both changed their hairstyle when first going to university for pragmatic reasons. Both of them mentioned that they wished to change their hairstyles for a long time, and being at university, provided them with an opportunity to do so. Furthermore, through altering their hairstyles, both *Metallica*-Fan and Scotty were able to express themselves as individuals within their social environment. Much like music can be used to showcase individuality (Laiho 2002), changing their hairstyles allowed for *Metallica*-Fan and Scotty to showcase their individuality.

Tine: "I started dyeing my hair when I was 17, and it was a teenage revolution. (…) I was walking down the street and a little girl told her mum that I'm a 'Rainbow Lady' - she's not wrong. When I had multicolored hair, and like shaved the side of my hair, old guys told me I looked really punk or that I had punk in me, which is pretty cool. I get stopped in the street a lot and get told they like my hair. But I generally get positive comments about my hair,

some people tell me that if I want to go into business and

accounting, it's going to stop me along the way, but I'm

of the opinion that if someone doesn't wanna hire me for

my qualifications and what I can do, then they have no

business with me."

Tine mentioned some encounters she has had with people in the streets, including a little girl telling her mother Tine is a 'Rainbow Lady' due to her colorful hair and older music fans telling her she has some punk aesthetics, which Tine appreciates. As mentioned in the section about piercings, Tine applies her mindset of: "if someone doesn't wanna hire me for my qualifications and what I can do, then they have no business with me" in regards to her hair in a similar fashion as with her piercings and tattoos.

5.6: Heavy Metal Identities and Everyday Social Interactions

The previous section examined the use of participants' material objects in their expression of their metal identities in everyday life. This section builds upon some of the ideas brought forward in the previous section: social interactions as a result of shared appreciation of tastes and culture. Throughout the course of our everyday life, we encounter many situations which present us with opportunities for social interactions with other people (Capozzi & Ristic 2018). While we do not interact with everyone we encounter throughout our day, we choose the social exchanges and interactions we have based on a multitude of factors which includes context, familiarity, interest, or availability. At the basic level, social interactions involve communicative signals which are

displayed by other humans which offer opportunities for social interactions to occur (Loveland 1991).

> Thrash Fan: "I wore a *Slipknot* hoodie in a tram in Helsinki and a drunken old guy came up to me and said: 'hey, do you listen to real music?', and I said 'yeah, I do'. So he played some *Iron Maiden* and was like 'do you know what this shit is?', I'm like 'yeah, it's *Iron Maiden*, it's what I grew up with', and he went 'Ah right, you're okay'. So he kind of started off a bit, not hostile, but agitated, but as soon as we kind of understood that I understand the heritage and culture, he was immediately accepting and embracing."

Thrash Fan further noted that Finland is a 'no small-talk kind of place' and people usually do not tend to go out of their way to initiate interactions, therefore he is 'on his own' in terms of being a metal fan. People automatically and reliably regulate the distance maintained between themselves and others throughout social interaction (Kennedy et al. 2009). Personal space can also be described as an emotionally tinged zone which is located around one's body, which can vary in its size and dimension depending on one's circumstances - individuals do, however, feel a sense of 'ownership' in regards to their personal space (Dosey & Meisels 1969; Sommer 2002).

Chemist: "People who have an appreciation for that band will come to me and say 'you're into *Cannibal Corpse'*, 'you're into *Chelsea Grin*' or whatever, and they might start having a conversation and I find myself doing that to other people as well. Or if you see someone who wears a t-shirt from a particular tour and you were on that tour or that particular event, then you kind of got something in common, you might approach them."

Moose: "It's that shared sense of experience and shared understanding of what the music is about. It gives you a pass into that subculture. If you said to me '*Suffocation* is a great band', I would immediately bypass two or three levels of conversation with you and we could have a friendly conversation. You could use that, 'social foreplay' I would say, because it is a subcultural indicator and I could go and presume a number of things about this person, and one of the main ones will be: they are receptive to me talking. Because if they wear a metal t-shirt, it's really rare that someone would say 'that's a sick band' or 'really cool t-shirt' and the response to that would be 'leave me alone'. That doesn't happen."

Both Moose and Chemist made reference to the fact that people strike up conversations based on heavy metal identities displayed in a visual manner or

appreciating heavy metal music and certain bands. With both accounts, there was an underlying sense of: if you are a metal fan, you should not be surprised when someone initiates a conversation and tries to interact with you. Furthermore, Moose made reference to mutual appreciation for heavy metal becomes an ice breaker, allowing people to skip the niceties and being able to delve into a proper conversation.

> *ATB*-Fan: "You instantly can connect with people - only from wearing a t-shirt and it opens up so many doors to new conversations, even people who you've never spoken to before feel more comfortable opening up to you"

ATB-Fan's account was a very pertinent in regards to the interactional nature of heavy metal music and being a heavy metal fan. I originally met *ATB*-Fan while queuing up to see the band *After The Burial* in Manchester in August 2019. Chemist and I were in front of *ATB*-Fan in the queue outside the venue, and our conversation and subsequent interactions throughout the evening were based on conversations about *After The Burial* and different concert venues in Manchester. Additionally, we all seemed to bond over all of us traveling from Yorkshire to Manchester. It was before the concert began, that I struck up another conversation with *ATB*-Fan, as we had temporarily dispersed after getting into the venue. He quickly agreed to participate and seemed pretty excited to be a part of the study. Adding on to Moose's point in terms of interactions, this encounter was perhaps so smooth as we were able

to bypass a certain level of conversation due to our mutual understandings of the heavy metal scene in Manchester and the bands we have seen. If I would have seen *ATB*-Fan at the supermarket where we both would be minding each other's business, for instance, I doubt, our interactions would not have taken place as they have at the *After The Burial* concert.

As noted previously, throughout the course of social life and subsequent interactions, people are constantly engaged in locating themselves in relation to others. People tend to think about themselves throughout their everyday life, and in doing so, they rely on their self-image, which they continuously develop (Hewitt 2007). When people come together and share a moment or social interaction together, they establish a situated identity with great ease. We readily identify with others and place them in relation to one another (Hewitt 2007: 96). Situated identity can be regarded as the taking on of different roles which we play in the different social settings that make up and encompass our social lives, and how our behavior can radically change depending on the situation and the people that are around us. In other words, our behavior has the ability to change for every different situation which we find ourselves in (Hewitt 2007).

Our capacity to act according to our identity in that moment in time, rests and relies on the establishment of a situated identity. Lacking the response from another person who acknowledges our possession of a situated identity, means that we are not able to meaningfully act in terms of that identity, or get others to act in terms of theirs (Hewitt 2007). Going back to the concert in

Manchester where I first met *ATB*-Fan, sharing my identity as a researcher but also heavy metal fan, allowed for the sharing of more information about my research, while *ATB*-Fan listened to what I had to say – subsequently becoming a participant in my study. Furthermore, our shared heavy metal identities can be used as a resource in the establishment of group memberships, as we are a part of the larger heavy metal community, and feelings of safety (DeChaine 2002).

5.7: Chapter Discussions

The aim of this chapter was to explore how our cohort of heavy metal fans use the music in their day-to-day lives, express their heavy metal identities - with a particular focus on how material objects and the body aid in the process -, and social interactions occurring in everyday life as a result of expressing heavy metal identities. This chapter also aimed to help address Research Question One, how heavy metal fans use the music to help construct and express their identities. Whilst identities develop cumulatively, a person's sense of self tends to remain stable and consistent over the course of time. There are, however, elements of change as people interact with one another and gain experiences through such interactions over the course of their lifetime (Hermans 2001). Furthermore, through some of the social interactions occurring, a sense of community may develop - more of which will be explored in the upcoming chapter.

With the technological advancements of the last decades, the consumption of music is now as easy as it ever has been as it is no longer restricted to live

performances and physical formats such as vinyl and CDs, but also readily available through streaming platforms, which participants noted they make use of. Listening to music while walking home from work, for example, has been found to help fade out the surrounding environments and increase listeners' levels of involvement with the music itself (Kallinen & Ravaja 2007). This elicits a more 'immersive' and 'intense' listening experience, and if combined with exercise, listeners may experience a boost in energy levels (Schönhamer 1988).

According to Social Identity Theory, people hope to maintain a positive social identity, which in turn leads to positive evaluations of the self. Group membership allows a person to recall all of the advantages and positive aspects which are associated with a particular group (Nezlek & Smith). Furthermore, Social Identity Theory hypothesizes that people enhance their social identity by comparing their in-group with other out-groups. To be able to boost their positive sense of self, people may highlight the differences between their group and other groups, by placing a particular focus on their group's distinctiveness (Deschamps & Devos 1999). Belonging to a specific social group also allows for members to interact with one another in an easier manner. At this point, is also important to note that membership may be ascribed or attained. Ascribed memberships are categories such as race, nationality, and gender, while attained memberships are what people actively seek or aspire to be - such as sports clubs, political organizations.

Social Identity researchers have found that individuals who identify with a group have strong attachments to the group as a whole, regardless of individual attachments within the group (Hogg and Hardie 1992). In other words, people can feel attached to a group even if they do not know any of the members within it. In order to create a feeling of collectivity, people need to have at least one thing in common, no matter how vague or mundane it is (Jenkins 2004). Jenkins (2004: 84) argues that there are two types of collectivity. In the first type, members of a group can identify themselves as members of that particular group. In the second type, members of a group may not be aware of their membership of the group, or even acknowledge the group's existence. Given this, the first type of collective exists because it is recognized by its members, while the second type of collective is based on the recognition of observers. Group identity is thus the product of a collective internal definition (Jenkins 2004: 84).

The home is a centralized place which is used by people to express individual identity or a symbol of the self (Duncan 1981). Homes can be sites for material goods. Such objects are both an expression of individual identity and the social relationships people have with others, and linking people to others and their communities (Csikszentmhalyi & Rochberg-Halton 1981; Jackson & Moores 1995). Material objects and their socially constructed meanings transform places like the home into a representation of the inhabitants and their personal and collective identities and symbols (Giorgio et al. 2007). Throughout interviews, some participants displayed a sense of pride in their material possessions. Concert tickets mentioned by *NIN*-Fan and *KL*-Fan in particular,

were subjects where participants became more excited about talking about their objects. Other material objects, such as *Metallica*-Fan's pin badges, for instance, can be used to emphasize a level of commitment towards heavy metal and being seen as an authentic metal fan – wearing the badges almost like a badge of honor, which displays group membership (Weinstein 2000).

Connections and affiliations towards communities can be represented tangibly via material objects (Garner 2004). Collections of objects represent a person's self at a given point in time. Material objects can also evoke notions of time and place, and can be seen as physical manifestations of interactions and experiences (Radley 1990). This was examined and discussed through the concept of souvenirs. Souvenirs serve as mementos of events and places, a way of physically connecting people to places, other people, and different times. Souvenirs remind the owner of the place they represent, the time that was spent there, and can be used to communicate this with others (Stewart 1993; Morgan & Pritchard 2005).

In regards to expressing heavy metal identities, some participants made reference regarding not *appearing* metal. Chemist, for example, noted that he does not associate the visual aspect with his music habits.

> Chemist: "I kind of see them as two separate things.
> Yeah, if I enjoy a band's music, I like to buy their merch,
> but I don't really see myself as someone who dresses up
> as a heavy metal fan. I just keep those things separate."

Megadeth-Fan told me that it's his style as a person is not particularly heavy metal, unless he wears one of the metal shirts he possesses. While both Chemist and *Megadeth*-fan are not visible heavy metal fans, they still very much consider themselves as part of the community. This ties in with the concept of Anderson's 'imagined community', which will also be explored in the upcoming chapter. The lack of visibility does not necessarily diminish fan's experience of the culture, and the distinction between 'visible' fans and 'invisible' fans will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Eight.

While not all participants participated in body modification, some were open to the idea of getting a tattoo or piercing their ears at some point in their life. The participants that had heavy metal tattoos mentioned that the tattoos help them express who they are. *Watain*-Fan made reference about bands 'being there' when he was feeling at his lowest and at his best, and to him, getting a tattoo of the band is a monument of their importance for him. Fruh and Thomas (2012) see the mere acquisition of tattoos by people who wish to individuate themselves from others as evidence 'people are clearly associating their bodies with their personal identity', in support of somatic accounts of personal identity, although they concede that 'many people acquire tattoos as a way of sublimating their individuality, to further integrate their identity into a bounded social group'. Falkenstein (2012) pointed out we have limited control over how our bodies change, and a tattoo is not an accident or natural mark on one's body but a result of a choice made at a certain point in time.

Performing and experiencing interactions with others does not only occur through similarities, but also through differences (Jovchelovitch 2007). People may also tend to focus on the emphasis of being different in order to establish themselves as community members and communicating this to other's (Adler & Adler 1995). Metal fans emphasize a sense of difference through the establishment of the generalized mainstream. The mainstream is constructed and perceived as a homogenous group which is a combination of fashion and commerciality (Jancovich et al. 2003). They position themselves in this way to create a sense of difference and distinction and to impart value to their heavy metal identity.

By sharing and appreciating aesthetic tastes and musical interests with others, people are drawn together which allows them to establish personal relations and community/group affiliations (Marti 2009). People have a desire to feel that their community membership is worthwhile, meaningful, and positive. Thus, there is oftentimes an emphasis on similarity between personal sense of self and the perceived values which are upheld by a community or group (Tajfel 1981). By doing so, people can feel that their group membership is worthwhile and throughout the process, they can experience feelings of community and belonging (Tajfel 1981). As individuals, we are born into a world that is comprised of social relationships, but we do not have a say into which culture we are born into. What we do have choice over however, is the different identities we take on and how we choose to present ourselves throughout everyday life. Through the use of material objects, people can present their identity meaningfully while at the same time, the self is brought

forward into the social, communal world, where it is shared with other people (Hermans 2001).

One theme which became more apparent was the notion of authenticity in relation to participants' perception of themselves. Female participants in particular made reference to their authenticity being questioned, which will be explored in more depth in Chapter Seven on the gendered experience of heavy metal. Furthermore, some of the participants made reference to not *appearing* heavy metal, thus not being perceived as authentic metal fans. Through the use of material objects, metal fans are afforded with opportunities to engage with members of both their in-group - other metal fans - and members of the out-group - members from outside of their community through the means of differentiating oneself and one's group with another. The iconography and symbolism of band logos and more stereotypically, skulls and demons, are a way of defining and expressing community in contrast to other groups (Brown 2007; Snell 2012). This is particularly the case with heavy metal, a culture which opposes the 'mainstream' and to some extent, enjoys its marginal and fringe position within broader society - with heavy metal material objects and associated symbolism becoming much like a 'badge of honor' (Weinstein 2000: 271).

The everyday life consists of a variety of different communities, situations, and places which people encounter as they move through their day-to-day life (Hodgetts et al. 2010b). In this chapter, I have conceptualized an understanding of the role of heavy metal music and its influence on our proud

pariah's identity. The elements I examined have been the use of music in everyday life, the use of material objects, and how the body can be modified in order to visibly belong to a particular community. One point that emerged and became apparent throughout this chapter was that the processes of identity and interactions are linked with the feeling and sense of community and belonging. As people go about their daily lives, they extend their personal identities into communal life for people to see, yet at the same time, draw and rely upon their community memberships in the construction of their own sense of self (Kroger 1996; Hodgetts et al. 2010a).

In light of ongoing social interactions participants are faced with, the notion of community arose, which will be explored in more detail in the upcoming chapter on the experience of community and feeling of belonging to the heavy metal community through the music.

CHAPTER SIX - EXPERIENCING BELONGING AND COMMUNITY THROUGH HEAVY METAL MUSIC

6.1: Introduction

The previous chapter explored how our cohort of metal fans make use of heavy metal music and associated material culture and artefacts in order to aid in the expression of their metal identities and communal affiliations in the course of their everyday life. Throughout their everyday lives, our participants are faced with countless situations and scenarios which require social interactions. Through such interactions, their identities are questioned, established, and reinforced. Furthermore, through ongoing social interactions, a sense of belonging and community may result on the basis of mutual appreciation of heavy metal music, culture, and aesthetics.

The aim of this chapter is to explore and examine how feelings of belonging and a sense of community is experienced by our participants. Sharing and appreciating certain aesthetic and musical tastes allows individuals to establish personal relationships, connect with others, and reinforce one's group affiliations and communal ties (Snell 2012). Some data in the previous chapter contained elements of the sense of community which arises through mutual appreciation of heavy metal music, therefore, this chapter will explore this phenomenon further. This chapter is split into five parts. The continuation of part one will explore heavy metal as an imagined community as conceptualized through the work of Benedict Anderson (1983). Part two examines how participants experience a sense of community through heavy

metal fandom. Part three will examine heavy metal concerts as sites for community and explore communal practices such as moshing at concerts and the physical nature of moshing as a form of dance. Part four will explore the role of being involved in bands, whilst part five will be chapter discussions.

6.1.1: Heavy Metal as an Imagined Community

The idea of the imagined community weaved its way into sociological literature through the works of Anderson in the 1980s. Anderson's (1983) '*Imagined Communities*' provided a macro-level analysis of by which nationalism arose and spread throughout contemporary Europe. Anderson's account was distinguished in particular by its focus on the imagined quality of nations - an emphasis which reflected his concern with the emergence of a new way of experiencing community based on indirect social relationships, rather than face-to-face interactions and relationships (Calhoun 1991).

Anderson (1983: 15) explained this idea of the nation in the following terms: 'It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion'. For Anderson, the social conditions that made this national form of community 'imaginable' for the individual were the emergence of 'print- language' (1983: 122), in interaction with capitalism and human linguistic diversity (1983: 46). Anderson's (1983) suggestion that communities - even local ones - may be imagined has been utilized in the field of ethnomusicology.

Much like within a nation-state, members of the 'imagined community' regard themselves as members of the same community, even if they do not have any perceivable or mutual history with one another, however their communal history is what brings unity. This notion, is also applicable to heavy metal music and culture. Whilst members of the culture may not know one another, their mutual affiliation to the culture and appreciation of it gives them meaning and a sense of belonging. Notions of being members of such an imagined community have been present in the previous two chapters - interactions based on social interactions, and participants' involvement with their friendship group in the context of heavy metal music and the potential and readiness for social interactions.

6.2: Experiencing Community Through Heavy Metal Music

Whilst conducting interviews, every participant was asked the following question: 'do you feel/think heavy metal provides a sense of community?' - with responses from *ATB*-Fan, *BMTH*-Fan, *KL*-Fan, and *Metallica*-Fan highlighted below:

> *ATB*-Fan: "For me, it's hard, it's like having an extension of your family. (…) I've never really had that male rough-and-tough bonding, it was only me and my mom and sister. Going to gigs, I'm being involved, [it] makes me feel like I've got a father figure around, but with lots and lots of different people, I do the things I should've done as a child with my father - that rough and tough playing

with my dad. But it's a completely different situation, if that make sense? It's euphoric. (…) Everybody is so connected, you're all there for the same reason, and it doesn't matter if you're 50 or 15, people are going to invite you in - and it's great."

BMTH-Fan: "I feel like it's an accepting community because you don't have to present yourself as your typical metal fan, but if everyone is going to a concert, like if everyone is seeing *Metallica* in concert, everyone is there for the same thing. Everyone is there for the music, they like the lyrics, they like come together. Metalheads are some of the nicest people I've ever met, not gonna lie."

KL-Fan: "Yeah, I think it's also joy… because normally, the average person doesn't listen to that music, and then it's like: 'whoa cool, I've found someone who also listens to this' and that's pretty cool. So I'd say it's joy and somewhat an expectation that you can also talk about other bands. Maybe it's also a bit of curiosity, which bands you may discover through talking to people for a longer period of time. (…) It's a nice feeling, the feeling of community."

> *Metallica*-Fan: "I think it's like having something in common: something you can talk about and you have funny stories to share. You know that these people understand these things and you know that you won't be discriminated for the music you listen to. It's a bit of a safe space - you can talk about it and it's kind of cool because (…) you get judged less."

During our interview, *ATB*-Fan mentioned his father passing away at a young age and growing up with only his mother, sister, and grandparents. For him, the metal community and being involved in heavy metal music, provided him with that father figure and 'rough-and-tough bonding' he was missing out on. *ATB*-Fan's account carries the notion that the heavy metal community is very much like a second family, albeit full of strangers, who look out for each other. The accounts from *BMTH*-Fan, *KL*-Fan, and *Metallica*-Fan all made reference to mutual appreciation of heavy metal music, with music being at the 'forefront' of the community experience. Music can be a powerful mechanism in terms of catalyzing affinity within communities (Kaufman Shelemay 2011). Furthermore, straightforward and aesthetic preferences in terms of music affinity do intersect and interfere with other powerful personal criteria such as age, gender identity, or ethnicity. Music is thus relatively arbitrary in comparison to other social criteria such as identity, ethnicity, or nationality, for instance. The allure of the feeling of community based on music is due to communities - smaller communities in particular - being able to derive their strength from the presence and proximity of group members (Kaufman

Shelemay 2011) - the feeling of community is present, regardless of the prestige of the group.

BMTH-Fan and *KL*-Fan made reference to experiencing music, and in the case of *KL*-Fan, even finding new music. Music affinity can be driven by sheer attraction alone and appreciation of the music and people have a desire to search for new sounds - granted these new sounds *sound* familiar (Kaufman Shelemay 2011). In sum, musical communities which are shaped by affinity can be extremely dynamic and have the potential find new devotees relatively quickly. Illustrating this, on the basis of smaller and sporadic conversations, some participants frequently shared links to bands they believed them and I would have a mutual appreciation of - most notably *I Prevail*-Fan, Chemist, and Mr. X, with whom musical exchanges occurred most frequently, even long after data collection was finished.

> Me: "Do you think/feel that heavy metal provides a sense of community?"

> Navigator: "It so does. If you walk into a pub, and it's a rock pub, it doesn't matter at all what you look like. I feel comfortable I have gone in there in a full suit, and I have gone in in jeans and a shirt, and I have gone in in Hawaiian shirts - bright and covered with flowers (...), I've gone to one club and I've had a fez on my head: nothing. I've gone to some of the more trendy clubs, wearing more

casual like shirt and I have felt intimidated because there

is an atmosphere that something could just explode here.

(...) There's never any animosity - it's doesn't matter if

you like band One and the person next to you doesn't.

You're all out for a good time."

Bassist: "Yeah, when I go to concerts, when I go to the

bar, when I listen to metal. I mean, I never knew such a

welcoming environment, or inclusive environment as

heavy metal to be honest. It's quite easy - you just have

to like the music, and if you perform it, it's even better."

Navigator made a similar point to *Metallica*-Fan: there is little judgement in the

heavy metal community in regards to music preference. Whilst direct

judgement is infrequent, the caveat is: members need to fall into the relatively

wider category of what constitutes the performance of heavy metal identities.

In particular in regards to material culture, members of the metal community

display a degree of insiderness which allows them to negate interrogation or

judgement from other members of the heavy metal community. Overall

however, the heavy metal community is an open and safe space for its

members to be in, and the community symbolizes an environment in which

people are free to be who they want [within the parameters of heavy metal],

without needing to worry about scrutiny or being shunned by others (Dunn et

al. 2005). Bassist can show his commitment, and people may even appreciate

his [further] commitment to the music, by playing in bands (Weinstein 2000).

One of the descriptions of community from Chapter Two highlighted that community can be understood as a social system - a set of social relationships which take place within a defined location (Newby 1980). In terms of this 'locatedness', Archaeologist and Trig told me, when asked about the sense of community:

> Archaeologist: "It depends on the location. I had a great heavy metal community in Sheffield because Sheffield has a really fantastic industrial metal music scene. There's some really great venues and because it's such a great big university city, it was a constantly evolving city, I think the community can't afford to be picky. It's really inclusive, really diverse, and really fun - I felt very safe and comfortable. Say the York heavy metal scene: because there's so few venues, and it is a student city to an extent, but it's a foreign student city - a lot of English people don't actually go to York. (…) In York I've really struggled because it's not inclusive. You need to have always been in the know, you need to have always been in the scene. It's almost too small to be inclusive."

> Trig: "10 - 15 years ago, Bradford was like a hub, a buzzing throng of all things alternative. (…) And then, I don't know what the frigg happened. Well, I *do* know what happened - the *X Factor* happened. Now there's just

nothing metal, and like all these places that we used to go to, all the spots have closed down. You can go into any town or city and find something for you. Now, it became it a little pretentious. (…) And the lack of new hard-hitting music of like, even the big bands and stuff like that, it was just stopped being done. We used to go to *Trapdoor*, which used to be at Bradford Uni - that's closed down (…), the scene just died."

Archaeologist made reference to the size of the cities in relation to experiencing a sense of community. She compared Sheffield and York, cities in which she studied and lived in, respectively, and mentioned how the metal scene in York was "almost too small to be inclusive". Trig was very vocal about his witnessing the decline of the local heavy metal scene in Bradford. *Trapdoor*, which he mentioned, was a heavy metal and alternative event which ran monthly in the city and was later relocated to the bars and entertainment venue of the University of Bradford. Due to a, presumable, decline in attendance numbers, *Trapdoor* shifted from monthly to quarterly before ultimately ceasing to exist - which further contributed to the steady decline of heavy metal music in the city of Bradford, which Trig lamented.

Other participants from the Bradford area also made reference to localities such as *Gasworks* and *Rio's*, prominent rock and metal venues in the city, which have however, closed down in recent years.

Both accounts by Archaeologist and Trig are examples of the role that live music economies play in relation and regards to attachment to place. Music fans are able to derive a sense of identity and cultural pride from local music scenes. For example, a music venue has the ability to define the character of a street of entire neighborhood. Legendary and prominent venues are part of the unique cultural heritage of cities - such as the techno club *Berghain* in Berlin, known around the world by techno afficionados and ravers; *Key Club* in Leeds, *Rebellion* and *Satan's Hollow* in Manchester - in the case for heavy metal fans in the north of England. In terms of venues, it is not only the aesthetic qualities of the venue which is cherished by fans, but also the legacy of hosting well-known bands and bands which started and established their careers in such venues (van der Hoeven & Hitters 2019: 267).

6.2.1: Heavy Metal Safety Net - Looking Out for One Another

> Moose: "It's also not just a sense of community, but it's incredibly inclusive across gender, sexuality, race, class-lines, absolutely anything. I went to *Download* [Festival] last year and we were at one of the main tents, watching *Carcass*. It was a fantastic full-on death metal night. And there was a guy in a wheelchair, crowd-surfing. You don't get that anywhere else. It's never a case of 'oh, you're in a wheelchair, you can't join' - it's everyone coming and saying 'we're gonna make this guy join in, we're gonna pull him in'. Sometimes it can

be quite difficult being a bystander in the metal scene

because everyone wants everyone to be involved and

be a part of it and get into it. It is incredibly inclusive.

Absolutely love that facet of it all."

Moose's account about a festival-goer in a wheelchair being held up by the crowd and crowd-surfing is not a frequent yet also not non-existent phenomenon in the world of heavy metal concerts. Every so often, especially from major heavy metal festivals, there are news reports about heavy metal fans coming together and helping someone have an unforgettable concert experience.

ATB-Fan: "The [metal] community doesn't let anybody get hurt, apart from the odd few that are idiots. If someone hits the deck, you get picked up, brush yourself off, and off you go again. It's great, I love it."

Thrash Fan: "Maybe if I am with someone [at a concert] who isn't comfortable going into the pit and having me around at the concert, then I'm not going to go [mosh], obviously."

Thrash Fan highlighted how he is considerate to his friends when it comes to moshing. He also noted that if he is at a concert and his friends are okay with everyone doing their own thing, he tends to mosh alone. He is, at the same

time, also just as happy as not participating in communal activities if his friends are not willing to.

> Navigator: "I took my 10-year old, she was 9 at the time, to a Maiden [*Iron Maiden*] concert at Manchester Arena last year. Earlier on in the day, we went to the drummer's shop in Salford, we met Nicko McBrain and one of the guys I was talking to in the queue to get stuff signed, he was brought by his dad but his dad had to go home and he was going to have to find his own way back to the concert, and I had absolutely no problem in saying 'we're going to Trafford Centre to go and get something to eat, there's only two of us in the car, jump in with me' and so I gave this guy a lift - I've never seen him before, I'll never see him again I don't think, and it was just 'of course, come with us, mate'."

> Tine: "If I was every panicking or ever felt I was in trouble, it is people who looked like rockers or moshers that I would ask for help - more than a guy in t-shirt and jeans. There is a huge community from being an outcast or from listening to a non-mainstream kind of music because there's just smaller clusters of people. I think it's one thing that music has done for a lot of people: it's bring people together like that."

Navigator's account about giving a metal fan a lift back to the concert, and getting food with him beforehand, exemplifies Moose's notion of heavy metal being a community which is 'incredibly inclusive'. For Navigator, there is also an element of selflessness, spending time with a stranger when he didn't *need* to - perhaps due to being a family man. Nonetheless, experiences such as this are examples of metal fans helping each other cements the idea of community members looking out for one another and providing a sense of safety (McMillan & Chavis 1986; Snell 2012).

Tine made reference to actively looking out for people who look a certain way, such as a rock or metal fan, as there is a common ground for conversation - the appreciation of a certain type of music. Based on positive experiences she made, Tine arguably continues to do so. Furthermore, there is a notion of social identity in Tine's account - the distinction between 'us' and 'them' (Jenkins 2004). Tine notes that she looks for individual who display heavy metal or rock characteristics, there is an establishment of similarity and familiarity, meaning that people who do not necessarily have to get along with one another, do though, without having to explore each other's individual differences (Jenkins 2004: 108). In other words, if Tine approaches a fellow metal fan, asking for directions or help, based on the mutual understanding that they both are part of the same community, positive interactions can occur - they may not become the best of friends based on the interaction, but their shared musical taste helps overcome individual differences for the duration of the interactions.

Subcultures are special in enabling interactions with one another, in particular in situations where an in-group member requires some form of assistance. Scholars such as Simon et al. (2000) and Stürmer et al. (2006) noted that people do not necessarily help a member of the in-group more than they would help a member of an out-group, but rather: the motivation between "us" and helping "them" are fundamentally different. Research has also shown that in terms of levels of concern, sympathy, concern, and feeling empathy for in-group members is increased when someone is in need - even in situations where there is danger for one self (Stürmer et al. 2006). A prominent explanation of this may be a perception of the person in need may be that members of the group are of 'the same kind' and defined or attributed through a common essence (Stürmer et al. 2006).

6.3: Heavy Metal Concerts as Community Sites

Music is a universal social phenomena which, traditionally, was only consumed and experienced predominantly in live settings (Nettl & Russell 1998). The emergence and evolution recording technologies throughout the late 19th century brought a shift in the way that people were able to consume and experience music, including the convenience of the consumption of music in private settings such as one's own home (Moreau 2013). Whilst mobile technologies enable music consumption to be more accessible, people still choose to attend live concerts - at times with great expense and long journeys (Weinstein 2000; Brown & Knox 2017). According to Homan (2010), popular music concerts are an integral facet in urban cultures, and Cohen (2012: 587) argued that live music "brings musicians and audiences together in one place

at one time and involve performance on vocals or other musical instruments and technologies, or with music recordings".

There are two factors which contribute to people's enjoyments of concerts. First, people appreciate the social connection of experiencing live music with others. Secondly, people enjoy the feeling of being connected to performers, which is achieved through occupying the same physical space and through the potential of interaction as the performers engage with the audience - and by experiencing a unique live performance (Burland & Pitts 2014; Leante 2016; Brown & Knox 2017). Every live performance is idiosyncratic in the sense that events occurring at the concert unfold organically and unpredictably - unlike when listening to a recording of music where performers and audience do not have an opportunity to engage with one another (Swarbick et al. 2019).

6.3.1: Community Made Tangible - Moshing and the Mosh Pit

Mosh pits are frequently witnessed occurrence at heavy metal concerts. Moshing can be described as a furious and ritualized form of dancing, which combines physical aggression with a collective display of emotion (Riches 2011). The term 'mosh' developed in the 1980s in the hardcore scene of Washington, D.C., with the vocalist of the punk rock band *Bad Brains* incorporated the word 'mash' into lyrics in order to incite and describe the aggressive and seemingly violent dancing of the hardcore scene. Due to his Jamaican accent however, the word 'mash' was misunderstood as 'mosh' by the fans and rapidly became a popular term in emerging heavy metal

magazine and moshing began to permeate all spectrums of the heavy metal music (Ambrose 2001).

The mosh pit is considered an integral proponent of the heavy metal concert experience as it provides opportunities for heavy metal fans to play with the darker aspects of existence, subvert everyday social conventions, and, most importantly release the pent-up frustrations of the mundanity of everyday life - whilst simultaneously fostering a sense of community (Weinstein 2000; Snell 2012). Whilst there exists a vast variety of literature dedicated to heavy metal culture, the significance of the mosh pit is still under-explored and steadily brought to the forefront.

In '*Society and the Dance'*, Spencer (1985) notes that dances have been understood as a form of escape, social protest, catharsis, and display and maintenance of boundaries that encapsulate group identity. Hanna (1979) elaborates on the significance of dance in contemporary society by identifying that dance has a multitude of meanings and purposes. It is a compound behavior that can be understood as corporeal, cultural, symbolic, political and communicative aesthetic. Cultural values, such as people's attitudes, values and beliefs, partially determine the conceptualization of dance, as well as its physical production, style and performance.

> *NIN*-Fan: "I think it was quite cathartic and you can let out a lot
> of aggression. It was unusual for a girl [to mosh] as well, but I
> certainly wasn't the only girl. But letting it all go, really, I think

most metalheads would probably agree with that as well. Just let it all out."

Charlie Sharpe: "I just love the release letting yourself go to the music. I love how it can be really kind of, aggressive, it's got that release, but everyone has got that respect. It's just this release, it's really hard to explain, really. It's just something I really enjoy. I've never felt too old. I'm not that kind of person, if you get me. I still mosh. But sometimes, some songs, I feel like 'yeah, I'm fucking going for this song' or some of my favorite songs. It's just all like down to the moment - I wouldn't go to a metal gig and not get into the pit."

Participating in moshing heightens the emotional relatedness which is necessary for catharsis to occur - being an active participant means that participants can 'lose themselves' in the heat of the moment (Henry & Caldwell 2007). When opportunities for spontaneity arise, in which individuals feel empowered, a positive emotional shift can occur - the spontaneity of moshing and the feeling of venting emotions and catharsis also plays a role in the sense of freedom that is fostered in the particular moment in time (Stanislavski 1989). Furthermore, the combined experience of pleasure and intensity of the mosh pit can be used to help alleviate negative emotions and feelings (Bernays 2004).

Suffocation-Fan: "Just the aggression, letting it all out. I like this riff - I'm going to go in there and fuck shit up."

Crash: "Just the energy. You know the happy chemicals [in your brain], the dopamine and serotonin, you get that kind of rush like 'this is my happy place'."

Slam Drummer: "It's like a vent or release from all the day-to-day stress. You can completely switch off from everything and let it all out."

The three accounts from *Suffocation*-Fan, Crash, and Slam Drummer made reference to living in the moment, allowing them to 'switch off' and not think about their everyday life problems. Dancing can be conceptualized as what Turner (1979) described as a 'liminal performance' because individuals are able to suspend everyday societal rules through the actions that occur through dancing. Turner (1979: 94) defined liminality as a "state or process which is betwixt-and-between the normal, day-to-day cultural and social states and processes of getting and spending, preserving law and order, and registering structural status". Thus, moshing's role in the heavy metal concert is integral as it allows fans present the freedom to establish, emerging from its chaos, their own sense of social order.

Every live performance is idiosyncratic, meaning events unfold organically and unpredictably - unlike compared to listening to a recording, where there is no

audience to affect the surrounding environment. Enjoying music with other listeners may contribute powerfully to the concert experience. Observers of concert audiences judged synchronously moving listeners as experiencing greater rapport and similar psychological states compared to those moving asynchronously (Lakens & Stel 2011). After people move in synchrony, even when unaware of their synchronized movements, they remember more about each other, express liking each other more, and show greater levels of trust and co-operation compared to after moving asynchronously (Swarbrick et al. 2019).

Contemporary popular performers often play variations of recorded works at live performances (Shoda & Adachi 2015), suggesting a novelty factor for listeners. Brown and Knox (2017) found that audience members consider this musical novelty as an important motivator for concert attendance. Live concerts also enable audience members to experience an in-person relationship with the performer. Performers can also be influenced by the presence of an audience, and live performances can be acoustically and energetically different than those recorded in the studio (Yoshie et al. 2016; Bradby 2017).

> Chemist: "I think it's part of the experience. . It's such a
> fun thing - like the energy it brings - and it's so different
> to other genres of music. Yeah, jump in, get stuck in, get
> involved - that's what this kind of music is all about: the
> aggression, and it's one way of showcasing it."

Me: "Is there a particular aspect of moshing you enjoy participating in?"

Chemist: "I just like the high-energy aspect of it. Just like, you kind of become one with the music, you're channeling your feelings through the movement."

Observational Fieldnote 1:

Chemist and I went to see the band After The Burial together in Manchester in August 2019, where I also met ATB-Fan. Even though Chemist and I were stood next to each other for the majority of the concert, there were instances in which he was 'sucked into' the mosh pit, jump around and mosh for some time, before attempting to make his way back to where we were originally stood.

When being in a concert space, the heavy metal community is embodied as a living and breathing entity. Embodied identities are not limited symbols which are displayed on the body such as clothing or tattoos, but also incorporate actual events which can be physically felt and experienced (Cromby 2005). Such actions and interactions in which people participate in, enforces their sense of culture and community (Novack 1990). This link between affect, music, and bodily movement is difficult to describe. When music is the focus of attention, peoples' experience of it is not only a matter of cognitive

processes, but results in a combination of mind and body; of thoughts, feelings and physical actions.

Moose: "You're effectively trying to create a fairground ride with no external inputs aside from other human beings. (…) It is incredibly physical - sometimes you get punched, you get punched in the face, or wherever else. But again, there is a feeling of 'baptism by fire' - incredibly inclusive. It is, to people who wouldn't know or have that sense of identity or belonging, it looks incredibly violent and aggressive. But it's every person in that mosh pit, every person has voluntarily walked into that mosh pit. Everyone understands the rules, and so you're not actively trying to hurt people, but you're trying to kick someone else's adrenaline into overdrive."

Me: When you were moshing, was there a particular aspect you enjoyed?

Moose: "If you walk forward in a mosh pit, you understand the rules and you are accepting whatever happens to you - that's what I like. It's a communal accepting of responsibility. You are moving all the time, bouncing up and down to the music, as well as bumping into people, pushing people with your arms, other people

bumping into you, other people pushing you as well, so it is a continual moving kind of physical thing - you don't know which direction you'll be moving (...). There is something ritualistic, something that that people are into together."

Moose made reference to the physical nature of moshing, when a sense of community becomes something tangible, being very much like a 'fairground' ride. Furthermore, Moose's account includes the notion of social co-operation and relying on other participants to create the environment and experience - a ritual which communicates trust with an element of 'play' to it (Arnett 1996). Whilst moshing is seemingly violent, people entering the mosh pit are aware of the dangers and risks associated with it. There is, like Moose mentioned, an understanding of the rules and acceptance of responsibility. Moshing could perhaps be compared to bumper-car rides on fairgrounds and amusement parks, where the main intention is nothing more than "friendly jostling" rather than causing intentional harm to others (Weinstein 2000: 228).

Figure 32: Heavy Metal Fans Moshing

The quick movement of people in the mosh pit are visible in Figure 32 as mosher's motion are blurry due to their velocity whilst moshing. Figure 32 showcases some of the points made from participants about the physical nature of moshing, the intensity at which bodies collide, and the tangible feeling of community as people bond with others and release energy through the valve that is moshing.

Two things are apparent in the above image. First, it is the moshers themselves who create the mosh pits through their movement and physical interactions. Second, the non-moshers, or 'bystanders' or 'passives'. In the photograph, a young man is stood at the periphery of the mosh pit, holding a drink. The boundaries of the mosh pit are clearly defined by people standing, not participating. This 'boundary' is however, not physical but rather, mental -

in people's mind - , and people who decide to want to participate in moshing, can easily step over the [invisible] threshold and be an active participant of the mosh pit. Whilst it is easy to distinguish between 'moshers' and 'passives', there is no fixed boundaries between the two - people who mosh may decide to take a break and instantly become a 'passive', and vice versa, people may change from being passive bystanders to be heavily involved in the mosh pit.

As part of the data collection process, I attended a number of heavy metal concerts in order to observe and conceptualize an understanding of moshing from an observational point of view, and also for non-metal readers. Moshing is not only limited to heavy metal, but a frequent occurrence, which may not be straightforward to comprehend for outsiders. Below are two observational field notes, on the mosh pit and the circle pit, respectively.

Observational Fieldnote 2 - Moshing :

People are jumping about, head banging to the rhythm of the music. Devil horns flailing and growls and yells of appreciation for the band after every song echo through the venue. When a mosh pit erupts, it's just arms and bodies, swinging and flailing through the area of the 'pit'. One fan braced himself, ran about a meter in the pit, collided with someone else, and his momentum sent him another direction - he only managed to keep his balance by jumping on one of his legs, counteracting the force of his body moving. Compare the mosh pit with a pool table which is set up, ready for a game. Take the white ball and randomly toss it across the table, so it hits the other, set up,

pool balls. The balls disperse all over the table, but because of the barrier of the table, move back and hit each other at random - without stopping, the pool balls are in perpetual motion. While the balls on the pool table slow down and cease to move across the table, the mosh pit is alive and the motion doesn't stop - rather it slows down in between songs - before picking back up again.

Observational Fieldnote 3 - The Cirlce Pit[10]:

In the circle pit, people run around the venue in a circular manner - some people run/jog whilst others hop along to the beat and rhythm of the music. Depending on the venue size, the circle pit is one to three people wide, running next to each other, over- and undertaking one another, bumping into one another - in bigger venues such as stadiums or outside festivals, the circle pit is considerably larger in size. Inside of the circle pit is a mosh pit where people flail their arms and collide into each other. At times, people leave the circle pit in order to participate in the mosh pit in the center, whilst people leave the mosh pit to be involved in the circle pit.

Moshing and the circle pit, which was also a feature of *the After The Burial* concert in Manchester where first meeting *ATB*-Fan, was a discussion point during the interview.

---

[10] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ehIXgbxX6vk

ATB-Fan: "For me, getting involved in a mosh pit or headbanging is like a natural reaction to the music, you just go with it. One thing leads to another, and the next thing you know is: you're circle pitting around *Satan's Hollow* [the concert venue in Manchester] and falling over. It's great."

Me: "Is there a particular aspect of moshing you enjoy?"

ATB-Fan: "It sounds really bad but: the violence. There's no actual violence. It allows me to release. Work is very stressful for me, a couple of years ago I suffered quite badly with my mental health, and it was either: go to gigs and start moshing and release a lot of pent up anger or go out and start a fight. And for me, I would rather go out and mosh than seriously hurt somebody. You get exactly the same feeling, exactly the same adrenaline rush, but no one is getting hurt – you're all there for the same reason. If someone does get hurt, it's a complete accident, and you will get picked up again. There are no repercussions from going out having a good time, rather than going out and beating someone up for no reason.

Moshers posess familiarity with the codes and practices of heavy metal music and exhibit a sense of awareness of its function as a way of experiencing

community and enjoying the music. From *ATB*-Fan's account, moshing can be understood as an appropriation of violence which uses aggressive movements and physical contact in order to experience a feeling of togetherness with others who are also participating. Emerging as an enjoyable activity, moshing can turn pent up anger into smiles and grins, and community solidarity (Gruzellier 2007).

Through one's involvement in the concert and in the mosh pit, which involves an active engagement with the music and other fans, attendees immerse themselves in the concert atmosphere (Tsitsos 1999; DeChaine 2002). Moshing can serve as an extremely physical way of uniting metal fans at heavy metal concerts (Gruzelier 2007). From participants' accounts of the mosh pit, there was an elements of the carnivalesque. Bakhtin (1984) linked the concept of the carnivalesque in literature to the medieval carnival in popular culture. The medieval carnival, for Bakhtin, as a precursor of the modern-day carnival, played a prominent role in people's lives. Medieval people inhabited a dual realm of existence.

On the one hand, there was the 'serious, official, ecclesiastical, feudal and political' world of medieval life, while on the other hand, periods of carnival represented a 'second world and second life outside officialdom' - a life which offered a "completely different, nonofficial, extraecclesiastical and extrapolitical' view or life (Bakhtin 1984: 6). Thus, the heavy metal concert and the mosh pit, much like the carnival are occasions in which the social hierarchies of the everyday life, with their solemnities, etiquette, and pieties, can be 'overturned' which creates an 'world-upside down' (Bakhtin 1984). The

carnival, or 'world-upside down', in this way, attempted to create an "atmosphere of freedom, frankness and familiarity" in contrast to the already existing hierarchies in one's own everyday life (Bakhtin 1984).

The mosh pit, through Bakhtin's (1984) conceptualization of the carnivalesque, thus involves a temporary suspension of the normal order, breaking down norms, prohibitions, barriers, and etiquettes, as well as reversing existing hierarchical distinctions. Furthermore, the mosh pit, much like the carnivalesque, encourages active participation by everyone present - "Carnival is not a spectacle seen by the people; they live in it, and everyone participates in it because the very idea embraces all the people" (Bakhtin 1984: 7). While the carnival lasts, there is no other life outside of it - during the carnival time, life is subjected to its laws - the laws of its own freedom, which is the "essence of carnival, vividly felt by all its participants" (Bakhtin 1984: 7).

Whilst moshing, participants of the mosh pit experience what Hamilton et al. (2019) refer to as 'flow' - a state in which an individual experiences an optimal level of functioning. To Csikszentmihalyi (1999: 824), the concept of flow "describes a particular kind of experience that is so engrossing and enjoyable that it becomes autotelic, that is, worth doing for its own sake even though it may have no consequence outside itself". While experiencing flow, one's sense of awareness merges with the action itself, meaning that one's attention is wholly focused and immersed in the activity taking place. Consequently, individuals experience a loss of self-awareness and experience a distorted perception of space and time throughout the event (Jackson &

Csikszentmihalyi 1999). After experiencing flow, the individual may tend to experience a strong sense of fulfilment and enjoyment based on the activity. In other words, after being in the mosh pit, people feel fulfilment and enjoyment after having moshed.

In terms of 'taking in' the moment, Csikszentmihalyi (2004) notes that the human brain is only able to process 110 bits of information per second. Given that 'flow' takes up almost all of that information processing capacity, thus not a great deal of other information can be taken up and processed. This makes up part of the experience of not being able to perceive time and space (Hamilton et al. 2019). Simultaneously, this means while being actively involved in the mosh pit, metal fans may not be able to pay attention to anything else happening outside of the mosh pit. In other words, at a concert, one cannot be immersed in the mosh pit and fully witness or enjoy the spectacle of the bands' performance.

6.4: Community in Bands

Some participants noted that they were actively involved in being in a band, or had a history of being involved in heavy metal and rock bands over the years. Dunn et al. (2005) made reference to heavy metal inspiring youth to begin playing instruments, it was a topic that was not investigated further, however. With this in mind, it seemed important to explore some of the participants' experiences of being in a band as such activities affect their experience of their everyday life and their perception and understanding of heavy metal music.

Figure 33: Bassist Performing (ca. 2005)

Bassist: "I used to play in two black metal bands. Right now, in Berlin, it's not a band, but it's called *Open Stage* (…). You also meet musicians and play in your little community like this."

Bassist told me that he began listening to heavy metal music in his late teens, and played bass guitar in black metal bands in his native Geneva, Switzerland. He also mentioned that while he lives in Berlin, he frequently attends *Open Stage Nights*, where people get together and play rock and heavy metal songs together - much like a weekly organized jam session. Lamont (2012) examined views and perceptions regarding performing, finding that university students have positive memories of performing, value frequent performance opportunities, and develop a sense of group identity through performances.

Bassist mentioned his 'little community' of other musicians with whom he jams on a regular basis, further reinforcing the idea that community is a set of social relationships (Newby 1980).

> Drummer: "It's dirty, it's tiring, it's cold. Sleeping in venues, I've slept in a bar, slept in cellars, on stages, in pubs - some bad nights. But the thing is: you almost get used to living that lifestyle, almost. Like living out of coffee shops and McDonalds, and sleeping rough in pubs and clubs. Some of the gigs, we've played have been crazy - we played to like 800 people. We went and recorded the EP and went to a place in Colne, in Burnley, literally just in a warehouse, sleeping and recording in the same room for five days solid. That was a good experience, really, bonding… You really get close to the people you play music with, because you're in the same situation together. When you're in a van, you get really close to people and the experience are always quite fun.

> Me: "Would you say it's almost like a brotherhood?"

> Drummer: "Yeah (…) you really get to know people on a personal level, and you get to take it and show people it. Which is the best bit. People started coming up from all over Europe. I had people showing up at my work,

because my *Facebook* page was associated with the band page, so people started showing up at my work and they'd start talking… Like I really appreciate it, but I'm at work, I'm trying to do my work."

Drummer, who toured through the UK with his former band, gave some insight into the life of being in a touring band. From the outside, when attending concerts, seeing a band performing is a thrill, however the flipside of the coin - the rough sleeping and living off coffee shops and fast food chains - seems forgotten about. Drummer's account exemplifies the notion of 'art is suffering' - being prepared to sacrifice one's own comfort in order to perform for others. Furthermore, Drummer made a comment regarding the social element and shared experience - 'you really get to know people on a personal level, and you get to take it and show people it'. The shared experience between band members becomes art for the fans to enjoy and appreciate.

Bandura (1986) argued that working together in a group, or in this instance, a metal band, requires a sense of unity and sustained collective effort from all members. The strength rests partly on the members' sense of cohesion and their belief that they can solve their problems and progress together, as a band through working together as a single unit. Simultaneously, Drummer's account had some elements of ambivalence - whilst he appreciates people striking up a conversation about his band whilst at work, he placed an emphasis on that he is at his job, not in the band.

Figure 34: Mr. V Performing

Mr. V: "I was front man - I wouldn't call it 'singing', ha! People come up to me afterwards and say how much they like it. That's nice and that makes it fun - I like the community and it goes to show how nice some of the metalheads are. Even if they just shout some drunken blabbering shit - and it's cool enough - you know what they mean, and it's positive."

As a singer/front man of a band, Mr. V is the main person who encourages concert-goes to participate in the performance, having the capacity to mosh, jump, or move around at his command. Weinstein (2000: 65) noted that being the a heavy metal performer means that their performance reflects who they are as a "true being" - unlike an actor who can remove traces of their true

selves to act a specific role. Thus, heavy metal performers' personalities can be identified through the music and art.

> Me: "Is there a particular aspect you like about playing in bands?"

> *BMTH*-Fan: "Playing with like-minded people. Being in a rock band, metal band, pop-punk, or whatever, you're there to create the same genre of music. And it's like… you're all there to create something. You're there, you like the same stuff, you're all gonna have similar writing styles if you're writing in that genre. And it's just the vibing with people. I love just jamming with people and making shit up on the spot. It's another form of expression, isn't it? So if you're angry about something, the best way to get over it is to just write a song."

According to Rothbart and Lewis (2006) and Dagaz (2012), people are motivated to participate in musical ensembles for a variety of musical, academic, and social reasons - as well as for personal development. *BMTH*-Fan and Drummer shared similar sentiments in regards to the influence of other people on music-making. *BMTH*-Fan made reference to writing music when being angry about something, and Drummer made reference to showcasing the work. Both accounts encapsulate experiences of being in a

band, overcoming adversities of one's own everyday life, making them [in Drummer's case in particular] more resilient and experienced.

The 'mircocultures', that are bands, form a sense of identity and encompass the intersection of musical and social practices, traditions, and both formal and informal leadership (Morrison 2001).

People find value in meaning in the process of music-making and performance, whilst fostering and strengthening the emotional meaning of music in performer's lives (Campbell et al. 2007). Music-making and participation is thus more than simply an activity solely deemed for entertainment, but a means through which an array of social and musical functions can be served and developed (Dagaz 2012). In regards to their appreciation of music, every participant who played in band was asked questions regarding having a different appreciation of the music overall. *Megadeth*-Fan, Slam Drummer, and Thrash Fan gave their insight:

> *Megadeth*-Fan: "I think I probably do [appreciate the music differently]. At the risk of sound like a 'I feel too intelligent' person, I think if you are a musician, and you have had training (…), I think you do have a deeper kind of understanding and appreciation of the different kinds of elements that go into making up a song or piece of music (…). Sometimes I think it maybe detracts a little bit, as you analyze it when you listen to it, rather than

listening to it and trying to enjoy it - sometimes I think it gets in the way a little bit."

Slam Drummer: "I think I perceive it differently compared to people who don't play music. When I listen to music, I immediately know what the drummer is doing, or what the guitarist is doing - what is behind the music. In general [for me], it happens more with heavy metal than other genres."

Thrash Fan: "That's an interesting one. I'd say yes, especially for bands that have really complicated music, for instance *Lamb of God*. They have complex music that is hard to play (…). So yes, to some extent, I do feel that I have a heightened understanding of metal, especially the more prog [progressive] it goes, the easier for me it is for me to understand."

All three accounts made reference to the understanding of music. Musical training influences a person's perception and action networks in their brain which are involved and needed in the process of listening and production of music (Alluri et al. 2017). At the same time, there is also the element of training and experience. A metal fan who has limited musical training will understand music differently to a metal fan who has years of experience (Dunn et al. 2005). Slam Drummer noted that he immediately knows what the guitarist and

drummer of a band are doing, more in heavy metal than in other styles of music. This can not only be attributed to his own musical training and experience, but also his own personal involvement with the music. In terms of 'understanding' music, in some ways 'better' than others, is dependent on musical training.

6.5: Chapter Discussions

The aim of this chapter was to explore how participants felt, experienced, and reflected upon experiences of community and the sense of belonging through their heavy metal fandom and expressions. Some of the accounts provided by participants related to and reinforced some of Newby's (1980) descriptions of the term:

1. Community can be understood as a fixed and bounded locality - a geographical location like a city. This was reflected in Archaeologist's and Trig's accounts regarding the sense of community in the cities of York and Sheffield, and Bradford, respectively.

2. A social system - a set of social relationships which take place within a defined location, reflected in participants' accounts regarding concerts and the feeling of community when discussing heavy metal music and culture with other people.

3. A type of relationship, more particularly, a sense of mutual identity which exists between individuals - prominent in the accounts regarding band membership.

Anderson's (1983) concept of the imagined community is an important and useful concept for understanding community in the context of heavy metal music. In sum, Anderson (1983) argued that while even in the smallest of nations (or communities in this instance), not every member of the nation/group knows who the other members are, know each other on a personal level, or ever interact with them. However, in the minds of every single of one of them, they all perceive themselves as part of the same larger community. While this idea is certainly applicable to the heavy metal community and other social groups, its members *do*, however, oftentimes meet up, interact with one another, and get to know one another.

When individuals from the imagined community that heavy metal is, meet up and come together, they interact and perform in what Shotter (1993) called 'joint activities' or 'joint action'. Joint activities such as moshing occur when individuals present in that moment co-ordinate their behavior in accordance to the actions of other members of the social group. This generates a response to an event or circumstances. The result of joint action may have unintended outcomes as the people involved at that particular moment in time, interpret a situation in a certain way and create a response accordingly. For example, at a concert, a few people may start jumping around during a song, leading to the creation of a mosh pit. The 'outcome' of the mosh pit may not have been planned initially, but resulted as a few people began to jump around and more people join in.

The carnivalesque of the heavy metal concert, and the mosh pit in particular, is perhaps one of the biggest allures in heavy metal music. Much like the carneval in medieval times, the heavy metal concert is something where people can feel a sense of freedom which allows them to soak in social interaction with others, or are "reborn for new, purely human relations" (Bakhtin 1984: 10). Perhaps it is the exhilaration of being in the mosh pit, the sense of freedom from societal norms, getting rid of all the pent-up anger and emotions that is the allure. Furthermore, it must be noted, that while mosh pits are a common occurrence at heavy metal concerts, no two mosh pits are the same. Every mosh pit is unique in terms of its make-up, who participates in it, how 'wild' it gets, etc. - it cannot be emulated to be experienced in exactly the same manner.

With this in mind, this is reminiscent of what Bauman (2004: 30) called 'cloakroom communities'. Such cloakroom communities are patched together for the duration of the spectacle, and 'dismantled' again once the event is over - much like people attending a concert or an opera collect their coats at the end of the concert and go their own separate ways again. For Bauman (2004: 31), the advantage of such 'cloakroom communities' is that their short duration and the 'pettiness' of the commitment which is required to join and participate and enjoy them - regardless of how brief.

Moshing and being involved in the mosh pit - and simultaneously: people not being involved in moshing - also creates boundaries: the people that mosh and the people that do not. There is a notion of social identity and potential distinction between 'us' and 'them' in the case of moshers and non-moshers. With this in mind, social identity can not only be seen as something abstract

and, as mentioned in Chapter Two, in the mind of the people, but also something tangible.

Furthermore, there were a number of participants who do not participate in moshing - almost half of the participant pool. Whilst some participants noted that they were avid and frequent moshers in the past, they have stopped, whilst some admitted they have never moshed before. Understandably, each participant had their own personal reason for not participating in moshing, however some reasons included: being older, fear of and risk of injury, lack of concert experience, and finding the idea of moshing frightening and uncomfortable.

Lastly, in regards to the performative side of heavy metal music, being in a band allows members to appreciate their intergroup relations and are able to perceive themselves much like a fraternity or like a family (Duchan 2012). Participation in a band allows people to get together and share their views of the world with an audience - much like in Drummer's account: "you really get to know people on a personal level, and you get to take it and show people it", whilst working together in order to sustain and meet collective goals. Most importantly, the band thrives off of members' sense of cohesion and motivation to master the music (Asmus 1994). Weinstein (2000) notes that heavy metal bands are complex social groups. As discussed in Chapter Two, in the segment on defining community, heavy metal fans do not fit into either category of being a primary or secondary group, as they share features of both.

In sum, community does not only exist as something tangible or as a fixed entity created by people, but rather, also as something which exists within the minds of people - an imagination and appreciation of belonging to the same community as other fellow metal fans. A number of theorists have suggested that a drive for social relationships, and forming and maintaining those, is an innate human tendency and feature which is paramount for human survival (Ainsworth 1989; Lambert et al. 2013). Baumeister and Leary (1995) argued that there can be repercussions to one's physical and mental health if people fail to form interpersonal attachment, and chose the term 'need to belong' to describe the innate human drive to form close and positive relationships with others. While it is possible to form and maintain close relationships with others, there is no guarantee that one can experience a subjective experience of belonging - in other words, one can belong but does not necessarily feel that they belong - albeit perhaps happening rarely (Lambert et al. 2013). According to Baumeister (2005), human beings have a biological need for social relationships, and the thirst for belonging and the capacity the understand larger systems of meaning are inextricably linked to the human psyche. Thus, we can expect the idea of having a 'meaningful life' to depend on, in at least some way, on a sense of belonging and community membership.

The upcoming chapter will focus on gender in heavy metal, with a focus on my female participants' experience of being heavy metal fans. Furthermore, it will focus on some aspects which have been covered in this chapter and Chapter

Five - notions around community between female fans and authenticity in terms of heavy metal identities.

CHAPTER SEVEN - GENDER IN HEAVY METAL MUSIC

7.1: Introduction

The previous two chapters explored identity and community/belonging in the context of heavy metal music, respectively. In particularly in terms of identity, some of my female participants made reference to their experience of being a female metal fan in terms of social interactions. Gender in particular, is an identity which has a large number of implications in terms of experiences of everyday life - along with identities relating to religion, race/ethnicity, etc.

Whilst Snell (2012), with his thesis on community and identity in the context of New Zealand heavy metal fans, was amongst the first to explore this overarching topic of identity and community in heavy metal, he failed to include the role of gender in the context of heavy metal identities. Despite only having 13 participants, of which four were female, Snell (2012) did not consider the gendered experience of heavy metal in his study. This could however, be for a number of reasons such as word count or time constraints, the low number of female participants in his study, or perhaps it was simply not deemed important or relevant. Regardless of Snell's (2012) motivations not to include the gender aspects, it is useful to consider themes and questions regarding gender in heavy metal, in particular as experiences may differ between female and male fans. Thus, it was important for me to incorporate some questions about gender into my questionnaire for my interviews, which will be explored in more depth throughout this chapter.

In recent years, a number of studies have emerged, exploring heavy metal's relationship with women and allegations of sexism in metal music (Vasan 2011; Hill et al. 2015; Hill 2018). Whilst this entire chapter could be an analysis of whether or not heavy metal music is sexist or not, backed up by female participants' data and experiences, it would largely deviate from the overall theme of the thesis, and therefore explore female fans' experiences as they occur within their everyday lives and affect their identity.

This chapter is split into seven part. Part two will focus on heavy metal music, women, and some historical background of heavy metal and marginalization/sexism. Part three will explore female participants' experiences of being a metal fan, part four will examine female metal fandom and allegations of not being authentic fans. Part five will focus on the interactions between female metal fans with one another, exploring the notion of a feeling community within a fringe group. Part six will cover some of the male participant impressions of women in heavy metal, whilst part seven will be chapter discussions.

7.2: Heavy Metal Music and Women

Figure 35: Comments Section from *YouTube*

The above screenshot was found in the *YouTube* comments section of *The Agonist*'s music video '…And Their Eulogies Sang Me To Sleep" - a Canadian, female-fronted band. The comments were not difficult to find, taking less than one minute to open up a web browser, browsing onto the *YouTube* website, and typing '*The Agonist'* in the search bar, clicking one of the featured videos at random. The comments depicted in the screenshots are just a handful of over 12,000 comments on one music video alone. While a lot of comments on said music video were generally positive, there were also a number of comments simply about Alyssa White-Gluz's, the singer's, appearance. There were also a number of comments on the video, giving credit to the drummer and guitarists for their outstanding work and virtuosity, but comments made by the users are the type of comments which people see online and may disapprovingly shake their heads at. Another striking aspect of the *YouTube* comment section, was the number of men that commented on the video.

Popular music scholars have demonstrated that men are, in terms of sheer numbers, heavily over-represented in heavy metal culture - both in terms of being a fan and as performers. Metal audiences consist predominantly of males, varying from 65-70% in the United States (Purcell 2003: 100), 70-75% in the United Kingdom (Hruzellier 2007: 62), and up to 85% in Germany (Chaker 2013). Bearing in mind that these numbers are perhaps outdated in the current year 2021, however, they still suggest that women are, as such, 'tokens' within heavy metal culture and part of a numerical minority (Berkers & Schaap 2015). The relationship between heavy metal music and marginalization has been central to academic debates, especially along the lines of gender. Scholars such as Walser (1993), Weinstein (2000), and Phillipov (2011) discussed how, as a musical genre, heavy metal music has, and continues to, occupy a position which is culturally, academically, and spatially marginalizing (Hill et al. 2015).

In regards to heavy metal research, gender remains a prominent focus of analysis in terms of practices of marginalization and exclusion. Embedded in such debates is, what Hill et al. (2015) refer to, the acceptance that heavy metal is not only male-dominated, but also masculinist. In other words, it is a community in which there are shared norms, values, and behaviors which place value and emphasis on masculinity (Weinstein 2000: 104). Historically, heavy metal has faced accusations of sexism from the media and academics (Vasan 2011). While scholars are broadly and unanimously in agreement that sexism exists in heavy metal and across its different subgenres, it is however,

in varying degrees (Hill 2018). Despite ongoing and sophisticated research focusing on gender in heavy metal, the question: 'how sexist is heavy metal?' remains pertinent. Accounts of both male and female fans are sometimes at odds with academic accounts, which demonstrates an incomprehension which leads to the question of why women would actively choose to listen to and enjoy sexist music and participate in such a culture (Savigny & Sleight 2015; Hill 2018).

While there have been historical allegations against heavy metal being sexist, promoting violence, and perversion, these allegations form an important part of how heavy metal fans understand their culture and music. In the 1980s in the United States, a number of conservative Christian organizations such as the PMRC and the PTA raised and voiced concerns that heavy metal music and music videos, enjoyed by young (white) men, were damaging to them due to their sexist and violent imagery (Hill 2018). Weinstein (1991/2000) investigated and analyzed the charges and allegations that heavy metal, including that heavy metal music consumption induces suicide, aggression, sexual perversion, and Satanism, and with some ridicule towards the PMRC and PTA, demonstrates the organizations' lack of understanding of lyrical irony. Weinstein (1991; 2000) does however, not give the charges and allegations of misogyny as much space as the other themes, and asserts that the genre is masculinist, chauvinistic, and misogynistic, but also argues that this alleviated or 'tempered' by the 'sense of community' that stems from being a metal fan (Weinstein 2000: 105). Furthermore, a notion which arises, is the idea that as long as women are prepared to downplay their femininity and go

by masculine-oriented standards, there is no problem - sexism is only faced by those who do not adhere to these standards and by those who are openly feminine (Hill 2018).

7.3: Female Experiences of Being a Metal Fan

> *KL*-Fan: "Sometimes at concerts, you have the feeling that many people say: 'wow, she's totally a fan girl' and 'she's only here because she finds the singer hot' - where I think: 'not the singer, but the bassist because he rocks' and 'no, I like listening to the music'. And then sometimes, you just hear degrading comments or stuff like 'she's going to the back of the crowd after two songs' or 'she only knows two songs anyways'. There are a lot of stereotypes - or even things like 'did your boyfriend bring you here?' which can get quite annoying if you hear it constantly. (…). Sometimes, because of that, you feel extremely uncomfortable. Once I heard a dude say: 'I've never seen anyone at a metal gig shake their ass so nicely' like… seriously? Are you kidding me? Are you serious? Concentrate on the music, boy."

During our interview, *KL*-Fan told me a story about being subjected to comments from male fans, questioning her *true* intentions of attending concerts. An allegation she told me of was that she found certain members of the bands attractive, usually the vocalist. As *KL*-Fan is an avid bass guitar

player, she told me that she tends to pay more attention to the bassist, and if she was to find one member of the band attractive, it would be the bassist - as she commented. In her thesis on the representation of female rock and metal fans, Hill (2013: 136) explains a correlation between being a female fan and the assumption of a sexual attraction towards the performing musician - even if a female fan is not actively seeking sexual contact, there is at least an assumption for a desire of it. In the case of *KL*-Fan, while she may not be a 'groupie', female fans like her are seen as such, as potential groupies.

One of the biggest issues with the term 'groupie' is the notion that a woman's sexual desire overrides her musical interest. *KL*-Fan's account of: "she's only here because she finds the singer hot" is a perfect example of how women tend to be perceived in music more generally. In other words, the groupie is more interested in the person performing the music rather than the music itself (Hill 2013). According to Hill (2013: 138), the devaluation of women in rock and metal is part of 'misogynistic' thinking. As a result, female fans are not attributed or given respect for having a certain musical taste, but rather, they have to face derogatory comments from other community members.

> *NIN*-Fan: "I've had a mix of experiences - overwhelmingly positive. You do get quite a lot of attention when you are a metalhead girl, not all of it welcome, but it tends to be okay - particularly when you and people can talk about it, like 'I'm not just a poser'.

The elitism comes in there, but I just want to talk about

my favorite album."

Me: "What kind of reactions do you get for being a woman

who likes heavy metal music?"

NIN-Fan: "Well, I am in my mid 30s now so I do not get it

quite the attention that I used to, but generally, people

back in the day, and particularly the heavier stuff I used

to go to, people were quite perplexed. But when they

found out I could like mosh with them, it was like "yeah,

you're alright" and that was that. Generally positive,

actually."

NIN-Fan made reference to elitism in metal and getting attention for being a

female fan. She notes that while she is older now, she does not receive the

same kind of attention as she did when she was younger - perhaps due to

being older, or other members accept her as an 'established' community

member. While heavy metal has a long-standing reputation of being sexist,

Savigny and Sleight (2015) suggest that it is more nuanced. Heavy metal

provides a place in which gender is subverted to the extent that established

socially constructed gender norms can be negotiated, challenged, and

reconstituted (Riches 2015). While women are oftentimes regarded as the

'weaker gender', through being an active participant in the mosh pit, *NIN*-Fan,

in a sense, 'proved' herself to other members of the metal community which would result in other having no problem with her.

> *BMTH*-Fan: "I think there's definitely less women that make it known. I feel like there's more women than people think that listen to metal. It's just one of those things where generally, we do live in a male-dominated world, where everything a female does is looked down on and pushed aside - regardless of what it is. I feel like, especially with something that is seen as more 'masculine', and more of a male thing - because most girls will be into the music and won't express themselves that way. It's easier for them to fly under the radar."

BMTH-Fan noted that more women 'hide' their heavy metal fandom, which consequently results in the belief that less girls and women actively listen to heavy music. This further relates back to some notions made in Chapter Five and Six, in terms of metal identities not always being visible. She also touched upon some gender stereotypes that heavy metal is more 'masculine' and more of a male activity, while girls who are into the music will not express themselves as outwardly or in the same manner as men will - resulting in female metal fans to be unnoticed.

> Me: "What is it like being a woman who is also a heavy metal fan?"

Bones: "Dunno, it's awesome. To me, it just seems normal. Like I think more when I was a teenager, the attitude that came with it. But like I said, it was more like a defense mechanism than anything else. (…). When I was a lot younger, I used to get a lot of comments from males about the way you'd dress, the clothes that you'd wear; if you had tights on, stuff like that - compared to being older. When you're a younger woman, you're not as defensive, I guess you're more open to the intimidation whereas when you get older, you tend to toughen up a bit."

Forensics Student: "I would say if there's any negative reactions, it would be from guys. Like: 'you can't possibly like this, you're a girl'. That's the kind of experience I've had: 'you're a girl'. (…). I've had a couple of people say 'you only wear that t-shirt because you like that t-shirt' umm…. And I guess when we were younger and went to concerts with my female friends, there'd be people in the queue looking at us like: 'they're just little school girls, they can't possibly be interested' - but as I got older, not really."

Bones made reference to being younger and receiving comments based on the way she'd dress. She also noted that she grew older, became more defensive about her style and that she 'toughened up' with time. Similarly, Forensics Student mentioned that people called her and her friends out for being "little school girls", which also faded as she became older. The fact that people pointed out that Forensics Student and her friends are "little school girls" and that Bones received comments about her appearance is an important reference point in regards to their respective perceived authenticity as metal fans. When analyzing authenticity, one important aspect is one's length of participation within the certain context which is used to argue for or against a person's 'true colors' (Larsson 2013: 99). In their study on punk culture, Widdicombe and Wooffitt (1990) noted that the time an individual has been involved with the culture has a direct effect on the level of authenticity is ascribed to them and, consequently, how much respect is 'gained'. The fact that Forensics Student and her friends were regarded as school girls who would not be 'able' to enjoy a certain music was in terms of the notion that longer commitment is better and more authentic.

The term 'girl' is a complex word in the context of heavy metal music and scholarship. Hoad (2017) notes that there are a number of complex issues which emerge out of how the term 'girl' is used as a marker of difference to delineate and evaluate fans and their relationship to heavy metal music. The fact that Forensics Student and her friends were called 'school girls' by others emphasizes the notion that the term 'girl' operates as a semiotic site of 'otherness', as a mode of excluding people outside of the parameters of what

271

a *true* metal fan should act and look like (Hoad 2017). The consequence of being labeled as a 'girl' in the metal scene situates hetero-masculinity as the default position in heavy metal scenes. Consequently, girls are at times treated with suspicion, mocked, and ridiculed for their attempts at engagements within scenes.

> Tine: "For me, as a female listening to metal and rock music, some guys will use that as a conversation starter, but it's not about the music, it's always something else… It's almost like that 'gamer girl' aesthetic, where it's like 'she's a metal chick' but no, I just found music that I like - that's not an invitation for you to message me because you happen to like the same songs, that's my personal taste. When I do go out to rock clubs, there will be guys who are like 'what's your music taste?' and 'oh my god, me too!' - no shit, we're at a rock club. I think being a rock or metal girl, being punk or gamer, is like a fetish [for some], which is why I don't want people to see it and be like: 'oh my god, we can listen to rock and heavier music together'… and then what, dickhead?"

Tine mentioned that some men will use a shared appreciation for metal and rock music to initiate conversation with her, and she noted that those conversations about music are never the *true* intention. Tine was very vocal and serious about her being into heavy metal music and men attempting to

use that as a conversation starter, which is, however, for her, not an "invitation" to find her interesting or attempt to start a conversation with her because of shared music preference. She was also very sarcastic regarding being approached at rock and metal clubs during a night out, and noted that to some people, the metal girl aesthetic is much like a fetish.

7.4: Female Metal Fans and Authenticity

> Me: "Do you get any reactions for being a female heavy metal fan?"
>
> Archaeologist: "All negative. I think a lot of heavy metal fans still expect you to be kind of crusty, working class, the idea of girls are nice and pretty and listen to pop music and Britney Spears and all the blonde hair and stuff. I think it's shifting for the better, but I still get a lot of stigma like 'you're a girl, are you here with your boyfriend or your husband?' and I'm like 'nah, I'm just here and just enjoy this', 'you're too posh for this' - well I grew up in the middle of nowhere, so I have no accent. It's one of those where you have to justify yourself."

Archaeologist was very vocal about her experiences as a female metal fan. Her description that metal fans are 'crusty' and 'working class' while girls listen to pop music' is a long-standing assumption which was already explained by

Weinstein (2000: 102). Similar to *KL*-Fan, Archaeologist mentioned that she receives comments in terms of attending concerts with her partner. As mentioned in the introduction, women in heavy metal are often seen as 'tokens' and there are stereotypical assumptions about what tokens must be like. Furthermore, in terms of her comment on being 'too posh' to be into metal music further shows that women's ability to fully participate in heavy metal subculture is conditional - they must perform metal on male terms, or on terms which are stereotypical to metal culture - being coarse, and rough and tough (Hutcherson & Haenfler 2010).

> *Metallica*-Fan: "I think it's more to do with the classical gender stereotype that it's more acceptable for men to listen to it [heavy metal]. And for women, it's more like: listen to the charts and pop music. But also maybe because a lot of women don't express it as much as men do, so the proportion of women isn't as obvious."

> *KoRn*-Fan: "It's more of a male-dominated scene. The women are just looked down on I think. (…) You get laughed at more, I guess - they don't believe you. In secondary school, all the boys would say 'I like this band' and when you said you like them too, you'd get laughed at and 'you're lying'."

Metallica-Fan mentioned the classical gender divides and gender stereotypes in which it is more acceptable for men to listen to rock and metal, whilst women are 'urged' to listen to popular music. *KoRn*-Fan on the other hand, made reference to being accused of being untruthful in terms of her music preference from male metal fans in her school. *KoRn*-Fan also noted that the metal scene is more male-dominated.

Over the last years, there have been numerous studies which have tried to establish a relationship between gender and music preference, and concluded that men prefer rock whilst women prefer pop (Coates 1997). At the same time however, it was revealed that rock music was only men's fifth favorite style of music and women's seventh (Millar 2008). Christenson and Peterson (1988), in a survey of British teenagers, revealed that girls' career opportunities are limited, and that marriage was the expected, and for many, the only avenue for mobility. In this sense, the real 'work' of teenage girls and young women is to find a husband, hence the orientation to softer and more romantic aspects of music, in particular in the context of dancing and finding a partner.

Frith (1981) further noted that girls' lives are more in the home than boys' lives. Girls are more integrated into the family, and the family has a higher dependency on them, whilst boys have had the freedom to go out alone and participate in cultures of leisure. *Metallica*-Fan also noted that she has witnessed being 'tested' on her knowledge of a band, being asked to name a number of albums and correct songs from the corresponding album. Like *Metallica*-Fan, *Korn*-Fan also made reference to boys challenging her metal

status, being accused of lying that she was into heavy metal from boys at her school. This 'testing', if assuming boys spend more time outside with more freedom than girls, stems from the boys being more interested in the music and are able to express their expertise to other boys (Christenson & Peterson 1988).

> Doc Martens Girl: "Sometimes people tried to challenge me and knew less about the matter than they thought they did, so I'd make them look stupid. My friends never 'challenged' me because they were die-hard and 'if you don't do it this way, you do it wrong'".

Doc Martens Girl noted that there were times people tried to challenge her on her knowledge on heavy metal. At such instances, she oftentimes knew more about the subject matter than the person who initially challenged her knowledge, and Doc Martens Girl seemed to take pride in the fact that she made the person 'look stupid', which would also [hopefully] serve them a lesson to just accept people's metal status and appreciation of the music.

> *NIN*-Fan: "I would definitely agree and I think it goes back to the elitism - it is always male fans, they will give you the third degree about the music that you love, but they don't do it to males. You see a guy with a *Tool* t-shirt or whatever, he's clearly a fan. See a girl with a *Tool* t-shirt, it's like 'name your favorite track off of *Opia* or one of the *Obscurity Peas*' and you are just like 'fuck off'. I think

there are plenty of female metal fans out there, but some

of our male friends have not caught up with that, actually.

We are fans too. I'm a fan because I am a fan, I'm not a

fan because someone I am dating is."

Metallica-Fan: "I've heard: name three albums and three

songs of each album."

NIN-Fan and *Metallica*-Fan both explained that they got 'tested' on music and

having to 'prove' that they are genuine metal fans. *NIN*-Fan also made a

sarcastic remark about "some of our male friends have not caught up with that"

in terms of women being metal fans too, linking it to the elitism that comes with

some members of the metal community, which she was quite vocal about

throughout our interview, and in this particular case: elitist fans giving her a

hard time to *be* metal.

7.5: Female Fans Together - Community in a Community?

Prior to data collection, while I was working on the first parts of the literature

reviews, I came across the notions of hypermasculinity in heavy metal music,

which evoked the idea of community between women. Agreed and granted

that women are a minority in heavy metal, what does that mean in terms of

how they interact with one another when they encounter each other? Is there

a sense of community? Is there an acknowledgement of a 'shared minority'

status? Is there a sense of community at all? These were some of the underlying questions I had in terms of the gendered experience of heavy metal, which are answered by a few of my female participants in the sections below.

> *BMTH*-Fan: "I think there is kind of that sense of 'oh, finally, there's someone else', as there always is when you meet someone who is into what you like. It's just one of them things where you have that weird mind-connection, and it's like… you might not be best friends with that person, but you share something in common, so it means something to you."

> *KL*-Fan: "We are a minority. (…). One of my best friends also listens to metal and we go to concerts together. I think we have a stronger bond, but I think that's [also] down to being best friends. I've had connections with other girls, though, and when we talked briefly, and it's like 'yeah, cool'. Not long ago, at the *Casey* farewell tour, I met a girl and I got along with her really well - and it was directly some sort of relationship where we ended up looking out for one another. But I think when push comes to shove, when you're in the mosh pit for example, everyone helps you. You're just a part of it. It's not like someone will say 'it's a girl, I'll leave her there' but yeah,

I think you have this feeling of 'let's go to the front together' which you wouldn't do on your own. But when you are together with another girl, you have a stronger feeling of togetherness and community."

Both *BMTH*-Fan and *KL*-Fan made reference to forming a connection with other women when they encounter them. They acknowledged a certain level of friendship, and while they tend to get along with other metal girls, it is not a deep level of friendship. Since women have been marginalized in heavy metal music, and likely to have had similar experiences due to their gender, the sense of belonging that fosters may stem from acknowledging that both parties are in the minority, and that the old cliché of 'safety in numbers' may still apply in such a scenario - as is explained by *KL*-Fan's account on going to the front of the crowd together, which would not happen if she were at the concert alone.

Archaeologist: "I think that's why I generally don't bond with other female heavy metal fans, because they're constantly trying to prove that they are more metal and you end up in a deep contest on who is more metal. It's always one of those, you have to know who the line-up is and the song, you can't just enjoy the music. I do find with women, you have to overcompensate."

Archaeologist noted that she does not tend to bond with other female metal fans since she oftentimes experiences competition in regards to who is more metal along with other women in a bid to prove their heavy metal authenticity. Vasan (2016) argued that there is a challenge between members and perceived outsiders - even when both parties are female. Vasan (2011) argued that tolerating sexist attitudes and participating in some form of sexist behavior - against people of the same gender - is a necessary strategy for some women to maintain their 'place' in the heavy metal community.

> Archer: "When I was younger, when I was a teenager, I quite liked the fact that there were no [other] girls around. We used to pose around the toilet and when we'd go back out, we'd be on our own as there weren't many of us."

When Archer was younger, she noted that she enjoyed that there were few other female metal fans in [her local] scene that she would interact with. As stated in the first chapter, on becoming metal, Archer noted that she felt a lot more attractive, confident and was more popular amongst the metal youth of her town. She told me about moments at concerts where she would meet other female metal fans in the toilets and they would take some photographs together in front of the mirror and eventually disperse and go their own way. For her, this activity, meeting other girls in the bathroom and taking mirror photos together, was a way for Archer to bond with other female members of the community. Furthermore, from her account, it did not seem to be a single

occurrence, but rather, a regular thing which presumably strengthened Archer's community bonds and individual identity as a heavy metal fan.

While I have asked every female participant the question of whether or not they feel a sense of community amongst other female metal fans, there were also a number of mixed responses. *Metallica*-Fan, for example, noted that gender does not play a role for her in the feeling of community. She told me that it has always been a matter of: "you either listen to metal or you don't", the role of gender and heavy metal music preference as a basis for community was never an important notion for her. Tine on the other hand, noted while she does have female metal friends, she does not tend to share the metal aesthetic the way they do. She also noted that there are difficulties for women when they try to 'find their place' in the scene, and that there are certain stereotypes they have to live up to, something which Tine oftentimes does not find herself doing - sharing the visual aspect of metal music.

Lastly, Forensics Student noted that while she perhaps feels a sense of community with other metal women, she also noted that women judge her a lot more than the men in the metal scene do – again some similarity with other contexts; something feminists have written about. Forensics Student told me that "women are really judge-y" and that the times when she was judged on her metal appearance, as mentioned in one of the previous sections, where she was queueing up at a concert with her friends, it was other girls making remarks about Forensics Student and her friends.

7.6: Male Metal Fan's Impressions

Whilst the main focus of this chapter is on female experiences, the topic of gender was also subject of discussion with some of my male participants. In general, most of my male participants shared the sentiment that women have it hard in metal, particularly due to the higher number of male fans.

> Slam Drummer: "I always notice it when I attend festivals, the number of women is substantially lower than the number of men. If you compared it to other festivals of other genres, it's noticeable. It is male-dominated, I would say."

Slam Drummer, a regular festival attendee, , commented on the low number of women who also attend festivals. One of the possible explanations for that is Slam Drummer's country of residence, Germany, where according to Chaker (2013), up to 85% of metal fans are male. Having attended different festivals in other countries too, Slam Drummer noted that he finds heavy metal and the festival scene male-dominated.

> Crash: "There's either the archetypal one: the super pretty ones, which, you can guarantee have a big, scary boyfriend or husband, or be the completely unapproachable ball of hate. Even the 'scary' ones aren't scary when you've had a beer with them, so it's the representation of it. They bring the power and passion

with it. But most importantly: female role models. If you

have/are a female role model, you'll get a bigger

following."

Crash made a very interesting statement about females in metal music. He

showed an awareness of the fact that women have to 'over-emphasize' their

metal fandom in order to 'fit' or 'represent' a specific category, and the female

role model. While there are a number of bands with female members or bands

which are female-fronted - most notably *Arch Enemy*, *The Agonist*, *Jinjer* - this

kind of exposure may inspire other women to get into metal and become the

next big hit. Crash also made reference to having a bigger following. Music

scenes, and metal in particular, remain heavily stratified along gender lines.

According to Berkers and Schaap (2015), there are two possible explanations

which may help explain and clarify this. First, heavy metal is oftentimes

perceived as a form of male rebellion vis-à-vis female bedroom culture[11]

(Berkers & Eeckelaer 2014). Second, playing in a band is a largely homosocial

activity, meaning that activities relating to heavy metals bands oftentimes

occur in peer-groups which are shaped by existing sex-segregated friendship

networks (Bielby 2003).

Furthermore, female metal fans, and female metal performers in particular,

tend to be more likely evaluated on their group category (being female) and

---

[11] The theory of bedroom culture, developed by the sociologists such as McRobbie, asserts that females/girls are socialized to not engage in crime and deviant behaviour through bedroom culture - they are 'trapped' in their bedroom, where such behaviour does not occur.

non-ability traits, rather than on their individual skills. In other words, a female singer may have good vocals when singing and amazing growls, but she will be judged if she does not do certain types of screams - female guitarists and drummers are also looked down on based on what they do not play, rather than what they *can* and *do* play.

Thrash Fan: "Performance-wise, I think it starts to be a bit of a change there. Again, there are a lot of females - because of artists like Angela Gossow and Alyssa White-Gluz - who are definitely stepping up, and other female-fronted bands like *Lacuna Coil*. There's bands popping up more and more, with female members and stuff like that.

Me: "What do you think of women in heavy metal?"

Thrash Fan: "Fuck yeah. I'm not sure there's anything to add to that... I've become to really enjoy aggressive female vocal sounds like *Jinjer*, *Arch Enemy*, *Fear of Domination*. I really like that unique twist it gives. I don't mind it, actually I encourage it and I think that's a pretty common view on metal and metal fans - nobody really cares about sexual identity or gender or whatever: you're a metal fan."

Thrash Fan mentioned a change in heavy metal bands and made reference to artists such as Angela Gossow [former singer of *Arch Enemy*] and Alyssa White-Gluz [former singer of *The Agonist*; currently in *Arch Enemy*] were 'stepping up'. Much like *Metallica*-Fan mentioned that for her, gender does not play a role in heavy metal, Thrash Fan also asserts that sexual identity and gender are not important in terms of being a metal fan - people are metal fans, or they are not, regardless of their gender except for the twist when it comes to performers. While the motivations behind join a band are similar for both men and women, their experiences of being a band member can vary significantly (Berkers & Schaap 2015). While women in bands, and singers in particular, experience an increased level of visibility, there are also problems that come with it. On the one hand, female vocalists can benefit from being noticed easier than men, making their videos potentially more popular. On other hand, female singers are noticed *because* of their gender rather than their skills.

> *Watain*-Fan: "Men are definitely more predominant. It's probably different from one sub-genre to another. In particular black metal, you have very little number of women. In terms of musicians, it's even worse. Let's take black metal, if I had to count how many women there are, from all the bands that I know, I could reach double-figures with a lot of difficulty. If I was to split by instrument, I could not think of a single female drummer apart from female-only band. I am also under the impression, I've

interviewed a few females, but they have to prove themselves a bit more. I'm not sure if that's from the scene, or if they want to. Since I've been in the scene, we've come closer to having more women in metal and there are more female artists and female journalists in magazines, but it's not equal at all."

Me: "Do you think women in heavy metal have it difficult?"

Watain-Fan: "Partly yes. It depends. I'll give you an example. I was at a party, and one of my friends is a DJane[12], and I was stood at the mixing desk with her and some dude came over and requested a song, as you do. He automatically looked at me and when I made the gesture that I am not in charge of the music, he only *then* asked her. I think this instance is no big deal or something that people should be mad about, but if it happens frequently, or if it gets worse such as people belittling their ability to make music because they are female - it may not be the rule anymore - but as long as something like this still exists, and if one wanker ruins 20 or 50 nice guys' reputation, it's always that one guy who you remember. Of course, that puts you off."

---

[12] "DJane" is a term for female DJs used in German-speaking countries

Watain-Fan noted that men are predominant in heavy metal, in particular in black metal [and other genres of extreme metal]. *Watain*-Fan, who works in the media industry, has close and regular contact with metal, and also notes that there are still discrepancies in terms of the ratio of female metal artist and women in metal media - while it is something which is steadily improving, there is still inequality, according to him. *Watain*-Fan also told me about an incident in which he was mistaken for being the DJ at a party, while his female friend was, in fact, in charge of the music. He also seemed concerned about the one 'wanker' who ruins other guys' reputation - much like can be seen from the *YouTube* comments screenshots from the introduction.

In regards to relationships, Weinstein (2000: 135) noted that if a male heavy metal fan had a girlfriend, he would typically prefer that she was not into heavy metal music too, but rather, would prefer being with his [male] friends whilst participating and indulging in metal-related activities. This raises the question: why would this be the case? According to Weinstein (2000), the majority of her male informants noted that whilst they did not expect their girlfriends to dislike heavy metal, they prefer if that was the case - presumably to have a distinction between spending time with their girlfriends and spending time with their friends - negotiating leisure activities between these two groups.

> Scotty: "I'm happy for my girlfriend or future girlfriend to
> be covered in tattoos and have no hair, get a Mohican, or
> dye her hair. It's what I love, so why can't my partner too?
> So it's more uncommon, you're gonna fall in love with that

person harder the more you have in common with them. Music is a big part of my life, so I'd have music be a big part of their life as well - that and video games. If I didn't have those sort of things in common with someone, I wouldn't get on with them as much, I wouldn't find common ground and stuff. I mean it's like with you: if you found a girl with tattoos, she listens to heavy music, you'd be more attracted to her. Would you rather listen to Taylor Swift or Justin Bieber or that sort of stuff, or like *Suicide Silence* with someone?"

Chemist: "I think the music you listen to and hobbies you have are quite a big part of who you are. If you've not got that compatibility with someone, it's a barrier. You can share that with someone. What are you gonna do when you have a missus and you're off, going to concerts, they're gonna miss out from not sharing that with you. Personally, it would be a massive plus, it's not something I look for in a partner, but it would be a benefit."

Chemist and Scotty both made reference to music and hobbies being big parts of who they are, and explored the notion of sharing that with a partner. The social bonding theory, originating from evolutionary psychology, suggests that musical behaviors may facilitate social affinity and group cohesion (Roederer 1984; Madison et al. 2017). Interestingly, Scotty, who grew up around metal

music due to influence from his aunt and other family members (as discussed in the first data chapter), notes that 'getting on with them' is an important part of the relationship. If Scotty and potential partner have children, their mutual interest may influence the child's music preference - raising the new generation of heavy metal kids.

7.7: Chapter Discussions

The aim of this chapter was to explore and highlight gender in heavy metal, with a particular focus on female participants' experiences as heavy metal fans. Heavy metal music has had a long-standing image of being male-dominated and has faced allegations of being sexist (Hill et al. 2015). From the interviews and data presented in this chapter, the conclusion about the gendered experience of metal music is: it is mixed - no two accounts of my female participants are the same. While some participants such as *KL*-Fan, *KoRn*-Fan, and Archaeologist were very open and vocal about the negative experiences and frustrations they face and have faced, others have had a mix of experiences.

Doc Martens Girl, *Metallica*-Fan, *KoRn*-Fan, and *NIN*-Fan made reference to being 'tested' on heavy metal and their knowledge on the matter, as a frequent occurrence in the heavy metal scene, where members try to establish each other's level of authenticity. Archaeologist mentioned that people constantly end up in a "contest" with one another - trying to prove to be *more* 'metal' than the other person. As an aspiring researcher, I was interested in finding out more about female fans' experiences in terms of their heavy metal identities

and everyday life as female fans. I found it, however, difficult to believe the ridiculousness of some of the accounts they told me - *KL*-Fan's account of a guy approaching her, saying: "I've never seen anyone at a metal gig shake their ass so nicely". Comments like that are what make other [male] metal fans look bad, like *Watain*-Fan mentioned "one wanker ruins 20 or 50 nice guys' reputation, it's always that one guy who you remember".

Krenske and McKay (2000) noted that even while heavy metal fans lean towards expression rebellion against society and assumed societal norms, they seem to reinforce traditional and conventional gender regimes between men and women, in particular in terms of how women are positioned within the culture. While many women claim that the reason for participating in heavy metal culture is to reject the image of the 'stay at home' girl, heavy metal culture does not change women's positions in the sense of equalizing them with male metal fans (Krenske & McKay 2000).

In terms of community between female metal fans, what was most surprising to me, was discrepancies of accounts in regards to feeling a sense of community with other female fans. While *BMTH*-Fan and *KL*-Fan mentioned that they do feel a sense of community with other women, I was surprised that they were the only two of my female participants who acknowledged this. I was surprised at *Metallica*-Fan's and Archaeologist's account that the role of gender does not matter and that she does not tend to bond with other female heavy metal fans, respectively. Perhaps it was my naivety, believing that fans

naturally bond, maybe it was the members of my cohort - perhaps future research may shed some more light into this.

According to Hoad (2017), heavy metal is an arena of gender within which members compete to register and affect ideas of masculinity, sexuality, femininity, and gender relations. Metal offers a site for doing identity work and accomplishing gender, where ideas of gender and sexual identity circulate in texts, sounds, and practices of heavy metal music (Walser 1993: 109). Women's acceptance within a scene oftentimes relies on their ability to conform to masculinist code of gender performativity, which my participants sometimes reject (Hoad 2017). Walser (1993: 131) thus suggested that women are offered male subject positions as a condition of their participation in empowerment.

A study by Schaap and Berkers (2014) regarding online participation of women in the extreme metal genre demonstrated that, while remaining highly under-represented, women are less commonly confronted with the consequences of tokenism as one might assume or expect. Rather, Schaap and Berkers (2014: 112) found a 'strong focus on music and mutual, intergender support'. They suggest that this might be due to the nature of the internet, but also the nature of cover videos posted on YouTube in particular. Savigny and Sleight (2015) however, while acknowledging that an increasing number of women make it onto the metal stage, note that women are, as a result of their presence on stage, more likely to be objectified, sexualized, and

commercialized than in previous times. Furthermore, within a concert environment, women are judged more on appearance than virtuosity.

Some scholars have long noted that listening to how participants in research studies talk and theorize about their lives from their own views and experiences is a valuable source of knowledge for researchers (Hill 2018). It is particularly important as participants' stories inform and alert us to misrepresentations within dominant spheres of knowledge, it also aids and enables a broader understanding of our lives, in particular in relation to non-hegemonic 'constructions of the social world' (Scott 2008: 273). Despite using 'experience' in research, there is a risk of grouping women into one unified category which omits any differences between individual members (Stanley & Wise 1993). Thus, one of my main concerns and efforts was to not group female participants' accounts as yet *another* account of experience, but rather, as a standalone account - each account had its own backstory and 'identity'.

In terms of accounts regarding heavy metal identities and experiences, the accounts of my female participants provide good insight into their everyday lives as female fans and the way they navigate through, at times, difficult social interactions. With my male participants, however, there was a different understanding of 'gender in metal' - with most of the accounts being on the subject of female performers. Only a handful of male participants made reference to women having it more difficult.

With this being the last data chapter, the upcoming chapter will discuss some of the main findings and implications from this chapter and Chapter Four, Five, and Six, and draw conclusions from notions and themes which were discussed throughout the thesis, and place them into a wider context of heavy metal music and its implications in participants' everyday life.

CHAPTER EIGHT - DISCUSSIONS

8.1: Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to discuss some of the main findings of this thesis, in particular the role of heavy metal identities in everyday life, heavy metal authenticity, the communal functions of heavy metal music, and the interplay of identity and community in the complexity of everyday life.

8.2: Heavy Metal Identities and Everyday Life

The findings of this research project and my participants' accounts support the notion that personal and social identities are intimately linked through reciprocal relationships and mutual influence between people (Arnow 1990; Jenkins 2004). The personal is regarded as the individual and isolated body and/or mind which is referred to as an autonomous individual or single person, whilst the social is explained through ideas of community, groups, and society (Jenkins 2004).

Within Anglo-Saxon psychology, notions such as personal-social, private-public, etc. have been grouped into opposing categories (Sedgwick 2001). This type of dichotomy can become problematic however, as the poles of the personal and social are not in opposition to one another but rather, overlap and coalesce in the course of one's everyday life. Thus, personal identities are integral and necessary for communal life, and communal life is, reciprocally, a necessity for the development of personal identity (Jenkins 2004). This was evident in Thrash Fan's account where he noted that being a metal fan is his

most defining and biggest part of his character and identity, which he inadvertently yet actively exhibits through the course of social interactions.

As highlighted in Chapter Two, the work of James (1890) plays an important role in understanding notions of the self, in particular the conceptualization of the distinction between the *I* and *Me* - the self-as-knower and the self-as-known, respectively. James (1890) described the *I* as the representing personal identity, whereby people witness and experience a sense of continuity over the course of time. There are core aspects of the self which remain stable and permanent over the course of time, whilst people have a sense of agency in regards to which information and identities they take on and display as their identity develops. The *Me* on the other hand, represents social identities and includes objects, possessions, and other people. The distinction between the *I* and *Me* were present in my participants and their accounts. They developed a sense of *I* as an individual who incorporates experiences with other people into their sense of self, whilst they also identified as metal fans, a social identity, or *Me*, which influences their appearance, material objects, and people with whom they share that particular identity with.

In symbolic interactionism, one of the main theoretical framework adopted in this work, human beings are not fixed and isolated units which are fixed into rigid patterns of their pasts, but rather, reflective beings responsive to the experience of those around them - thus the self is both a product and producer of relations with other people (Gusfield 2003). The core focus of this thesis was the expression of identity in everyday life, and metal fans engage and interact with heavy metal music in a number of ways, which includes objects,

other people, and places. Their social participation with others is an important aspect of their community experience (Snell & Hodgetts 2007). Symbolic interactionism emphasizes the notion that "behaviour is a response to specific contexts as the actor interprets those contexts" (Gusfield 2003: 123). This approach brings together interactions that people have with others, as well as places and objects, and particularly emphasizes how people interpret these interactions in the construction of meaning (Blumer 1969).

The core ideas which derive from symbolic interactionism are particularly relevant to my thesis and research questions as metal fans create meaning for and from material objects and music through interactions with those objects and with other metal fans. Heavy metal fans engage with heavy metal music throughout their everyday life and are engaged in public contestations and deliberations in regards to their identities, as they define themselves in opposition to others and other role models - an example of the looking-glass self at work. In sum, symbolic interactionism provided a basis for me to demonstrate the inter-connectedness of the various relational and situational processes, which my participants encounter and go through in their everyday life, in particular in regards to material culture and the importance for places and other people in terms of community and identity.

8.2.1: The Situated Nature of Heavy Metal Identities

Situated Identity Theory offers a general approach to the problem of situational meaning and provides an operational definition of normative structures in action settings (Alexander & Lauderdale 1977). Situated Identity Theory

begins with the assumption that what Goffman (1959) referred to as 'expressions given off' which are pervasively communicated by ongoing activities (Alexander & Epstein 1969). In brief, Goffman and other interactionists assume that people must mutually negotiate their respective identities making interactions possible and that they continue to reinforce or renegotiate the original transaction/interaction through the encounter.

In terms of interaction, a situated identity must be established and maintained as a prerequisite for shared meaning. Situated identities are the attributions that are made about people in particular settings and circumstances as a consequence of their action. Not only is this situated identity a basis for initiating interaction, it is crucial for guiding and anticipating the course of that interaction - much like Dylan and Chad in the example in Chapter Two, but also in an imagined sense, as some participants mentioned hypothetical scenarios in which social interactions would occur (Alexander & Lauderdale 1977). Behavior becomes meaningful social action when it is perceptually integrated into a shared interpretive perspective (Mead 1934). Attribution theories suggest that these explanatory frames of reference importantly involve ideas about the dispositional characteristics of actors (Alexander & Gordon 1971), whilst some theorists strongly emphasize that social identity attributes, organizes, and orients interaction (Goffman 1959).

People do not only perform one identity across many places, but rather, they perform multiple identities across a number of places as they carry out activities related to their everyday life (Hannerz 2003; Snell 2012). The self is

comprised of multiple identities which shift in meaning and emphasis across the different scenarios individuals encounter and experience throughout the course of the day - a process which has been referred to as the dialogical self (Hermans 2001). The use of this concept explains the performance of the various, and sometimes contradictory, identities by my participants. For example, Navigator, who sported a mohawk for a number of years made reference to wanting to go into teaching and not being able to have a colorful mohawk and required to have a 'professional' hairstyle and covering his tattoos within a school environment. Similarly, Trig mentioned going for a job interview and tying his long hair back and having a clean shave rather than a long beard to appear more professional for a bank environment. Archer mentioned that during important meetings with international clients, especially from far-East Asia, she removes her piercings. Whilst all three examples involve participants altering their appearance, they did not stop listening to metal music or stopped being fans, but rather, that aspect of their identity had to be de-emphasized and suppressed for that specific encounter and moment in time. This illustrates how the negotiation of identity and community are located across places, times, events, and objects (Noble 2004; Hurdley 2006). This negotiation of 'visible' identities will be discussed in more detail in Section 8.2.3.

8.2.2: Material Culture in Heavy Metal Identity Expression

In Chapter Five, *Metallica*-Fan made reference to decorating her school bag with *Metallica* pins as a sign that she "actually" listened to the music - unlike many of her peers who, according to her, would frequently wear metal-themed

clothing because of the aesthetics, rather than due to musical preference. Through appropriating material objects with other cultural artefacts such as pins, fans such as *Metallica*-Fan are able to communicate their music taste and group membership in a creative manner - the badges are explicit signifiers through which fans can meaningfully display their group membership (Weinstein 2000). Similarly, *Watain*-Fan made reference to his abundant collection of metal-related memorabilia, reminding him of his cultural place in the world, past experiences, and heavy metal identity - in particular his *Necrophobic* tattoo on his leg being a constant symbol in the process of communicating his heavy metal status.

Material objects that my participants and I talked about were analyzed and viewed through the concept of souvenirs, which people consciously accumulate and use as mementos of events and places, and as a way to be physically connected to other people, locations, and times. Souvenirs remind the owner of the location they represent, the time that was spent there, and the memories which were created there - all which can be communicated to others through simple objects (Stewart 1993). The home, the place where souvenirs are most often kept, becomes a central place where individuals are able to utilize material objects in the expression of their true self and cultural place in the world (Duncan 1981). Material objects can serve a variety of functions which are important in relation to identity and community, and interactions with other people are oftentimes mediated through objects, and interactions are readily available through them (McMillan & Chavis 1986; Cullum-Swan & Manning 1994). Similarly, Snell (2012) argued identity and

community are not only made tangible through what people do, but also through their material possessions.

Stylization is an important facet of people's everyday life as visual displays allow for the representation of identities and group affiliation as individuals navigate through the mire of daily social interactions, environments, and contexts. Through the use of material culture and objects, identity is communicated and one's style becomes routine and an everyday element of one's life, and may thus become taken-for-granted until it is defamiliarized (Chaney 2002). It is however, important to note that displaying identity through material culture is more than displaying culture like birds display their feathers, but rather, it is also negotiated along community standards - there is a 'way' to look metal, and only if one *looks* metal, they *are* metal (Weinstein 2000).

Much like material objects being couched as 'symbols of self', as explained earlier, more permanent changes such as body modification aid in the expression of identity. Some of my participants that have modified their body through tattoos and/or piercings mentioned that their tattoos help them express who they are. *Watain*-Fan explored the importance of his metal tattoos, as they show his place in the world and highlight the monumental importance of metal music in his life. Similarly, Tine made reference to people's reactions regarding her piercings and tattoos and how that is an indicator of whether or not she would want to associate with people who cast judgement over her body modification. Regarding his nose piercing, Moose noted that people will "make their mind up" about him when they see him.

Whilst we do not have any influence over how our body develops and changes over the course of our life, we have a choice in how we choose to modify our body through piercings and tattoos (Falkenstein 2012).

Fruh and Thomas (2012) regard the acquisition of tattoos by people who wish to individuate themselves from others as evidence that people are clearly associating their bodies with personal identity, and acknowledge that people get tattoos as a way to channel their individuality to further integrate their identity into a social group. The role of social interaction in relation to material objects suggests that people do not automatically and necessarily interact with the objects themselves, but rather, that people can have communal experiences of objects (Snell 2012). Further extending Anderson's (1983) concept of the imagined community, it not only through the practices but also through material culture that communities emerge in everyday life.

8.2.3: The "Visibles" and "Invisibles"

One notion which became apparent in some participants' accounts was the notion of being a 'visible' metal fan. *Megadeth*-Fan noted that on first glance, there is nothing particularly *metal* about his appearance, whilst Chemist mentioned that he does not necessarily associate the visual aspects of heavy metal music with his identity expression. A person's social identity is based on and stems from the social groups and categories which the individual is recognized as being a member of (Rosenberg 1997). Social categorization and social identity theories contend that individuals regularly and repeatedly classify themselves and others around them into the different social categories

available to them through the use of available and salient characteristics (Tajfel 1981; Turner 1982; Clair et al. 2005). Through the course of social interactions, people are able to recognize discernible differences between one another (Williams & O'Reilly 1998). Therefore, the way people think about their identity and differences in relation to others is largely based on and focused around perceivable attributes.

By and large, people recognize and understand each other's social identity at face value, based on cultural norms of expected behavior (Pinder 1995). The absence of clues - behavioral and visual - regarding someone else's social identity as a heavy metal fan for instance, may raise suspicions amongst members of the social group (Clair et al. 2005), which may lead to the creation of insider-outsider dynamics. Even at basic levels, belonging to a specific group transforms the way the way people think about themselves and others. When people think about themselves and each other in terms of their respective group identities, they tend to view themselves and other members of the in-group in terms of the group prototype, the "cognitive representation of features that describe and prescribe attributes of the group" (Hogg & Terry 2000: 123), and perceive themselves as interchangeable representatives of that group. In other words, and in the context of heavy metal fans, fans view themselves and others as homogenous and representing heavy metal music equally. Group prototypes tend to emphasize similarities amongst in-group members and highlight differences between members of the in-group and certain out-groups.

Visible and invisible social identities can be accurately described through the example and thought-experiment involving flashcards. Writing on both sides of a flashcard is never simultaneously visible - one side of the card is always concealed, two sides of the same flashcard are unable to 'exist' concurrently despite being two parts of one whole (Mitchell 2006). Consequently, people need to 'flip' the flashcard in order to reveal what is on the other side and to alternate between which side they wish to be visible upon inspection. When one side becomes visible, the other becomes invisible. Similarly, this is the case regarding identities. When heavy metal fans present and express themselves visibly, other aspects of their identity may become suppressed - and vice versa. With some participants, choosing not to engage with the visible aspect of heavy metal, which thus affects their identity expression. Their heavy metal identity is, throughout certain situations, invisible and unimportant. Only when the heavy metal aspect of their identity is important during a social interactions, they 'flip' their heavy metal identity into the open for people to witness and engage with.

It is, however, important to note that the difference between being a visible or invisible metal fan is not always of particular or monumental importance. A number of participants shared the sentiment of heavy metal being inclusive regardless of levels of involvement and someone is considered a metal fan [by them] if they like the music. To those participants, norms are not written in stone or important to be adhered to - perhaps fueled by past experiences of 'gatekeepers' who attempt to regulate what heavy metal is and what it should be like. Whilst a number of participants may well be considered 'invisibles', it

is noteworthy that the threshold of 'being' a heavy metal is not an impermeable border. Much like the photograph of the mosh pit in Chapter Six, with bystanders in the photographs, individual motivation and agency is required and necessary in order to act out metal-related practices and identities. The lack of visible identity may diminish opportunities for involvement in social interactions for which a visible identity may be beneficial or participating in social interactions. Nonetheless, an 'invisible metal identity does not diminish individual levels of fandom. Thus, the notion of 'visibles' and 'invisibles' navigates along subjective lines and perceptions.

The aspect of visibility was more pronounced in the accounts of my female participants, who frequently made reference to their metal identities being questioned by others, mainly male fans, but also by other female fans in Archaeologist's and Forensics Student's case. Here, their visibility relies on an active communication of their metal identities and needing to assert their metal identities in order to be 'accepted' as such. Tine, for instance, noted that she does not share the visual aspect of heavy metal in the same way as her friends do, and made reference to the difficulties female fans face in order to 'find their place'. She rejected the idea of having to 'dress up' in order to fit in with the community. Similarly, as Forensics Student noted some comments she heard about herself and some other friends, there seems to be a feeling of 'competing' with one another in order to be regarded as a legitimate heavy metal fan. Korn-Fan noted that when boys in her high school found out that she was a heavy metal fan, she was laughed at and accused of lying. The act of being visible is, therefore, negotiated along subcultural expectations in order

to fully 'participate' - being a *visible* female fan is based on terms and expectations stereotypical to heavy metal culture, which is predominantly male-oriented and hyper-masculine (Hutcherson & Haenfler 2010; Hill 2018).

In sum, regarding visibility, there is a discrepancy with the perception and experience. Whilst there is a general consensus that 'you are a heavy metal fan if you like the music' or 'if you are a heavy metal fan, you are a heavy metal fan' in terms of fandom, this notion is not as straightforward. Whilst most, if not all, of my male participants acknowledged the difficulties female fans may face, there still seemed to be an element of complacency it - almost like 'I have witnessed it but there is nothing I can do'.

It is also noteworthy that a lack of visibility does not mean lack of engagement. Whilst some participants might not appear metal, they are not excluded from interactions with other heavy metal fans. There may be a lack of interaction with them based on *their* appearance, however, they are still able to interact with other people based on other's appearance. Their lack of visibility does not necessarily diminish their involvement with heavy metal, as those participants shared similar if not equal sentiments in terms of bonding with other metal fans, and feeling part of a greater collective. Whilst 'invisible' fans might be regarded as peripheral members, they are still members and therefore regarded as part of the community.

8.3: Heavy Metal Authenticity

One theme which became increasingly prominent as interviews and research progressed was the concept of authenticity and being an 'authentic' metal fan. My female participants in particular made reference to their experiences that they are at times not perceived as *proper* heavy metal fans, and are thus subsequently regularly scrutinized and tested on their metal knowledge and legitimacy as fans. In this section, I will consider some of the discussions made in relation to the expression of identity through material culture from Chapter Five, arguing that authenticity is situational and influenced by social identity.

Through the use of material objects, metal fans are afforded with opportunities to engage with members of both their in-group - other metal fans - and members of the out-group - members from outside of their community through the means of differentiating oneself and one's group with another. The iconography and symbolism of band logos and more stereotypically, skulls and demons, are a way of defining and expressing community in contrast to other groups (Brown 2007; Snell 2012). This is particularly the case with heavy metal, a culture which opposes the 'mainstream' and to some extent, enjoys its marginal and fringe position within broader society - with heavy metal material objects and associated symbolism becoming much like a 'badge of honor' (Weinstein 2000: 271).

From my participants' accounts regarding their authenticity being questioned and them, in a sense, having to negotiate their authenticity with others - through being expected to verify their knowledge of certain bands - authenticity

seems to share some common notions with social identity and the theory of the looking-glass self. As explained in Chapter Two, the looking-glass self is the idea that people perceive themselves through the eyes of others. Very much like our physical appearance is reflected back to us when we look in the mirror, Cooley (1902) argued that the reactions and responses we receive from others provide us with a viewpoint from which we are able to define our attributes. Furthermore, through the looking-glass self, the notion that a sense of self is based on the contemplation of our individual qualities and impressions of how others perceive us is brought forward (Isaksen 2013). In this sense, the way we perceive ourselves does not originate from how we *really* are, but rather, from how we *believe* other people see us - we thus create our self-image in accordance with the evaluations and responses of others who are part of our environment (Isaksen 2013).

Much like the looking-glass self, in terms of authenticity, individuals do not internalize all the perceptions that others have of them, but rather, seem to carefully select which people's perceptions and opinions are the most influential, important, and hold most value and meaning (Reitzes 1980). As long as, or rather - every time -, people are involved in social interactions, they are inevitably vulnerable to the judgements of others about them, meaning they are constantly faced with the task of altering their self-image throughout the course of their social lives.

Some participants' accounts relating to authenticity suggest that heavy metal fans are continuously confronted and scrutinized with the distinction between

being a 'real' fan or a 'poser'. This study revealed some commonalities with Harkness' (2012) study on cultural practices and rhetoric of authenticity in the Chicago underground rap scene - contestations and differentiations between 'real' and 'fake' fans as a basis for understanding authenticity. Boundaries create hierarchies, distinctions, and negotiate rules regarding inclusion, and Lamont and Molnar (2002) argued that boundaries create feelings of group membership and similarity amongst group members. Boundaries are, however, also contextual and flexible and have the ability to vary across time and space (Lamont & Molnar 2002). In the context for heavy metal fans, authenticity seemed to be one of the most salient boundaries - who is and is not a 'fan' seemed to be of central and particular importance.

In sum, based on participants' accounts, it can be argued that authenticity is not only relational and context-dependent [situational], but also influenced by social identity. In a social group, a group of friends may all perceive each other as genuine and authentic metal fans. An out-group however, a different group of metal friends or even heavy metal outsiders, may perceive and consider this group as less authentic or not even authentic at all - and vice versa; 'our' group may view other groups as less authentic by our own groups' standard. Two examples of social identity influencing the judgement of authenticity are Thrash Fan's and Forensics Student's accounts in Chapter Five and Seven, respectively. Thrash Fan mentioned a story of him being questioned by a drunk person in a tram in Helsinki - questioning his metal knowledge and appreciation. Forensics Student's account included getting attitude and receiving criticism from other fans whilst queuing outside a concert.

The highlighting of differences between the in-group and out-group can be problematic - in particular if occurring within a group in which members perceive themselves as homogenous. In the account of Forensics Student, in which she made reference to being called 'little girls' when herself and her friends attended heavy metal concerts, there was evidence of stigmatization. Crocker et al. (1998) noted that stigmatized individuals are believed to possess some attribute or characteristic which is devalued within particular social situations. Being subjected to stigmatism leads to discrimination and status loss (Link & Phelan 2001) - and those who bear the stigma, in this case Forensics Student and her peers, are negatively evaluated regardless of the truth or merit of the [negative] evaluation (Clair et al. 2005). Whilst Forensics Student could be seen as a visible metal fan, her authenticity was in question which resulted in her being seen and treated like an outsider - due to an 'invisibility' of fandom.

8.4: The Communal Functions of Heavy Metal Music

The section on material culture touched upon notions of place and place-based identity, and how identity can seep into communal places and locations. Due to my focus on social interaction and thus shared activities in regards to identity and community, the notion of place became another theme. I utilized notions of place to examine not only geographical locations in the traditional sense, but rather also to investigate materiality and embodiment. The accounts that my participants gave and referenced, frequently involved being situated in places, as they described different scenarios such as concerts, work, study, and their home. Whilst some of my participants mentioned

listening to music in private, the majority of our conversations revolved around music-related activities involving others.

Through a sharing and appreciation of aesthetic tastes and musical interests, people are drawn together which allows them to establish personal relations and community/group affiliations (Marti 2009). People have a desire to feel that their community membership is worthwhile, meaningful, and positive - thus, there is oftentimes an emphasis on similarity between personal sense of self and the perceived values which are upheld by a group or community (Tajfel 1981). By doing so, people experience and perceive their group memberships as worthwhile, and throughout the process, they can experience feelings of community and belonging.

During the interviews, I asked my participants about the sense of community in regards to heavy metal music. *KL*-Fan made a comment, originally about gender and other female metal fans, which sums up my participants' sentiments nicely: "finally, someone else". People consume music in a variety of settings and for a variety of reasons, and being able to share our music consumption habits with others is a preferred and natural conversation starter amongst people meeting and interacting for the first time (Rentfrow & Gosling 2006; Boer et al. 2011). People have an ability to communicate and bond over music, and studies have demonstrated and revealed that shared music preference forges and strengthens social bonds (Knobloch et al. 2000; Lonsdale & North 2009). This relates to some of the literature based on

similarity and attraction that has largely demonstrated that similarity leads to social attraction (Byrne 1997; Boer et al. 2011).

Social psychological research has identified specific social functions of music preferences. First, individuals tend to listen to specific types of music - which implies that music preference may provide clues about a person (Rentfrow & Gosling 2006). Moose made an observation/comment regarding his own appearance, commenting that when people see him, they will make their minds up about him without even speaking to him. Unsurprisingly, music offers important and easy to access social information which individuals share early on in their interactions (Rentfrow & Gosling 2006). Second, individuals who share a preference in similar styles of music demonstrate a higher level of social attraction toward each other (Knobloch et al. 2000; Selfhout et al. 2009).

ATB-Fan and Moose made reference to that social attraction, stating that metal fans are some of the nicest people one could meet and furthermore, referred to the heavy metal subculture as being inclusive. Similarly, Tine made reference to seeking help from 'rockers' and metal fans if she ever finds herself in trouble, as there is a common ground and something relatable in sharing music tastes, meaning that there is a certain degree of trust between group members, even if they are not aware of each other until the moment when a social interaction occurs, or when help is required - much like Navigator offered to take a young metal fan back to the *Iron Maiden* concert him and his daughter also attended, as highlighted in Chapter Six.

Anderson's (1991) concept of the 'imagined community' was an important and helpful concept for understanding community in the context of heavy metal community. Whilst not all members of the heavy metal community will ever interact with one another, much like members of nation-states, they perceive themselves to be part of the same [larger] community. Whilst many metal fans might not know of each other's existence, interactions with one another allow for the feeling of community and belonging to develop. It is, however, important to note that such feelings of belonging do not instantly develop. As a number of my female participants noted, they are 'tested' on their knowledge, before they are seen as a part of this imagined community that is heavy metal. The initial feeling of community is not necessarily intense, but rather a talking point that is elicited from a shared repertoire which has historical, ritualized, and signifiable events. In turn, awareness of shared metal 'heritage' are a means of reinforcing notions of belonging and commonality.

8.4.1: Metal Concerts, Communal Experiences, and the Carnivalesque

If identity and community can be understood and perceived as performances, naturally, they must occur somewhere. As mentioned earlier, people perform identity and community in everyday life not only within but also across a variety of places (Hodgetts et al. 2010b). Anderson's (1991) concept of the imagined community can not only be applied to the context of groups, but also to the context of the concert, illustrating how they are carried out across places and are created in a more localized environment, involving smaller groups where they experience a more tangible connection. Whilst Anderson (1991) noted that members of the smallest nations [or communities] do not know another,

yet still feel connected as belonging to the same community, it is important to note that members of communities do meet up and interact with one another - no matter how brief the encounter.

In the case for metal fans at concerts, people do not give up control or act out of characters due to the anonymity which is afforded by a group (Gruzelier 2007). Whilst there is an element of anonymity as with any [larger] crowd, metal fans look out for one another. A lot of my participants made reference to the 'unwritten' rules of the mosh pit which includes to not actively causing harm to anyone and picking someone up if they fall over - in some cases even stopping moshing so that the person can get back up. In the mosh pit, rather than being deindividuated, metal fans become hyperaware of their membership and their belonging to an intense community (Snell 2012). It seems rather contradictory however, moshing, as a practice, seems uninhibited as individuals participating 'release' or 'let go' and become hyper-physical. This is, however, regulated through the imposed informal or unwritten codes of practice.

My participants also made reference to heavy metal, and subsequently the metal concert, offering a sense of freedom and catharsis, which relates to Bakhtin's (1984) concept of the carnivalesque as explored in *Rabelais and His World*, in which Bakhtin (1984: 218) used the concept of the carnival to denote the 'varied popular-festive life of the Middle Ages and Renaissance'. These were positive spaces of cultural leveling, a distinct time and space in which the existing hierarchal social structures were eliminated temporarily. In regards to

social relations, the carnival suspended 'all hierarchical distinctions and barriers' so that everyone attending could be perceived as equal (Bakhtin 1984: 10/15). For the duration of the carnival, officers of political and religious power shelved their identities, and were able to join the festivities (Ravencroft & Gilchrist 2009). Similarly with heavy metal music, at the concerts, there is no hierarchy - everyone present is equal, enjoying the festivities, or rather, the spectacle as one, together. Simultaneously, it must be noted that people's engagement may vary - those who participate in moshing and those who do not. In light of this, in Chapter Six, I discussed the 'actives' and the 'passives' - who are divided by the threshold of 'wanting to participate' in the mosh pit.

Furthermore, besides from the carnivalesque, the metal concert is also something liminal. Liminality can be understood as a socially defined area which allows individuals to experience freedom from the mundane existence of everyday life (Shields 1990). Another importance of the concert is the fleeting duration, the essence of its brevity. Bauman (2004) referred to situations and environments like that as 'cloakroom communities', communities which are patched together for the duration of the spectacle, and 'dismantle' again once the event is over - reminiscent of how people leave and collect their coats at the cloakroom before embarking on separate ways at the end of the night. The beauty of the heavy metal concert, and festivals for that matter, is that the event allows people to feel like they are a part of a larger community - much like Anderson's imagined community - and witness and experience each other's presence in a palpable manner.

8.4.1.1: Metal Concerts as Ritual Sites

The previous section discussed the communal experiences and Bakhtin's carnivalesque in relation to heavy metal concerts. A number of participants, most notably Moose, made reference to heavy metal concerts being something ritualistic in nature. In Chapter Six, Moose made reference to heavy metal concerts and mosh pits being a "baptism by fire". Section 8.4.1 began with the notion that if identity and community can be understood and perceived as performances, they need to occur somewhere, in a set location. Music, in this case heavy metal, has the ability to provide routines and occasions which make up social life, through which people are able to give meaning to their surroundings (DeNora 2000; Roy & Dowd 2010; Vandenberg et al. 2021). In other words, rather than only for immediate effects such as emotional release and regulation, music possesses a social function. Particularly live concerts oftentimes take on ritual characteristics, creating a 'sonic bond' which allows people to create and reciprocate emotions (Bensimon 2012). Furthermore, as some participants such as *ATB*-Fan or Scotty made reference to past experiences of mosh pits, music does not only allow for people to create emotions, but also memories between them.

A number of sociologists have stressed the importance of rituals as an integral component of human behavior and as a key aspect of people's agency (Knottnerus 2016; Vandenberg et al. 2021). With its foundation on Durkheim's work on ritual, Collins (2004) connected the feelings of interacting with other people who share the focus of attention and mood with the creation of emotional energy. When people, fans at a heavy metal concert for instance,

are in the same space and have a mutual understanding of their shared awareness of each other, they are able to reach a state of effervescence (Collins 2004: 48). Rituals are a means to experience this, and are able to establish and maintain memberships and shared symbols, create norms for group behavior, and be important for people's emotions and confidence (Collins 2004: 49). Thus, through experiencing and participating in rituals, and the subsequent and simultaneous interaction with other group members, may lead to people experiencing amplified feelings of belonging. It is also noteworthy that whilst rituals occur within religious contexts and ceremonies, which sociological works are based on - in particular in terms of collective effervescence, the notions originating from ritual theory can easily be applied to secular occurrences and interactions such as live music concerts (Vandenberg et al. 2021).

Reoccurring activities which are common to concerts - and practiced by audience members - such as moshing can act as ritual activities in the heavy metal. Such activities, or 'stereotyped formulas', provide a sense of mutual awareness between participants in the crowd (Collins 2004; Vandenberg et al. 2021). Through focusing on shared activities, members of the community aware and accustomed to one another, resulting in the creation of a collective consciousness and a increased emotional energy (Vandenberg et al. 2021).

As stated earlier in this section, in Chapter Six, Moose made reference to moshing possessing a feeling of "baptism by fire", highlighting the chaotic nature of mosh pits and being involved in mosh pits, there is something

ritualistic regarding moshing. Every metal fan who moshes, will need to mosh 'for the first time'. By being involved in moshing, the sense of community becomes something tangible and due to the nature of mosh pits and heavy metal concerts, there is a necessity for social co-operation as people rely on one another in order to create the environment and experience (Arnett 1996). Every mosh pit has the potential to be someone's 'first' mosh pit. The 'baptism by fire' as Moose called it, can transition from something intimidating to friendly jostling and fun - rather than purposefully inflicting harm on someone (Weinstein 2000).

At metal concerts, moshing is not the only ritualistic occurrence. Between songs, the crowd may chant the names of songs, whilst during songs, fans may raise their hands in the air, displaying devil horns as a sign of appreciating the music and band. An integral part of the heavy metal concert as a ritual site is the shared focus of attention (Collins 2004). Through collective involvement regarding the same thing, the crowd is able to reach a shared mood which results in the feeling of collectivity (Vandenberg et al. 2021). Music events represent a break from the mundanity of everyday life, as discussed in the previous section on the carnivalesque, and are a special occasion which presents an opportunity to interact and connect with other like-minded people (Vandenberg et al. 2021).

8.4.2: Heavy Metal Locations and Localities

In Chapter Six, some participants made reference to 'community' in an imagined sense, being a part of the overall heavy metal community, whilst

others made reference to community not only being imagined, but also bound through physical space. Some of my participants shared with me some of their experiences of localities that involved metal-related activities, but were merely representational and had no relation to the wider, general [global] metal community - these localities are 'metal' localities in a local sense [e.g metal bars in Sheffield, Bradford, and Leeds].

For example, *ATB*-Fan made reference to a field in his hometown in North Yorkshire, in which the local metal community and what he called 'chavs' would meet up and brawl with each other. Doc Martens girl made reference to a park in her hometown in Suffolk where local youth groups meet up in their 'their' area of the park - resulting in hundreds of local youths occupying the same space, yet in their own social and spatial bubble. Through accounts such as above, metal fans are able to claim and voice a sense of ownership over a place, with the ability to convey notions of pride, values, identity, and belonging as it becomes *their* place (Nowel et al. 2006).

Navigator shared a story, explaining that he would frequently visit *Rio's*, a rock and metal bar in Bradford, and never experienced any issues regarding dress code. He mentioned how we would be able to enter the bar in a Hawaiian shirt, a mohawk, or business attire, and never faced any problems. Whilst some bars may have strict dress codes which visitors are advised to adhere to [not wearing hats or tracksuits, for example], establishments such as *Rio's* are able to emphasize and maintain a sense of difference from the mainstream (Snell & Hodgetts 2007). Rock bars and clubs' emphasis on differing to the

mainstream suggest that some bars do not adopt formal mainstream codes and standards, they adopt a code to reflect a commitment towards heavy metal music and how fans articulate their identities and interests.

Even with metal clubs and bars, however, there exists a slightly contradictory sentiment. On the one hand, there exists and element of inclusivity - you can be who you want to be; everyone is welcome. On the other hand however, there seems to be a notion of the establishment of difference from the 'mainstream' - the fact that the bar and club is a *metal* club. Groups that tend to be marginalized by mainstream society, such as the metal community is at times, oftentimes create spaces for community where they invert the social power relations by 'pushing out' members of the dominant group (Snell & Hodgetts 2007). Despite being inclusive, some of my participants emphasized the existence of '*metal* clubs' and '*metal* bars' as opposed to just 'clubs' and 'bars'.

In this sense, the sense of inclusivity is along the lines of: as long as it is the *correct* kind. If people express themselves as metal fans, there should not be any issues. The emphasis of participants of 'metal clubs' and 'metal bars' implies that only people who are metal fans would attend such establishments. Whilst an open door policy does exist, it is almost invisible exclusion - only metal fans would attend metal bars.

8.4.3: Heavy Metal Community of Practice

Lave and Wenger (1991) defined 'community of practice' as any group which is involved in joint activities, through which the group is 'reproduced' through

the gradual and continual induction of new participants over time. A community of practice is, thus, both a sustained organizational activity which is maintained/sustained through members coming together and making use of shared routines, skills, and a location in which new members are socialized into the community (Husband 2005: 463). Through the process of ongoing induction of new members and participants into the community of practice, skills, knowledge, and values of the community are passed onto incoming members by existing and established members. Husband (2005) noted that practice and learning are complementary processes which occur within communities of practice, and leaning particular is not exclusively for the mastery of new skills or knowledge, but rather also the taking on an identity shared by the community members.

Lave and Wenger (1991) noted that community is an innate feature in the existence of knowledge, creating a social space where people are able to learn. Through mutual engagement, new members of the group interact with more experienced members in order to achieve the goal of the community. This can be applied in relation to the mosh pit at heavy metal concerts. In Chapter Six, Thrash Fan showed some consideration to his fellow friends at concerts, noting that if someone is not comfortable moshing, he refuses his own involvement in the pit. Similarly, it can be assumed that if he is attending a concert with an inexperienced concert-goer, he may 'take it easy' in terms of moshing to accommodate for his friend's experience and comfort level.

Similarly, in a home environment, more experienced members of the community [family members] are able to pass down knowledge and experiences to incoming members. This was exemplified in the examples of *NIN*-Fan, who noted that her father was "very supportive of my love for loud, progressive music"; *Metallica*-Fan and Julie's accounts of having their father as a main source of influence for heavy metal music whilst cooking or traveling, respectively.

Initially, newcomers of the community are peripheral members whose engagement increases over time through more exposure and involvement (Lave & Wenger 1991). Learning the practices of the community occurs through the development of social relationships which develop over time, and through experiences, belonging, and participating, members' sense of self and identity is developed and reinforced (Barab & Duffy 2000; O'Brien & Bates 2015). Moose made reference to the notion of participation in the mosh pit. He noted that "you're trying to kick someone else's adrenaline into overdrive", allowing new members to be involved and, in future, replicate the sensation and experience in other potential newcomers in future events.

Community of Practice and Mutual Identity

Several participants made reference to being 'introduced' to heavy metal music through influences such as peers and family members, resulting int their eventual taking on and expressing of heavy metal identities through increased involvement with the music over time. Originally made use of within learning environments, some aspects of community of practice are relevant and applicable to heavy metal music. Wenger (1988) suggested that members of

communities of practice possess three attributes: mutual engagement, joint enterprise, and mutual repertoire. Through these three attributes, communities of practice are able to exist as every individual member possesses a unique individual identity, which is important for members to engage with one another. Members influence each other's development and the practice of the community, leading to negotiated goals to be achieved such as forming a mosh pit at a concert [mutual engagement]. Lastly, as time progresses, community routines are developed, actions, and the different means of doing things become an integral part of the community [shared repertoire] (Goodyear & Casey 2015).

The generation of knowledge, and learning, and therefore: experiences, occur through situating practices within authentic contexts (O'Brien & Bates 2015). In the case for heavy metal, experience can be gained through participating in moshing or talking to other fellow heavy metal fans. Wenger (1998) noted that oftentimes, the knowledge which is generated through the informal nature of communities of practice is tacit rather than explicit. Through the joint activities of the members based on mutual passion of the topic, goals of the community are more easily achieved, and the support of other members of the community progresses people's practice and involvement through ongoing social interactions (Wenger 1998; Wenger et al. 2002). The community thus offers members an opportunity to negotiate competence via the means of gaining experience through participation (Wenger 2000: 229). Through this, learning, knowledge, and practice forms and re-forms members' identities.

Wenger (2000: 241) noted that identity requires a 'home base', allowing participants to develop a level of competence which exhibits their belonging to the group and gives meaning to their practices, and through their mutual engagement and interactions, the relationship of those observing older members and those being observed by younger members are expanded (Wenger 2000). An example of this is Doc Martens Girl who noted that her father now listens to the same music that she used to listen to when she was a teenager. In sum, within communities of practice, there is an ongoing process of social negotiation amongst group members, which is a result of ongoing participation and social interactions, and through the construction of shared meanings, ideas, and understandings (Cortese & Wright 2018).

8.5: The Interplay of Identity, Community, and Everyday Life

The relationship between identity and community is dialectical - each influencing the other throughout the course of ongoing social interactions. This relationship exemplifies how personal identities are made up of elements of what Hermans (2001) referred to as 'socialness'. Throughout the course of the development and expression of their individual personal identities, my participants drew upon the influence of relevant groups. Through the use of and emphasis of notions such as 'us' and 'them', the 'personal' and 'collective', this study helped develop an understanding of how my participants regularly experience themselves as both individuals and as members of specific social groups and communities (Arnow 1994). The continual interplay of identity and community resulted in my participants' lives resulted in them being required to

navigate along the need to belong to social groups whilst concurrently asserting a sense of distinctiveness (Jenkins 2004).

This study demonstrated that people experience a sense of community through the social interactions and engagements with others, and the findings in Chapter Five and Six for instance, support the notion that identity and community tend to overlap via their reciprocal and influential relationship with each other - rather than developing separately in isolation without any influence from the other (Jenkins 2004). My participants shared their heavy metal identities with other people who also have and share an appreciation for the music and culture, thus creating a sense of belonging and community. Furthermore, participants' engagements, relationships, and interactions with others and the wider heavy metal community influenced their personal identity development. In other words, people rely on the wider community in the construction and development of their own sense of self - through which they feel that they are members of an overarching group or community whilst simultaneously managing to maintain a sense of personal identity and distinctiveness (Tajfel 1987) - related to James' (1890) *I* and *Me*.

A shared social identity which revolves around the appreciation of heavy metal music and culture is what brings my participants together with people they interact with throughout the course of their everyday life. Thus, a social identity provided a basis for community and through the sharing of metal identities between individuals with similar musical tastes, my participants regularly step over the threshold into the metal community with every interaction they

encounter. Identities become interlinked as communities comprised of like-minded people come together around common views, characteristics, and tastes, and my participants' accounts elucidated how people 'commune' through the joining and engagement with groups in their everyday life (Snell 2012). Thus people, as embodied identities, feel that they are members of a community when they engage and interact with others (Kroger 1996).

Given that individuals have a need to belong and to be social, in particular amongst those with whom they deem important and share communal bonds with, heavy metal-related material objects aid in communicating an individual's interests and interaction (Hurdley 2004). My participants made reference to encounters with strangers regarding heavy metal t-shirts, and what is an otherwise fleeting encounter and sense of community has the potential to become a long-lasting relationship (Snell 2012). Members of the community, or in-group, recognize others sporting heavy metal objects as 'one of us', and thus the objects provide an opportunity to engage with one another and in the process, experience a sense of community (Snell & Hodgetts 2007).

In sum, findings from this project support the view that identity and community are structured and exist as physical and tangible phenomena, rather than being confined to an 'existence' based on abstract thoughts within individuals' minds (Jovchelovitch 2007). People participate in metal-related practices and activities in order to extend their identities into their relevant communities, meaning the relationship between identity and community, place and practices are also linked - as cultural practices such as moshing for example, are a way

for people to physically manifest and channel their identities and communal ties (Chaney 2002). Activities related to music allow heavy metal fans to share their identities with others in a physical fashion and through such practices, heavy metal social identities can flow into the places in which they are performed (Csikszentmihalyi & Rochberg-Halton 1981; Walser 1993).

CHAPTER NINE - CONCLUSIONS

9.1: Introduction

This thesis aimed to explore how heavy metal identities are expressed, a feeling of belonging and community results through ongoing social interactions with members of the heavy metal community, and how heavy metal weaves into participants' everyday life.

9.1.1: Thesis Overview

In Chapter One, I presented the research questions and aims and objectives of this thesis, followed by an introduction around heavy metal music, exploring its origins and developments from blues music, to spreading around the world as a style of popular music, made reference to heavy metal genre and the sub-genres which exist. Introducing and conceptualizing heavy metal music was important as different people have different ideas and understandings of what heavy metal music is and may lack awareness of its cultural origins and developments.

Chapter Two reviewed some of the literature regarding heavy metal music studies as an academic discipline, identity, community, and the role of music in adolescence.

Chapter Three explored the methods and methodologies applied in this research project, with a focus on ethnography and insider research and other aspects of data collection and analysis. In this chapter, I also introduced the

participants of this study, briefly outlining their experience and involvement with heavy metal music.

Chapter Four explored my participants' entries into heavy metal music, with a focus on parental and peer influence, which were mentioned by every single participant. This chapter provided an insight into the 'pathways' into heavy metal fandom and explored some themes revolving around social interactions in family and public environments regarding heavy metal fandom. Furthermore, this chapter explored notions of the role of music in adolescence and the use of heavy metal music for mood management and as a coping mechanism in everyday life.

Chapter Five explored how participants use heavy metal as a resource in order to meaningfully express themselves as heavy metal fans - aided through the use of material culture. A particular focus was placed on the role of material objects my participants possess and the use of the body in communicating who they are and which social groups they have an affiliation with and belong to. The body in particular, can act as a modifiable canvas which allows people to express their sense of self through permanent modifications such as piercings and tattoos.

Chapter Six focused on how my participants felt, experienced, and reflected upon their experiences of community and a sense of belonging based on their metal music preference when interacting with other people. This chapter also highlighted the importance of social interactions in the creation and negotiation of a sense of community. Furthermore, another point of focus was the context

of the heavy metal concert, where through moshing, community is able to manifest into something physical.

Chapter Seven explored and highlighted gender in heavy metal, with a focus on my female participants' accounts and experiences as heavy metal fans, in particular the micro-aggressions and group negotiations of authenticity and how such experiences affect female participants' identity and overall experience of heavy metal. Heavy metal music has a long-standing history and image of being male-dominated and has faced accusations of being sexist (Hill et al. 2015). My female participants also made comments about their authenticity as metal fans being questioned by other fans, mainly male fans and at times, other female fans. Furthermore, this chapter explored some of the male participants' thoughts on women in heavy metal music.

Chapter Eight discussed some of the notions which were covered throughout this thesis, including heavy metal identities, authenticity in the context of heavy metal fandom, the communal functions of heavy metal music, and the interplay and interwovenness of identity, community, and everyday life.

Lastly, this chapter, the concluding chapter, will examine how the research questions of this thesis have been addressed, explore some methodological reflections regarding insider research and friendship as method, consider thesis contributions, thesis limitations, directions for future research, and deliver some final remarks.

9.2: Research Questions Revisited and Addressed

1. *How do heavy metal fans use heavy metal music to construct and express their social identities*?

This question was addressed in Chapters Four and Five. In a school environment, and throughout early social interactions 'as metal fans', some participants made reference to their social identity as metal fans. In Chapter Four, there was a reference to taking on a scary persona and being intimidating, which Bones and Moose made reference to, which gave them a feeling of power and superiority - people went out of their way to avoid interactions with Bones and Moose. Archer and Mr. X made reference to the bullying nature of high school, and the 'safety' of 'their' groups.

In Chapter Five, this research question was addressed through the examination of the role of material culture and how participants express themselves. In particular through artefacts such as clothing and band-related memorabilia, my participants are able to express themselves as fans and make use of artefacts to advertise their membership within the metal community. Furthermore, through the collection of souvenirs such as concert tickets, posters, and tour-specific band merchandise, my participants are able to make use of such artefacts in order to 'locate' themselves at the events they represent, 'proving' their attendance and thus identity as heavy metal fans. Furthermore, heavy metal music is used by my participants in the different scenarios of their everyday life such as at work, on the way to university and work, and during other everyday activities, and as a form of mood

management, resulting in an active engagement which further develops their music preference due to increased exposure.

2. To what extent are notions of community and belonging arrived at through social interactions based on mutual music preference in a heavy metal context?

This question was addressed, to some degree in Chapter Five, it was however the main focus of Chapter Six. A sense of community is achieved through the ongoing social interactions my participants face throughout their daily life, in particular in terms of mutual appreciation of heavy metal music.

In particular in the concert environment, in the mosh pits, my participants are able to collectively release pent up energy from the mundanity of their everyday life, and come together in order to create an enjoyable environment in which people are able to get involved in. Furthermore, community is not only existent as something tangible or fixed, but rather, also something which is existent within the minds of people. The imagination of a mutual appreciation of heavy metal music and engaging with other fellow heavy metal fans is a source for feeling belonging, and experiencing a 'meaningful' life and existence.

3. What is the interplay between identity, community and belonging, and heavy metal music in the everyday life of heavy metal fans?

This question was more in the background in most of the chapters, as, as mentioned in Chapter Two, things need to occur *somewhere* - which is in the arena of everyday life. As discussed in Chapter Eight, identity and community influence one another, and there are social elements in personal identity (Hermans 2001).

9.3: Methodological Reflections

In this section, I will briefly discuss some aspects regarding methodology, with a particular focus on insider research and the friendship as method approach.

9.3.1: Insider Research

A common focus of reflection for myself over the course of this PhD was that heavy metal music is a large part of my life and sense of self - the music is something I am continually engaged with in a number of ways in a day-to-day context. My membership of the community I was investigating meant that I was able to analyze some of the practices and processes I have actively participated in myself for a number of years - such as collecting material objects, moshing at concerts, and expressing myself as a fan - it was however, at times, a difficult process. Many of the processes which were discussed in the data chapters [Chapters 4-7], were things which I often took for granted, as I was accustomed to them. Furthermore, 'being used to' the heavy metal lifestyle revealed some occasional difficulties in regards to expressing and articulating certain themes and ideas, such as describing moshing for example. Outsider supervision, having thesis supervisors who have no

involvement with heavy metal music [as far as I know] helped, at times, describing phenomena and articulating certain ideas - particularly notions which seemed natural or obvious to me.

Scholars such as Thornton (1995) and Hodkinson (2005) for example, noted that in the case of youth subcultures, insider researchers seeking to become involved and immersing themselves in their own culture need to be aware of the potential risk of creating barriers rather than reducing them - due to some groups' dispositions and potential suspicions over 'inauthentic' participants. This can be particularly the case in groups and subcultures which are marginalized (Hodkinson 2005). Whilst none of my participants ever seemed to question my authenticity as a heavy metal fan, I attempted to negate and disperse any potential suspicion through informal conversation about heavy metal music prior to the interview, which in retrospect, helped establish rapport with participants who did not know me prior to the interview.

One of the benefits of insider research was the degree of mutual understanding of experiences, language, activities, and situations relating to heavy metal music (Roseneil 1993). Especially in terms of topics such as body modification, there existed some common ground between my participants and myself in terms of family reactions to tattoos and/or piercings. Furthermore, I felt that my insider status and thus shared understanding of my participants' experiences enhanced the quality of the interview (Hodkinson 2005). Lastly, having an insider status, which seemed to break down some of the traditional researcher-participant barrier, generated a relaxed atmosphere

instrumental in open conversation and participants' willingness to discuss and disclose certain stories which may not have been the case, had I not been an insider.

There were however, some everyday interactions such as anodyne conversations with a person sitting next to me on a plane back to Germany in 2019, during which I was met with a "your PhD is on your community? Isn't that a bit easy?". Whilst insider research may be accused of complacency, insider researchers are able to make use of their status and experience of their culture, making reasonable judgements as to which aspects of research are fruitful and relevant to them, and which may not (Roseneil 1993).

9.3.2: Friendship as Method

As noted in Chapter Three, at the start of this research project in 2018, a couple of people expressed an interest in participating in my research project if I needed participants. It is noteworthy [again] and important to re-emphasize that I reached out to people who expressed an interest and offered to help out, rather than reaching out to people I knew had a preference for heavy metal music. Whilst this may seem arbitrary, it is an important point to consider since participant choice was reciprocal rather than one-sided or being coerced into participating and 'doing me a favor' - rather, 'friend participants', expressed a genuine interest in participating in the study.

Whilst the friendship as method approach made finding participants easier, I would like to point out that for me, there was no distinction between participant-

friends and participant-strangers. Through the accessibility and ease of social media, I managed to maintain contact with most of my participants, thus in a sense, we became 'friends' as my research project progressed after our initial interview. This relates to Taylors (2011) argument regarding the potential that researcher and participants may become friends, regardless. Even after data collection was long over, some participants and I still maintained interactions via social media and meeting in person, having conversations about heavy metal music, sharing music via *Spotify*, or making plans to attend concerts together.

Furthermore, there was a feeling of the researcher-participant barrier being broken down quicker due to a mutual understanding of one's own involvement in the heavy metal community – through playing in bands and sharing relatable experiences, or other means such as having seen the same bands or having similar experiences in terms of social interactions and negative attitudes towards one's metal identity. In the interview, Moose made a comment of having a mutual appreciation of heavy metal music allows people to bypass several layers of conversation – which was certainly the case with the participants and a friendship developed regardless of our own status in the researcher-participant dichotomy/relationship.

In regards to the 'richer data' which was discussed by Tillman-Healy (2003), it is noteworthy that this was not necessarily the case in this study. Some participants such as Moose or ATB-Fan - with whom I have only interacted with briefly before the initial interview - shared deeper and personal accounts

with me than participants with whom I have had an established friendship with. One important factor in friendship as method was the extent of which known, or rather: familiar participants shared their stories with an undertone of 'do you remember when…' which brought my own subjectivity into their accounts, which may have an affect on the data.

9.4: Thesis Limitations

As with a number of past research studies, this projects also had some limitations, and it is generally understood that case studies such as this do not necessarily allow for any broader generalizations, and whilst this provided in-depth accounts of the phenomenon of identity, community, and everyday life in the context of heavy metal music culture, there is room for further and more in-depth investigations regarding this topic.

Sample Make Up

The sample make up of this study had a greater number of participants compared to Snell (2012) with 14 participants, Hill (2013) with 19, and Rowe (2018) with 28 participants. In regards to gender, with a mixed cohort, only 12 out of 31 participants identified as female, and having a split closer to 50:50 may have yielded better results in particular in terms of gender and authenticity and identity. In terms of ethnicity, the majority of participants identified as white or white British. Only three participants identified as mixed race, while the rest of the cohort identified as either 'white' or according to the countries they were from - which were exclusively Western countries. On face value, the participant make-up reflects the long-standing assumptions about 'who' heavy

metal fans are: white and predominantly male. This does not however reflect current global heavy metal trends as the genre is developing and growing in terms of racial, gender, and ethnic diversity (Clifford-Napoleone 2014). In regards to the criteria in order to participate in this study, the main focus was not along gender or ethnic lines. The main factor was identification with heavy metal music and culture, rather than selecting people *specifically* in order to 'get their views' as fans based on their gender and ethnicity.

With this in mind however, the topic of race was not a conversation point with my participants during the interviews. Whilst Mr. V made reference to his mixed-race heritage, the main focus of his account was on the matter of being treated differently for being a metal fan rather than being mixed-race. Overall, the notion and importance of race was, in the case of my participants, always outweighed by the importance and emphasis on possessing and exhibiting a heavy metal identity – as *Suffocation*-Fan said during our interview: "I don't give a shit if you're (…) black or white, if you're a fan of heavy metal, you're a fan of heavy metal". It is, however, noteworthy that this does not mean that metal fans in other parts of the world do not experience forms of prejudice based on race/ethnic lines.

The Degree of Insiderness

Due to the immense personal involvement with heavy metal music, some of the phenomenons which are explained in this thesis (such as mosh pits, material culture, etc.) may still have a degree of taken-for-granted, and not been explained and explored to the extent as if an outsider were to conduct

the same research. Whilst being an insider and conducting insider research was helpful in terms of understanding the culture and participants, some aspects of data collection may have been left not defamiliarized enough.

9.5: Thesis Contributions

There have been a number of contributions to knowledge made through this thesis, and aspects of the research which uncovered potential for future research, which will be explored in a later section of this chapter. Whilst previous work on heavy metal music provided an overview of heavy metal as a subculture (Walser 1999; Weinstein 2000), myth-making and boundary maintenance in localized metal music scenes such as in black metal (Kahn-Harris 2007), and discussions of gender in metal (e.g. Hill 2016; 2018), this thesis examined and highlighted the nuances and processes of metal fans navigating through their everyday life and negotiating their place in the world as metal fans – including the previously discussed ideas of subcultures, boundaries, and gender. In his discussion on the development of metal music studies, Kahn-Harris (2011) voiced a concern over popular music being more than the simple matter of trying to establish how musical sounds are related to social practice is at times not only simplified by scholars, but also neglected and ignored by emerging literature in the metal music studies arena. This thesis explored and highlighted how music is linked with social behavior (such as moshing, social interactions, and more broadly: identity formation).

Formative Years of Heavy Metal Identities:

With the rise of heavy metal studies, there has been a sharp increase in research which treats heavy metal fans in a more sympathetic fashion and examines the allure and positive aspects of heavy metal, and whilst young people have participated in such studies regarding heavy metal music, the focus of such studies has not been focused specifically on youth (Rowe 2017). One of the contributions of this study is that it explores the formative years of heavy metal preferences, and the impact of parental and peer influence. Furthermore, it examined some of the interactions regarding heavy metal identities at a younger age such as in school environments - or more generally: throughout adolescence.

Showcasing of Heavy Metal Identity:

Through the use of material objects, heavy metal fans are provided with an opportunity to express their identities in a meaningful manner, sharing their sense of self with their communal environment (Hermans 2001). Through expressing affiliation and affinity towards the heavy metal community, material objects can be used to express these ties in a tangible manner (Garner 2004). Through the use of material objects, my participants are able to interact with their social environment and engage with members of their in- and out-groups, whilst communicating their sense of self which is influence by their music preference. This further reinforces Laiho's (2004) notion of people communicating: I am me, with my own tastes and music preferences - which can be used as a catalyst for social interactions throughout the course of fans' everyday lives.

The Gendered Aspect of Heavy Metal Music:

My female participants made particular reference to their authenticity being questioned and having to 'prove' their authenticity as heavy metal fans. In light of heavy metal having a long-standing history of being regarded as hyper-masculine and male-oriented (Hutcherson & Haenfler 2010; Hill et al. 2015), female participants' accounts shed some insight into their experiences of being subjected to issues regarding their authenticity - not only from male fans, but also female fans. Whilst heavy metal music places a focus on rebellion and individuality, traditional gender codes between male and female fans are still present - in particular in terms of how female fans should perform their heavy metal fandom, as highlighted by Krenske and McKay (2000). Another contribution along gender lines was the consideration of male fans and their views on female metal fans, predominantly and if not exclusively, in favor and appreciative of women in heavy metal.

Similar to discussions about race (in 9.4: Sample Make Up), where the sentiment existed that heavy metal identity outweighs other aspects of fans' identities, gender seemed to have a similar standing – in particular for male participants who were supportive of women in heavy metal. Whilst most, if not all, of my female participants had experiences of being judged and questioned in regards to their heavy metal identity, notions suggested by scholars such as Hill (2016; 2018) claiming that heavy metal, seemingly as a whole, being sexist is ill-founded. Particularly male participants who have evidenced witnessing occasions of female fans being subject to scrutiny showed an

awareness, and as *Watain*-Fan mentioned: one bad guy ruins it for "25 to 50 nice guys". Some of my female participants also showed that awareness – *NIN*-Fan made a comment, saying that "some of our male friends haven't caught up with that" in terms of some people's attitudes. This sentiment, shown by *NIN*-Fan, shows an understanding that there may be negative attitudes from male fans, these do not reflect the views of the entire metal community.

Advancements of Social Identity:

Over the course of the thesis, there have been a number of instances in which participants made reference to their social identity as heavy metal fans, highlighting and reinforcing some of the key concepts of Social Identity Theory. In Chapter Four, Mr. V made reference engaging in altercations and admitting enjoying that aspect growing up. Similarly, also in Chapter Four, Bones and Moose mentioned changing their clothing and style in order to appear unapproachable, using heavy metal much like a defense shield. Such experiences and efforts suggest that undergoing such efforts not only reinforced their identities, affecting their experience of being a metal fan, but also how others perceive them through the course of their lives.

Bridging of Identity and Community:

Scholars on social identity such as Hermans (2001) and Jenkins (2004) have explored the reciprocal nature of individual identity and community membership, and have identified social identity as a useful conceptual concept and framework for understanding both individuals and groups. Through making use of social identity, researchers are able to uncover and understand

the influence of external behavior and internal motivations (Jenkins 2004) - as most notably seen Chapter Six on the sense of belonging and the mosh pit at heavy metal concerts. Furthermore, identity and community can be bridged through the use of material culture, which helps people showcase their group memberships but also personal histories as seen in Chapter Five.

The Meaning of the Mosh Pit

Another and significant aspect of this research, with a particular relevance in Chapter Six, was the role of the mosh pit in the experience of the heavy metal community. As mentioned in Chapter Six, the mosh pit is a place in which the metal community comes together in a physical form. For those participants who participate in moshing, the mosh pit is a place of catharsis. A place where the stresses of everyday life are released in a form of physical dance. As mentioned in the chapter, the mosh pit is a place where fans are able to experience a sense of freedom and release – perhaps its greatest allure. It is also important to remember that this study involved participants who did not participate for a number of reasons such as the fear of injury, inexperience in moshing, and overall lack of concert-going experience. Whilst these participants showed an awareness of moshing and some of its practices, moshing is something that they choose not to engage with. Moshing and the mosh pit, as a whole, and as a common feature of heavy metal concerts, can be regarded as almost unavoidable. And whilst some participants shy away from the engagement, others approach the chaos and catharsis head on.

9.6: Directions for Future Research

From this research project, there are a number of potential research avenues which may be explored in-depth, including data presented in this thesis - within its own context - and yet unpublished and unused data, as outlined below.

Not Participating in the Mosh Pit:

Almost half of my participants mentioned that they did not participate in moshing at heavy metal concerts, citing to a number of reasons including age, lack of experience, intimidation, and fear of getting hurt. There exists an opportunity to explore some of the reasons why members of the heavy metal community actively avoid moshing whilst attending concerts.

The Role of being in a Band:

Whilst some participants made reference to playing in bands, there is a potential to examine the role of being in a band and the experience of the heavy metal community even further. Whilst Dunn et al. (2005) and Snell (2012) also had instances of participants making reference to playing in bands, this notion is still fairly under-explored. Whilst Spracklen et al. (2012) explored constructions of identity in extreme metal bands in the north of England, this was more along the lines of band identity along heritage lines and constructs of mythology, rather than distinctively exploring individuals' feelings and experiences.

The De-Emphasis of Metal Identities:

In Chapter Five, on the expression of identity, some participants made reference to having to de-emphasize their metal identities in some aspects of their everyday life, mainly in the context of employment. There is an opportunity to engage with the gathered data to explore the role between identities at the work place and social interactions and expectations.

Heavy Metal and Covid-19:

In light of the global Covid-19 pandemic, there has been a rise in research focusing on the impact of the pandemic across the different sectors of society and people's lives. Publishers such as *Intellect*, and *The International Association of Popular Music Studies* (UK and Ireland branch) have communicated calls regarding the impact of Covid-19 and the effects of the pandemic. From a heavy metal research perspective, there are several aspects of heavy metal culture and fandom which have been deeply affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, revealing a number of potential research opportunities such as:

- Attending concerts post-pandemic

- Metal fans' attitudes towards Covid tests and vaccinations - in particular in light of anti-vaccination rallies occurring and fans being required to be vaccinated and/or tested in order to be allowed to enter concert venues

- Managing mental health and well-being through heavy metal music in a locked down world.

9.7: Final Remarks

Identities and social relations complex for everyone involved. People are continually engaged in an endeavor to negotiate our way through the social world and the social interactions we are faced with. Nobody is safe from the ups, downs, curveballs, and petty concerns which everyday life and social interactions confront us with. For my participants, heavy metal music is a constant, a safety net, a companion, a reminder of their place in the world, a portal to their past experiences and future aspirations, a second family, something truly larger than themselves - something they are able to call *their own*. Heavy metal music helped them in the good times, the bad moments, it was there when they may have needed it the most - and the conversations and data presented revealed how much heavy metal truly permeates their everyday life in unimaginable ways.

Heavy metal is more than just music for its fans. It is a lifestyle, a commitment, and a statement of their authentic self. Thrash-Fan made a comment, mentioned in Chapter Five, that his heavy metal identity is one of his most prominent characteristics. For Moose and Bones, showcasing their heavy metal identities was an act of empowerment, echoing Laiho's (2004) sentiment of: I am me. There is more to heavy metal identities than just showcasing them, there is the aspect of shared identities and social interactions. This was also reflected in the accounts of my participants. Some fans, such as Charlie Sharpe or I Prevail-Fan used heavy metal as a vehicle for socializing such as going to wrestling matches or having something to share with other friends, respectively. Other fans appreciate the sense of community which exists when

there is a mutual recognition of similar music and aesthetic taste – highlighting the reciprocity between the personal and the collective further.

Burkitt (2008) wrote that some people regard identity as something deeply personal, a 'pearl in its shell'. Whilst this may apply to some identities, identities which are never revealed, heavy metal identities are not locked away or hidden. My participants display them and wear their metal identities with pride, much like athletes wear gold medals with pride. To outsiders, heavy metal music may be nothing but 'noise', but for others, it is the lighthouse - a beacon of positivity - which guides them to safety in the storms and cacophony of everyday life.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Adler, P. A. & Adler, P. (1995) Dynamics of inclusion and exclusion in pre-adolescent cliques. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 58(3), 145-162.

Ainsworth, M. D. (1989) Attachments beyond infancy. *American Psychologist*, *44*, 709-716.

Albert, W. G. (1978) Dimensionality of Perceived Violence in Rock Music: Musical Intensity and Lyrical Violence Content, *Popular Music and Society*, 6(1), 27- 38.

Alexander, C. N. & Epstein, J. (1969) Problems of dispositional inference in person perception research, *Sociometry*, 32, 381-395.

Alexander, C. N. & Gordon, W. K. (1971) Situated identities and social psychological experimentation, *Sociometry*, 34, 65-82.

Alexander, C. N. & Lauderdale, P. (1977). Situated Identities and Social Influence, *Sociometry*, 40(3), 225-233.

Allport, G. W. (1954). *The nature of prejudice*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Alluri, V., Toiviainen, P., Burunat, I., Kliuchko, M., Vuust, P. & Brattico, E. (2017) Connectivity Patterns During Music Listening: Evidence for Action-based Processing in Musicians, *Human Brain Mapping*, 38, 2955-2970.

Altman, I. (1975) *Environment and Social Behavior*. Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Altman, I. & Chemers, M. (1980) *Culture and Environment*. Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Altman, I. & Gauvin, M. (1981). A cross-cultural and dialectic analysis of homes. In Liben, L., Patterson, A. & Newcome, N., (Eds), *Spatial Representation and Behavior Across the Lifespan*. New York: Academic Press. 283-319.

Ambrose, J. (2001) *Moshpit: The Violent World of Mosh Pit Culture*. London: Omnibus Press.

Anderson, B. (1983) I*magined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso.

Anderson, B. (1991). I*magined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Second Edition. London: Verso.

Anderson, I. G. & Lee, J. R. E. (1982) Taking Professor Gluckman seriously: the case of participant observation in Frankenberg, R. *Custom and Conflict in British Society*. Manchester: University Press.

Archer, M. (2000) *Being Human: The Problem of Agency*. Cambridge: University Press.

Arnett, J. J. (1995) Adolescents' Uses of Media for Self-Socialization, *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 24(5), 535-49.

Arnett, J. J. (1996*) Metalheads: Heavy Metal Music and Adolescent Alienation*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press

Arnett, J. J. (1996) *Metalheads: Heavy Metal Music and Adolescent Alienation*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Arnow, D. (1994) Toward a psychology of Jewish identity: A multi-dimensional approach, *Journal of Jewish Communal Service, 71*, 29-36.

Asmus, E. P. (1994) Motivation in music teaching and learning, *The Quarterly Journal of Music Teaching and Learning*, *5*(4), 5–32.

Back, L. (2004) Inscriptions of love. In H. Thomas & J. Ahmed (Eds.), *Cultural bodies: Ethnography and theory*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing. 27-54

Back, L. (2015) Why Everyday Life Matters: Class, Community and Making Life Liveable. *Sociology*, 49(5), 820-836.

Bakagiannis, S. & Tarrant, M. (2006) Can music bring people together? Effects of shared musical preference on intergroup bias in adolescence, *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*, 47, 129-136.

Bakhtin, M. [1936] (1984) *Rabelais and his world*. H. Iswolsky (trans), Bloomington, USA: Indiana University Press.

Balzacq, T. (2002). Security, identity, and symbolic interactionism. *International Review of Sociology*, 12 (3), 469-506.

Bandura, A. (1986) *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, Inc.

Barab, S. A. & Duffy, T. (2012) *From Practice Fields to Communities of Practice*. In *Theoretical Foundations of Learning Environments*. 2nd ed. edited by D. Jonassen and S. Lund, 29–65. New York: Routledge.

Baraka, A. (1963) *Blues People – Negro Music in White America*. New York: Harper Collins.

Bauman, Z. (2004) *Identity*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Baumeister, R. F., & Leary, M. R. (1995) The need to belong: Desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation, *Psychological Bulletin*, *117*, 497-529.

Baxter, R. L., De Riemer, C., Landini, A., Leslie, L. & Singletary, M. W. (1985) A Content Analysis of Music Videos, *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, 29(3), 333-340.

Becker, H. (1963) *Outsiders: Studies in the sociology of deviance.* New York, NY: Free Press.

Bennett, A. (1999) Subcultures or neo-tribes? Rethinking the relationship between youth, style and musical taste, *Sociology* 33 (3), 599-617.

Bennett, A. (2000) *Popular music and youth culture: Music, identity and place*. London: Macmillan.

Bennett, A. (2001) *Cultures of Popular Music*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Bennett, A. & Kahn-Harris, K. (2004) Introduction. In *After subculture: Critical studies in contemporary youth culture*, edited by A. Bennett and K. Kahn-Harris, 1-18. New York: Palgrave.

Bennett, A. & Rogers, J. (2016) Popular Music and Materiality: Memorabilia and Memory Traces, *Popular Music and Society,* 39(1), 28-42.

Berger, H. M. (1997) The Practice of Perception: Multi-Functionality and Time in the Musical Experience of a Heavy Metal Drummer, *Ethnomusicology*, 41 (3), 464-488.

Berger, H. M. (1998*) Metal, Rock and Jazz: Perception and the Phenomenology of Musical Experience.* Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press.

Berger, H. M. (1999) *Metal, Rock and Jazz: Perception and the Phenomenology of Musical Experience*, Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press.

Berger, L. (2001) Inside out: Narrative auto-ethnography as a path toward rapport, *Qualitative Enquiry, 7*(4), 504-518.

Berger, P. & Luckman , T. (1967) *The Social Construction of Reality*. New York, NY: Doubleday Anchor.

Berkers, P. & Eeckelaer, M. (2014) Rock and roll or rock and fall? Gendered framing of the rock and roll lifestyles of Amy Winehouse and Pete Doherty in British broadsheets, *Journal of Gender Studies*, 23(1), 3–17.

Berkers, P. & Schaap, J. (2015) YouTube as a virtual springboard: Circumventing gender dynamics in offline and online metal music careers, *Metal Music Studies*, 1(3), 303-318.

Bernays, J. (2004) On catharsis: From fundamentals of Aristotle's lost essays on the effects of tragedy*, American Imago*, 61(3), 319-341.

Bielby, W. (2013) Rock in a hard place: Grassroots cultural production in the post-Elivs era, *American Sociological Review*, 69(1), 1-13.

Bilamava, D. (2014*) Heavy metal subculture: Music festivals and their meanings for visitors*. Wageningen University & Research.

Billig, M. (1991) *Rock 'n' Roll Jews*. Nottingham: Fine Leaves.

Black, G. C., Fox, M. A., & Kochanowski, P. (2007) Concert tour success in North America: An examination of the top 100 tours from 1997 to 2005, *Popular Music and Society*, 30(2), 149–172.

Blackman, S. (2005) Youth subcultural theory: a critical engagement with the concept, its origins and politics, from the Chicago school to postmodernism, *Journal of Youth Studies*, 8 (1), 1-20.

Blumer, H. (1969) *Symbolic interactionism: Perspective and method*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Bobcock, R. (1993). *Consumption*. London: Routledge.

Boer, D. & Abubakar, A. (2014) Music listening in families and peer groups: benefits for young people's social cohesion and emotional well-being across four cultures, *Frontiers in Psychology*, 5, 1-15.

Boer, D., Fischer, R., Strack, M., Bond, M. H., Lo, E. & Lam, J. (2011) How shared preferences in music create bonds between people: values as the missing link, *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 37, 1159-1171.

Bradby, B. (2017) Performer-audience interaction in live concerts: ritual or conversation? In Tsioulakis, I. & Hytönen-Ng, E. (Eds*.) Musicians and their Audiences: Performance, Speech, and Mediation*. New York: Routledge.

Branscombe, N. R. & Wann, D. L. (1994) Collective self-esteem consequence of outgroup derogation when a valued social identity is on trial, *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 24(6), 641-657.

Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2006) Using thematic analysis in psychology, *Qualitative research in psychology*, *3*(2), 77-101.

Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2017) Thematic analysis, *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 12(3), 297-298.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2012) Thematic analysis In H. Cooper, P. M. Camic, D. L. Long, A. T. Panter, D. Rindskopf, & K. J. Sher (Eds.), *APA handbook of research methods in psychology, vol. 2: Research designs: Quantitative, qualitative, neuropsychological, and biological*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. 57–71

Breen, M. (1991) *A Stairway to Heaven or a Highway to Hell?: Heavy Metal Rock Music in the 1990s.*

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979) *The Ecology of Human Development*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Brown, A. R. (2007) Rethinking the subcultural commodity: The case of heavy metal t-shirt culture(s). In P. Hodkinson & W. Diecke (Eds.), *Youth cultures: Scenes, subcultures and tribes.* New York: Routledge. 63-78

Brown, A. R. (2011) Heavy Genealogy: Mapping the Currents, Contraflows

and Conflicts of the Emergent Field of Metal Studies, 1978-2010, *Journal of Cultural Research*, 15(3). pp. 213-242.

Brown, C. M. (1995) 'Musical Responses to Oppression and Alienation: Blues, Spirituals, Secular Thrash, and Christian Thrash Metal Music', *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society*, 8 (3), 439-452.

Brown, J. S. & Duguid, P. (1996) "The social life of document". *First Monday*, 1 (1).

Brown, S. C. & Knox, D. (2017) Why go to pop concerts? The motivations behind live music attendance, *Musicae Scientae*, 21(3), 233-249

Bryman A (2008) *Social Research Methods*. Third edition. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Bryman, A. (2012) *Social Research Methods*. Fourth edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bryman, A. (2016) *Social Research Methods*. Fifth edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bull, M. (2005) No dead air! The iPod and the culture of mobile listening, *Leisure Studies*, *24*(4), 343-55.

Bull, M. (2006) Investigating the culture of mobile listening: From Walkman to iPod. In K. O'Hara & B. Brown (eds), *Consuming Music Together: Social and Collaborative Aspects of Music Consumption Technologies* London: Springer. 131-149.

Burford, B. (2012) Group processes in medical education: learning from social identity theory, *Medical Education,* 46, 143–152.

Burgess, R. G. (1984) *In the field: An introduction to field research*. London, UK: George Allen & Unwin.

Burkitt, I. (2008). *Social Selves.* Second edition. London: Sage.

Burland, K., & Pitts, S. (2014) *Coughing and Clapping: Investigating the Audience Experience*, New York, NY: Routledge.

Byrne, D. (1997) An overview (and underview) of research and theory within the attraction paradigm. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, *14*, 417-431.

Calhoun, C. (1991) *Indirect Relationships and Imagined Communities*. In Bordieu, P. & Coleman, J. S. (Eds.) *Social Theory for a Changing Society*. Boulder, CO: Westview.

Campbell, C. (1995) *The sociology of consumption*. In D. Miller (Ed.), *Acknowledging consumption.* New York, USA: Routledge. 96-126

Campbell, P. S., Connell, C. & Beegle, A. (2007) Adolescents' expressed meanings of music in and out of school, *Journal of Research in Music Education*, *55*, 220–236.

Capozzi, F. & Ristic, J. (2018) How attention gets social interactions. Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences, Special Issue: *The Year in Cognitive Neuroscience.*

Capron, A. M. (1982) *Is consent always necessary in social science research?* In Beauchamp, T. L.; Faden, R. R.; Wallace, R. J et al (eds) *Ethical Issues in Social Science Research*. Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press.

Carrier, J.C. (1995) *Gifts and commodities: Exchange and Western capitalism since 1700.* London, UK: Routledge.

Carter, M. J. & Fuller, C. (2016) Symbols, meaning, and action: The past, present, and future of symbolic interactionism, *Current Sociology Review*, 64 (6), 931-961.

Castano, E., Yzerbyt, V., Paladino, M. P. & Sacchi, S. (2002) I Belong, Therefore, I Exist: Ingroup Identification, Ingroup Entitativity, and Ingroup Bias, Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 28 (2), 135–143

Castillo-Villar, F. R., Cavazos-Arroyo, J., & Kervin, N. (2020). Music subculture as a source of conspicuous consumption practices: a qualitative content analysis of "altered movement" songs and music videos, *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 37 (4), 353-363.

Chaker, S. (2013) "Extreme metal? It's just a boy thing…!?" Quantitative Befunde zum Geschlechterverhältnis im Black - und Death Metal [Quantitative Findings in Gender Relaations in Black- and Death Metal]. In Music, Gender & Difference, Universität für Musik und darstellende Kunst, Vienna, Austria.

Chamberlain-Salaun, J., Mills, J. & Usher, K. (2013) Linking Symbolic Interactionism and Grounded Theory Methods in a Research Design: From Corbin and Strauss' Assumptions to Action, Sage Open July-September, 1-10.

Chaney, D. (2002) *Cultural change and everyday life*. Hampshire, UK: Palgrave. Charleston, S. (2009). The English football ground as a representation of home.

Christenson, P. G. & Peterson, J. B. (1988) Genre and Gender in the Structure of Music Preference, *Communication Research*, 15(3), 282-301.

Christenson, P. G. & Roberts, D. F. (1998) *It's Not Only Rock & Roll: Popular Music in the Lives of Adolescents*. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.

Clair, J. A., Beatty, J. E. & Maclean, T. L. (2005) Out of Sight but Not out of Mind: Managing Invisible Social Identities in the Workplace*, Academy Management*, 30 (1), 78-95.

Coates, N. (1997) '(R)evolution now? Rock and the political potential of gender', in S. Whiteley (ed.), *Popular Music and Gender*, London: Routledge. 50–65.

Cohen, A. (1956) *Delinquent Boys—The Subculture of the Gang*. London: Collier-Macmillan.

Cohen, A. (1985). *The Symbolic Construction of Community.* Chichester: Ellis.

Cohen, S. (1972). *Folk Devils and Moral Panics.* London: MacGibbon and Kee.

Cohen, S. (2012). Live music and urban landscape: Mapping the bear in Liverpoo*l, Social Semiotics*, 22(5), 587-603.

Collins, R. (2004) *Interaction Rituals.* New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Conner, C. T. & Katz, N. (2020). Electronic Dance Music: From Spectacular Subculture to Culture Industry, *Young*, 28 (5), 445-464.

Cooley, C. (1902), *Human Nature and Social Order*, New York, NY: Scribner's.

Cooper, L. & Rogers, C. (2015) Mothering and "insider" dilemmas: Feminist sociologists in the research process, *Sociological Research Online, 20*(2).

Copilaş, E. (2020), Slayer and psychoanalysis, *Metal Music Studies*, 6(1), 109–121

Cortese, C. & Wright, C. (2018). Developing a Community of Practice: Michael Gaffikin and Critical Accounting Research, *ABACUS*, 54 (3), 247-276.

Creswell, J. W. (2013) Qualitative Enquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among five Approaches

Crewe, B. & Maruna, S. (2006) Self narratives & ethnographic fieldwork. In D. Hobbs & R. Wright (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of fieldwork.* New York, USA: Sage. 109-123

Crocker, J., Major, B. & Steele, C. (1998) Social stigma. In D. T. Gilbert, S. T. Fiske, & G. Lindzey (Eds.), Handbook of social psychology (Fourth edition.). New York: McGraw-Hill. 504-553

Csikszentmihalyi, C. (1999) If we are so right, why aren't we happy, *American Psychologist*, 54, 821-827.

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2004) *February, 'Flow the secret to happiness'*. TED2004 Conference, Monterey, USA.

Csikszentmihalyi, M. & Rochberg-Halton, E. (1981) *The meaning of things: Domestic symbols and the self*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Cullam-Swan, B. & Manning, P. (1994) What is a t-shirt? Codes, chronotypes, and everyday objects. In S. Riggins (Ed.), *The socialness of things: Essays on the socio-semiotics of objects*. New York, USA: Mouton de Gruyter. 415-433.

Cushman, T. 1995. *Notes from underground: Rock music counterculture in Russia*. New York: Albany State University of New York Press.

Dagaz, M. C. (2012) Learning from the band: Trust, acceptance, and self-confidence, *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, *41*, 432–461

Daly, J. (2017) *Columbine, Marilyn Manson and the real-life Antichrist Superstar*. Available at: https://www.loudersound.com/features/1999-columbine-marilyn-manson-and-the-real-life-antichrist-superstar. Accessed on July 19 2021.

Dant, T. (1999) *Material Culture in the Social World*. Buckingham: Open UP.

Davies, C. A. (2008). *Reflexive Ethnography: A Guide to Researching Selves and Others* (2nd Edn). London: Routledge.

Dawes, L. (2015) Challenging an "Imagined Community": Discussions (or lack thereof) of black and queer experiences within heavy metal culture, *Metal Music Studies*, 1(3), 385–393

DeChaine, D.R. (2002) Affect and embodied understanding in musical experience, *Text & Performance Quarterly, 22*(2), 79-98.

DeHart, C. (2018) Metal by numbers: Revisiting the uneven distribution of heavy metal music, *Metal Music Studies*, 4(3), 559–571

DeNora, T. (2000) *Music in Everyday Life*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

DeNora, T. (2000) *Music in everyday life.* Cambridge, NY, USA: Cambridge University Press.

Denzin, N. (1989a) *The research act.* Third edition. New Jersey, USA: Prentice-Hall.

Denzin, N. (1989b) Reading/writing culture: Interpreting the postmodern project.

Derbaix, M. & Korchia, M. (2017) Individual celebration of pop music icons: A study of music fans relationships with their object of fandom and associated practices, *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 18, 109-119.

Deschamps, J. C. & Devos, T. (1998) Regarding the relationship between social identity and personal identity. In S. Worchel, J. F. Morales, D. Paez, & J. C. Deschamps (Eds.), *Social identity: International perspectives.* London: Sahe Publications. 1-12

Dijkstra, J. K.; Cillessen, A. H. N. & Borch, C. (2013) Popularity and Adolescent Friendship Neworks: Selection and Influence Dynamics, *Developmental Psychology*, 49 (7), 1242-1252.

Donkin, J. (2009) *"Heavy metal and violence: More than a myth?"* available at: http://edition.cnn.com/2008/SHOWBIZ/Music/05/09/metal.violence/index.html accessed on July 19 2021.

Dosey, M. A., & M. Meisels. (1969) Personal Space and Self- protection, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,* 11 (2): 93–97.

Douglas, K. & Carless, D. (2012) Membership, gold and a story about Anna and me: Reflections on research in elite sport, *Qualitative Methods in Psychology Bulletin, Sports and Performance*, 13 (1), 27-35.

Duchan, J. S. (2012) *Powerful voices: The musical and social world of collegiate a cappella*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Duncan, J. (1981) *Housing and identity: Cross-cultural perspectives.* London, New Zealand: Croom Helm.

Dunn, S., Wise, J.J. & McFadyen, S. (2005) *Metal: A Headbanger's Journey*. Warner Home Video.

Durkheim, E. (1951 [1897]) *Suicide: A Study in Sociology*, trans. JH Spaulding and G Simpson. New York: Macmillan/The Free Press.

Durkheim, E. (1965 [1912]) *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, trans. JW Swain. New York: Simon and Schuster/The Free Press.

Durkheim, E. (1984 [1893]) *The Division of Labor in Society*, trans. WD Halls. New York: Macmillan/The Free Press.

Eischeid, S. A., Kneer, J. & Englich, B. (2019) Peace of mind: The impact of metal gestures on stress and power, *Metal Music Studies*, 5(2), 137–150

Elias, N. (1991) *The Society of Individuals*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Ellemers, N, Spears, R, & Doosje, B. (1997) Sticking together or falling apart: ingroup identification as a psychological determinant of group commitment versus individual mobility, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,* 72, 617-627.

Ellemers, N; Spears, R. & Doosje, B. (1999) *Social Identity*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Ellis, C. (2004). *The ethnographic I: a methodological novel about autoethnography*. Walnut Creek, CA: Alta-Mira.

Emmett, I. & Morgan, D. H. J. (1982) *Max Gluckman and the Manchester shop-floor ethnographies*. In Frankenberg, R. *Custom and Conflict in British Society*. Manchester: University Press.

Ethier, K. A., & Deaux, K. (1994) Negotiating social identity when contexts change: Maintaining identification and responding to threat, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 67*(2), 243–251

Falkenstein, R. C. (2012) "Illusions of permanence: tattoos and the temporary self". in Arp, R. (Ed.). *Tattoos: Philisophy for Everyone: I Ink, Therefore I Am*. MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

Fellezs, K. (2012) Black metal: Stone Vengeance sing the thrash metal blues*, Popular Music History*, 6(1), 180–97.

Ferreira, V.S. (2011) Becoming a Heavily Tattooed Young Body: From a Bodily Experience to a Body Project*, Youth & Society* 46(3), 303-337.

Fiese, B. H., Tomcho, T. J., Douglas, M., Josephs, K., Poltrock, S. & Baker, T. (2002) A review of 50 years of research on naturally occurring family routines and rituals: cause for celebration?, *Journal of Family Psychology*, 16, 381-390.

Fine, G. A. (1993) Ten lies of ethnography, *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 22 (3), 267-2

Fiske, J. (1992) *The cultural economy of fandom*. In Lewis, L. (eds) (1992). *The adoring audience. Fan culture in popular media*. London: Routledge.

Fiske, J. (1993) *Power plays, power works*. London, UK: Verso.

Fontana, A. & Frey, J.H. (2000) *The interview: From structured questions to negotiated text.* In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (Second edition) London, UK: Sage Publications. 279-314

Formanek, E. (1991) Why they collect: collectors reveal their motivations, *Journal of Social Behaviour and Personality*, 6, 276-286.

Foster-Fishman, P., Nowell, B., Deacon, Z., Nievar, M. & McCann, P. (2005) Using methods that matter: The impact of reflection, dialogue, and voice, *American Journal of Community Psychology, 36*, 275-291.

Franken, A., Keisers, L., Dijkstra, J. K. & ter Bogt, T. (2017) Music Preferences, Friendship, and Externalizing Behavior in Early Adolescence: A SIENA Examination of the Music Marker Theory Using the SNARE Study, *Youth Adolescence*, 46, 1839-1850.

Friesen, B. K. (1990) *Powerlessness in Adolescence: Exploiting Heavy Metal Listeners*, in Sanders, C. (ed.) Marginal Conventions: Popular Culture, Mass Media and Social Deviance, Bowling Green University Popular Press, Bowling Green, OH, pp. 65-77.

Friesen, B. K. & Epstein, J. S. (1994) Rock 'n' Roll Ain't Noise Pollution: Artistic Con- ventions and Tensions in the Major Sub-Genres of Heavy Metal Music, *Popular Music and Society*, 18 (3), 1-18.

Friesen, B. K. & Helfrich, W. (1998) *Social Justice and Sexism for Adolescents: A Con- tent Analysis of Lyrical Themes and Gender Presentations in Canadian Heavy Metal Music, 1985-1991*, in Epstein, J. S. (ed.) Youth Culture: Identity in a Postmodern World, Blackwell, Oxford, pp. 263-285.

Frith, S. (1981) *Sound effects. Youth leisure and the politics of rock 'n' roll.* New York, NY: Pantheon.

Frith, S. (1983) *Sound Effects: Youth, Leisure and the Politics of Rock.* London: Constable

Frith, S. (1996). *Performing rites: On the value of popular music*. Harvard University Press.

Frith, S. & McRobbie, A. (1978) Rock and Sexuality, *Screen Education*, 29, 3-19.

Frith, S. & McRobbie, A. (2000) *Rock and Sexuality*, in McRobbie, A. (ed.) Feminism and Youth Culture, 2nd edn, Macmillan, London, pp. 137-158.

Frohmann, B. (2004) *Deflating Information: From Science Studies to Documentation*. Toronto: University Press.

Fruh, K. & Thomas, E. (2012) *Tattoo you: personal identity in ink*. in Arp, R. (eds). *Tattoos: Philisophy for Everyone: I Ink, Therefore I Am*. MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

Gamble, S. (2019) Breaking down the breakdown in twenty-first-century metal, *Metal Music Studies*, 5(3), 337–354

Garner, A. (2004) Living history: Trees and metaphors of identity in an English forest, *Journal of Material Culture, 9*(1), 87-100.

Gecas, V., & Schwalbe, M. L. (1983) Beyond the looking-glass self: Social structure and efficacy-based self-esteem, *Social Psychology Quarterly, 46* (2), 77–88.

Gelder, K. (2007*). Subcultures: Cultural histories and social practice*. London: Routledge.

Gelir, I. (2021). Can insider be outsider? Doing and ethnographic research in a familiar setting, *Ethnography and Education*, 16 (2), 226-242.

Gergen, K.J. (2006) The relational self in historical context, *The International Journal for Dialogical Science, 1*(1), 119-124.

Ghisleni, M. (2017) The sociology of everyday life: A research program on contemporary sociality, *Social Science Information*, 54 (4), 526-543.

Giazitzoglu, A., & Payne, G. (2018). A 3-Level Model of Insider Ethnography, *The Qualitative Report*, 23(5), 1149-1159.

Gillet, C. (1983) *The Sound of the City: The Rise of Rock and Roll*. 2nd ed. London: Wyndham.

Giorgio, S., Padiglione, V. & Pontecorvo, C. (2007) Appropriations: Dynamics of domestic space negotiations in Italian middle class working families, *Culture & Psychology, 13*(2), 147-178.

Gleason, R.J. (1972) *A Cultural Revolution*. in Dennisoff, R. S. & Patterson, R.A. (1972).*The Sound of Social Change.*

Goffman E (1959) *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. New York: Doubleday Anchor Books.

Goodyear, V. A. & Casey, A. (2015). Innovation with change: developing a community of practice to help teachers move beyond the 'honeymoon' of pedagogical renovation, *Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy*, 20 (2), 186-203.

Govenar, A. (2000). *The changing image of tattooing in American culture*, 1846-1966.

Gracyk, T. (2016). Heavy Metal: Genre? Style? Subculture?, *Philosophy Compass*, 11: 775-785.

Griffin, C. & Bengry-Howell, A. (2008) *Ethnography*. in Willig, C. & Stainton-Rodgers, W. (Eds) *The handbook of qualitative methods in psychology*. London: Sage Publications

Grusec, J. E. & Davidov, M. (2007) *Socialization in the Family: The Role of Parents*. In Grusec, J. E. & Hasting, P. D. (eds). *Handbook of Socialization: Theory and Research*. Guildford Press.

Gruzelier, J. (2007) Moshpit menace and masculine mayhem. In F. Jarman-Ivens (Ed.), *Oh boy! Masculinities and popular music.* New York, USA: Routledge. 59-75

Guibert, G. & Hein, F. (2007*) 'Les Scenes metal: Sciences sociales et pratiques culturelles radicales'*, 5(2), 5-18.

Gusfield, J. R. (2003) A journey with symbolic interactionism, *Symbolic Interaction, 26*(1), 119-139.

Habermas J (1987 [1981]) *Lifeworld and System: A Critique of Functionalist Reason.* Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

Haenfler, R. (2013). *Subcultures*: The basics. London: Routledge.

Hamilton, A. K., Pernía, D. M., Wilson, C. P. & Dell'Aquila, D. C. (2019) What makes metalheads happy? A phenomenological analysis of flow experiences in metal musicians, *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 16 (4), 537-565.

Hammersley, M. (1992) *What's wrong with ethnography? Methodological explorations.* London, UK: Routledge.

Hanna, J. L. (1979) *To Dance is Human: A Theory of Nonverbal Communication.* Chicago, IL: University Press.

Hannerz, U. (2003) Being there...and there...and there!: Reflections on multi-site ethnography, *Ethnography,* 4(2), 201-216.

Hargreaves, D. J. & North, A. (1999) The Functions of Music in Everyday Life: Redefining the Social in Music Psychology, *Psychology of Music, 27,* 71-83.

Harkness, G. (2012) True School: Situational Authenticity in Chicago's Hip-Hop Underground*, Cultural Sociology*, 6 (3), 283-298.

Harris, P. B. & Brown, B. B. (1996) The Home and Identity Display: Interpreting Resident Territoriality from Home Exteriors, *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 16, 187-203.

Harrison, B. (2002) Photographic visions and narrative inquiry, *Narrative Inquiry, 12*(1), 87-111.

Haslam, S. A., Jetten, J., Postmes, T., & Haslam, C. (2009) Social identity, health and well-being: An emerging agenda for applied psychology, *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, *58*, 1-23.

Häusser, J. A.; Kattenstroth, M.; van Dick, R. & Mojzisch, A. (2012) We are not stressed: social identity in groups buggers neuroendocrine stress reactions, *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 48, 973-977.

Hebdige, D. (1979) *Subculture: The Meaning of Style.* London: Methuen.

Henry, P. & Caldwell, M. (2007) Headbanging as Resistance of Refuge: A Cathartic Account*, Consumption Markets & Culture*, 10 (2), 159-174.

Herbert, S. (2000). For ethnography, *Progress in Human Geography, 24*(4), 550-568.

Hermans, H. J. M. (2001) The dialogical self: Toward a theory of personal and cultural positioning, *Culture & Psychology, 7*(3), 243-281.

Hewitt, J. P. (2007) *Self and Society: A Symbolic Interactionist Social Psychology*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Hier, S. (2016) Moral panic, moral regulation, and the civilizing process, *The British Journal of Sociology*, 67 (3), 414- 434.

Hill, R. L. (2011) Is emo metal? Gendered boundaries and new horizons in the metal community, *Journal for Cultural Research*, 15 (3), 297-313.

Hill, R. L. (2013) *Representations and Experiences of Women Hard Rock and Metal Fans in the Imaginary Community*. Thesis. University of York.

Hill, R. L. (2014) Reconceptualising hard rock and metal fans as a group: Imaginary community', *International Journal of Community Music,* 7(2), 173–88.

Hill, R. L. (2016) "Power has a penis": Cost reduction, social exchange and sexism in metal – reviewing the work of Sonia Vasan, *Metal Music Studies*, 2(3), 263–271

Hill, R. L. (2016) *Gender, Metal and the Media: Women Fans and the Gendered Experience of Music.* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Hill, R. L. (2018) Metal and sexism, *Metal Music Studies*, 4 (2), 265-279.

Hill, R. L. (2021) When love and critique collide: Methodology, ontology, fandom and standpoint in metal research, *Metal Music Studies*, 7 (2), 197-210.

Hill, R. L.; Lucas, C. & Riches, G. (2015) Metal and Marginalization: Researching at the edges of exteriority, *Metal Music Studies*, 1 (3), 295-301.

Hillier, B. (2020) Considering genre in metal music, *Metal Music Studies*, 6(1), 5–26

Hjelm, T.; Kahn-Harris, K. & LeVine, M. (2011) Heavy metal as controversy and counterculture*, Popular Music History*, 6, 5-18.

Hoad, C. (2017) Slashing through the boundaries: Heavy metal fandom, fan fiction and girl cultures, *Metal Music* Studies, 3 (1), 5-22.

Hodgetts, D., Drew, N., Sonn, C., Stolte, O., Nikora, L.W. & Curtis., C. (2010a) *The social psychology of everyday life.* New York, USA: Palgrave McMillan.

Hodgetts, D., Stolte, O, Chamberlain, K., Radley, A., Groot, S., & Nikora, L. (2010b) The mobile hermit and the city: Considering links between places, objects, and identities in social psychological research on homelessness, *British Journal of Social Psychology, 49*(2), 285-303.

Hodkinson, P. (2002) *Goth: Identity, style and sub-culture.* New York, USA: Berg.

Hodkinson, P. (2002). *Goth: Identity, style, and subculture*. Oxford, UK: Berg.

Hodkinson, P. (2005) 'Insider Research' in the Study of Youth Cultures, *Journal of Youth Studies*, 8 (2), 131-149.

Hoffman, D. L. & Fodor, M. (2010) Can you measure the ROI of your social media marketing, *MIT Sloan Management Review*, 52(1), 41–49.

Hogg, M. A. & Abrams, D. (1988) *Social Identifications: A Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations and Group Processes*. London: Routledge.

Hogg, M. A. & Hardie, E. A. (1992) Prototypicality, Conformity and Depersonalised Attraction: A Self-Categorisation Analysis of Group Cohesiveness, *British Journal of Social Psychology,* 31, 41- 56.

Hogg, M. A. & Reid, S. A. (2006) Social identity, self-categorization, and the communication of group norms, *Communication Theory, 16* (1), 7–30.

Hogg, M. A. & Terry, D. J. (2000) Social identity and self-categorization processes in organizational contexts, *The Academy of Management Review, 25*(1), 121–140

Hogg, M. A. & Tindale, R. S. (2005) *Social identity, influence, and communication in small group*, In J. Harwood & H. Giles (Eds.), *Intergroup communication: Multiple perspectives*. New York, NY: Peter Lang. 141–164

Holbrook, J., Minoca, J. & Laumann, A. (2012) Body Piercing: Complication and Prevention of Health Risks, *Clinical Dermatology*, 13 (1), 1-17.

Holmes, S. M. (2013) "Is it worth risking your life?": Ethnography, risk and death on the U.S.- Mexico Border, *Social Science & Medicine*, 99, 153-161

Homan, S. (2010) Governmental as anything: Live music and law and order in Melbourne, *Perfect Beat*, 11 (2), 103-118.

Howe, T. R., Aberson, C. L., Friedman, H. S., Murphy, S. E., Alcazar, E., Vazquez, E.J. & Becker, R. (2015) Three Decades Later: The Life Experiences and Mid-Life Functioning of 1980s Heavy Metal Groupies, Musicians, and Fans, *Self and Identity*, 14 (5), 602-626.

Howton, H. & Allen-Collinson, J. (2013) Close but not too close: friendship as method(ology) in ethnographic research encounters, *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 43 (3), 283-305.

Hudson, L. A. & Ozanne, J. L. (1988) Alternative ways of seeking knowledge in consumer research, *Journal of Consumer Research, 14*(4), 508–521

Hughes, P. (2016) Using symbolic interactionism insights as an approach to helping the individual with Asperger's syndrome overcome barriers to social inclusion, *Symbolic Interactionism*, 43 (1), 60-74.

Hurdley, R. (2006) Dismantling mantelpieces: Narrating identities and materializing culture in the home, *Sociology 40*(4), 717-733.

Husband, C. (2005). Minority Ethnic Media as Communities Of Practice: Professionalism and Identity Politics, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 31 (3), 461-279.

Hutcherson, B. & Haenfler, R. (2010) Musical genre as a gendered process: Authenticity in extreme metal, *Studies in Symbolic Interaction*, 35, 101-137.
Ingham, C. (2002*) The Book of Metal*. New York: Thunder's Mouth Press.

Intellectbooks (2021) available at: https://www.intellectbooks.com/metal-music-studies

Isaksen, J.V. (2013) *The Looking Glass Self: How Our Self-image is Shaped by Society*. Available at http://www.popularsocialscience.com/2013/05/27/the-

looking-glass-self-how-our-self-image-is-shaped-by-society/. Accessed 10/01/2021.

Jackson, S. & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1999) *Flow in sports: the key to optimal experiences and performances. Human Kinetics*. Champaign: IL.

Jackson, S. & Moores, S. (1995) *The Politics of Domestic Consumption.* London, UK: Prentice Hall.

Jacobs, K. & Gabriel, M. (2013) Introduction: Homes, Objects and Things. Housing, *Theory and Society*, 30 (3), pp. 213-218.

James, W. (1890) *The principles of psychology.* Volume one. New York, USA: Henry Holt

Jancovich, M., Reboll, A.L., Stringer, J. & Willis, A. (2003) *Defining cult movies: The cultural politics of oppositional taste.* Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press.

Jenkins, H. & Tulloch, J. (1994) *Science Fiction Audiences: Watching Star Trek and Doctor Who*, New York: Routledge.

Jenkins, R. (2004) *Social identity.* Second edition. London, UK: Routledge.

Jenkins, S. P., & Osberg, L. (2005) *Nobody to play with? The implications of leisure coordination*. In D. S. Hamermesh & G. A. Pfann (Eds.) The economics of time use. Amsterdam: Elsevier. 113–145

Jipson, A. J & Litton, C. E. (2000) *Body, Career and Community: The Implications of researching dangerous groups*. In Lee-Treweek, G. & Linkogle, S. (eds). *Danger in the Field: Risk and Ethics in Social Research*. London: Routledge.

Jovchelovitch, S. (2007) *Knowledge in context: Representations, community and culture*. New York, USA: Routledge.

Joyner, D. (2003) *American Popular Music*. New York: McGraw-Hill

Kahn-Harris, K. (2004). *The 'failure' of youth culture: Reflexivity, music and politics in the black metal scene. Cultural Studies* 7(1), pp. 95-111.

Kahn-Harris, K. (2007). *Extreme metal: Music and culture on the edge*. New York, USA: Berg.

Kahn-Harris, K. (2011) Metal Studies: Intellectual Fragmentation or Organic Intellectualism?, *Journal for Cultural Research,* 15(3), 251-253.

Kalekin-Fishman, D. (2013) Sociology of Everyday Life, *Current Sociology Review*, 61 (5-6), 714-732.

Kallinen, K. & Ravaja, N. (2007) Comparing speakers versus headphones in listening to new from a computer — individual differences and psychophysiological responses, *Computers in Human Behavior*, *23*, 303-17.

Kaplan, B., & Maxwell, J. A. (1994) *Qualitative Research Methods for Evaluating Computer Information Systems*. In J. G. Anderson, C. E. Aydin, & S. J. Jay (Eds.), Evaluation Health Care Information Systems: Methods and Application. California: Sage Publications.

Kaufman Shelemay, K. (2011) Musical Communities: Rethinking the Collective in Music, *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 64 (2), 349-390.

Kennedy, D. P., Gläscher, J., Tyszka, J. M. & Adolphs, R. (2009) Personal space regulation by the human amygdala, *Nature Neuroscience*, 12 (10), 1126-1127.

King, P. (1985) 'Heavy Metal Music and Drug Abuse in Adolescence', *Postgraduate Medicine*, 83 (5), 295-302.

Kneer, J. (2016) Are we evil? Yes we are – but at least not crazy! How to test implicit associations of fans and non-fans with metal music, *Metal Music Studies*, 2(1), 69–86

Knobloch, S. and Zillmann, D. (2002), Mood Management via the Digital Jukebox, *Journal of Communication*, 52(2), 351–66.

Knobloch, S., Vorderer, P. & Zillmann, D. (2000) The impact of music preferences on the perception of potential friends in adolescence, *Zeitschrift für Sozialpsychologie [Journal for Social Psychology]*, 31, 18-30.

Knopke, E. (2015) Headbanging in Nairobi: The emergence of the Kenyan metal scene and its transformation of the metal code, *Metal Music Studies*, 1(1), 105–125

Knottnerus, J. D. (2016) *Ritual as a Missing Link: Sociology, Structural Ritualization Theory, and Research*. London: Routledge.

Knudsen, H. G.; Hjort, M. F. & Blaser, L. J. (2019) Playing with Fandom. *Journal of Media and Communication Research*, 66, 18-36.

Koch, T., Gerber, C. & De Klerk, J. J. (2018) The impact of social media on recruitment: Are you LinkedIn?, *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*, 1-14

Kosut, M. (2000) Tattoo Narratives: the intersection of the body, self-identity and society, *Visual Studies*, 15 (1), 79-100.

Kotarbra, J.A., Merrill, B., Williams, J.P. & Vannini, P. (2013) *Understanding Society Through Popular Music*. New York: Routledge.
Kozinetz, R. (2001) Utopian Enterprise: Articulating the meaning of Star Trek's culture of consumption, *Journal of Consumer Research*, 28(1), 67-88.

Kraaykamp, G., van Gils, W. & Ultee, W. (2008) Cultural participation and time restrictions: Explaining the frequency of individual and joint cultural visits *Poetics*, 36, 316–332.

Kracauer, S. (1993) Photography, *Critical Inquiry*, 19, 421-436.

Krause, A. E., North, A. C. & Hewitt, L. Y. (2015) Music-listening in everyday life: Devices and choice, *Psychology of Music*, 43 (2), 155-170.

Krenske, L. and McKay, J. (2000) Hard and heavy: Gender and power in a heavy metal music subculture, *Gender, Place and Culture,* 7(3), 287–304.

Kroger, J. (1996) *Identity in adolescence: The balance between self and other*. London, UK: Routledge

Kumar, R. (2014) *Research Methodology: a step-by-step guide for beginner.* Fourth edition. Los Angeles, CA: Sage

Kurkela, Kari (1996) Nuoren aggressiivisuus ja musiikki [Adolescent Aggression and Music]. In: Suurpaa, L & Aaltojarvi, P (Eds.). *Nåin nuoret.* Pieksamaki: Kirjapaino Raamattutalo.

Laiho, S. (2002) *Music as a Resource for Self-regulation and Development in Adolescence*. Thesis University of Jyväskylä.

Laiho, S. (2004). The Psychological Functions of Music in Adolescence, *Nordic Journal of Music Therapy*, 13 (1), 47-63.

Lakens, D. & Stel, M. (2011). If they move in sync, they must feel in sync: movement synchrony leads to attributions of rapport and entitavity, *Soc Con*, 29, 1-14.

Lambert, N. M.; Stillman, T. F.; Hicks, J. A.; Kamble, S.; Baumeister, R. F. & Fincham, F. D. (2013) The Belong Is to Matter: Sense of Belonging Enhances Meaning in Life*, Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 39(11), 1418-1427.

Lamont, A. (2011) University students' strong experiences of music: Pleasure, engagement, and meaning, *Musicae Scientae*, 15 (2), 229-249.

Lamont, A. (2012) Emotion, engagement and meaning in strong experiences of music performance, *Psychology of Music*, 40, 574–594

Lamont, M. & Molnar V. (2002) The Study of Boundaries in the Social Science, *Annual Review of Sociology*, 28, 167-195.

Larson, R. (1995) Sectrets in the Bedroom: Adolescents' Private Use of Media, *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 24(5), 535-549.

Larsson, S. (2013) 'I Bang my Head, Therefore I Am': Constructing Individual and Social Authenticity in the Heavy Metal Subculture, *Young*, 21 (1), 95-110.

Lather, P. (2001) Postbook: Working the Ruins of Feminist Ethnography, *Sings: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 27(1), 199-227.

Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). Situated learning. Legitimate peripheral participation. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lawrence, J., Dodds, A. & Valsiner, J. (2004) The many faces of everyday life: Some challenges to the psychology of cultural practice, *Culture and Psychology*, 10(4), 455-476.

Lazzaro, E. & Frateschi, C. (2017) Couples' arts and participation: assessing individual and joint time use, *Journal of Cultural Economics*, 41, 47-69.

Leante, L. (2016) *Observing musicians/audience interaction in North Indian classical music performance*. In Tsioulakis, I. & Hytönen-Ng, E. (Eds.) *Musicians and their Audiences: Performance, Speech, and Mediation*. New York: Routledge.

Lee-Treweek, G. & Linkogle, S. (2000) *Danger in the Field: Risk and Ethics in Social Research*. London: Routledge.

Lee, R. M. (2000) *Unobtrusive methods in social research*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Lerner, R. M., & Steinberg, L. (2009) *The scientific study of adolescent development: Historical and contemporary perspectives*. In R. M. Lerner & L. Steinberg (Eds.), *Handbook of adolescent psychology: Individual bases of adolescent development*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons Inc. 3-14.

Lichterman, P. (2017) Interpretive Reflexivity in Ethnography. *Ethnography*, 18 (1), 35-45.

Liljeström, S., Juslin, P. N. & Västfjäll, D. (2012) Experimental evidence of the roles of music choice, social context, and listener personality in emotional reactions to music. *Psychology of music*.

Lincoln, Y. S. & Guba, E. G. (1985) *Naturalistic inquiry.* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Link, B. G., & Phelan, J. C. (2001) Conceptualizing stigma. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 27, 363-385.

Linkogle, S. (2000) *Relajo: Danger in a crowd*. In Lee-Treweek, G. & Linkogle, S. (eds). *Danger in the Field: Risk and Ethics in Social Research*. London: Routledge.

Longhurst, B. (2007) *Popular Music & Society*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Lonsdale, A. J. & North, A. C. (2009) Musical taste and ingroup favouritism, *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, *12*, 319-327.

Loveland, K. A. (1991) Social affordances and interaction II: autism and the affordances of the human environment, *Ecological Psychology*, 3, 99-119.

Luna, D. & Gupta, S. (2001) An integrative framework for cross-cultural consumer behavior, *International Marketing Review*, 18 (1), 45-69.

Lundgren, D. C. (2004) Social Feedback and Self-Appraisals: Current Status of the Mead-Cooley Hypothesis, *Symbolic Interactionism*, 27 (2), 267-286

Macklem, G. (2003) *Bullying and teasing: Social power in children's groups*. New York: Kluver Academic/Plenum.

Madison, G.; Holquist, J. & Vestin, M. (2017). Musical improvisation skills in a prospective partner is associated with mate value and preferences, consistent with sexual selection and parental investment theory: Implications for the origins of music. *Evolution and Human Behavior* 38, 120-129.

Marti, G. (2009) Affinity, identity and transcendence: The experience of religion racial integration in diverse congregations, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, 48*(1), 53-68.

Marx K (1975 [1844]) *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*. In: Marx K and Engels F, *Collected Works, Volume 3.* New York: International Publishers.

Mauss, M. (1985 [1938]) *A category of the human mind: The notion of person; the notion of self*. In M. Carrithers, S. Collins & S. Lukes (Eds.), *The category of the person*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

McCracken, G. (1986) Culture and consumption: a theoretical account of the structure and movement of the cultural meaning of consumer goods, *Journal of Consumer Research*, 13 (1), 77-84.

McFerran, K.; O'Grady, L.; Grocke, D. & Sawyer, S. (2012) How Teenagers Use Music to Manage Their Mood: An Initial Investigation. The University of Melbourne, Australia.

McMillan, D.W. & Chavis, D.M. (1986) Sense of community: A definition and theory, *Journal of Community Psychology, 14,* 6-23.

Mead, G.H. (1934) *Mind, self and society: From the standpoint of a social behaviourist*. Chicago, USA: University of Chicago Press.

Merriam, A. P. (1964) *The anthropology of music*. Chicago: Northwestern University Press.

Merton, R. (1996*) Socially expected durations*. In: P. Sztompka (ed*.) On Social Structure and Science*. Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press. 162–172.

Millar, B. (2008) Selective hearing: gender bias in the music preferences of young adults, *Psychology of Music*, 36 (4), 429-445.

Miller, D. 2008 *The Comfort of Things*. Cambridge: Polity.

Miranda, D. & Claes, M. (2009) Music Listening, Coping, Peer Affiliation and Depression in Adolescence, *Psychology of Music*, 37(2), 215-233.

Miranda, D., Blais-Rochette, D., Vaugon, K., Osman, M. & Arias-Valenzuela, M. (2015) Towards a cultural-developmental psychology of music in adolescence, *Psychology of Music*, 43 (2), 197-218.

Mitchell, D. D. (2006) Flashcard: Alternating between Visible and Invisible Identities, *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 39 (2), 137-145.

Mohr, J., & DiMaggio, P. (1995) The intergenerational transmission of cultural capital, *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility*, 14, 167–199.

Monaghan, L. (2002). Regulating "unruly" bodies: Work tasks, conflict and violence in Britain's night-time economy. *British Journal of Sociology, 53*(3), 403-429.

Monaghan, L. F. (2003*) Danger on the doors: bodily risk in a demonised occupation, *Health, Risk & Society*, 5(1) 12-31.

Montero, M. (2009) Community action and research as citizenship construction, *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 43 (1-2), 149–161

Moreau, F. (2013) The disruptive nature of digitization: the case of the recorded music industry, *International Journal of Arts Management,* 15, 18–31.

Morgan, N., & Pritchard, A. (2005) On souvenirs and metonymy: Narratives of memory, metaphor and materiality, *Tourist Studies, 5*(1), 29-53.

Morrison, S. J. (2001) The school ensemble: A culture of our own, *Music Educators Journal*, *88*, 24–28.

Moynihan, M. & Söderlind, M. 2003. *Lords of Chaos: The Bloody Rise of the Satanic Metal Underground*. Los Angeles: Feral House.

Mynett, M. (2019) Defining contemporary metal music: Performance, sounds and practices, *Metal Music Studies*, 5(3), 297–313

Nagel, I. (2004) Cultuurdeelname in de Levensloop [Culture Participation throughout the life course]. ICS Utrecht University.

Nagel, I. & Ganzeboom, H. B. G. (2002) Participation in Legitimate Culture: Family and School Effects from Adolescence to Adulthood, *Netherlands Journal of Social Sciences*, 38 (2), 102-120.

Nancy, J.-L. (1991) *The Inoperative Communicty* (trans. P. Connor, L. Garbus, M. Holland and S. Sawhney), Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Nettl, B. & Russell, M. (1998) *In the Course of Performance: Studies in the World of Musical Improvisation*. Chicago, IL: University Press.

Newby, H. (1980) *Community*. Milton Keynes: University Press.

Nezlek, J. B. & Smith, C. V. (2005) Social Identity in Daily Social Interaction, *Self and Identity*, 4 (3), 243-261.

Noble, G. (2004) Accumulated being, *International Journal of Cultural Studies, 7*(2) 233-256.

North, A. C. & Hargreaves, D. J. (1999) Music and adolescent identity, *Music Education Research*, *1*, 75-92.

North, A. C. & Hargreaves, D. J. (2007). Lifestyle correlates of musical preferences: 1. Relationships, living arrangement, beliefs, and crime, *Psychology of Music*, 35, 58-87.

North, A., Hargreaves, D. & O'Neill, S. (2000). The Importance of Music to Adolescents, *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 70, 255-272.

Nowel, B. L., Berkowitz, S. L., Deacon, Z. & Foster-Fishman, P. (2006) Revealing the cues within community places: Stories of identity, history and possibility, *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 37, 29-46

O'Brien, W. & Bates, P. (2015). "Looking and feeling the part": developing aviation students' professional identity through a community of practice, *Teaching in Higher Education*, 20 (8), 821-832.

O'Connor, A., Jackson, L. & Goldsmith, L. (2014) Can I get a retweet please? Health research recruitment and the Twittersphere, *Journal of Advanced Nursing*. 70 (3), 599-609.

O'Reilly, D., Larsen, G. & Kubacki, K. (2013) *Music, markets and consumption*. Oxford: Goodfellow Publishers.

O'Reilly, K. (2009) *Key Concepts in Ethnography*. London: SAGE Publications.

Oakes, P. J. (1987) *The salience of social categories*. In J. C. Turner, M. A. Hogg, P. J. Oakes, S. D. Reicher, & M. S. Wetherell (Eds.), *Rediscovering the social group: A self-categorization theory.* Oxford: Blackwell. 117-141.

Oakley, A. (2016). Interviewing women again: Power, time and the gift. *Sociology, 50*(1), 195- 213.

Okunew, N. (2016) "Satan demands total annihilation": Heavy metal in the German Democratic Republic, *Metal Music Studies*, 2 (2), 199–214

Oliver, M. B. & Bartsch, A. (2010) Appreciation as audience response: Exploring entertainment gratifications beyond hedonism, *Human Communication Research, 36*(1), 53–81

Olivier de Sardan, J.P. (2005) *Researching the practical norms of real governance in Africa. Africa, Power and Politics*. Discussion Paper 5.

Olson, B. H. (2012) Voice of our blood: National Socialist discourses in black metal, *Popular Music History*, 6(1), 135–49.

Olsson, L. (2010) *Language in metal song lyrics: A study of the song lyrics of the Swedish power metal band Falconer*. Thesis: University of Gothenburg. OR

Orend, A. & Gagné, P. (2009) Corporate Logo Tattoos and the Commodification of the Body, *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 38(4), 493-517.

Parncutt, R. (2009) Prenatal and infant conditioning, the mother schema, and the origins of music and religion*, Musicology Science*, 13 (2), 119-150.

Pasbani, R. (2019) *Ohio Reporter Tries To Scapegoat THE ACACIA STRAIN Over Dayton Shooter Wearing The Band's Sweatshirt*. Available at: https://metalinjection.net/metal-in-the-mainstream/ohio-reporter-tries-to-scapegoat-the-acacia-strain-over-dayton-shooting-due-to-shooters-sweatshirt. Accessed on July 19 2021.

Phillipov, M. (2011). Extreme music for extreme people? Norwegian black metal and transcendent violence*, Popular Music History,* 150-163.

Phillipov, M. (2012) *Death Metal and Music Criticism: Analysis at the limits.* Lanham: Lexington Books.

Phillips, W. & Cogan, B. (2009) *Encyclopedia of Heavy Metal Music*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Pierry, M. (2013) The LCC Number of the Beast: A Guide to Metal Music and Resources for Librarians, *Music Reference Services Quarterly*, 16 (3), 141-159.

Pike, K. L. (1967) *Language in relation to a unified theory of the structure of human behavior*. The Hague: Mouton.

Pinder, R. (1995) Bringing back the body without the blame?: The experience of ill and disabled people at work, *Sociology of Health & Illness*, 17(5), 605-631.

Pink, S. (2005) *The future of visual anthropology*. London, UK: Routledge.

Powers, A. (1999) The nation; The stresses of youth, the strains of its music. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com.

Pruitt, C. (2019) Get In The Ring: Professional Wrestling and Heavy Metal Music in Parallel, *The Journal of Public and Professional Sociology*

Punyodyana, B. (1969) *Social structure, social system, and two levels of analysis: A Thai view*. In H.D. Evers (Ed.)*, Loosely structured social systems: Thailand in comparative perspective, Cultural Report Series No. 17*. New Haven, CT: Yale University, Southeast Asia Studies. 77-105

Purcell, N. (2003) *Death Metal Music: The Passion and Politics of a Subculture*. North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc.

Quinn, K. (2019) Heavy metal music and managing mental health: Heavy Metal Therapy, *Metal Music Studies*, 5(3), 419–424

Raby, R. (2005) What is Resistance?, *Journal of Youth Studies*, 8(2), 151-171.

Radley, A. (1990) *Artefacts, memory and a sense of the past*. In D. Middleton & D. Edwards (Eds.), *Collective remembering.* London, UK: Sage. 46-59.

Rappaport, J. (1993) Narrative studies, personal stories, and identity transformation in the mutual help context. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Sciences, 29*(2), 239- 256.

Rappaport, J. & Seidman, E. (2006), *Handbook of Community Psychology*, New York: Springer.

Ravenscroft, N. & Gilchrist, P. (2009). Spaces of transgression: governance, discipline and reworking the carnivalesque, *Leisure Studies*, 28 (1), 35-49.

Raviv, A.; Bar-Tal, B.; Raviv, A. & Ben-Horin, A. (1996) Adolescent idolization of pop singers: Causes, expressions, and reliance*, Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 25, 631-650.

Reavey, P. & Johnson, K. (2008) *Visual approaches: Using and interpreting images.* In. C.Willig & W. Stainton Rogers (Eds.), *The handbook of qualitative methods in psychology*. London, UK: Sage Publications. 296-333

Reitzes, D. (1980) Beyond the Looking Glass Self: Cooley's Social Self and its Treatment in Introductory Textbooks*, Contemporary Sociology,* 9(5), 631-640.

Rentfrow, P. J. (2012) The Role of Music in Everyday Life: Current Directions in the Social Psychology of Music, *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 6 (5), 402-416.

Riches, G. (2011) Embracing the Chaos: Mosh Pits, Extreme Metal Music and Liminality, *Journal for Cultural Research*, 15 (3), 315-332.

Riches, G. (2015) Reconceptualizing womens' marginalization in heavy metal: A feminist post-structural perspective, *Metal Music Studies*, 1 (2), 263-270.

Roccor, B. (1998) *Heavy Metal: Kunst, Kommerz, Ketzerei*. Berlin: IP Verlag Jeske.

Roederer, J. (1984) The search for a survival value of music, *Music Perception*, 1, 350-356.

Rosenberg, S. (1997) *Multiplicity of selves*. In R. D. Ashmore & L. Jussim (Eds.), Self and identity: Fundamental issues. New York: Oxford University Press. 23-45

Rothbart, M., & Lewis, T. L. (2006) Attitudes and beliefs in a marching band: Stereotyping and accentuating in a favorable intergroup context, *European Journal of Social Psychology*, *36*, 699–719.

Rousseau J-J (2007 [1762]) *Of the social contract*. In: Calhoun C, Gergeis J, Moody J, et al. (eds) *Classical Social Theory*. Second edition. Cambridge: Blackwell, 28–38.

Rowe, P. (2016) *We're in This Together and We Take Care of Our Own: Narrative Constructions of Metal Community Told by Metal Youth*. In Varas-Diaz, N. & Scott, N. (Eds) *Heavy Metal and Communal Experience*. New York: Lexington Press. 79-98.

Rowe, P. (2017) Becoming Metal: narrative reflections on the early formation and embodiment of heavy metal identities, *Journal of Youth Studies*, 20(6), 712-731.

Rowe, P. & Guerin, B. (2017) Contextualizing the mental health of metal youth: A community for social protection, identity, and musical empowerment, *Journal of Community Psychology*, 46, 429-441.

Roy, W. G. & Dowd, T. J. (2010) 'What is sociological about music?', *Annual Review of Sociology*, 36, 183–203.

Rubin, H. J. & Rubin, I. S. (2012) *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data (3rd Edition)*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Ryan, G. (2018) Introduction to positivism, interpretivism and critical theory, *Nurse Researcher*, 25 (4), 14-20.

Safko, L., & Brake, D.K. (2009) The social media bible: Tactics, tools, and strategies for business success, *Skin & Allergy News,* 43, Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons

Sánchez, E. (2000) *Todos con la 'Esperanza': Continuidad de la participación comunitaria/Everyone with 'Esperanza': Continuity of communal participation*, Caracas, Venezuela, Comisión de Estudios de Postgrado, Fac. de Humanidades y Educación, Universidad Central de Venezuela.

Sandelowski, M. & Leeman, J. (2012) Writing usable qualitative health research findings, *Qualitative health research*, *22*(10), 1404-1413.

Sanders, C. R. (1988) *Drill and frill: client choice, client typologies, and interactional control in commercial tattooing settings*. In Rubin, A. (eds) *Marks of Civilization: Artisitic Transformations of the Human Body.*

Sarason, S.B. (1974) *Psychological sense of community.* London, UK: Jossey Bass Publishers.

Savigny, H. & Sleight, S. (2015) Postfeminism and heavy metal in the United Kingdom: Sexy or sexist?, *Metal Music Studies*, 1 (3), 341-357.

Savigny, H. and Schaap, J. (2018) Putting the "studies" back into metal studies, *Metal Music Studies*, 4(3), 549–57

Schaap, J. & Berkers, P. (2014) Grunting alone? Online gender inequality in extreme metal music, *IASPM Journal*, 4 (1), 101-116.

Scheff, T. J. (2005) Looking-Glass Self: Goffman as Symbolic Interactionist, *Symbolic Interaction*, 28 (2), 146-166.

Schönhammer, R. (1988) *Der Walkman. Eine phänomenologische Untersuchung [The Walkman. A Phenomenological Study]*. Munich: Kirchheim Verlag.

Schwartz, K. & Fouts, G. (2003) Music Preferences, Personality Style, and Developmental Issues of Adolescents, *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 32(3), 205-213.

Schwartz, M. S. & Schwartz, C. G. (1955) Problems in Participant Observation*, American Journal of Sociology* 60(4) 343-353

Scott, J. W. (2008) *"Experience": Becoming visible*, in A. M. Jaggar (ed.), *Just Methods: An Interdisciplinary Feminist Reader*, Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers, 272–81.

Scott, N. (2016) *The monstrous male and myths of masculinity in heavy metal*, in N. Scott and F. Heesh (eds), *Heavy Metal, Gender and Sexuality: Interdisciplinary Approaches*, Farnham: Ashgate. 121–32.

Sedgwick, P . R. (2001) *Descartes to Derrida: An Introduction to European Philosophy*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Selden, R., & Widdowson, P. (1993) *A reader's guide to contemporary literary theory .*Third edition*.* Lexington, USA: The University Press of Kentucky.

Selfhout, M. H. W.; Branje, S. J. T.; ter Bogt, T. F. M. & Meeus, W. H. M. (2009) The Role of Music Preferences in Early Adolescents' Friendship Formation and Stability, *Journal of Adolescence*, 32 (1), 95-107.

Shields, R. (1990) The system of pleasure. *Theory, Culture & Society, 7*(1), 39–72.

Shoda, H. & Adachi, M. (2015) Why live recording sounds better: a case study of Schumann's Träumerei*. Frontiers in Psychology*, 5.

Shotter, J. (1993) *Conversational Realities: Constructing Life Through Language*. London: Sage.

Shuker, R. (1994) *Understanding Popular Music*. London: Routledge.

Shuker, R. (1998*) Key Concepts in Popular Music*. New York: Routledge.

Shuker, R. (2001) *Understanding Popular Music.* Second edition. London: Routledge.

Shuker, R. (2014) *Record Collecting and Fandom.* In M. Duffett (Ed.) *Popular Music Fandom: Identities, Roles and Practices*. London and New York: Routledge. 165-185.

Simmel, G. (1971) *On Individuality and Social Forms*, edited by D. Levine (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press).

Simon, B. (1992) The perception of in-group and out-group homogeneity: reintroducing the intergroup context, *European Review of Social Psychology*, yr1992 (3), 1–30.

Simons, B., Stürmer, S., & Steffens, K. (2000) Helping individuals or group members? The role of individual and collective identification in AIDS volunteerism, Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 4, 997-507.

Skånland, M. S. (2011) Use of mp3 players as a coping resource, *Music and Arts in Action*, 3 (2), pp. 15-33.

Slaven, J.E. and Krout, J.L. (2016) Musicological analysis of guitar solos from the roots of rock through modern heavy metal, *Metal Music Studies*, 2(2), 245–251 .

Sloboda, J. A. & Juslin, P. N. (2010) *At the interface between the inner and outer world: Psychological perspectives.* In Juslin, P. & Sloboda, J. A. (eds.) *Handbook of music and emotion: Theory, research, applications*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. 73-79

Sloboda, J.A., O'Neill, S.A., & Ivaldi, A. (2001) Functions of music in everyday life: An exploratory study using the experience sampling method, *Musicæ Scientiæ, 5*(1), 9-32.

Smialek, E. (2015) *Genre and expression in extreme metal music, ca. 1990–2015.* Thesis. McGill University.

Smith, D. E. (1990) *The Conceptual Practice of Power*. Toronto: University Press.

Smith, S. (1994) Soundscape. *Area, 26*(3), 232 - 240.

Snaza, N. and Netherton, J. (2016) Community at the extremes: The death metal underground as being-in-common, *Metal Music Studies*, 2(3), 341–356

Snell, D. (2012) *Everyday Bogans: Community and Identity between Fans of Heavy Metal Music*. Thesis. Waitako University.

Snell, D. & Hodgetts, D. (2007) Heavy Metal, identity and the social negotiation of a community of practice. *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology, 17*(6), 430-445.

Sommer, R. (2002) *Personal Space in a Digital Age* In R. R. Bechtel & Churchman, A. (Eds), *Handbook of Environmental Psychology*. New York: Wiley. 647–660

Spencer, P. (1985) *Society and the Dance,* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Spracklen, K., Brown, A.R. & Kahn-Harris, K. (2011) Metal Studies? Cultural Research in the Heavy Metal Scene, *Journal for Cultural Research*, 15(3), 209-212.

Spracklen, K., Lucas, C. & Deeks, M. (2014) The Construction of Heavy Metal Identity through Heritage Narratives: A Case Study of Extreme Metal Bands in the North of England, *Popular Music and Society*, 37 (1), 48-64.

Springhall, J. (1998) *Youth, Popular Culture and Moral Panics: Penny Gaffs to Gangsta-Rap, 1830-1996*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Stanislavski, K. (1989) *An actor prepares*. New York: Routledge.

Stanley, L. (1992) *The auto/biographical I*. Manchester: University Press.

Stanley, L. and Wise, S. (1993) *Breaking Out Again: Feminist Ontology and Epistemology*. London: Routledge.

Steinberg, L. & Morris, A. S. (2001) Adolescent Development, *Annual Review of Psychology*, 52, 83-110.

Steinberg, L. & Silverberg, S. B. (1986) The vicissitudes of autonomy in early adolescence, *Child Development*, 57, 841-851.

Stets, J. E. & Burke, P. J. (2000). Identity Theory and Social Identity Theory, *Social Psychology Quaterly*, 63(3), 224- 237.

Stewart, S. (1993) *On longing: Narratives of the miniature, the gigantic, the souvenir, the collection*. Durham, NC, USA: Duke University Press.

Strauss, A.L. (1969) *Mirrors and masks.* London, UK: M. Robertson.

Straw, W. (1983) *Characterising rock music culture: the case of heavy metal.* In Frith, S. & Goodwin, A. (1990*). On Record: Rock Pop and the Written Word.* London: Routledge.

Straw, W. (1984) Characterizing Rock Music Culture: The Case of Heavy Metal, *Canadian University Music Review*, 5, 104-122.

Street, J. (1992) *Shock Waves: the Authoritative Respones to Popular Music.* In Strinati, D. & Wagg, S. (1992). *Come on Down? Popular Music in Post-War Britain.* London: Routledge.

Strong, C. & Whiting, S. (2018) 'We love the bands and we want to keep them on the walls': gig posters as heritage-as-praxis in music venues, *Continuum*, 32:2, 151-161.

Stürmer, S., Snyder, M., Kropp, A., & Siem, B. (2006) Empathy-Motivated Helping: The Moderating Role of Group Membership, *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 32 (7), 943-956.

Swarbick, D., Bosnyak, D., Livingstone, S. R., Bansal, J., Marsh-Rollo, S., Woolhouse, M. H. & Trainor, L. J. (2019). How Live Music Moves Us: Head Movement Differences in Audiences to Live Versus Recorded Music*, Frontiers in Psychology*, 9, 1-11.

Sztompka, P. (2008) The Focus on Everyday Life: a New Turn in Sociology, *European Review*, 16 (1), 23-37.

Tajfel, H. (1972) *Social categorization* In S. Moscovici (Eds.), *Introduction a la psychologie sociale*, Paris: Larousse. 272–302

Tajfel, H. (1978) *Differentiation between social groups.* London, UK: Academic Press

Tajfel, H. (1981) *Human groups & social categories: Studies in social psychology.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1979*) An integrative theory of social conflict.* In W. G. Austin & S. Worchel (Eds.), *The social psychology of intergroup relations.* Monterey, CA, USA: Brooks/Cole. 33–47

Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1986) *The social identity theory of intergroup behavior.* In S. Worchel & W. G. Austin (Eds.), *Psychology of intergroup relations.* Chicago, USA: Nelson Hall. 7– 24

Talò, C., Mannarini, T., & Rochira, A. (2013*) Sense of Communtiy and Community Participation*, Social Indicators Research,* 117, 1-28.

Tarrant, M., North, A. C., & Hargreaves, D. J. (2002) *Youth identity in music.* In MacDonald, R., Hargreaves, D., & Miell, D. (eds) *Musical Identities.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Taylor, J. (2011) The intimate insider: negotiating the ethics of friendship when doing insider research, *Qualitative Research*, 11(1), 3-22.

Te Awekotuku, N., Nikora, L.W., Rua, M. & Karapu, R. (2007). *Mau Moko: The world of Maori tattoo.* North Shore, New Zealand: Penguin Viking.

Tedlock, B. (2000) *Ethnography and ethnographic representation.* In. N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research.* Second Edition. London, UK: Sage Publications. 455-486

ter Bogt, T. F. M.; Delsing, M. J. M. H.; van Zalk, M.; Christenson, P. G. & Meeus, W. H. J. (2011) Intergenerational Continuity of Taste: Parental and Adolescent Music Preferences, *Social Forces*, 90 (1), 297-319.

Thompson E.P. (1964) *The Making of the English Working Class.* London: Victor Gollancz.

Thornton, S. (1995) *Club cultures: Music, media and subcultural capital.* Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

Thornton, S. 1995. *Club cultures: Music, media, and subcultural capital.* Cambridge, UK: Polity.

Tillman-Healy, L. (2003) *Friendship as method*, *Qualitative Inquiry*, 9(5), 729-749.

Tompkins, J. (2009) What's the Deal with Soundtrack Albums? Metal Music and the Customized Aesthetics of Contemporary Horror, *Cinema Journal*, (1):65.

Tönnies, F. [1887] (2001) *Community and Civil Society*. Cambridge: University Press.
Trilling, L. (1972) *Sincerity and authenticity.* Cambridge, MA, USA: Harvard University Press.

Tsitsos, W. (1999) Rules of rebellion: Slamdancing, moshing, and the American alternative scene. *Popular Music, 18*(3), 397-414.

Turner, J. C. & Oakes, P. J. (1986) The significance of the social identity concept for social psychology with reference to individualism, interactionism and social influence, *British Journal of Social Psychology*, *25*, 237–252.

Turner, J. C., Hogg, M. A, Oakes, P. J., Reicher, S. & Wetherell, M. (1987) *Rediscovering the social group: A self-categorization theory. Handbook of theories of social psychology*. Volume Two. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Turner, R. (1976) The real self: From institution to impulse. *American Journal of Sociology, 81,* 989-1016.

Turner, R. H. (1956). Role taking, role standpoint, and reference-group behavior, *American Journal of Sociology*, 61:316–328.

Turner, V. (1979) *Process, Performance and Pilgrimage*. New Dehli: Concept.

Ulusoy, E. and Fırat, F.A. (2018), "Toward a theory of subcultural mosaic: fragmentation into and within subcultures", *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 18 (1), 21-42.

van der Hoeven, A. & Hitters, E. (2019) Social and cultural values of live music: Sustaining urban live music ecologies*, Cities*, 90, 263-271.

van Eijk, K. (1997) The Impact of Family Background and Educational Attainment on Cultural Consumption: A Sibling Analysis, *Poetics*, 25 (4), 195-224.

van Maanen, J. (1995) *Representation in Ethnography*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Vandenberg, F., Berghman, M., & Schaap, J. (2021). The 'lonely raver': music livetreams during COVID-19 as a hotline to collective consciousness?, *European Societies*, 23 (1), 141-152.

Varas-Diaz, N.; Revera-Segarra, E.; Rivera Medina, C.; Mendoza, S. & Gonzalez-Sepulveda, O. (2015) Predictors of Communal Formation in a Small

Heavy Metal Scene: Puerto Rico as a Case Study, *Metal Music Studies*, 1(1), 87-103.

Vasan, S. (2011) The Price of Rebellion: Gender Boundaries in the Death Metal Scene, *Journal for Culture Research*, 15(3), 333-349.

Vasan, S. (2016) *Gender and power in the death metal scene: a social exchange perspective*. In Brown, A. R; Spracklen, K.; Kahn-Harris, K. & Scott, N. (Eds.) *Global Metal Music and Culture: Current Directions in Metal Studies.* Abingdon: Routledge.

Verkuyten, M. (2001) National identification and intergroup evaluation in Dutch children, *British Journal of Developmental Psychology, 19,* 559– 571.

Verkuyten, M. (2007) Ethnic in-group favoritism among minority and majority groups: Testing the self-esteem hypothesis among preadolescents, *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 37,* 486–500.

Verkuyten, M. & De Wolf, A. (2007). The Development of In-Group Favoritism: Between Social Reality and Group Identity, *Developmental Psychology*, 43 (4), 901-911.

Vestal, V. (1999). *Breakdance, red eyed penguins, Vikings, grunge and straight rock 'n' roll: the construction of place in musical discourse in Rudegna, West Side Oslo. Young: Nordic Journal of Youth research* 7(2)

Wall, T. (2003) *Studying Popular Music Culture.* London: Hodder Arnold.

Walser, R. (1992) Eruptions: Heavy Metal Appropriations of Classical Virtuosity, *Popular Music*, 22 (3), 263-308.

Walser, R. (1993) *Running with the devil: Power, gender and madness in Heavy Metal music.* Hanover, USA: University Press of New UK.

Walser, R. (1993). *Running with the devil: Power, gender, and madness in heavy metal music.* Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England.

Weinstein, D. (1991) *Heavy Metal: A Cultural Sociology*. Indiana University: Lexington Books

Weinstein, D. (2000) *Heavy Metal: The music and its culture*: New York: Dacapo Press.

Wenger, E. (1998) *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning and Identity*. Cambridge: University Press.

Wenger, E. (1998) *Communities of practice. Learning, meaning and identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wenger, E. (2000) Communities of Practice and Social Learning Systems, *Organization*, 7 (2), 225–246.

Wenger, E., McDermott, R., & Snyder, W. (2002) *A Guide to Managing Knowledge: Cultivating Communities of Practice*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business.

Whitaker, M. C. (2020) Us and Them: Using Social Identity Theory to Explain and Re-envision Teacher-Student Relationships in Urban Schools, *The Urban Review* 52, 691-707.

Widdicombe, S. & Wooffitt, R. (1990) ”Being” versus “Doing” Punk: on Achieving Authenticity as a Member, *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 9 (4), 257-277.

Williams R (1958). *Culture and Society*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Williams, A. M. & Majumder, S. (2010) Earlobe reconstruction following plug and tunnel piercing, *Journal of Plastic, Reconstructive & Aesthetic Surgery*, 63, 294-295.

Williams, J.P. (2006) Authentic identities: Straightedge sub-culture, music, and the Internet, *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, 35,* 173-200.

Williams, K. Y., & O'Reilly. C. A., III. (1998). Demography and diversity in organizations: A review of 40 years of research, *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 20, 77-140.

Wilson, R. L. & Usher, K. (2017) Social media as a recruitment strategy: using Twitter to explore young people's mental health, *Nurse Researcher*, 25 (3), 36-41.

Winegarner, B. (2013) *The Columbine effect: How five teen pastimes got caught in the crossfire and why teens are taking them back*. New York: Lulu.

Woodward, K. (2002). *Understanding Identity*. London: Arnold.

Woodward, K. (2008). Hanging out and hanging about: Insider/outsider research in the sport of boxing, *Ethnography*, 9(4), 536-560.

Yavuz, M. (2017),'"Delightfully depressing": Death/doom metal music world and the emotional responses of the fan', *Metal Music Studies*, 3:2, 201–218

Yinger, J. M. (1960). Contraculture and subculture. *American Sociological Review*, *25*(5), 625–635.

Yoshie, M., Nagai, Y., Critchley, H. D., & Harrison, N. A. (2016). *Why I tense up when you watch me: inferior parietal cortex mediates an audience's influence on motor performance. Sci. Rep*, 6, 1-11.

Yuan, Y. (2014). *Turning Friends into Research Participants: Rationale: Possibilities and Challenges*. Cambridge Open-review Educational Research e-Journal 1 (1) pp. 88-104.

Zillmann, D. (1988), 'Mood management: Using entertainment to full advantage', in L. Donohew, H. E. Sypher and E. T. Higgins (eds), *Communication, Social Cognition, and Affect*, Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum, pp. 147–71.

Zillmann, D. & Gan, S. (1997). Musical Taste in Adolescence. in Hargreaves, D. J. & North, A. C. (eds) The Social Psychology of Music. Oxford: University Press.

Zografou, L. (2012) The gifts of research - playing with phenomenology, *Dramatherapy* 34 (2), 83-91.

APPENDIX 1: INTRODUCTION LETTER

Dear xxx,

my name is Douglas Schulz and I am currently a research student at the University of Bradford, working towards a PhD in sociology. The aim of my PhD is to explore the ways in which fans of heavy metal music construct their identity and how a sense of community is negotiated through the culture and practices of heavy metal music.

In order to carry out this project, I require the participation of fans of heavy metal music. Therefore, I would like to interview you to find out about your personal experiences with heavy metal music as a fan, when you began listening to the music, how your heavy metal identity has implications on your daily life, and how you express who you are throughout the course of everyday life. If you are active on social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc., I would like to discuss your use of social media in regards to your consumption of heavy metal music.

Additionally, if you have any photographs of the things you consider important and symbolic in relation to your heavy metal identity - this can include pictures of you at concerts, posters, albums, your favorite band t-shirt or clothing, tattoos if applicable, or anything else you may consider as relevant. We would then have a discussion about these photographs, what they mean to you, why you took them, etc.

The interview will be held in a neutral setting, such as a coffee shop or via *Skype* - whichever is more convenient. It is entirely up to you how long the interview takes, what you wish to discuss, and how much you disclose. Your responses are confidential and you may choose a nickname/alias for this study if you wish. You have the right to withdraw from the study at any stage, for any reason and without penalty until the process of data collection finishes in November 2019. Any faces in photographs provided by you will be blurred out in the final copy of the thesis in order to ensure anonymity. A copy of the findings will be made available to you upon completion and submission of the thesis.

If you are interested in being a participant, or have any questions regarding this project, the best way to contact me is via e-mail: dhischul@bradford.ac.uk or via mobile/Whatsapp on (+44) 07462 XXXXX.

This study is part of my PhD study at the University of Bradford, which is being supervised by Dr. Yunis Alam and Dr. Paul Sullivan from the University's Division of Sociology and Criminology. Should you have any questions or concerns regarding this study at any time, you may contact either of them on:

Dr. Yunis Alam

Email: M.Y.Alam1@bradford.ac.uk

Phone: (+44) (0)1274 233178

Division of Sociology and Criminology

University of Bradford

Richmond Road

Bradford, West Yorkshire

BD7 1DP

Dr. Paul Sullivan

Email: P.Sullivan@bradford.ac.uk

Phone: (+44) (0)1274 234789

Division of Sociology and Criminology

University of Bradford

Richmond Road

Bradford, West Yorkshire

BD7 1DP

Please find attached a copy of the interview themes and a consent form.

Thank you for your help. Your participation is greatly appreciated and if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me.

Yours sincerely,

D. Schulz

Douglas Schulz
PhD Candidate

Division of Sociology and Criminology

Faculty of Social Sciences

University of Bradford

APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW THEMES

Musical Interests

When did you start listening to heavy metal music? How and when did your 'journey' into heavy metal music begin? What are some of your favorite bands? Do you have any favorite genres?

Identity

How much does heavy metal music impact your identity? What reactions do you get in regards to your identity? Do you think heavy metal fans have a bad reputation (e.g: Satanism, murder, violence, etc.)?

Community

Does heavy metal provide a sense of community? Do you feel a sense of community when you attend concerts? What do you think of communal practices like headbanging or moshing; do you participate, do you like them?

Material Culture

Do you have any objects that represent heavy metal (t-shirts, posters, CDs, etc.)? How do you use such objects to express your identity? What reactions do you get when you wear band shirts?

Social Media

In terms of your consumption of heavy metal, how do you use social media? Do you follow bands?

Tattoos/body modification

Do you feel that tattoos and body modification are a big part of the heavy metal culture? Do you have tattoos? What do they represent/stand for? Do you have any band-related tattoos? What do you think about body modification?

Gender

Do you think heavy metal is a 'masculine' genre in terms of its demographics? What do you think of women in heavy metal? What is your experience of heavy metal as a woman? What are some of the reactions you get for being a woman that likes heavy metal?

APPENDIX 3: CONSENT FORM

Name of Research Project: "Heavy Metal Fans and Their Identity"

Name of Researcher: Douglas Schulz

Name of Supervisors:

Dr. Yunis Alam	Dr. Paul Sullivan
Email: M.Y.Alam1@bradford.ac.uk	Email: P.Sullivan@bradford.ac.uk
Phone: 01274 233178	Phone: 01274 234789
Division of Sociology and Criminology	Division of Sociology and Criminology
University of Bradford	University of Bradford
Richmond Road	Richmond Road
Bradford, West Yorkshire	Bradford, West Yorkshire
BD7 1DP	BD7 1DP

Please tick the appropriate boxes:

☐ I have received an information sheet about this research project

☐ I have been informed about the research project and the nature of this study

☐ The researcher has explained the aim of this study to me

☐ I have had the opportunity to ask questions and they have been answered to my satisfaction

☐ I am aware that I can withdraw from the study at any point until write-up begins

☐ I give permission to the researcher to use any of the material and information I supply

☐ I understand that the data/information I give will be stored in a secure place and will be destroyed after the research project has finished

☐ Material/information I provide may be used in future publications

Participant's Name (in block letters): _____

Participant's Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX 4: HEAVY METAL SUB-GENRES LISTENING EXAMPLES

1349 - Through The Eyes of Stone:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mw2ZGAV_QyI

Animals As Leaders - Physical Education:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0jpOBd949O4

Cannibal Corpse - Hammer Smashed Face:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gNhN6lT-y5U

Carnifex - Hell Chose Me:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NTty4gqhnvc

Cryptopsy - The Pestilence That Walketh in Darkness:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XlLjQ5GV9kc

Currents - A Flag To Wave:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hZnZ-CpX57Y

Death - Pull The Plug:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_duhhVa-dk8

Decapitated - Spheres of Madness:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QRlVTJ-3G5g
Disturbed - Indestructible:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aWxBrI0g1kE

For The Fallen Dreams - The Big Empty:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IhtMoVh1tS8

Immortal - All Shall Fall:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sOOebk_dKFo

Invent Animate - Monarch:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=edAix3i6_A4

Job For A Cowboy - Tarnished Gluttony:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=48YhY-GOLSE

Make Them Suffer - Erase Me:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TwZmtvD-Xgo

Martyr Defiled - 616:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wh76VoCRm1U

Megadeth - Symphony of Destruction:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K5jvUXij7nU

Meshuggah - Bleed:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qc98u-eGzlc

Miss May I - Masses of a Dying Breed:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=29l7PDb2O9E

Municipal Waste - Breathe Grease:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iwEf-1NkIpg

P.O.D. - Youth of the Nation:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EDKwCvD56kw

Protest The Hero - Bloodmeat:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rhMfz4HrcEA

Shadows Fall - Redemption:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nkARbDMEMEQ

Slayer - Raining Blood:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z8ZqFlw6hYg

Suicide Silence - Unanswered:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Yr5rn3Sv_4

The Amity Affliction - Pittsburgh:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vu3xGr-lNVl

Traveller - Distance Calls:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ew2p7HvjO7I

Watain - Outlaw:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DJvTodlCIVU